WHERE, WHY, AND HOW?

TOPOPHONES IN RAY BRADBURY'S SCIENCE FICTION

Nataliya Panasenko

University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Trnava, Slovakia

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Résumé

Literary time and place are very important text categories. For some writers who belong to the genres of science fiction, fantasy, or detective stories, chronotopes help express the authors' worldview and sometimes are the triggers, which direct plot development in a specific way. In Bradbury's science fiction, we can find specific topophones: unreal and real. Mars and Venus, rocket, etc. belong to the first category. Real topophones are represented by specific countries (China, Mexico, the USA, etc.). This group also includes so called microtoponyms: small geographical objects or places well known in a specific locality, like a (farm) house, its parts and surroundings, a field, rooms in a house, an attic, a porch, a Ferris wheel, a children's playground, a maternity home, a square, etc. Toponyms connected with the Bible

deserve special mention: some toponyms are of definite (Egypt. Babylon, Sodom and Gomorrah) and general character (Northern and Southern kingdoms). Without literary time all these topophones and microtoponyms would have belonged to fictional texts or to autobiographical or historical novels. Ray Bradbury skillfully unites time and place in a chronotope and shifts his heroes on the time axis to the far future or to the past; especially it concerns microtoponyms, e.g.: maternity home – people use helicopters to go to the concert or to the hospital; children's playground – time stops for the father who wanted to protect his son and occupied son's place on the playground for several years, etc. All these real and unreal topophones I have managed to specify are closely connected with chronotype models. I have put three research questions for myself: Where? Why? and How? and answered them in the following way. Ray Bradbury puts his heroes into specific conditions and specific places (Venus, rocket, etc.) and tries to give us a moral lesson. People may be friendly to Martians or kill them without warning; children may abuse a little girl and grown-ups may show their best qualities under certain circumstances. The last question is how the author makes the reader believe in what (s)he is reading. It is masterfully done with a set of specific tools (Time Machine) and numerous linguistic means.

Contact data		**Fields of interest**
Professor Nataliya Panasenko, DrSc. (Philology), Chair of Language Communication, University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Nám. Herdu, 2 Slovakia e-mail: cindy777@mail.ru		Stylistics, lexicology, cognitive linguistics, text linguistics, literary time, psycholinguistics, folklore (fairy tales, songs)