

# What's in a Name? Literary Anthroponymy in Children's Literature

Widyastuti<sup>1,\*</sup>, M.R. Nababan<sup>2</sup>, Riyadi Santosa<sup>2</sup>, Agus H. Wibowo<sup>2</sup>, Slamet Setiawan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author: [widyas@unesa.ac.id](mailto:widyas@unesa.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the type of characters' names. It encounters one of the most extreme cases in dealing with literary characters in their ontological status: are they are treated as real people or as textual format? Literary characters are created to build a plot of the story. Generally, a writer decides the characters contributing in his story then s/he finds names to fit them. Furthermore, characters which have no contribution to the development of the course of the story do not have names. In children's literature, this matter has a crucial part in terms of imagination. Literary anthroponymy is the approach in this paper. The given source of data are classified into the following sequence: (a) realistic genre, (b) historical genre, and (c) fantasy genre. Orderly, Secret Garden, The Hobbit, and Roald Dahl's BFG novels were provided as their representative. As a result, it is found that literary names are classified into two types, namely conventional names and unconventional names. The former is found in realistic novels and historical novels and the latter are applied in fantastic novels and historical ones.

**Keywords:** *Literary anthroponymy, children's literature, conventional names, unconventional name*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Today, children's books emphasize on a character-oriented text over action-oriented one. Literary characters' psychological and ethical dimensions have been used as ways for implementing education, such as personality traits [1]. In fiction, a character is one of the important elements in making sense of literary works. After outlining characters, names are created to fit them [2]. Naming a literary character calls for more knowledge than the writer had when earlier, characters with semantically loaded. Yet, many authors cannot get started until they have names [3]. Artistic creativity and linguistic innovation characterize the naming of literary characters. The former is allusion and the latter is constant. Both employ the trait of human beings. Thus they have become literary anthroponyms.

Examining the form and meaning may be useful in the consideration of the names' functions in terms of in literary contexts. Napolano [4] states that "if the fictional characters do exist, sentences containing fictional names will express consist of conventional and unconventional. The problem of this study is formulated as follows: in what way do literary anthroponyms contribute to the plot of the story?"

### 1.1. Related Work

#### 1.1.1. Literary Anthroponyms

Names used in literature are called literary names, and their theoretical study is literary anthroponyms. According to Gerus-Tarnawecky [5], literary names are treated under stylistic and should be studied in regard to the development and change in artistic language and literary technique. An artistic language is a constructed language designed for aesthetic pleasure meanwhile literary techniques are intentionally construction of language which the author use to reveal particular meaning.

Due to the needs of human communicative purposes, Langendonck [6] claims personal names into three, namely primarily official personal names, secondary official personal names, and unofficial personal names. Similarly, names comprise a conventional name is a symbolic sign, i.e. the act of attributing a name and an unconventional name which is an iconic sign, whose aim is to snapshot a certain kind of behavior of the name bearers [7]. It also occurs in literary names which depict the roles of characters in developing the story.

Conventional names consist of first names and/or family names that belong to the general anthroponymy. The examples are *Anthony Renfrew*, *Harry Winton*, and *Tom Gates*. They accept and employ a particular name by convention as a social creature. In addition, the title is under this type since it is used for social identity, such as educational degree and age. The examples are *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, and *dr.*

Unconventional names make up the category of proper names that are not in agreement with the official rules and regulations of a community or circumstantial proper names, deriving from other proper names (deanthroponyms, detoonyms) as well as individual and group common names (deappellatives, anthroponymised, anthroponymisation).

### 1.1.2. Typology of Unconventional Names

Unconventional names employ unlimited creativity classifying into six categories, namely *nicknames*, *bynames*, *user names*, *pseudonyms*, *hypocoristics*, and *individual and group names* that undergo anthroponymisation [7].

