

Abstract

Since 1997, *Harry Potter* has captivated wizards and Muggles alike. A large part of the series' appeal is Rowling's language and ability to create a world that completely immerses readers into the depths of their imagination through the use of neologisms. Though some words are borrowed, many of Rowling's neologisms are her own creation and each word has meaning and consequence to Harry and his story. In this thesis, I examine the effect and importance of the -magical words, the neologisms, in the *Harry Potter* series, how both Harry and the reader encounter these words, and how they affect the overall experience for both Harry and the reader.

Word Magic: Defining Harry Potter's World in New Terms

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-But some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again.¶

-- C.S. Lewis

To those old enough to believe in fairy tales.

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Chapter I: How the Muggles Went Crazy over Potter

–He’ll be famous—a legend—I wouldn’t be surprised if today was known as Harry Potter day in the future—there will be books written about Harry—every child in our world will know his name!|| (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 13).

After his literary birth in the United Kingdom in 1997, Harry Potter did not take his time in getting the world’s attention. The seven book series has sparked much controversy, criticism, analysis and applause since the publication of the first book barely over a decade ago. Because of its young age, studies and analyses of the series are recent, and the scope of the research has not yet had time to broaden and grow. In researching works about the *Harry Potter* series, most tend to concentrate on the same, general questions: What is the secret behind the Potter phenomenon? Under which genre should the series fall? Is *Harry Potter* appropriate for children? How can parents and teachers take advantage of the *Harry Potter* series?

Since the publication of the first book, *Sorcerer’s Stone*, one of the most prevalent discussions of scholars and critics is how Rowling managed to create a series that has generated such a worldwide craze, coined Pottermania, especially since up until July 2011, Rowling did not allow any of her works to be published on any sort of digital media.¹ Of the last two books alone, *–Prince* sold just shy of seven million copies in America on the first day. *Hallows* had a record first print run of twelve million in America alone, and sold there at a rate of five thousand copies a minute in the first few days of its release. Before this final book, the other six in the

¹ The announcement of Rowling’s novels published in e-book form came from one of her official websites, *Pottermore.com* in July, 2011. The site will officially open in October of 2011. For more information, visit the site, or see *Washington Post* article, “J.K. Rowling announces Harry Potter e-books and tells more about Pottermore,” 23 June 2011.

series had collectively sold more than three hundred and twenty-five million copies (Trevarthen 17). Before the release of *Goblet of Fire*, – when Amazon.com, both in the United States and Great Britain, offered internet customers the opportunity to pre-order Book IV in the spring of 2000, so many orders were placed that the unpublished book achieved bestseller status (Schafer 14). Also in 2000, Rowling accomplished something, which Bloom admits, –has an unusual distinction: She has changed the policy of the policy-maker. In July, 2000, the *New York Times Book Review* created a Children’s Best Sellers List to differentiate from the regular Best Sellers List. Administrators at *The New York Times Book Review* admitted that –the change is largely in response to the expected demand for the fourth in the Harry Potter series of children's books (Smith).

In 2008, Scholastic released a 10th anniversary edition of *Sorcerer’s Stone*. In addition to the seven book series, Rowling also wrote three supplementary books, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, *Quidditch Through the Ages*, and *Tales of Beedle the Bard*. The first two were written to raise money for the charity *Comic Relief* and the third was written for the charity *Children’s High Level Group*, now called *Lumos*. When asked about writing any additional *Harry Potter* books, Rowling answers, –I might do an eighth book for charity, a kind of encyclopaedia of the world so that I could use all the extra material that’s not in the books (jkrowling.com).

But Rowling’s Potter empire now extends far beyond the books. Harry’s story first hit the big screen in 2001, grossing more than \$900,000,000 from box offices worldwide (–Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone). The rest of the books were then made into films over the next ten years, with the last book divided into two movies. Other merchandise available includes everything from Harry Potter video games, Legos and figurines to Harry Potter wands, clothing

and trading cards. In June of 2010, *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter* theme park opened at Universal Studios, Orlando, FL, and according to a *New York Times* article from January 2011, –since the attraction opened a few months ago, Universal’s overall attendance for its parks here has surged by a million people, hitting record levels. Industry trade groups have showered it with prestigious awards. Local hotels are now offering Harry Potter packages, with promises of special gifts,|| creating a surprising rival for neighboring Disney World (Barbaro). There are *Harry Potter* conferences, such as *Infinitus* and *Leakycon*, where people can share their love and appreciation for the books and movies. Fans of the series have also established International Quidditch teams and rules. *Harry Potter* centered classes are taught at such universities as Yale, Georgetown, and Frostburg (–Universities teach ‘Harry Potter’ classes||). The most well known Potter pundit, author and lecturer John Granger, has even been dubbed –The Hogwarts Professor.||

