

A Study on Metaphors in the First Four Volumes of Harry Potter by J.K.Rowling

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Abstract: - *This topic is chosen because of the important role and the beauty of metaphors, particularly metaphors used in literary. The language utilized in Harry Potter's books must be smoothly rendered in order that it's both expressive to the readership and faithful to the authors' intention. The key purpose of this research is to research the metaphors and other ways to express metaphors through professional ways of using metaphors in Harry Potter. The results of the analysis shows that metaphor may be used in different ways: reserving metaphors of the language, using target language equivalent metaphors, reserving metaphors and giving explanations, and removing metaphorical imagery. Within the final part, the research suggests some techniques in using metaphors in Harry Potter. Furthermore, the research may be useful for college kids and people who have an interest within the topic of metaphor in literature.*

Keywords: - *Metaphors, lexical stylistic devices, variety of using metaphors, literary, Harry Potter*

1. Introduction:

It is known that metaphor has been investigated by a great number of linguists and scholars. In classical theories of language, metaphor is not considered as a matter of thought. Metaphor is only a matter of language (Geerearts, 2006). However, in cognitive linguistics, Tendahl (2009) argues "metaphor is not a primarily a phenomenon of language, but rather a phenomenon of thought". In other words, if we want to understand how metaphor or metaphorical language is used in a literature as well as its meaning, you need to look at both language used in original version of this work.

That is also the reason why I decided to study in depth the subject of metaphor in Harry Potter of Rowling which is written for general readers, especially for children who loves Harry Potter the most for the following reasons: First, books in general and translated works in particular contribute greatly to the improvement of Vietnamese readers' knowledge, cognition, critical thinking and emotion. It is not easy for an adult to smoothly understand the messages by a foreign author into language of children. Therefore, metaphors can leave children with strong and vivid impressions that may remain

Forever in their mind. Then, deeply understanding about metaphors is absolutely worth being considered. Third, metaphors have long been making numerous difficulties to translators, i.e. how to recognize a metaphor, how to understand correctly its semantic implication, how to re-express it into the target language while reserving the original meaning, etc. In addition, linguistic and cultural gaps frequently challenge language skills of the translator. Therefore, the research is concerned with the following questions: How is a metaphor recognized and its hidden meaning understood?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Metaphor

Lakoff (1987) defined metaphor "as the mapping of one conceptual domain onto a dissimilar conceptual domain." According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1993), "A figure of speech in which a word or phrase denoting kind of object or action is used in a place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them (...): an implied comparison (...) in contrast to the explicit comparison of the simile (...)." "An implied analogy, which imaginatively identifies one object

with another and ascribes to the first one or more of the qualities of the second or invest the first with emotional or imaginative qualities associated with the second.” (Holman,1972)

“Many words have both literal and metaphorical meanings. The literal meaning of a word is the most basic sense. A metaphorical meaning is when it is used to refer to something other than this.” (Deignan, 1999)“A metaphor is a relation between the dictionary and contextual logical meaning based on the affinity or similarity of certain properties or features of the two corresponding concepts.” (Granger, 2002) “Metaphor is the transference of meaning (name) from one object to another, based on similarity between the two objects.” (Nguyen Hoa, 2004)

2.2. Stylistic Equivalence:

Eugene Nida (1964, 1969) categorizes equivalence into two types, i.e. formal and dynamic. As far as formal equivalence is anxious, there's complete correspondence between the source language (SL) and target language (TL) texts with respect to both form and structure (e.g. sentence-to-sentence, word-for-word and concept-to-concept). It further attempts to convey the maximum amount information about the SL text as is possible. A faithful translation is characterized by formal equivalence between the 2 texts. On the opposite hand, dynamic equivalence aims at having or recreating an identical relationship between the reader/listener and also the text. Both types of equivalence are still relevant in translation in spite of their merits and demerits. Equivalence is taken into account to be a primitive person between the dynamic model (process-oriented) and also the static model (product-oriented) (Neubert, 1985).

In term of stylistic equivalence, it suggests the similarity in the perceived meaning or its influence on the readers' mind conveyed through the translated message. In other words, if there is functional equivalence of elements in both original and translation- aiming at an expressive identity with the invariant of identical meaning. The idiomatic or multiword expressions are quite crucial

for both manual and machine translation as one need to consider the socio-cultural milieu of a given language.

