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AN ANALYSIS OF MAGIC SPELLS IN *HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE*

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the magic spells uttered by the characters in *Harry Potter and The Half-Blood Prince* movie and identify the meaning and functions of the magic spells in the movie. To come to the analysis, the writer applied literal meaning and non-literal meaning based on Griffiths's theory. Meanwhile, the function of magic spells analyzes based on Searle's theory. This research employed qualitative research and descriptive method. The data were collected by the non-participant method and taking notes, selecting dialogues containing magic spells while watching the video. The result finally found the functions of each spell and its meaning, whether it has literal or non-literal meaning.

Keywords: magic spells, literal and non-literal meaning, speech acts

I. INTRODUCTION

Magic spells are words used by wizards and witches who have the power to do impossible things and special actions by saying special words (Longman Online Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2020). The connection between language and magic is due to a belief in the inherent ability of words to influence the universe Tambiah (1968). According to Malinowski (as cited in Coral Gardens and Their Magic, 1935), the language of magic is sacred, set, and used for an entirely different purpose to that of ordinary life and magic language can be used by specialized practitioners such as magicians, priests, wizards, and witch. In other words, magic spells are certain words that have the power to carry out special actions.

Therefore, magic spells are ritual actions and are the same or even more important for magic performance than non-verbal actions. Only certain phrases or words were spoken in a specific context are considered to have magical power. Ogden and Richards (1923) define magic language categories of speech, which is distinct from scientific language because it is emotive and it converts words into symbols for emotions, whereas, in scientific language, words are tied to specific meanings and refer to objective external reality. So, that magic spells are adept to build

metaphors that form symbols and link magic rituals to the world.

Malinowski (1948) defines magic as "akin to science in that it always has a definite aim intimately associated with human instincts, needs, and pursuits." It can be concluded that magic and science always have a definite aim associated with human instincts, needs, and pursuits.

Magic spells are often used in medieval literature, folklore, fairy tales, and modern fantasy fiction. Many of the magic spells are taken in classical Latin and other languages such as charms and curses in the movie. The words used in the movie *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, such as *Sectumsempra*, *Avada Kedavra*, *Finite*, *Expelliarmus*, *Stupefy*, etc.

The writer uses a movie entitled *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* as the source of the data. In the movie, the characters frequently use magic words when they are using the wand so that the utterances can be analyzed easily. However, the movie was watched by people that mostly not understood the meaning of charms and spells that were said by the characters. Hence, it's interesting to analyze the meaning of magic spells by the characters, to provide information on the existence of magic spells to society.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

To help the writer see the concept of magic spell's meaning and function, Griffiths and Searle's theory about each concept is explained as below:

2.1 Meaning of Magic Spells

According to Griffiths (2006), there are two meanings of words. First, the sender's meaning or known as the non-literal meaning is the meaning of the speaker or writer intends to convey means of an utterance. Second is utterance meaning or known as the literal meaning, utterance meaning is the meaning based on context (explicature and implicature). To give a clear explanation of the meaning of magic spells, below are brief descriptions of the meanings.

2.1.1 Sender's Meaning

Many authors use a lot of non-literal languages to help readers better understand something or gain a more detailed picture in their minds. According to Griffiths (2006), the Sender's meaning is something that addressees are continually having to make informed guesses about.

2.1.2 Utterance meaning

Sometimes the meaning magic spells is utter because it is the sentence means what it says. Griffiths (2006) explains that utterance meaning would likely be understood when it is

interpreted by people who know the language, are aware of the context, and whatever the background knowledge of the sender could be presumed to be available to address(s) because the word in the movie gives something appropriate to the word's mean.

2.2 Functions of Magic Spells

In this research, Searle's theory used to analyze the function of using magic spells. Searle in *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts* (1979) in his writing, proposed that function of speech acts can be divided into five:

2.2.1 Assertive function

According to Searle (1979) "The point or purpose of the members of the assertive class is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something is being the case, to see the truth of the expressed proposition". Assertive functions of speech acts are the ones that commit the speaker to the truth of what is said. The types of speech acts included in the function are speeches that demand, state, acknowledge, show, report, speculate, give testimony, and mention.

2.2.2 Directive function

According to Searle (1979) "The illocutionary point of these consists in the fact that they are attempts (of varying degrees, and hence more precisely, they are determinates of the determinable which includes attempting)

by the speaker to get the hearer to do something'. A directive is a speech act intended by the speaker so as the speech partner takes an action following what the speaker implies in the speech. Speeches included in this type include to force, to invite, to urge, to demand, to order, to suggest, to give, to remind, to command, and to instruct.

2.2.3 Commissive function

Searle (1979) stated, "The illocutionary acts whose point is to commit the speaker (again in varying degrees) to some future course of action". Commissive is a speech act that commits the speaker to carry out everything mentioned in his speech. Speeches included in this type of speech are cursing, promises, threats, state's abilities, and vows.