Even with, or because of all the craze over the series, there are critics and nay-sayers. As critic and *Salon* writer Charles Taylor explains, –when a book sells 5 million hardcover copies in its first day, it is inevitable that there's going to be someone who slams it and tells us that what we're seeing is merely a pop phenomenon that bears no relation to literature.|| The leaders of the anti-Harry opinion are critic Harold Bloom and author A.S. Byatt. In his infamously scathing review, –Can 35 Million Book Buyers Be Wrong? Yes,|| Bloom suggests, –How to read ‘Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone’? Why, very quickly, to begin with, perhaps also to make an end. Why read it? Presumably, if you cannot be persuaded to read anything better, Rowling will have to do.|| He goes on to state that Rowling appeals to the reader through simple writing, clichéd language, and perhaps a wistful appeal to escape (Bloom). In her article, –Harry Potter and the Childish Adult,|| Byatt challenges the appeal of the series to adult readers, stating:

Ms. Rowling's world is a secondary secondary [sic] world, made up of intelligently patchworked derivative motifs from all sorts of children's literature... Derivative narrative clichés work with children because they are comfortingly recognizable and immediately available to the child's own power of fantasizing... But why would grown-up men and women become obsessed by jokey latency fantasies? (Byatt)

This brings attention to the debate about under which genre the series should fall. Often classified as Children's Literature, the series also appeals to a large adult audience and these –were the first children's books to be offered with ‘adult’ covers, so grown-ups could read them on the train without embarrassment. Yet adult fans needn't be embarrassed (Trevarthen 16). In his essay, ‘On Fairy-stories,’ J.R.R. Tolkien asserts, –is there any *essential* connection between children and fairy-stories? Is there any call for comment, if an adult reads them for himself? *Reads* them as tales, that is, not *studies* them as curios.... The value of fairy-stories is thus not, in my opinion, to be found by considering children in particular (Tolkien 51).

When not classified solely as Children's Literature, the series is most commonly placed in the Fantasy genre, but even that has sparked debate. Many critics argue that Rowling does not create an entirely separate world, but simply a parallel of reality and some even question the persuasiveness, or validity of that parallel. For example, Byatt protests, –Ms. Rowling's magic wood...is small, and on the school grounds, and dangerous only because she says it is. However, in a BBC news interview, Rowling explains that while all the other books start at the Dursley's house, the fourth, sixth, and seventh books are different (the fourth book starts at the house of Voldemort's ancestors and the sixth starts with a meeting between the Muggle Prime

Minister and the Wizarding Prime Minister, and the seventh starts with a Death Eater meeting at the Malfoy mansion). She did this because she wanted to establish the fact that –this conflict is really widening now, right out into the wizard world. This is no longer just Harry's secret struggle to be believed everyone now knows that Voldemort is back, everyone now knows that a lot of people are being affected and they know who is behind it. So that was a useful device to show that.¶ This mixing of the two worlds—the Muggle and the Wizarding—has earned Rowling both criticism and acclaim. It is possible that critics find it frustrating that her series cannot be pinned to a single genre and does not fall categorically into one, specific formula.

As Bloom argues, –the ultimate model for Harry Potter is ‘Tom Brown’s School Days’ by Tomas Hughes....But Hughes’ book, still quite readable was realism, not fantasy. Rowling has taken ‘Tom Brown’s School Days’ and re-seen it in the magical mirror of Tolkien.¶ Yet is this mixture of styles something to criticize? Granger attests that –writers read books, and the best writers, like Ms. Rowling, have read voraciously, profoundly, and widely¶ (*Bookshelf* xiii). And with the book sale numbers still steady and Pottermania well underway, Rowling has to be doing something right. In this world she creates (whether it is a secondary or a secondary secondary world, as Byatt would have it), Rowling allows the reader to share an experience with Harry. Tolkien states that the author of a successful fairy story:

makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what [he or she] relates is ‘true’: it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside. If you

are obliged, by kindness or circumstance, to stay, the disbelief must be suspended (or stifled), otherwise listening and looking would become intolerable. (52)

