THE PARADIGMATICS OF TOPONYMS IN FAIRY-TALE TEXTS

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Abstract. This article examines the paradigmatic features of toponyms used in fairy-tale texts and explores their role in the semantic and structural organization of fictional narratives. Toponyms in fairy tales are not merely geographical markers; they can also convey cultural, historical, symbolic, and emotional meanings. The study focuses on the relationships established among different types of place names within fairy-tale discourse and considers how these relationships contribute to the development of the fictional world. Particular attention is paid to the contrast between real and imaginary toponyms, their semantic associations, and their interaction with characters, events, and narrative space. The analysis demonstrates that the paradigmatic organization of toponyms reflects the cultural worldview represented in fairy tales and contributes to the creation of a distinctive spatial background. The findings suggest that the study of toponymic paradigmatic provides valuable insights into the linguistic, cultural, and stylistic characteristics of fairy-tale texts.

Keywords: toponym, paradigmatic, fairy-tale text, place names, fictional space, semantics, cultural meaning, narrative.

ERTAK MATNLARIDAGI TOPONIMLARNING PARADIGMATIKASI

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada ertak matnlarida qo‘llaniladigan toponimlarning paradigmatik xususiyatlari ko‘rib chiqiladi hamda ularning badiiy bayonning mazmuniy va strukturaviy tashkil etilishidagi o‘rni tadqiq etiladi. Ertaklarda toponimlar nafaqat geografik nomlarni ifodalovchi birliklar, balki madaniy, tarixiy, ramziy va hissiy ma’nolarni ham ifodalashi mumkin. Tadqiqot ertak diskursida turli xil geografik nomlar o‘rtasida yuzaga keladigan munosabatlarga, shuningdek, ushbu munosabatlarning badiiy olamni shakllantirishdagi ahamiyatiga qaratilgan. Ayniqsa, real va xayoliy toponimlarning qarama-qarshi qo‘yilishi, ularning semantik aloqalari hamda personajlar, voqealar va bayon makoni bilan o‘zaro munosabatiga alohida e’tibor beriladi. O‘tkazilgan tahlil shuni ko‘rsatadiki, toponimlarning paradigmatik tashkil etilishi ertaklarda aks etgan madaniy dunyoqarashni ifodalaydi va o‘ziga xos makoniy fonning yaratilishiga xizmat qiladi. Olingan natijalar toponimik paradigmatikani o‘rganish ertak matnlarining lingvistik, madaniy va uslubiy xususiyatlarini yanada chuqurroq anglash imkonini berishini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: toponim, paradigmatika, ertak matni, geografik nomlar, badiiy makon, semantika, madaniy ma’no, bayon.

ПАРАДИГМАТИКА ТОПОНИМОВ В ТЕКСТАХ СКАЗОК

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются парадигматические особенности топонимов, используемых в текстах сказок, и исследуется их роль в смысловой и структурной организации художественного повествования. Топонимы в сказках являются не только географическими обозначениями, но и могут передавать культурные, исторические, символические и эмоциональные значения. Исследование сосредоточено на отношениях, устанавливаемых между различными типами географических названий в сказочном дискурсе, а также на том, каким образом эти отношения способствуют формированию художественного мира. Особое внимание уделяется противопоставлению реальных и вымышленных топонимов, их семантическим связям и взаимодействию с персонажами, событиями и пространством повествования. Проведённый анализ показывает, что парадигматическая организация топонимов отражает культурное мировоззрение, представленное в сказках, и способствует созданию своеобразного пространственного фона. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о том, что изучение топонимической парадигматики позволяет глубже понять лингвистические, культурные и стилистические особенности текстов сказок.

Ключевые слова: топоним, парадигматика, текст сказки, географические названия, художественное пространство, семантика, культурное значение, повествование.

Introduction. Language serves as an important means of expressing a society’s cultural values, historical experience, and understanding of the world. Among the linguistic

elements that establish a connection between language and geographical space, toponyms occupy a significant position. Toponyms are geographical names used to identify particular places and locations; however, their function extends beyond simple geographical identification when they appear in literary works. Within a fictional text, a place name may convey cultural associations, create additional semantic meanings, characterize the setting, and contribute to the overall organization of the narrative. These functions become particularly prominent in fairy-tale texts, where geographical space is often an essential part of the imaginary world.