2.2.4 Expressive function

According to Searle (1979) state that "The illocutionary point of this class is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content". Expressive is the speech act intended by the speaker so that the speech is interpreted as an evaluation of the things mentioned in the speech which expresses a psychological state. Speeches included in this function are speeches complaining, blaming, criticizing, saying thank you, apologizing, welcoming,

praising, flattering, scolding.

2.2.5 Declarative function

According to Searle (1979), "It is the defining characteristic of this class that the successful performance of its members brings about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality" (1979). Declarative is speech acts intended by speakers to create immediate changes, status, and circumstances. Speech that is included in this function is the speech of forgiving, classifying, lifting, allowing, deciding, prohibiting, canceling, and granting.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

In analyzing the data, the writer used qualitative research. Corbin (1998) states that qualitative research is achieved by not utilizing quantification or statistical technique. For this qualitative technique, the result of the analysis will be presented in form of a descriptive method. According to Subroto (2007), the descriptive method examines and provides language systems based on the actual data contained. The writer simply looked toward the phenomena of magic spells in the *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* movie and explained the form of utterances spoken by the characters in the *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince's* movie.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the analysis was divided

into two parts according to the problem formulation. There were two main divisions in this analysis. The first division was the meaning of magic spells taken from the *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* movie. The second division was the functions of magic spells based on the context of the movies.

4.1 Meaning of magic spells

There are about 20 magic spells found in the *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* movie. Some magic spells were taken purely from a language, mostly Latin, the rest are combined from two or more words in one or more languages. The meaning of magic spells itself was analyzed as literal or non-literal based on the theory of Griffiths (2006,). They were divided into two, the sender's meaning, or called non-literal meaning, and utterance meaning or literal meaning. Following the list of examples the meaning of the magic spells is based on the theory as below:

a. Avada Kedavra

DUMBLEDORE: Severus...please.

(Harry's eyes dart back and forth frantically, trying to make sense of the scene playing out above. Snape's arm rises)

SNAPE: **Avada Kedavra!**

(A jet of green light hits Dumbledore squarely in the chest. Instantly, suspended upon the ramparts, and then the night swallows him)

There are many resources about where this

magic spell came from, J. K. Rowling states during her interview at the Edinburgh Book Festival on 15 April 2004 that "Does anyone know where 'Avada Kedavra' came from? It was a spell from Aramaic, an ancient region in Syria and it is the original of *abracadabra*, which means 'let the thing be destroyed.' Originally, it was used to cure illness and the 'thing' was the illness, but I decided to make it the 'thing' as in the person standing in front of me. I take a lot of liberties with things like that. I twist them around and make them mine" (www.todaytranslations.com).

Avada Kedavra, also known as the Killing Curse is one of the unforgivable curses (the others are *crucio* and *imperio*). It is one of the most dangerous and powerful spells known of the Wizard world, can kill the target instantaneously without pain, or leaving any mark. The only counter-spell for *Avada Kedavra* is the power of love also known as sacrificial protection (harrypotter.fandom.com). As seen in the context above, when Snape casts the magic spell and pointed his wand into Dumbledore's chest, then he is killed instantly and falls from the ramparts. Rowling confirmed, this killing curse is Aramaic and derives from the original *abracadabra* which means "let the illness be destroyed", she twists the word around and its use, therefore *Avada Kedavra* has a meaning

"let the thing to be destroyed".

The writer concludes after analyzing the literal and non-literal meaning and the context above, the magic spell *Avada Kedavra* or Killing Curse, proves has a different meaning from the words meant and its use. The result of this research, the meaning of the magic spell *Avada Kedavra* is in the non-literal meaning/senders' meaning.

b. Sectumsempra

(Harry draws his own wand, fires back. The cistern behind Malfoy explodes and the water sweeps the ceiling, rains down. Malfoy howls with rage. Harry readies himself)

DRACO: Crucio--

HARRY: **SECTUMSEMPRA!**

(Blood spurted from Malfoy's face and chest as though he had been slashed with an invisible sword. He staggered backward and collapsed onto the waterlogged floor with a great splash, his wand falling from his limp right hand. Slipping and staggering, Harry got to his feet and plunged toward Malfoy, whose face was now shining scarlet, his white hands scrabbling at his blood-soaked chest.)

Sectumsempra is a very dark curse invented by Professor Severus Snape also known as the Half-Blood Prince during his childhood and it is one of his signature spells. This curse cause cuts to the target several times like a sword and severe hemorrhaging. As seen in

the context above, in the sixth film, Harry used this spell to confront Draco in Moaning Myrtle's Bathroom without knowing its effects at the time, it causes Draco's got slash across the face, and chest, meanwhile his body is full of blood. The magic spell *Sectumsempra* is composed of two Latin words which *sectum* means "to cut", and *semper* means "forever" "always", "all times" or "ever." So, the magic spell *Sectumsempra* has a meaning "to cut forever"

The writer concludes after analyzing the literal and non-literal meaning and the context above, the magic spell *Sectumsempra* curse, proves to have an appropriate meaning with the word's mean and its use. As a result of this data, the meaning of the magic spell *Sectumsempra* is in the literal meaning/utterance meaning.