Even if the reader doesn't believe the story of magic and wizards, he or she at least believes in it while reading it and perhaps part of the appeal is this hint of other stories, other familiar, successful genres. In *Harry Potter's Bookshelf: The Great Books Behind the Hogwarts Adventures*, Granger dissects the different genres and authors which inspire the novels, from Dickens, mystery, and gothic style, to Austen, boarding school stories, and the postmodern epic. He argues that the appearance of so many familiar genres shows Rowling's well-read background and versatility as a writer. Still, the main debate remains over whether *Harry Potter* is primarily Children's Literature or Fantasy, which brings us to the next question: is it appropriate for children?

In 2005, the *Harry Potter* series took the number one spot on the American Library Association's List of -Top 10 Most Challenged Books of the 21st Century. In 2006, it also topped their list for readers' favorite challenged book (-Readers choose). And in 2009, it was first on the ALA's list of -Top 100 Banned/Challenged Books: 2000-2009. The main groups in this debate who attack the series are heavily conservative Christian groups. In the *christiananswers.net* article, -Is the _Harry Potter... ' series truly harmless?, Ken James claims -God is clear in Scripture that *any* practice of magic is an _abomination' to him. God doesn't distinguish between _white' and _dark' magic since they both originate from the same source. On *Godandscience.org*, Evangelical Christian and biologist Rich Deem states, -many Christians are actually promoting these books to other believers, and finding _Christian' analogies and even the _Gospel' story in it. The problem is that the _good' guys in *Harry Potter* are relying upon

magic and sorcery instead of God for their power. The Bible states emphatically that doing evil to accomplish good ends is not acceptable.¶ Most other articles which argue the inappropriateness of the series seem to follow the same logic. Their argument is that the series teaches children the occult, influencing them away from good, Christian values. However, this is not to say that all Christians feel this way. In fact, the Hogwarts Professor himself has, from the beginning, openly said that he is a Christian author who approves of the series and the moral lessons they have to offer (–The Seven Literary Keys¶). On her website, Christian speaker Connie Neal, author of *What’s a Christian to Do with Harry Potter?* offers a parent discussion guide for the *Harry Potter* movies—encouraging parents to utilize the series as a teaching opportunity. Many parents even thank the series, citing it as the reason their children read. As *Washington Post* writer Jennifer Holland states, –the best-selling novels have cast a spell on young and old readers alike: Supportive parents say their preteens are putting away the video games and gobbling up the tales of sorcery, magic and secret spells.¶ Yet Bloom, who constantly questions the literary merit of the series, asks, –is there any redeeming education use to Rowling?. . . Why read, if what you read will not enrich mind or spirit or personality?¶ Though the latter question makes a valid point, Bloom is mistaken in regards to Rowling.

In her article, Byatt states –a surprising number of people—including many students of literature—will tell you they haven’t really lived in a book since they were children. Sadly, being taught literature often destroys the life of books.¶ On the contrary, studying Rowling’s works only exposes the depth of them, and many educators (in addition to parents) are taking advantage of that. In teaching the series, elementary and secondary school teachers often focus on Harry as a hero figure and the presentation of good versus evil and use some of the spells to teach Latin. For example, in their article, –Latin Revived: Source-based vocabulary lessons

courtesy of Harry Potter, linguists and educators Alleen Pace Nilsen and Don L.F. Nilsen say, –teachers can capitalize on the popularity of the Harry Potter books to interest students in the roots of words (128). The article goes on to provide example lesson plans of how teachers can use spell names and other of Rowling’s Latin-based words to teach Latin roots.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, whole courses have been introduced to colleges across the U.S. and parts of the U.K, which focus strictly on various aspects of *Harry Potter*. On the collegiate level, some classes look at social issues presented in the books—such as classism, racism, etc.—and Rowling’s presentation of them. Other classes look at how she mixes different genres and story shapes, such as modern epic and hero’s journey, and how they can be compared to other famous works, from *The Odyssey* to *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*. Still, students are not limited to studying just literary theories or aspects surrounding the series—some have applied other curricula as well. For instance, at Frostburg University, –Professor George Plitnik teaches basic physics and cutting-edge science through Harry Potter books, using Einstein's Theory of Relativity and applying antigravity research to flying broomsticks (–Universities teach ‘Harry Potter’ classes.)). In his introduction to *Muggles and Magic: An Unofficial Guide to J.K. Rowling and the Harry Potter Phenomenon*, author George Beahm posits:

what’s really important is that Rowling reaffirmed in a very real and important way that reading is fundamental. That, in a world increasingly filled with the noise of cell phones, PDAs, Blackberries, laptops, and other electronic distractions...there’s a timeless quality to the quiet power of the printed word on a page

that cannot be equaled. Storytelling begins with the printed word
and it is all about the power of imagination. (–Introduction¶ xvi)

