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Functions of characters' proper names in *Jingo* by Terry Pratchett

Funkcje nazw własnych postaci w powieści *Jingo* Terry'ego Pratchetta

Abstrakt

Niniejszy artykuł poświęcony jest funkcjom nazw własnych bohaterów w powieści *Jingo* Terry'ego Pratchetta. W oparciu o teorię dwóch aktów (Gibka 2019) analizie poddano dwieście pięćdziesiąt osiem onimów. W tym celu przygotowano modele aktu nazewniczego oraz aktu użycia nazwy dla badanej powieści. W pierwszej części pracy omówiono sekundarne funkcje stałe, czyli te, które nomina propria pełnią od momentu nadania nazwy. Natomiast w części drugiej przedstawiono sekundarne funkcje chwilowe, które nazwy pełnią w poszczególnych użyciach.

Słowa kluczowe: onomastyka, onomastyka literacka, funkcje nazw własnych, akt nazewniczy, akt użycia nazwy własnej

Abstract

This article is devoted to functions served by characters' proper names in *Jingo* by Terry Pratchett. The analysis of 258 characteronyms is based on the theory of two acts (Gibka 2019). For the study to be conducted, the models of the naming act and the act of using a name in *Jingo* were created. The first part of the article deals with secondary permanent functions which are performed from the moment a character is named. The second part of the article focuses on secondary momentary functions which emerge in individual uses of particular proper names.

Keywords: onomastics, literary onomastics, functions of proper names, naming act, act of using a name

1. Introduction

Jingo is the fourth novel of the City Watch cycle and the twenty-first novel of the Discworld series and it shows the readers a war. The armies of two neighbouring countries, Klatch and Ankh-Morpork, fight over a piece of rock in the middle of the sea. This small island appeared apparently out of nowhere, but what the soldiers do not know is that as suddenly as it appeared, it will disappear before the war is over. Reading this story, the reader meets two hundred fifty-eight characters' proper names denoting one hundred thirty-four fictional figures. Once more, he reads about Commander Vimes, Lord Vetinari and Fred Colon, but he also witnesses the fortunes of new characters, such as Solid Jackson and Greasy Arif.

This article aims at analysing functions served by the characteronyms in *Jingo*¹. To this end, the theory of two acts will be applied (Gibka 2019)². Thus, the first part of the analysis will be based on the naming act in the novel and will reveal the permanent functions and the second part will be conducted on the basis of the act of using a name in the novel and will yield the momentary functions.

2. Permanent functions

The permanent function of a character's proper name in a novel is understood as 'the role the name serves in relation to a particular element of the naming act' (Gibka 2019: 52). Therefore, the identification of functions needs to be preceded by the creation of the said act³. When a new character is named, the naming act occurs in the following way:

(1) the author creates a fictional figure, who due to his or her importance to the story and the social needs of communication has to have a proper name; (2) the author recognizes some motivational features (which can come from the situational context, the denoted character or the proper name itself); (3) the identified attributes become the incentive to name the denoted character – the author names the fictional figure. After the character is named, other characters in the created universe use the proprium, and finally, when the novel is published, the reader meets the name (Gibka 2019: 51).

¹ For a different perspective on studying proper names in Pratchett's Discworld, see for example Farkas (2019) and Manova-Georgieva (2020).

² Different approaches to the study of functions in literary onomastics were proposed by, for instance, Birus (1978), Gutschmidt (1984) and Dvořáková (2017).

³ The first model of the naming act was created by Lutterer (1982).

From the perspective of the fictional world, it is not the author who names the character (as the world is unaware of any author), but a namer. In case of first names, the namer is usually the parents, whereas in case of nicknames, the namer can be anybody.

This description of the naming act allows for its creation (see Diagram 1).

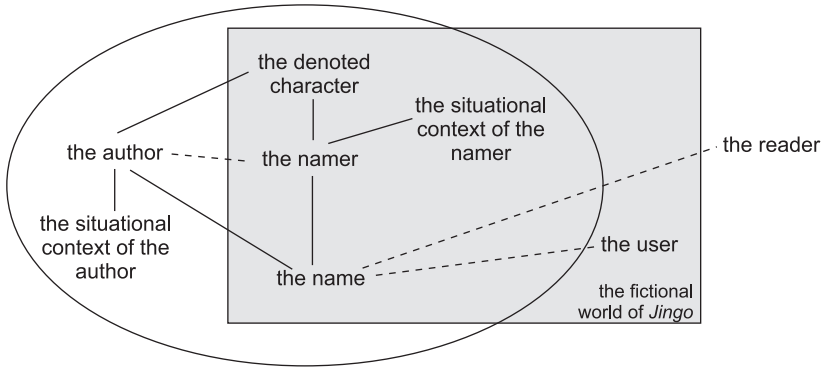


Diagram 1. The model of the naming act in *Jingo*

As the user and the reader are not present at the moment of naming, there are outside the sphere of the naming act and the lines with which they are connected with the name are broken.