“In translation, there is substitution of TL meanings for SL meanings: not transference of TL meanings into the SL”- J.C. Catford (1965). In transference, there is an implantation of SL meanings into the TL text. These two processes of substitution and transference must be clearly differentiated in any theory of translation. Lefevere (1976) has emphasised on the approximation of meanings between the SL and TL texts. But to encode the semantic aspect of linguistics to the machine is a daunting task and it seems relevant for MT having input and output texts that are quite divergent in nature linguistically.

It also takes into consideration the similarity in the organizational structure and forms of the texts. To put forth differently, if there is equivalence of the syntagmatic structuring of a text, i.e. equivalence of both form and shape, it is known as textual equivalence. Keeping the form and shape of both the texts while translating is little difficult which results in collapsing of the translation output.

3. Methodology:

3.1. Research Design

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were stated in the study. At the first stage, the number of sentences in the novels will be counted first. After that, all the sentences containing metaphors and simile will be considered, respectively, and compared with the total number. The metaphor will then be classified into two categories: sustained and genuine, whereas dead metaphor will not be taken, as into account as they are not used to convey any purpose of the author. The lexical features of expressive means embodying the metaphor will also be considered, so that the amount of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs metaphor will be gotten and divided into subclasses. With simile, only the syntactic features embodying this kind of lexical stylistic device will be taken into account. Secondly, the qualitative method will be applied to analyze the use of these two lexical stylistic devices in the novel. Metaphor will be dealt with in

different aspects. The lexical features of expressive means will be considered first. Some examples including the use of nouns, verbs, adjectives, as well as adverbs to convey metaphors will be taken to illustrate this point. Then comes the semantic feature, cognitive and aesthetic values. The procedure for the study will be as follows:

Collecting data and Data analyzing: In this stage, the novels are read deeply and widely to get a deep understanding of the whole story, as well as the way words are used. Also during this stage will all notes of the examples be taken and classified into metaphor and simile.

The examples taken in the previous step will then be classified into various categories: The metaphors will be divided first into sustained and genuine, second to nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, as these means are vividly used to embody the metaphors. The simile will be considered under different kinds of syntax structures that contain these stylistic devices.

After that, the frequency of occurrence of these two lexical stylistic devices will be measured, based on the gained data above. Tables will be made to arrange the data systematically and clearly. Metaphors used in the novel will be pointed out in different aspects to create the multi – level meaning

Lexical Stylistic Devices	Raw Numbers	Percentages (%)
Metaphor	814	27.99
Simile	567	19.51
Total	1381	47.50

Table 4.1. Relative frequency (per total sentences) of the Metaphor and Simile

Out of total 814 metaphors, there are 458 sustained (56.33%) and 355 genuine (43.67%). However, dead metaphors are not taken into consideration because they are not used for the purpose of the research. These figures are shown in the following table

Categories	Raw numbers	Percentages (%)
Sustained	458	56.33
Genuine	355	43.05
Total	813	100

Table 4.2. Relative frequency (%) of expressive means embodying genuine and sustained metaphors

Among 814 metaphors, 341 are nouns, accounting for round 41.95%; adjectives and adverbs with a smaller number of 263 cases (32.34%) and 209 cases are verbs accounting for 25.71%.

for the expression. Besides, their artistic and aesthetic values will also be discovered and analyzed.

3.2. Reliability and Validity:

In terms of reliability, all the data used for analysis and the quotations are shown with clear and exact references about the authors, name of publishers, time and place of the publication so we assure that what is cited in this study would be exactly the same as it appears in its original material. For the data, we get from the Internet, since nobody can be certain about their reliability and stability; we choose to rely on ones submitted by prestigious domestic and international websites.

4. Results and Discussions:

4.1. The frequency of metaphors and simile in “Harry Potter”

The two stylistic devices Metaphor and simile are contentedly used in the first four books of *Harry Potter*. The study of about 2908 sentences arranged on 181pages of the four novels shows that there are 814 metaphoric and 567 simile cases. Therefore, the percentage of metaphors is approximately 27.99% while the one of similes is about 19.51% of the total sentences.

Only the main parts of speech (the lexical vocabulary) are taken into consideration, as they play the most important role in any senses and expressions. Others such as prepositions, articles, or conjunctions are not mentioned in this study.