Overall, while some have protested the series on a basis of inappropriate content for children (even though it is most often classified as Children’s Literature), the series has entered millions of households and is steadily working its way into the curriculum of educators around the globe.

While scholars and critics have looked at the series’ genre, appropriateness, structure, and at the phenomenon itself, what they have tended to overlook are Rowling’s neologisms, her made-up words. True, a majority of Rowling’s spells are of Latin origin, and some teachers have used that in teaching Latin roots. However, only a very small amount of scholarly work has been done examining these words. Since Rowling has plans to develop an encyclopedia of Harry’s world, writers have found it difficult to publish on the matter—whether it is because of legality issues or false presumptions of Rowling’s etymologies. Before the end of the series, one of the more well-known books on this matter was Beahm’s *Fact Fiction and Folklore in Harry Potter’s World*. As of now, only one book has been published since the end of the series that has examined the majority of Rowling’s names, whether they are made-up, common, or borrowed. Steve Vander Ark’s *The Lexicon: An Unauthorized Guide to Harry Potter Fiction and Related Materials*, published in 2009, examines hundreds of Rowling’s words and their possible origins. However, after a lawsuit by Warner Brothers, Vander Ark wrote a note to the reader on the cover of his book, explaining that –Harry Potter and the names of the fictitious people and places in the Harry Potter novels are trademarks of Warner Brothers,¶ and so on in order to publish his book. In his introduction, Vander Ark explains that –one of the most important goals of this new book is to avoid giving too much away or using J.K. Rowling’s unique expressions.¶ He clarifies that the purpose of *The Lexicon* is to be used –as a convenient reference that provides chapter

citations if you want to explore further in J.K Rowling's Harry Potter books (vii). The only other detailed Harry Potter lexicon provided is on the largest fansite, *Mugglenet.com*. However, that lexicon is based on contributions of fans and visitors of the site. While it is useful and generally well monitored, it does not often appear in scholarly citations. In addition, there have been a couple translators who have looked at some of the technical issues of translating these words into other languages (Jentsch).

What has not been studied yet is how these words affect Harry's experience and entrance into the Wizarding world and, consequently, the reader's experience. In this thesis, I examine the effect and importance of the magical words, the neologisms, in the *Harry Potter* series, how both Harry and the reader encounter these words, and how they affect the overall experience for both Harry and the reader.

Chapter II: The Making of Magic

–Harry felt a great leap of excitement. He didn’t know what he was going to—but it had to be better than what he was leaving behind! (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 98).

Part I: Neologisms

Tolkien tells us that –Language cannot, all the same, be dismissed. The incarnate mind, the tongue, and the tale are in our world coeval! (41). In the *Harry Potter* series, there is hardly a name which does not have some linguistic significance, but the way in which Rowling gives us these names and spells and places is truly clever. Rowling makes the reader experience the Wizarding world as Harry does—as a novice. –Harry’s adventures in the world of wizards began with words on a page, his invitation to Hogwarts. This is also of course, where we began with Harry! (Trevarthen 13).

Harry, originally born into the Wizarding world only to be removed at a young age and later returned, is unaware of the realm to which he belongs. During Harry’s first encounter with Draco Malfoy in Diagon Alley, Draco proclaims, –I don’t really think they should let the other sort in, do you? They’re just not the same, they’ve never been brought up to know our ways. Some of them have never even heard of Hogwarts until they get the letter, imagine! (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 78). Little does Draco know that Harry had only heard of Hogwarts a few days prior to this encounter. In fact, the reader only found out about Hogwarts a few pages earlier than that. Throughout the series, each detail of the Wizarding world and culture is revealed to us at the same time as it is revealed to Harry. When Hagrid comes to retrieve Harry in *The Sorcerer’s Stone*, both Harry and the reader learn that Harry does not belong with the Dursleys or their

world. After Harry insists to Hagrid that he knows *some* things, Hagrid replies, –About *our* world, I mean. *Your* world. *My* world. *Yer parents’ world*|| (50). In the same way Harry learns that he lived among Muggles and that Hogwarts is a school for wizards, the reader also learns. And thus begin Harry’s and the reader’s adventures into the unknown.