The name can serve functions in relations to all elements of the act; nevertheless, in *Jingo*, it does so in six relations, which are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Permanent secondary functions of characters' proper names in *Jingo*

Relation	Function	Exemplary proper name
name: denoted character	semantic	<i>Spuddy</i>
	sociological	<i>Private Webb</i>
name: namer	expressive	<i>'Bloody Stupid' Johnson</i>
	desirous	<i>Nhobi</i>
name: situational context of the namer	commemorative	<i>71-hour Ahmed</i>
name: name	poetic	<i>Smite-The-Unbeliever-With-Cunning-Arguments</i>
name: user	camouflaging	<i>SGT DETRITUS</i>
	didactic-educative	<i>Mosheda</i>
	conative	<i>71-hour Ahmed</i>
name: reader	humorous	<i>Whistling Dick</i>

2.1. Name: denoted character

The denoted character is the fictional figure who receives the name. In relation to it, every proper name serves the identifying-differential function because it identifies the protagonist and differentiates him from other fictional figures (cf. Kosyl 1992: 50). Apart from this role, the studied onymic material serves also the semantic and sociological functions. The first is performed when a proper name ‘characterizes a fictional figure [...] according to the metaphoric or the literal meaning of the name’ (Wilkoń 1970: 83). The characterisation can also be done by means of metonymy⁴. Some characteronyms refer to appearance, for instance *Spuddy*, *Captain Tuber* and *Mr Horrible Hat* are names given to Carrot disguised as a potato. Without a disguise, the man is also called *Blue Eyes*. Another character, *Sidney Lopsides*, has an upside down face, then *Stoolie* looks like a ‘long-neglected compost heap’ (Pratchett 2013: 157) and *Topless Harry* decapitated himself. On the other hand, names *Crazy Winston*, *Evil Brother-in-Law of a Jackal* and *Lord Snapcase* contain references to character traits. The first denotes a man who collected ears, the second a camel which ‘bites everyone who tries to ride it’ (Pratchett 2013: 396) and the third a ruler who was mental. Next, five nomina propria reveal the denoted characters’ occupations: *the Bursar*, *the Librarian*, *the Dean*, *Needle Ned* (a tattooist) and *Death*. The last refers to an anthropomorphic personification who comes when people die to separate the soul from the body. Then, the names *Constable Visit-The-Ungodly-With-Explanatory-Pamphlets*, *Smite-The-Unbeliever-With-Cunning-Arguments* and *Washpot*⁵ reveal the after-hours activities of two Omnians, who have ‘pathological interest in evangelical religion’ (Pratchett 2013: 142). Finally, the onym *Snowy Slopes* refers to a health issue of the denoted character, who struggles with dandruff.

The other function served in this relation, the sociological function, appears when a name ‘indicates the character’s social, group or national affiliation’ (Wilkoń 1970: 83) or ‘expresses (or suggests) the social inferiority or superiority of the character’ (Kuffner-Obrzut 2003: 493). In *Jingo*, this function is served by sixty-one nomina propria of forty-three fictional figures. All onyms which serve this role serve it since titles became parts of them. A great number of names denote City Watch guards, thus pointing to their group affiliation: *Commander Vimes* (also *Commander Vimes of the City*

⁴ Proper names which serve the semantic function have been called meaningful, figurative and significant names as well as “redende Namen” (Gerus-Tarnawewky 1968: 312).

⁵ The name includes a reference to Psalm 60:8 (King James Bible).

