



SEMANTIC AND LINGUOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF ANTHROPONYMS IN
“MARTIAN CHRONICLES” BY RAY BRADBURY

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Abstract: *Through a linguistic examination of Ray Bradbury’s The Martian Chronicles, this study investigates the semantic and linguocultural aspects of anthroponyms within narrative discourse. Anthroponyms, which are typically defined as people’s given names, surnames, nicknames, and pseudonyms, play a significant role in literary texts, as they are not mere labels for characteristics but also carriers of semantic, cultural, and symbolic meanings. A renowned American writer Ray Bradbury’s The Martian Chronicles is a science fiction work that combines futuristic imagination with deep humanistic and cultural concerns. The anthroponyms used in the work function not only as identifiers of characters but also as linguocultural signs that reflect American society, historical memory, and moral values. The author consciously chooses names for the characters in order to highlight and emphasize the ideas that he wants to propose. In some place, names are chosen symbolically, some names coincide to their direct ideological function and some are even chosen ironically, contradicting to the real nature of the hero. These aspects make this science fiction work more comprehensible, readable, and engaging.*

Key words: *anthroponyms, linguocultural, futuristic imagination, semantic contradiction, irony, “speaking names”, literary discourse.*

INTRODUCTION

From a linguocultural point of view, language is inseparable from culture. As Kramsch states, language both reflects and shapes cultural reality⁹. Consequently, anthroponyms can be viewed as linguistic signs that encode social values, traditions, and cultural memory. In literary discourse, these features become even more apparent, since authors deliberately select names to convey particular ideas or attitudes.

Literature Review. Regarding the anthroponyms used in The Martian Chronicles, they demonstrate clear semantic patterns and can be divided into several groups.

1. Common American Personal Names

Most characters of the novel own traditional American names such as John, Tom, Robert, and Samuel. These names are familiar to the reader and represent ordinary members of society. For example, Captain John Black symbolizes the average American military figure. The neutrality of the name John reinforces the idea that the colonizers of Mars are not extraordinary individuals but typical representatives of human civilization.

The character Samuel Teece provides an interesting semantic contrast. The biblical origin of the name Samuel is associated with morality and righteousness, yet the character

⁹ Kramsch, C. Language and Culture. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.



behaves in a cruel and intolerant manner. This semantic contradiction creates irony and strengthens Bradbury's criticism of moral hypocrisy.¹⁰

2. Semantically Motivated and Symbolic Names

Certain character names in the novel convey hidden or implied meanings. The surname Spender, for example, suggests waste and excessive consumption. This meaning is symbolically linked to the destructive behavior of humans toward Martian culture and environment. Through this name, Bradbury indirectly comments on humanity's irresponsible exploitation of new worlds.

A further prominent instance is Captain Wilder. The semantic association of the word wild with nature and freedom reflects the character's respect for Martian civilization and his opposition to violent colonization. Such names function as "speaking names" and contribute to the ideological messages of the text.

3. Martian Anthroponyms and Cultural Difference

The names of Martian characters differ significantly from human names. They are phonetically unusual and semantically opaque for English-speaking readers. This lack of recognizable meaning emphasizes the cultural and psychological difference between humans and Martians.¹¹ From a linguistic perspective, these anthroponyms underline the theme of alienation and the tragic consequences of cultural misunderstanding.

In terms of linguoculture, anthroponyms in *The Martian Chronicles* reflect key aspects of American cultural identity. The transfer of familiar Earth names to an alien planet symbolizes cultural dominance and colonial expansion. Bradbury draws a parallel between the settlement of Mars and the historical colonization of the American West.

The use of American and biblical names on Mars illustrates how language becomes a tool of cultural imposition. By renaming places and individuals, humans symbolically claim ownership of the planet. This linguistic strategy highlights the destructive impact of colonial ideology and the loss of indigenous cultures.

Thus, anthroponyms in the novel function as cultural signs that connect the fictional narrative with real historical experience and collective memory.

Conclusion

In conclusion, anthroponyms in Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* play an essential semantic and linguacultural role. They contribute to character development, express symbolic meaning, and reinforce the central themes of the novel.

Semantically, personal names reveal irony, moral contrast, and ideological positions. Linguaculturally, they reflect American historical experience, colonial mentality, and ethical concerns. Through anthroponyms, Bradbury criticizes humanity's tendency toward domination and cultural destruction.

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