

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The fascination for searching for the origin and the history of words creates eagerness for some people to do research. Most of the time, we use language purely as a means of communication, without thinking seriously about the individual word we utter or write. In my opinion, however, the origin of a word can give light to the cultural development in history because the knowledge of the origins of words can take us closer to its original meaning; moreover, with such knowledge, we will understand more about what the words carry from the history. By understanding this, we can feel a sense that the words are related to the history by its origin so that the plausibility of the book is felt even more.

As seen in the Harry Potter novels, the use of a word may not only communicate a fictitious story about a witch world that is secluded from the human world - which in the novels is described as the Muggle world - but also create a sense of reality because of the use of actual places in England as the

setting of place, for instance London city, the King's Cross station in London, and Surrey, England. The sense of reality is also built through the use of words which seem meaningless but are actually meaningful if further analysed. The words can be related to the historical and cultural backgrounds that exist. For instance, when we analyse the word origins of the spells in the Harry Potter novels, we can see the cultural development in the English history. It is because the spells originate in the language used in the witch period in England, which spanned from 500 to 1000 AD. <wikipedia> Thus, knowing this will help the readers feel closer to the original meaning of the spell.

In creating the story, J. K. Rowling brilliantly relates the magical world she creates to the elements in the history so that the witch world seems real. As a result, the readers feel closer to the witch world. Linguistically speaking, Rowling is also great at inventing words that bring the elements from the historical and cultural backgrounds to make the readers strongly feel the plausibility of the story, when reading the novels.

This thesis is entitled *The Origins of the Words Used as Spells in the Harry Potter Novels*. The scope of this research is limited to the analyses of only the spells as the invented words in the first six of the Harry Potter novels, namely Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, Harry Potter Chamber of Secrets, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix and Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince. In this thesis, I use comparative method. I systematically compare the words I have listed with the related languages in which the words originate; I detect from

which ancestor language the words are derived, before analysing how they are used as spells in the novels.

In order to know what have influenced Rowling's creativity in imposing her great imagination on the readers' mind through the spells that she creates and which originate from the Latin and Greek languages in the Harry Potter, this topic is chosen. Hence, this thesis belongs to the semantic area of Linguistics, especially to the study of the history of word origins, English Etymology theories. Besides, it concerns the Morphological area. It deals with Semantics as it speaks about the meaning of both the words used in the spells and the origin of words. The theories of Etymology are applied in the analyses when it comes to relating the origin of the word with the English word used, in this case the spells. Finally, the morphological theory is needed to analyse Rowling's brilliant way of forming the invented words used as spells.

According to the articles entitled "Plain Text History", "Early Middle Ages", and "Witchcraft", in the history of England, the magical world became popular during the Early Middle Ages. The Early Middle Ages is a period in the European history following the fall of the Western Roman Empire, spanning roughly for five centuries from 500 to 1,000 AD. This empire had ruled Europe for centuries before it started to fall. Therefore, although the empire finally fell, the culture inherited from the Roman Empire, including the language, still had a big and obvious influence on the society at that time. For example in art, Romanesque art movement was known, as there was renewed interest in Roman construction

techniques. In literature, one of the strongest cultures influencing the literature of the High Middle Ages is Christianity. The greatest connection to Christianity was found in Latin literature, which was influenced by the vernacular languages in the literary cycle of the Matter of Rome. Another proof is the Latin heritage on mathematic and medicine terms used ever since.

<historyworld>, <wikipedia>

The articles “Plain Text History” and “Early Middle Ages” further explain that from 500 to 1,000 AD the Roman Empire had already been divided into Greek-speaking and Latin-speaking regions. Even in the High Middle Ages, which is the period after the Early Middle Ages, and in the Late Middle Ages, which by convention ends around 1500, the Latin language was still used. It can be proved by a variety of cultures that influenced the literature during the High Middle Ages. One of the strongest influences was Christianity, which was obviously connected to the Latin literature.

<historyworld>, <wikipedia>

The magical world was popular during the Early Middle Ages. I believe this fact about the popularity of the magical world in the period in which the Latin and the Greek languages were used as vernacular language, has a close relationship with Rowling’s creative imagination in creating the great story that influences the image of the novels.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problems that I am going to analyse in my research are formulated as follows:

1. What are the words used as spells in the Harry Potter novels, which are related to the Latin and Greek languages?
2. What kind of etymological mechanism is adopted by each word?
3. How is the meaning of the Latin or Greek word, from which each spell originates, related to the meaning of the spell in the novels?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purposes of the research are as follows:

1. to show the words used as spells in the Harry Potter novels, which are related to the Latin and Greek languages.
2. to give a classification about the kind of etymological mechanism which is adopted by each word.
3. to show how the meaning of the Latin or Greek word, from which each spell originates, is related to the meaning of the spell in the novels.

1.4 Method of Research

The first step that I take in doing the research is reading the Harry Potter novels. Then I make a list of the spells used in the Harry Potter novels. After I have got the words that I am going to use in my research, I analyse the word origins of those words which are used as spells. Then I analyse the etymological

mechanism of how these words are used as spells. Finally, I relate the meaning of the origin words with the meaning of the spells in the novels. After I have finished with the analysis of the data, I come to the conclusion of the research.

1.5 Organisation of the Thesis

My thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter I of my thesis contains Background of the Study followed by Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research and Organisation of the Thesis. While in Chapter II, I describe the theoretical framework that I use as the essential base of the analyses. Chapter III contains the analyses of the data and Chapter IV contains my personal opinion about the research. Finally, the thesis ends with Bibliography and Appendices.