The following are the brief explanation of typologies of unconventional names proposed by Felecan & Felecan [7]:

- (1) Nicknames: Names that represent physical traits, personality, or achievement. The examples are *Ginger*, *Four-Eyes*, *Ethelred the Unready* for King *Ethelred* and *The Artful Dodger* for *Jack Dawkins* in *Oliver Twist* in respectively [3]. A common motive for nicknaming is a need to characterize others by some features such as occupation, behavior, and physical traits [6].
- (2) Bynames: It is an additional name category. They are the counterpart of first names, family name, or inhabitant names of nation, city or village. Somebody who is called *Francis the Painter*, another one is *the Johnsons*, and the rest one is *the English* in respectively [6].
- (3) User names: The full names of the name bearer. The example is *John Smith*.
- (4) Pseudonyms: Names adopted or arbitrarily imposed by others as a real name. There are various motives for pseudonymity. For instance, the pseudonym *Noman* is created by *Odysseus* in *Odyssey* when he is trapped in the *Cyclops' cave*, offers to tell his famous name in return for a guest-gift. Another one is when *Lancelot* taking the name *Le Shyvalere III Mafeete* when he is rejected by *Guinevere* after knowing his scandal with *Elaine* [3].
- (5) Hypocoristics: Diminutive form of names. The purpose of doing hypocoristics is to the renewal of traditional names with innovative spelling [3]. The examples are *Angy*, *Flory*, *Gabry*, *Lucy*, *Rosy*, *Susy*, *Andry*, and *Tommy*. Those are exotic-sounding abbreviated forms ending in *-y* in which reducing the phonic body lightens the weight of the traditional name.
- (6) Individual names: They are *Aristotle*, *Bucepharus*, and *Hesperus*. The form of individual names comprises of the first names and most bynames 'nicknames). Meanwhile, collective names are inhabitant names, certain bynames and especially family names [7].

### 1.2. Our Contribution

This paper presents the typology of literary names in children's literature which informs its important role in characterization as one of the intrinsic elements in literary works. Besides, this encourages children's literature's translators to be aware in translating names for young readers in terms of rendering pedagogical perspectives on it.

## 2. METHOD

This paper employs Spradley's Approach to interpretation [8]. It has 4 phases to follow, namely domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis. The first is the domain which forms a unit of broad categories of cultural knowledge elaborating into smaller ones. The second one is concerned with creating a classification system that categorizes the domains in pictorial representation (e.g. table) to clarify the relationships among the domains. The third reveals the differences among the subcomponents of domains using matrices and/or tables. The last step involves a search for the relationships among domains, as well as a search for how these relationships are connected to the whole cultural context. In this study, the total numbers of literary anthroponyms are 185 names taken from three novels, namely *The Secret Garden* (SG) [9], *The BFG* (BFG) [10], and *The Hobbits* (TH) [11]. They are realistic, fantasy, and epic novels respectively. The first step was classified names based on the domain genres. Its domain was grouped into sub-domain engaging with conventional and unconventional. Furthermore, the sub-sub domain was divided into 10 senses, namely professions, physical appearances, allusion, family bound, religious identity, popularity, uniqueness, aesthetic reasoning, connotation of psychology, and connotation of magic [12].

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Typology of Literary Names in Children's Literature

Characters' names vary depending on the creativity of the author. One of the purposes is to give information about the storylines. In order to predict their meanings, the structures of names are able to convey them. Theoretically, there are two types of names, namely conventional or unconventional for all genres, i.e. realistic, fantasy, and epic. Figure 1 shows the comparison of conventional and unconventional which are found in three novels, namely SG, TBFG, and TH.

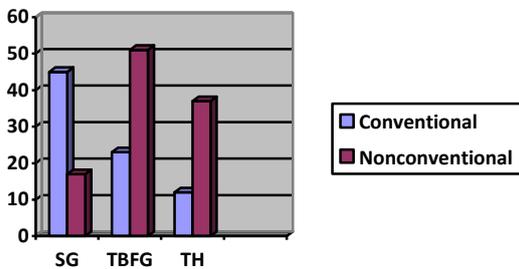


Figure 1. The structure of literary anthroponyms in realistic, fantasy, and epic novels

These names are derived from 80 names of conventional names and 105 names of unconventional names. SG as a realistic novel has 45 conventional names and 17 unconventional names. Meanwhile, a fantasy novel that belongs to TBFG, characters' names, contains 23 conventional names and 51 unconventional names. The last one is TH or an epic novel consisting of 12 conventional names and 37 unconventional names.

#### 3.2 Conventional Names Found in Genres: Realistic, Historical, and Fantasy

Talking about a conventional name, it encompasses the complete construction such as a title, a first name, a middle name, and the last name in respectively. Indexing names in a story, it refers to the involving the interlocutors in the conversation in the story. Not all genres possess the full constructions of names as the preceding sentence. The composition of conventional names in novels is depicted in Figure 2.