In order to make Harry’s world convincing to the reader, Rowling has to distinguish it from the dull world in which the Dursleys live. She does this by structuring an environment of foreign people, customs, creatures, and laws. Some of these objects, names and ideas are not completely of Rowling’s own creation, but are borrowed from other cultures. For example, the *boggart*, –a shape shifting creature that feeds on its victim’s emotions and assumes the shape of the victim’s worst fear,|| can also be found, in similar form, in English and Scottish legend (*Fact, Fiction, and Folklore* 12-13). However, other words, such as *Quidditch* (both the word and game), derive primarily from Rowling’s imagination. To make sure that Harry and his readers can connect with these new foreign objects and ideas, Rowling has to identify them in a way that is still exotic, but not outlandish. To do this, she uses neologisms, or new or made-up words.

According to *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*, a neologism is –a new word or phrase that has been coined to express economically a meaning not conveyed by any single word in the dictionary|| (Murfin and Ray 291). The question is, then, how does Rowling create these words? When addressing the issue of originality, Tolkien asserts that –we are therefore obviously confronted with a variant of the problem that the archaeologist encounters, or the comparative philologist: with the debate between *independent evolution* (or rather *invention*) of the similar; *inheritance* from a common ancestry; and *diffusion* at various times from one or more centres|| (Tolkien 40). Rowling’s neologisms are a mix of all three. Many times, Rowling pulls from other languages or cultures. Yet, while Rowling draws on other

languages and cultures in creating some of her neologisms, from a linguistic perspective the term *neologism* encompasses a wider range of word-formation processes, including borrowing, calque, compounding, blending, semantic shift, and others in addition to coining (creating a word without using any of the other processes). Just as Rowling may have borrowed *boggart*, she can also borrow parts of words, such as prefixes or suffixes, from other languages. She can take morphemes, the smallest word part that still contains meaning.

As linguist Joseph M. Williams explains in *The Origins of the English Language*, –because every language has a finite number of words and because speakers are not inclined to coin completely new forms for new concepts, the simplest way to deal with new areas of knowledge is to use the current vocabulary. Borrowing, derivation, compounding and so on operate here (177). Furthermore, as Williams explains, to –coin *completely* new forms for concepts, or to develop entirely original words, is incredibly difficult when language is already so evolved, and Rowling only manages to do so entirely a couple times. However, to build new words on old parts, through the methods such as Williams mentions, is a more likely way to generate new(er) words, or neologisms, which can –deal with new areas of knowledge. In the case of *Harry Potter*, the –new area of knowledge is magic. As *The Bedford Glossary* goes on to elucidate, –as a literary term, *neologism*, refers to an original word or phrase invented by an author to convey an idea or create an effect that no existing word could convey or create (Murfin and Ray 292). Rowling utilizes this strategy throughout the entire series; hundreds of Rowling’s neologisms can be found within the 4,100 pages that make up the series. In talking about creating words, Rowling claims that she will –fill sides and sides of paper until [she] gets the right one (–J.K. Rowling). However, in order to demonstrate exactly how she develops and employs these neologisms, I have chosen the following ten lexical items: *Muggle*, *Quidditch*,

Voldemort, Dementor, Expecto Patronum/Patronus, Apparate/Disapparate, Parseltongue, Durmstrang, Expelliarmus, Horcrux, and thestral.

Part II: Examples

Muggle (n)

First appears in Sorcerer's Stone

In an interview on NPR, Rowling declares, –I love making up words. There a few key words in the books that wizards know and Muggles, as in us, no-magic, people, don't know. Well, 'Muggle' is an obvious example (–J.K. Rowling). One of Rowling's more famous neologisms, *Muggle* is first mentioned in the beginning of *Sorcerer's Stone* when Uncle Dursley thinks he's been called a Muggle, –whatever that was (5). A *Muggle* is a non-magical human who is born to non-magical humans (not to be confused to a non-magical human who is born to wizards, which is a *Squib*)². To refer back to *The Bedford Glossary* definition earlier, –*neologism*, refers to an original word or phrase invented by an author to convey an idea or create an effect that no existing word could convey or create (292). According to the *OED*,