Watch and *Cmdr. Vimes*), *Sergeant Detritus* (also *Sgt Detritus*), *Corporal Littlebottom* (also *Cpl Littlebottom* and *Corporal Littlebottombottom*), *Constable Downspout*, *Captain Carrot* (also *Carrot Ironfoundersson (Captain)* and *Captain Carrot Ironfoundersson*), *Constable Shoe*, *Corporal Angua*, *Sergeant Colon* (also *Sgt Colon*, *Sergeant Al-Colon*), *Corporal Nobbs* (also *Corporal Beti*), *Constable Visit* (also *Constable Visit-The-Ungodly-With-Explanatory-Pamphlets*), *Constable Dorfl*, *Constable Flint*, *Probationary Constable Buggy Swires*, *Constable Pediment* and *Corporal Stronginthearm*. On the other hand, names expressing social superiority denote aristocracy: *Sir Samuel* (also *Sir Sam*, *Sir Samuel Vimes*, *Sir Sam Mule-*, *Dux Vimes* and *Lord Vi-*), *Lord Vetinari*, *Lord Downey*, *Lord Selachii*, *Lord Rust*, *Prince Khufurah*, *Prince Cadram*, *Lady Sybil*, *Lord Venturi*, *Lady Selachii*, *Duke of Eorle*, *Prince Kalif*, *Prince Arkven*, *Queen Sowawondra of Sumtri*, *Lady Venturi*, *Lord Pinwoe*, *Baron Mimbledrone* and *Lord Snapcase*. New for the Discworld, there appear also names of people from another group, namely soldiers: *Sergeant Willikins*, *Lieutenant Hornett*, *General Ashal*, *Private Bourke*, *Private Hobbey*, *Private Webb*, *Private Smith* and *General Pidley*. Finally, there remain three characteronyms which serve the sociological function because they also show the group affiliation of their denoted characters. *Captain Jenkins* is a merchant who owns a ship, *Archchancellor Ridcully* is a magician and *General Tacticus* (also *Gen. A. Tacticus*) is a deceased soldier.

2.2. Name: namer

The namer is the character who does the naming, in relation to him, the expressive and desirous functions are served. The first occurs when a proper name voices the feelings the namer has for the denoted character or for the name (Gibka 2019: 55). This happens when '*Bloody Stupid*' Johnson receives his nickname. The namer explicitly shows what he thinks about Johnson. Similarly, Vimes discloses his dislike towards Prince Cadram when he gives him an ironic nickname *Prince Charming*.

Hitherto the desirous function has been defined as served by every proper name 'that shows what attributes the namer would like the denoted character to possess' (Gibka 2019: 55). However, after the analysis of *Jingo*, its definition needs to be broadened. The function occurs also when an onym exhibits the characteristics the namer wants the name to have. There are three *nomina propria* which perform this function: *Knobi*, *Nhobi* and *Gnobbee*. They are all hypothetical names for Nobby given to him by sergeant Colon, when the two arrive in Klatch and need Klatchian-sounding names.

2.3. Name: situational context of the namer

The situational context of the namer ‘refers to all physical and social circumstances in the fictional world that surround the naming’ (Gibka 2019: 50). In this relation, there emerges the commemorative function, served by the onym which ‘memorialises an entity from the namer’s world (for instance a person or an event)’ (Gibka 2019: 55). *71-hour Ahmed* receives his name after he breaks the hospitality tradition of his tribe and does not offer his guest seventy-two hours of accommodation, but kills him after seventy-one hours.

2.4. Name: name

Some of the studied characteronyms ‘do not refer to other elements of the naming act, but keep the recipient’s attention on their structure’ (Rutkowski 2001: 100), thus serving the poetic function in relation to themselves. The onym *71-hour Ahmed* includes a number, thus it belongs to the group of ‘names whose internal organisation is of an exceptional kind, which attracts attention to the name’s linguistic form in the first instance’ (Rutkowski 2001: 100–101). Similarly, *Constable Visit-The-Ungodly-With-Explanatory-Pamphlets* and *Smite-The-Unbeliever-With-Cunning-Arguments* are unusual nomina propria, as they are not single words, but whole imperative sentences.

2.5. Name: user

The term user refers to all fictional characters in *Jingo*. One of the functions served in relation to this element of the naming act is the camouflaging role. It emerges when ‘the name conceals the identity of its denotation from all or some fictional characters’⁶ (Gibka 2019: 56). When Vimes wants to scare away potential burglars and vandals, he leaves a message on a building signing it *SGT DETRITUS*, thus hiding his real identity. Next, when Sergeant Colon and Corporal Nobbs travel to Klatch, they assume false identities under the names *Al*, *Nhobi* and *Beti*.