Expressive means	Raw numbers	Percentages (%)
Nouns	341	41.95
Adjectives and adverbs	263	32.34
Verbs	209	25.71
Total	814	100

Table 4.3. Relative frequency (%) of categories of the Metaphor

4.2 The Use Of Metaphor In The Novels Of *Harry Potter*

4.2.1. Lexical Features of Expressive Means Embodying Metaphor:

"But mostly, sir, life has improved for my kind since you triumphed over He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. Harry Potter survived, and the Dark Lord's power was broken, and it was **a new dawn**, sir, and Harry Potter shone like a beacon of hope for those of us who thought the Dark days would never end. (Rowling, 1999 p.178)

In the first example, the metaphor noun "**new dawn**" functions as the complement of the subject "it" (Voldemort's broken power), to indicate the new period of history: light first appears as a dawn. A **dawn**, as defined in the dictionary, is the beginning or first sight of splendid time. As used in this situation, this image metaphorically point out the similar picture of Dark Lord's collapse: being nearly dead, lonely and broken magic power.

4.2.2. Semantic Features: Mrs. Weasley set the potion down on the bedside cabinet, bent down, and put her arms around Harry. He had **no memory** of ever being hugged like this, as though by a mother. The full weight of everything he had seen that night seemed to fall in upon him as Mrs. Weasley held him to her. His mother s face, his father's voice, the sight of Cedric, dead on the ground all started spinning in his head until he could hardly **bear** it, until he was screwing up his face against the howl of misery fighting to get out of him. (Rowling, 2000, p. 714]

The noun **memory** as it is explained in dictionary is "the period of time that someone is able to

remember events". That means, to Harry, his infancy is such an empty period with nothing worth remembering or telling about his parents. In fact, the meaning has gone far beyond her explanation. As regard to the whole context, it is undeniable to say that by using this very noun in such way, the author wants to foretell, from the very beginning, the unhappy and unlucky life of Harry Potter, the poor orphan. The noun "**memory**" is metaphorically used here, suggesting the unmemorable and miserable period of Harry's childhood with his evil and fierce relatives.

4.2.3. Cognitive Effects

"Snape finished calling the names and looked up at the class. His eyes were **black** like Hagrid's, but they had none of Hagrid's warmth. They were **cold and empty** and made you think of **dark** tunnels." (Rowling, 1998, p. 136)

Literally, the adjective "**empty**" means "unhappy because life does not seem to have a purpose", when combined with the adjective "**cold**" (without emotion), its meaning turns into "emotionless and unhappy life"; and "**black**" means "a dark colour". However, actually, in this context, the truth is beyond this range. Readers may have the same feeling as Harry about this deceitful man, since his appearance gives some frightening impression to the young and innocent boy. "It all comes down to blood, as I was saying the other day. **Bad blood** will out. Now, I'm saying nothing against your family, Petunia" she patted Aunt Petunia's bony hand with her shovellike one "but your sister was **a bad egg**. They turn up in the best families. Then she ran off with **a wastrel** and here's **the result** right in front of us." (Rowling, 1999, p. 28)

The continuous metaphorical nouns “**Bad blood**”, “**a bad egg**”, “**a wastrel**” and “**the result**” used in the above example indicate Aunt Marge’s offending to Harry Potter’s family, does not take their true meaning (a poor state of family origin, a person who you cannot rely on to behave well, a lazy and stupid person and a person is born by someone else), but comes to their metaphorical ones: the bad but noble descent of Harry Potter. It is clear that the normal (non-magic) person as Aunt Marge can never see Harry’s true quality (a magic person or a wizard) hidden behind the skinny and poor appearance, and that deceitfulness of the Dursleys.

“Harry crouched behind the headstone and knew the end had come. There was no hope ... no help to be had. And as he heard Voldemort draw nearer still, he knew one thing only, and it was beyond fear or reason: He **was not going to die** crouching here like a child playing hide-and-seek; he **was not going to die** kneeling at Voldemort’s feet... he **was going to die** upright like his father, and he **was going to die** trying to defend himself, even if no defense was possible ...” (Rowling, 2000, p. 662) As child’s everlasting brave fighting spirit is rarely found in the common society, the repetitions of the metaphors **was not going to die** and **was going to die** make a great impression of the children’s attitude towards their difficulties. From being venerated his father as a saint by his loved son, Harry gets face-to-face his enemy without fear of death and is ready to fight to defend himself and justice. This impression tends to be strengthened when the metaphor is repeated once again and again, creates a heart-rending feeling upon the child’s situation.