² After the publication of the first book, Rowling was sued over the use of the word *Muggle* by American author, Nancy Stouffer. Stouffer claimed that she originally used the word in her independently published pamphlets. However, these pamphlets, published in the 1980s, did not sell much and were not wide spread. In addition, Stouffer's *Muggle* described a monster-like creature, whereas Rowling's *Muggle* describes a non-magical human. Because of the nature of neologisms, it is uncommon, but not entirely impossible for two separate authors to independently develop the same word. The root, *mug-* is a word that many use in their everyday speech and therefore, because of the process of developing these words, it is logical to assume that Rowling's *Muggle* is completely independent of Stouffer's. Rowling counter-sued Stouffer and won both cases (though Stouffer continues to appeal the decision). Today, as demonstrated by the OED entry, the definition of *Muggle* is associated entirely with Rowling's series.

Muggle was —invented by J.K.Rowling, British author of children’s fantasy fiction.¶ Of the lexical items I provided, *Muggle* was the only one listed in the *OED*.

Yet, *Muggle* has expanded beyond Rowling’s literary world and has attained extended uses, in relation to her definition, to mean –a person who lacks a particular skill or skills, or who is regarded as inferior in some way.¶ For example, a 1999 edition of *Computer Weekly* reads, –our new senior DBA starts Monday. She’s a muggle. No IT background, understanding or aptitude at all¶ (*OED*). Rowling needs the word *Muggle* to distinguish between magical and non-magical humans. In order to classify magical humans, Rowling chose to use the already accepted terms, *witch* and *wizards*, but to use a word of her own creation, *Muggle*, to classify the non-magical humans. Interestingly enough, though witches and wizards are seen as a higher class by many in the Wizarding world, Rowling does not capitalize them; yet she always capitalizes *Muggle*, as if it were a proper noun. However, since its usage has spread into everyday life, as in the example above, use of the word outside the book is non-capitalized (just as Kleenex or Fridge are only capitalized in reference to the specific brand name). *Muggle* is by far one of Rowling’s most famous neologisms. When asked about the words she creates, she often uses *Muggle* as her prime example. The next example she usually refers to is *Quidditch*.

***Quidditch* (n)**

First appears in Sorcerer’s Stone

Though it is not in the *OED*, there is only one definition for *Quidditch*, as it is completely from Rowling’s imagination. *Quidditch*, likely Rowling’s second most famous neologism, is the most famous Wizarding sport. It is played by seven players (each flying on a broomstick), with four balls (two Bludgers, a Quaffle and a golden snitch) and three goals on each side. Rowling

explains that when she was developing the word for the famous Wizarding sport, she –wanted a word that began with ‘Q’—on a total whim—and I filled about, I don’t know, five pages of a notebook with different ‘Q’ words until I hit ‘Quidditch’ and I knew that was the perfect one (–J.K. Rowling). By the end of the series, *Quidditch* is one of the words with which Harry and the reader are most familiar, as Harry picks the game up quickly and becomes as actively involved with it as he can be.

Today, *Quidditch* has become so popular that hundreds of teams have formed worldwide by fans who can play for the winning title at the International World Cup. Of course, the rules have to be slightly adjusted for Muggle abilities, but otherwise, the game is essentially the same³.

Voldemort (n)

First appears in Sorcerer’s Stone

Lord Voldemort, or the Dark Lord, is the main antagonist of the series. Voldemort created his name by scrambling the letters of his birth name, Tom Marvolo Riddle, which, when rearranged, spells –I am Lord Voldemort, first explained in *Chamber of Secrets*:

–Voldemort, said Riddle softly, –is my past, present, and future,
Harry Potter...

He pulled Harry’s wand from his pocket and began to trace it
through the air, writing three shimmering words:

TOM MARVOLO RIDDLE

³ For those interested, a more extensive look into International Quidditch can be found at internationalquidditch.org.

Then he waved the wand once, and the letters of his name
rearranged themselves:

I AM LORD VOLDEMORT (313-314)

Though in my research I was unable to find whether Rowling first created the name Tom Riddle or Voldemort, her creativity in the development of them both highlights her dexterity with language. For instance, Voldemort created his new name through a cryptic shuffling of his old name; his name is a riddle both literally and metaphorically. When asked about the creation of Voldemort's name, Rowling states, "names are really crucial to me—as some of my characters have had eight or nine names before I—I, you know hit the right one. And for some reason, I just can't move on until I know I've called them the right thing. That's very fundamental to me" (–J.K. Rowling Interview).