Fairy tales are characterized by a distinctive representation of space in which real and fictional locations may interact. Forests, rivers, mountains, villages, cities, kingdoms, and other geographical objects frequently become important components of the narrative environment. Such spatial elements are not always used merely to indicate where an event occurs. They can influence the movement of characters, establish relationships between different locations, create contrasts between familiar and unknown spaces, and strengthen the atmosphere of the story. Consequently, toponyms used in fairy tales may perform several functions simultaneously, reflecting both the requirements of the narrative and the cultural background underlying the text.[1]

The paradigmatic analysis of toponyms provides an opportunity to examine the systematic relationships among geographical names and identify the principles according to which they are organized. From a linguistic perspective, toponyms can be grouped according to the types of geographical objects they denote, their semantic features, structural composition, and functions within a particular text. Names of settlements, rivers, mountains, regions, countries, and fictional territories may form interconnected paradigmatic groups. At the same time, the fairy-tale genre allows authors and storytellers to modify existing geographical names or create imaginary ones, thereby expanding the possibilities of representing space through language.

The study of toponymic paradigmatic in fairy-tale texts is relevant because geographical names can provide valuable information about the way space is linguistically and artistically constructed. Examining their organization makes it possible to identify the relationships between different types of place names and to understand how they participate in the creation of a fictional world. Furthermore, the analysis of toponyms may reveal cultural and symbolic meanings that are not immediately apparent from their geographical reference alone.

Therefore, this study focuses on the paradigmatic characteristics of toponyms occurring in fairy-tale texts. It considers their semantic and structural organization as well as their functions in the representation of narrative space. Such an approach views toponyms not simply as names of geographical locations but as meaningful linguistic units that contribute to the construction, interpretation, and cultural representation of the fairy-tale world.[2]

Literature review. Toponyms are traditionally studied within onomastics as names of geographical objects. However, their role in literary texts extends beyond identifying places. In artistic discourse, geographical names can convey cultural associations, emotional meanings, symbolic ideas, and information about the fictional world. Therefore, literary toponyms should be examined in relation to both their linguistic characteristics and their contextual functions.

Previous research in literary onomastics has shown that place names contribute significantly to the representation of fictional space. They can locate events, establish relationships between different settings, create atmosphere, and influence the reader's perception of the narrative world. This function is particularly important in fairy tales, where journeys and transitions between places frequently determine the development of the plot.[3]

The concept of paradigmatic provides an effective framework for studying these relationships. Instead of treating toponyms as separate units, a paradigmatic approach considers them as members of interconnected semantic and functional groups. Such groups may include names of settlements, rivers, mountains, territories, and other geographical objects. Their classification can reveal recurring patterns in the organization of space within fairy-tale texts.

Another important distinction is between real and fictional toponyms. Real geographical names connect the narrative with recognizable cultural and geographical knowledge, whereas invented names contribute to the creation of imaginary worlds. In fairy tales, both types may acquire additional symbolic meanings depending on the events and characters associated with particular places.

Scholarly research also emphasizes the cultural value of toponyms. In folklore, geographical names may reflect collective memory, traditional beliefs, historical experience, and culturally specific perceptions of space. Their meanings can therefore extend beyond geographical reference and participate in the representation of a particular worldview.

Although literary toponymy has received considerable scholarly attention, the paradigmatic organization of place names in fairy-tale texts remains insufficiently explored. Existing studies often focus on individual names, their origins, or separate functions rather than examining their relationships as parts of a unified system. The present study addresses this gap by analyzing the semantic, structural, and functional paradigmatic of toponyms and their contribution to the construction of spatial and cultural meanings in fairy-tale texts.[4]

Research methodology. This study uses a qualitative approach to explore the paradigmatic features of toponyms in fairy-tale texts. The research material includes selected English fairy tales containing geographical names.

The identified toponyms are analyzed according to their semantic, structural, and functional characteristics. A descriptive method is used to classify them by the type of place they denote, while semantic analysis examines their meanings and contextual associations. Paradigmatic analysis identifies similarities and differences among toponyms and groups them into related categories. Contextual analysis determines their role in creating fictional space and supporting the development of the narrative. The study also differentiates between real and fictional toponyms to examine their contribution to geographical representation and imaginative space. The analysis involves collecting, categorizing, and

interpreting toponyms in order to reveal their role as interconnected elements of fairy-tale discourse.

In addition, the research considers the structural composition of toponyms. Particular attention is paid to simple, compound, and descriptive forms, as their structure may provide additional information about the place represented in the narrative. The internal components of a name can sometimes indicate geographical characteristics, cultural associations, or the imagined nature of a location.[5]

The analysis also focuses on the distribution of toponyms within the narrative. Their frequency and position may vary according to the development of the plot. Some names appear repeatedly and become closely associated with central events or characters, while others occur only once to introduce a particular setting. This distribution helps identify the relative importance of different locations within the fictional world. Another aspect of the methodology is the examination of oppositional relationships between place names. Toponyms are considered in relation to spatial and semantic contrasts such as home and foreign land, centre and periphery, known and unknown, or ordinary and magical space. These relationships are particularly relevant to fairy tales because changes in location often correspond to important stages in a character's journey.