Secondly, onyms which enrich or preserve the user’s knowledge perform the didactic-educative role (cf. Kęsikowa 1988: 81). This occurs when the

⁶ The camouflaging function was first identified by Siwiec, who claimed it was performed by onyms whose denoted characters are connected with entities from the non-literary world and which bear no similarities to names of the latter individuals (Siwiec 1993: 194–195). In the theory of two acts, the function received a completely different definition.

user meets names denoting historical figures⁷ (Gibka 2019: 56). *Woddeley*, *Mezerek*, *Scavone* and *Gen. A. Tacticus* (also *General Tacticus* and *Tacticus*) are authors. *Nonpo* is a character from a book Omnians consider as holy. *Dropley* is a scientist and *Mosheda* is a poet. *Prince Arkven* and his wife *Tistam* are famous warriors. *Queen Sowawondra of Sumtri* is a ruler who 'had more than thirty thousand people put to death during her reign' (Pratchett 2013: 352). Finally, *General Pidley* is a leader famous for his rallying cry 'Let's all get out throats cut, boys!' (Pratchett 2013: 397).

Thirdly, the conative function occurs when characteronyms 'induce feelings or emotions in the user or cause him to do something' (Gibka 2019: 56). This happens when the name *71-hour Ahmed* makes the user wonder why the man is called so as well as what kind of name it is (see for instance Pratchett 2013: 112, 152, 306, 339 and 368).

2.6. Name: reader

The term reader refers to 'all people who will read the novel' (Gibka 2019: 51). In this relation, the humorous function occurs. It should be defined to emerge when the reader laughs; however, it is impossible to analyse the reactions of all readers. Therefore, a different solution has been proposed. Characters' proper names can be analysed as text and the humorous element as their external quality. Such an analysis yielded five groups of humorous characteronyms:

- (1) *nomina propria* which can be confused with common nouns (the basic incongruity of the type meaningless – meaningful arises in these units);
- (2) the same proper names but put in a context which increases the probability of their misinterpretation;
- (3) appellations with a non-neutral etymological basis, for instance referring to semantic fields like anatomy or sexuality;
- (4) onyms depreciating the characters they denote;
- (5) (mis)matched clusters of names, e.g. a first name and a surname (Gibka 2018: 58).

Jingo includes numerous names from the first category, for instance *Carrot*, *Rust*, *Shoe*, *Flint* and *Spent*. There is also one onym from the second group: *Ironcruft*. It denotes a dwarf who owns a bakery. There are two non-neutral names: *Corporal Littlebottom* and *Colon*, both including references to anatomy. Three other *nomina propria* – *Sir Sam Mule-*, *Scumbag Gav* and *Foul Ole Ron* – depreciate their denoted characters. Finally, there emerges also one mismatched name cluster: *Whistling Dick*.

⁷ Historical for the fictional world.

3. Momentary functions

The momentary function of a characteronym can be defined as ‘a role a character’s proper name serves in relation to an element of the act of using a name in a novel’ (Gibka 2019: 66). Such an act occurs when a fictional figure addresses or thinks about a character using an onym (Gibka 2019: 64). A model of the act of using a name is shown in diagram 2.

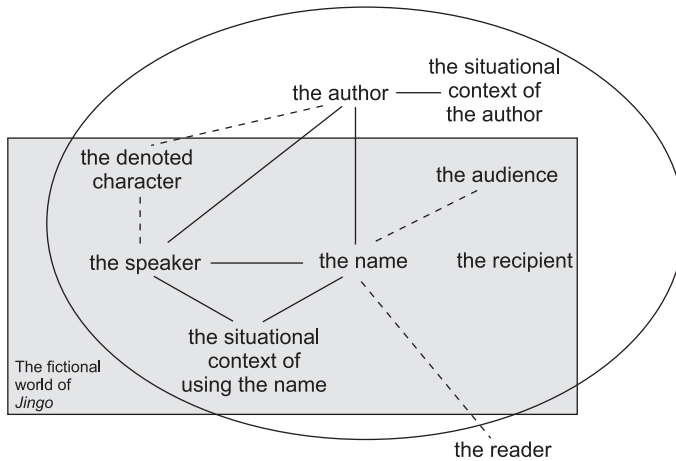


Diagram 2. The model of the act of using a character’s proper name in *Jingo*

Because the reader is not present at the moment the name is used, he is outside the act and is connected with the name with a broken line. Then, the lines to the audience, the recipient and the denoted character are broken since these elements are not obligatory, the act can occur without them.