4.2 Functions of magic spells

In this section, the writer will analyze the functions of magic spells and will be analyzed based on the theory of Searle, (1979). They are divided into five: Assertive, Directive, Commissive, Expressive, and Declaration. The analysis of five categories of the functions of the magic spells with the following explanation will be served below:

4.2.1 Assertive function

Assertive is what the speaker believes. The types of speech acts included in the

function are speeches that demand, state, acknowledge, show, report, speculate, give testimony, and mention. In this utterance, the speakers are responsible that the spoken utterance was indeed a fact and can be proven. It can be concluded that the speaker tells the hearer how things are. The function of magic spells containing Assertive is *Expelliarmus* (demand), and *Aguamenti* (mention).

A magic spell has functioned as the assertive one because the magic spells in this movie contain a paradigm case as demand and mention. In other words, the magic spells are showing how things are.

4.2.2 Directive function

A directive function is what the speaker says to ask the hearer to do something. It means the speaker wants the hearer to do what the speaker wants. The sentences included in this type, to force, to invite, to urge, to demand, to order, to suggest, to give, to remind, to command, and to instruct. The function of magic spells which containing Directive are: *Aguamenti* (to command), *Expelliarmus* (to force), *Lumos* (to command), *Lumos Maxima* (to command), *Oppugno* (to command), *Impedimenta* (to force), *Firestorm* (to command), *Partis Temporus* (to command).

Based on the explanation above in 4.1 about the meaning of the magic spell, these

magic spells have functioned as a directive because the magic spell gets the addressee to do something. The magic spells contain the paradigm case as command and force. The addressee in here could be an object. For example, as the explanation above in (4.1.1) the magic spell "*Aguamenti*" has functioned as a directive because the word makes the object (Crystal Globe) fill with water. The word gives commanding to the object (Crystal Globe) to do something the caster wants.

4.2.3 Commissive function

Commissive are what the speakers say relate to future action. It means the speaker commits to the listener. The sentences included in this type of speech are cursing, promises, vows, threats, and abilities. The function of magic spells containing Commission is *Avada Kedavra* (Cursing), *Oppugno* (threats), *Petrificus Totalus* (Cursing), *Stupefy* (threats), *Crucio* (Cursing), *Impedimenta* (threats), *Sectumsempra* (Cursing), *Incarcerous* (threats), *Harmonia Nectere Passus* (abilities), *Reparo* (abilities), *Episkey* (abilities).

Based on the explanation above in 4.1 about the meaning of magical spells, these magic spells have functioned as commission because these spells contain paradigm cases as threatening and cursing. For example, an explanation in (4.1.2) the magic spell "*Avada*

Kedavra" causes someone killed. The caster says this word because he wants to kill people. In other words, these words commit the speaker to do things.

4.2.4 Expressive function

Expressive function is what the speaker feels. The sentences included in this function are speeches hating, complaining, blaming, criticizing, saying thank you, apologizing, welcoming, praising, flattering, scolding. The magic spells containing Expressive function are *Avada Kedavra* (hating), *Oppugno* (blaming), *Confundo* (blaming).

Based on the explanation in 4.1 about the meaning of magic spells, these magic spells are having a function as expressive because these spells express the feeling of the speaker. These magic spells, *Avada Kedavra*, and *Oppugno*, are stated by the speaker when the speaker is angry about someone or something that makes trouble. These words can cause injury and even death.

4.2.5 Declarative function

Declaration function is what the speaker says to change the propositional content and reality. It shows what the speaker says causes a change to the listener. The speech which is included in this function is the speech of forgiving, classifying, lifting, allowing, deciding, prohibiting, canceling, and granting. The magic spells which are

containing the Declaration's function are *Finite Incantatem* (canceling), *Expelliarmus* (prohibiting), *Vulnera Sanentur* (canceling), *Reparo* (granting), *Harmonia Nectere Passus* (granting), *Episkey* (granting).

Based on the explanation in 4.1 about the meaning of magic spells, these magic spells are having a function as declarations because they bring about changes through the speaker's utterances. The magic spells declare spells against, prohibit, and fix the target/object.

V. CONCLUSION

The meanings of magic words are divided into two: sender's meaning or called non-literal meaning and utterance meaning or literal meaning. After analyzing the meaning of magic spells based on the literal or non-literal meaning, the writer found there are sixteen (16) magic spells in the literal meaning and four (4) magic spells in non-literal meaning. It can be concluded that most of these magic spells are classified as literal meaning. The writer found there are several functions of one magic spell. The functions of magic spells are divided into five: Assertive, Directive, Commissive, Expressive, and Declaration function. The writer found there are two (2) magic words in the Assertive function, eight (8) in the Directive function, eleven (11) in the Commissive function, three (3) in the Expressive function, and six (6) in the

Declaration function. It can be concluded that almost most of the functions of magic spells in this analysis have more than one function.

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