The study further examines the contextual transformation of meaning. A toponym may have a neutral geographical meaning outside the text but acquire positive, negative, mysterious, or symbolic associations through the events connected with it. Therefore, each name is interpreted within its immediate textual context as well as in relation to the overall narrative.[6]

Research discussion. The analysis shows that toponyms in fairy-tale texts have functions beyond naming places. They form semantic and functional groups that help organize fictional space and support the development of the narrative. Their use demonstrates that geographical names are closely connected with the structure and meaning of the fairy-tale world.

Real toponyms connect fairy-tale events with recognizable geographical and cultural contexts, while fictional names create imaginary settings and often acquire symbolic meanings. The difference between these two types of names allows fairy tales to combine elements of reality with fantasy. As a result, readers can move between familiar geographical references and completely imagined spaces.

The interpretation of a toponym is strongly influenced by its textual context. A place may initially appear to have only a geographical function, but the events occurring there can give it additional emotional or symbolic meaning. For example, a particular location may become associated with danger, freedom, loss, protection, transformation, or success depending on the role it plays in the story. Thus, the meaning of a toponym develops through its relationship with characters and events. The paradigmatic relations between toponyms also create important contrasts, such as real–imaginary, familiar–unknown, near–distant, centre–periphery, and safe–dangerous. These oppositions help establish the internal structure of fairy-tale space. They can also reflect changes in the hero's situation, particularly when the character leaves a familiar environment and enters an unfamiliar or magical world.[7]

Natural geographical objects have a particularly noticeable role in this process. Forests, rivers, mountains, seas, and other natural locations frequently function as spatial boundaries. They may separate two worlds or mark a transition from one stage of the narrative to another. In many cases, crossing such a boundary represents not only physical movement but also an important change in the character's experience. The discussion also reveals that settlements and constructed places can carry different meanings from natural locations. Villages, towns, castles, and kingdoms often represent social or political spaces where characters interact and major events take place. Castles and kingdoms may additionally suggest authority, wealth, power, or status, whereas small settlements may be associated with ordinary life and familiarity. These differences contribute to the semantic organization of the fairy-tale setting.

Another significant feature is the relationship between toponyms and the hero's journey. The sequence of places through which a character moves can correspond to the progression of the plot. The starting place may represent security and familiarity, intermediate locations may introduce challenges or uncertainty, and the final destination may symbolize achievement, discovery, or resolution. Consequently, toponyms can indirectly reflect the stages of narrative development.

Repetition is also relevant to the interpretation of place names. When a particular toponym occurs several times, it can become strongly associated with a specific character, event, or idea. Repeated references reinforce the importance of the location and contribute to the cohesion of the narrative. Therefore, frequency and textual position may influence the functional significance of a toponym.

The cultural dimension of toponyms should also be considered. Geographical names may contain associations connected with history, traditions, landscapes, collective memory, and national or local identity. Even when these meanings are not explicitly explained, they can influence the reader's understanding of the fictional environment. In this respect, toponyms serve as linguistic elements through which cultural information can be embedded in a narrative.

Research results. A closer examination shows that toponyms also differ in their degree of semantic transparency. Some names immediately suggest a particular image or characteristic, while others have meaning only through the events described in the text. This difference affects the way readers perceive the represented location and demonstrates that the meaning of a toponym can be created both by its linguistic form and by its narrative context. The analysis further indicates that place names are closely connected with the movement of fairy-tale characters. Changes in location often signal a new stage of the story, such as departure, exploration, confrontation, transformation, or return. In this way, toponyms help organize the sequence of events and make the development of the narrative more spatially understandable.

The results demonstrate that the same type of place can receive different meanings in different fairy tales. For

example, a forest may represent fear and uncertainty in one narrative but protection or discovery in another. This shows that the interpretation of a toponym cannot be based solely on its geographical category; its meaning is strongly influenced by the surrounding events, characters, and narrative situation.[8] The analysis also reveals that naming patterns contribute to the distinction between realistic and fantastic environments. Realistic place names tend to provide geographical familiarity, whereas unusual or invented names can create a sense of distance, mystery, or fantasy. Some fictional names are constructed in ways that resemble real geographical naming, making the imaginary world appear more coherent and believable.

Conclusion. The research shows that toponyms are meaningful components of fairy-tale discourse rather than simple names of places. Their semantic and functional connections help shape the imagined world, direct the course of events, and reflect cultural ideas. The contrast between real and invented place names also strengthens the distinction between ordinary and magical spaces. Thus, examining the paradigmatic of toponyms reveals their contribution to the structure, meaning, and cultural richness of fairy-tale texts.

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