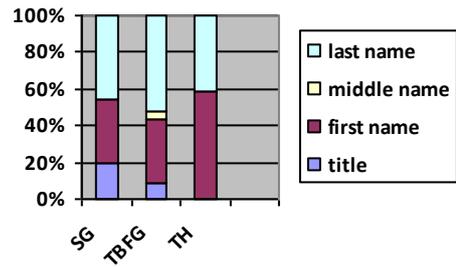


Figure 2. Composition conventional names in realistic, fantasy, and epic novels

Figure 2 draws the structures of literary names in children's novels in three genres consisting of title, first names, middle names, and the last name. To begin, last names in SG are frequently found to name the characters, the second-order bestows the first name and the last one adds the title to identify the social status of the characters. Similarly, TBFG inserts a middle name to emphasize religious identity. The third is TH that occupies first names more often than last names. For realistic and fantastic novels, last names are added frequently to give information about the ancestries and/or homelands. Meanwhile, first names are chosen many times in the epic novel.

#### 3.3 Unconventional Names of Three Genres: Realistic, Historical, and Fantasy

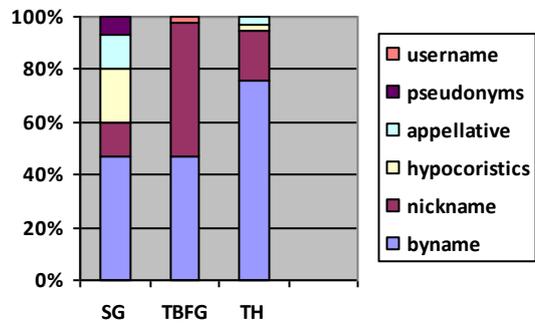


Figure 3. The construction of unconventional names in three novels

Unconventional names are freely to occupy in fantasy and epic novels describing the traits of the characters. From the result of Figure 3 is shown that bynames and nicknames are chosen to attach to the characters widespread to all genres; however, each typical type of genre has unconventional names. The first one is a realistic novel in SG depicting subsequently bynames, hypocoristic, nicknames, appellatives and pseudonyms. Then, TBFG has the patterns of unconventional names as follows: nicknames, bynames,

and usernames. The last is unconventional names of historical type in TH. The TH contains subsequent bynames, nicknames, hypocoristic, and appellative.

Meanwhile, children's novels of the fantastic which depict the battles between good deeds and evils or stuffed animals escaping about nursery world after hours contain more unconventional names than conventional names. this type of name describes the characteristics of the characters in order to help the reader to predict their role engaging in the plot of the story, As in *The BFG*, the characters' names represent the personality traits that also contribute the storyline, such as *The Big Friendly Giant*, *The Childchewer*, and *The Bloodbottler*. The first giant is a 24-foot-tall giant. His job is collecting dreams and storing them in his home before sharing good dreams to children around the world. The second giant likes to eat human beings especially children. The third giant has a fondness for the taste of human blood. The creativity of the author in inventing the names suits to the characters bring the information as well as enjoyment to young readers. Gibka [2] emphasizes that an author constructs the characters, and then s/he has to find names to fit them.

Dealing with the historical genre, the plot of this type takes place in the setting located in the past. Besides, it pays attention to the manners, social surroundings other factors in given periods. TH contains unconventional names more than conventional names. Bynames are dominated in this novel followed with a nickname and first name as well. The examples are *Bilbo Baggins of Bag End*, *Bard the Bowman*, *The Master of Lake-town*. The first one informs the location when *Bilbo Baggins* comes from. Similarly, the second example reveals the character's profession, as an archer of the Lake-town. The third one is the ruler of Lake-town which has no name explicitly but others label him as a 'moneybags' since he is corrupted by a share in the dwarves' treasure. This shows that the main characters for a few cases have no names [12].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Literary anthroponyms are created to identify or to describe the role of the characters in developing the storyline. Both are necessary for readers to gain the benefit of knowing the meaning of such names by closely acquaintance with the typology of names. In addition, genres predict the type of names whether to construct conventional or unconventional names. The realistic novel contains conventional names, historical novel employ both conventional and unconventional names. The last is fantasy stories that occupy unconventional names which rich of unlimited creativity. Last but not least, research focusing on the readers' feelings towards names needs further exploited.

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