*Voldemort*⁴ derives from French roots and can be broken down into three parts: *vol* meaning –flight, *de* meaning –of, from, and *mort* meaning –death, which can be translated as –flight from death (*Fact, Fiction, and Folklore* 135). Rowling's choice in Voldemort's name truly demonstrates her linguistic cleverness. The one thing that Voldemort fears is death itself. Lord Voldemort's name is fitting as he spends much of his time trying to conquer death—even going so far as to split his soul seven times. As Prinzi explains, "how one responds to the fear of death is the central conflict of the story; the fundamental difference between Harry and Voldemort is how each one approaches the reality of their own mortality" (8). The translation of his name also parallels the name of his followers: *Death Eaters*. *Death Eater* implies a

⁴ According to her official site, *jkrowling.com*, *Voldemort* should be pronounced, "vol-de-mor," but Rowling claims that she is probably the only one to say it that way.

conquering of death, which is ultimately Voldemort's goal. When spoken today, among fans and Muggles alike, *Voldemort* instantly brings to mind the Dark Lord, nemesis of Harry Potter.

Dementor (n)

First appears in Prisoner of Azkaban

The guards of the wizard prison Azkaban, *Dementors* are ghost or ghoul-like, hooded creatures. They distribute what is called the Dementor's Kiss, which sucks all feelings of happiness or hope from its victims, often making the victims slowly lose their sanity. One possible etymology of the word is from the Spanish, *mente*, meaning mind and *demente*, meaning insane. Another possibility, which Beahm describes, is from *-demented* (meaning crazy or insane) and *demensia* (a mental illness that impairs a person's ability to function normally, involving loss of memory and cognitive functioning) (*Fact, Fiction, and Folklore* 20). The effect that *Dementors* have on their prey can be associated with what readers might identify as depression or dementia, which is reflected in their name.

While Rowling was writing the series, her mother passed away from complications due to multiple sclerosis; when asked about the name for these creatures, Rowling asserts, -It was entirely conscious. And entirely from my own experience. Depression is the most unpleasant thing I have ever experienced....It is said that absence of being able to envisage that you will never be cheerful again. The absence of hope. That very deadened feeling, which is so very different from feeling sad (qtd. in Vander Ark. 82). *Dementors* not having souls themselves are often unforgiving, as depression can be for those who experience it. The only protection against *Dementors* is the *Expecto Patronum* spell, which is an advanced form of Wizarding knowledge.

Expecto Patronum/ Patronus (n)

First appears in Prisoner of Azkaban

As mentioned earlier, *Expecto Patronum* is an advanced, protective spell, meant to ward off Dementors. It produces what is called a *Patronus* (the plural of which is *Patronuses*, not *Patroni*) or a shield, which, when fully formed, takes the shape of an animal (each person's *Patronus* takes the shape of a different animal). The name comes from the Latin *expecto*, –to expect or look for,|| and *Patronus*, –a protector or defender|| (Vander Ark 106-107). In order to perform the *Expecto Patronum* spell, casters must maintain cheerful thoughts, even in the presence of a Dementor and the possibility of depression and insanity.

Apparate/Disapparate (v)

First appears in Goblet of Fire

Apparation/Disapparition is to transport yourself (or others, through the use of side-apparition) from one point to another. *Apparate* is the act of appearing somewhere through Apparition, whereas *Disapparate* is the act of disappearing from somewhere through the use of Apparition. Because of the mental, emotional, and magical skill required to perform apparition, wizards are not allowed to Apparate alone until they are 17.

The word *Apparate* derives from the Latin *appeareo*, or –to appear|| (Vander Ark 12). The *Dis-* prefix added to the front negates the word, essentially making it mean –to disappear.||

Parseltongue (n)

First appears in Chamber of Secrets

Parseltongue is the language of snakes and is not spoken by many wizards. Harry and Voldemort are two among those who can. Harry first finds out that he can speak to snakes when a snake appears from his wand in a duel against Malfoy. Later, Harry hears the basilisk, a large snake-like creature, in the pipes of Hogwarts and realizes that only he can hear it because he can speak its language. In breaking down the word, there are a couple options. The first part of the word, *parsel*, likely comes from the French verb, *parler*, which means –to speak.¶ This would make sense in context as this is a spoken language. It is possible that the second half of the word, *tongue* can mean language, as in *mother tongue* or quite literally, a tongue.