The name can perform momentary functions in relations to all nine elements of the act; however, in *Jingo*, it does so in six relations shown in table 2.

Table 2. Momentary secondary functions of characters’ proper names in *Jingo*

Relation	Function	Exemplary proper name
name: speaker	expressive	<i>Ronnie</i>
	revealing	<i>Corporal Littlebottombottom</i>
	sociological	<i>Sir Sam Mule</i>
name: name	poetic	<i>71-hour Ahmed</i>
name: denoted character	conative	<i>Mister Vimes</i>
name: recipient	conative	<i>Cecil</i>
name: audience	conative	<i>Dux Vimes</i>
name: reader	humorous	<i>Colon</i>

3.1. Name: speaker

The speaker is the character who utters (or thinks) the name. In relation to him, the expressive, revealing and sociological functions are served. The first of these roles occurs when 'a character's proper name that is not expressive from the moment of naming is used by the speaker to express his feelings and emotions' (Gibka 2019: 69)⁸. When speaking to Lord Rust, Vimes uses three variants of the man's first name – *Ronald*, *Ron* and *Ronnie* – to express his contempt for the man (Pratchett 2013: 218). Then, in the midst of a war, Vimes meets his butler on the battlefield and utters his name, *Willikins*, and later his name with a rank, *Sergeant Willikins*, with utter surprise (Pratchett 2013: 387). A different situation occurs when Sergeant Colon, who usually addresses Nobbs as Nobby, calls him *Corporal Nobbs* to show his anger (Pratchett 2013: 210).

The revealing function occurs when a characteronym reveals a piece of information about the speaker (Gibka 2019: 69). The name *Corporal Littlebottombottom* (the correct surname being Littlebottom) shows how confused the dis-organiser uttering the onym is (Pratchett 2013: 412). Then, the names *Ronnie* and *Ronnie Rust* said by Lady Sybil reveal her closer relationship with lord Rust (Pratchett 2013: 199) and the name *Frederick* shows how desperate for superiority Sergeant Colon is. Working undercover and unable to use ranks, he prohibits Corporal Nobbs from calling him Fred and orders the use of his full name instead (Pratchett 2013: 119). Finally, after some time together in one room, Colon calls Leonard of Quirm *Len*, thus showing how, in his mind, the relationship between the men changed (Pratchett 2013: 256).

Lastly, the sociological function arises when an onym 'indicates the speaker's social, group or national affiliation or social superiority or inferiority' (Gibka 2019: 68). In *Jingo*, this happens once. Jabbar, who comes from Klatch, calls Sir Samuel *Sir Sam Mule*, thus revealing his not being from Ankh-Morpork (Pratchett 2013: 339).

3.2. Name: name

In relation to the uttered proper name, the poetic function is served. It emerges when an onym 'which does not attract attention to its structure from the moment of naming draws this attention at the moment of one of its

⁸ A group of names which can often perform this function is hypocoristics.

uses' (Gibka 2019: 69) or when the poetic element is reinforced. The latter occurs in *Jingo*, where the name *71-hour Ahmed*, which contains a number in itself, is juxtaposed with another phrase including a number: 'Vimes [...] glanced at 71-hour Ahmed's 24-carat grin' (Pratchett 2013: 85).

3.3. Name: denoted character

The denoted character is the fictional figure who bears the name; in relation to him the examined nomina propria serve the conative function. It occurs when 'a use of a character's proper name [...] provokes a reaction in the denoted character or persuades him to do something' (Gibka 2019: 70). One of the characters who reacts to the use of his name is Samuel Vimes. When Lord Rust calls him *Mister Vimes*, the word 'Mister' twists in Vimes's chest and he thinks: 'He knew he was a mister, would always be a mister, was probably a blueprint for mistership, but he'd be damned if he wouldn't be Sir Samuel to someone who pronounced years as 'hyahs'' (Pratchett 2013: 35). When, on another occasion, Rust addresses Sir Samuel *Vimes*, he corrects him: 'It's Sir Samuel, my lord' (Pratchett 2013: 219). On the other hand, when Sergeant Colon calls Vimes *Mr Vimes*, the man accepts it and thinks certain people earned the right to call him so (Pratchett 2013: 69). Still a different situation occurs when archchancellor Ridcully begins to utter *Lord Vi-* and Vimes does not let the man finish and says 'Call me Sir Samuel [...] I can just about live with that' (Pratchett 2013: 459).