“She was very like Uncle Vernon: **large, beefy, and purple-faced**, she even had a mustache, though not as **bushy** as his. In one hand she held an **enormous** suitcase, and tucked under the other was an **old and evil-tempered bulldog**.” (Rowling, 1999, p. 22).

A burst of adjectives used metaphorically does create the very first impressive image of Aunt Marge: **large, beefy, purple-faced, bushy, enormous** and even **old and evil-tempered** (for humorously described her dog or herself), all are emphasized, but none is used to make people feel

easier with their literal meanings or the derived ones – the ugly-looking appearance of a woman. In fact, with these metaphors, Aunt Marge appears in rather a dog than a woman, rather cruel than kind in manner. It is believed that it is the metaphoric quality that carries the deepest message of the author. Through this scrupulous-described image, the laughter arises on such decaying class of people.

Finally, but the most extraordinary thing, Rowling’s distinguished style is proved throughout the novel, thanks to the great symbolic power that metaphors bring about.

“Quirrell rolled off him, his face blistering, too, and then Harry knew: Quirrell couldn't touch his bare skin, not without **suffering terrible pain** -- his only chance was to keep hold of Quirrell, keep him in enough pain to stop him from doing a curse. Harry jumped to his feet, caught Quirrell by the arm, and hung on as tight as he could. Quirrell screamed and tried to throw Harry off -- **the pain** in Harry's head **was building** -- he **couldn't see** -- he could only hear Quirrell's terrible shrieks and Voldemort's yells of, "KILL HIM! KILL HIM!" and other voices, maybe in Harry's own head, crying, "Harry! Harry!" (Rowling, 1998, p. 295)

At the end of the first volume of Harry Potter, Rowling shares part of her admire towards Harry’s bravery. Once again, in the second encounter Lord Voldemort, Harry fought with Mr. Quirrell to protect the sorcerer’s stone. The little only eleven-year-old boy got face-to-face with the most powerful enemy regardless of **suffering terrible pain**. The successive metaphors (**terrible pain, the pain, was building, couldn’t see**) have quite an effect on the readers. We are astonished at the great symbolic power of these, as Harry, on his last effort, tries to hold on the enemy’s arm despite his nearly dead pain. With this very scene, maternal love inside his heart turned into heat burns sinful souls and warms the normal earth, where angels knows how to praise for it, the everlasting valuable thing in the word.

5. Conclusions:

Carried out in the light of stylistics, this study is an investigation into lexical stylistic devices in the first

four volumes of *Harry Potter* by Joanne Kathleen Rowling.

It has mainly focused on the metaphor, which are the most frequently and distinctively used in the novel. As a study of stylistics, the paper mentioned some of the prior researches of distinguished scholars in the field as well as the relevant theories invented by those in the Literature Review. Besides, Rowling's life and *Harry Potter* were also presented herein to provide readers with general impression of the author and the novels themselves. As far as methodology is concerned, both quantitative and qualitative methods were stated and illustrated to make the study a profound and widespread descriptive analysis. Basing on the collected data used in the novel, I have classified and arranged the expressive means embodying the metaphor and simile into the different tables, according to their part of speech, their structure, and their frequency. Aiming at finding the most satisfactory answer to the research questions of the study, I have dealt with the metaphor in different aspects: lexical/syntactical and semantic features, cognitive and aesthetic effects. This discussion has led us to interest remarks on the metaphors and the writer's individual style.

In conclusion, to Vietnamese learners, appreciating the literary works professionally from the viewpoint of the linguistic researcher is still a big challenge. As an investigation into lexical stylistic devices in a literary work, the researcher considers this study as the illustration for the following proof: Firstly, there is an inseparable relationship between linguistics and literature especially fantastic literature, to the large extend. Secondly, to the small extent, the inseparable relationship between stylistics and literature is also considered. Finally, the practical approach to literary assessment in combination with stylistics should be kept in mind.

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