However, Commander Vimes is not the only fictional figure who reacts to the use of his name. When Captain Carrot calls the Artful Nudger *William*, the boy scowls as no one is supposed to know his first name (Pratchett 2013: 39). Then, two things happen when Nobby calls Colon *Fred*. The first time the man corrects him saying: 'It's Sergeant Colon, thanks' (Pratchett 2013: 76) and the other time the men work undercover so this is not possible and Colon hesitates 'in an agony of status' and says 'Well, that's Frederick to you, Nobby' (Pratchett 2013: 119). To this Corporal Nobbs replies: 'Right, Frederick. And that's Cecil, thank you' (Pratchett 2013: 119). A few moments later Colon uses the name *Nobby* again and is again corrected by the corporal (Pratchett 2013: 125).

3.4. Name: recipient

The term recipient refers to the character to whom the act is directed. In this relation, it is also the conative function which emerges. It can be defined analogously with the only difference being the element of the act which reacts, it is no longer the denoted character but the recipient. The first situation in which this happens has been already mentioned. When Nobby tells Colon to call him *Cecil*, the sergeant repeats the name in surprise (Pratchett 2013: 119). One more instance in which the function arises is when Vimes asks Carrot about the identity of a Klatchian man. He hears the man is *Prince Kalif* and surprised asks 'Another prince?' (Pratchett 2013: 189).

3.5. Name: audience

The audience is understood as all characters who witness the act but are not its addressees. This element of the act is the third in relation to which the conative function is served. It appears when the audience reacts to the name that is used (Gibka 2019: 71). During a fight about a donkey which went up a minaret, Corporal Nobbs reveals he named the donkey *Valerie* and a few moments later Sergeant Colon who heard the name asks Nobby about it surprised (Pratchett 2013: 363-364). A different situation occurs when Lord Vetinari bestows a new title upon Vimes and the man utters *Dux Vimes*. At this moment Lady Sybil, who listens to the whole conversation, gasps (Pratchett 2013: 449).

3.6. Name: reader

Exactly as in the naming act, in the act of using a name, the reader also refers to all people who will read the novel. In this relation, the humorous function occurs. It emerges when a characteronym 'which does not amuse the reader from the moment of naming amuses him in a particular act of using the name' (Gibka 2019: 71). This may happen when an onym receives a new humorous element or when the old humorous element is highlighted. The latter is true for the name *Colon*. At one point, the sergeant says: 'You can put it where the sun does not shine, sir!' (Pratchett 2013: 187). This attracts attention to one of the meanings of the word 'colon', namely 'the main part of the large intestine', which gives the name the neutral – non-neutral incongruity. If the proper name is not perceived as humorous every time when used, it may be perceived as such in this particular use.

4. Closing remarks

Apart from the primary function, characters' proper names in *Jingo* serve ten permanent and eight momentary roles. The function which dominates the analysis from the quantitative perspective is the permanent sociological function served in relation to the denoted character. It might not surprise because the analysed novel belongs to a cycle about City Watch guards and deals with the topic of war, thus including the names of a group of people, namely soldiers. Then, the function which appears in most variants is the conative role. It emerges in four relations. On the other hand, there are also functions performed by one or two nomina propria, which cannot be omitted or disregarded in the analysis. They enrich the set of onymic functions served by characteronyms in *Jingo*.

Among the studied material, there is one name – *71-hour Ahmed* – which serves four functions, sometimes being the only onym serving them⁹. Moreover, one character – Samuel Vimes – very often appears in the analysis. He receives nineteen (variants of) names which perform five permanent and three momentary roles. Furthermore, he is also a namer, a user, a speaker and a recipient, in relation to whom some other functions occur.

It might also be worth considering which functions are absent from the analysis. No role is performed in relations to the situational context of the author and to the author himself. What is more, the didactic-educative function occurs only in relation to the user, but not the reader. Therefore, the reader cannot learn about his world. This indicates that the fictional world of the novel is separated from the real world as should be the case in terms of fantasy books.

Finally, the analysis does not yield any new functions which could be included in the theory of two acts. It does, however, broaden the definition of one role. The desirous function in relation to the namer does not only occur when the onym shows the characteristics the namer wants the denoted character to have but also when the features shown concern the name itself.

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⁹More on “poly-functional” proper names see Gerus-Tarnawecy 1968: 323.

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