Since *Parseltongue* is completely spoken, then the first hypothesis, spoken tongue, or spoken language, would be appropriate. The second hypothesis, spoken tongue, meaning a literal tongue, could make sense as well, as people use their tongues to talk. However a snake using his tongue to talk (snakes mostly use their tongues to smell and to taste whether food is edible or poisonous), would more likely apply using myth or folklore.

Durmstrang (n)

First appears in Goblet of Fire

Durmstrang is a rival Wizarding school, famous for producing dark wizards, who come to Hogwarts to compete in the Triwizard Tournament. Vander Ark clarifies that the –the name *Durmstrang* comes from the German phrase ‘_Sturm und Drang’ which translates to ‘_Storm and Stress. Sturm und Drang¶ refers to a movement in German literature in the late 1700s which emphasized the expression of raw, sometimes, negative emotions¶ (97). This is fitting as the students of *Durmstrang*, particularly the infamous Quidditch star, Viktor Krum, are viewed as cold and aggressive. In borrowing the phrase, Rowling not only compounds it (placing the two

words together), but switches the prefixes of the words, placing the *st-* at the beginning of the second half and placing the *d-* onto the first half—a process called metathesis.

What is particularly important about this neologism as opposed to the others is that the Triwizard tournament is the first time that Harry truly realizes there are other Wizarding schools than Hogwarts. While he is starting to become familiar with Hogwarts and the rules surrounding the school, *Durmstrang* represents a new unknown of the Wizarding world which Harry had not really considered. However, compared to the other words he has encountered, this foreign word is not as exotic. It resembles a more familiar, modern European language, as opposed to *thestral* or *Quidditch*. Rowling does not need to make this word overly outlandish, just as *Hogwarts* is not overly outlandish. In naming this school (just as the *Beauxbatons* from France), she adjusted the name to fit the setting that would surround it.

***Expelliarmus* (n)**

First appears in Prisoner of Azkaban

The disarming spell, *Expelliarmus*, causes its caster's opponent's wand to fly from his or her hand. *Expelliarmus* is Harry's trademark spell; it is a defense mechanism that often does not harm the opponent. It is possible to break the word down into two parts: *Expell* and *armus*. In Modern English, the word *expel* derives from the Latin *expello*, which means –to drive out or away, thrust out or away, to eject (–Expello). In Modern English, to arm can mean to supply oneself with weapons. It is possible that Rowling developed *armus* from the Latin *arma* means –what is fitted to the body for its protection, defensive armor (–Arma) or –means of protection, defence, weapons (–Arma). Seeing as the disarming spell is a defense causing the opponent to –thrust away (–Arma) their wand, this would make the most sense.

Horcrux (n)

First appears in Half Blood Prince

One of the Darkest pieces of Magic, a *Horcrux* (the plural of which is *Horcruxes*) is a cursed object (frequently an object of personal significance) in which a wizard can hide a piece of his or her soul. However, the only way to split a soul is to kill someone. In order to protect himself from death, Voldemort split his soul seven times, placing each piece in a *Horcrux* and hiding each in a separate place. By doing this, he cannot die until each *Horcrux* is destroyed.

The word can be broken down into two parts: *hor*, and *crux*. The suffix *-crux* is Latin for *cross* (*-Crux*||). In modern English, *crux*, often means the core or heart of things. The prefix *hor-* does not have Latin roots, but can be linked with words *horrid*, and *horrible*, both of which carry negative connotations. Considering what must be done to make a *Horcrux*, this combination of word parts could have two possible meanings. One option is that someone of a horrible, immoral heart would be the only one to try this. The second, and more likely option, is that *crux* could refer to the soul that is actually being split—leaving *hor* to refer to either the person doing the act or the actual act itself—or both.

Thestral (n)

First appears (by name) in Order of the Phoenix

A winged, horse-like creature with leathery skin, *thestrals* carry the carriages for the older students from the train station to Hogwarts. The tricky thing about thestrals, however, is that they are invisible to most and can only be seen by those who have witnessed death. Until the fifth book, the carriages that carry the students are just identified as *—horseless carriages*||

(*Prisoner of Azkaban* 87). It is not until after Harry has witnessed Cedric Diggory die at the end of the fourth book that he is able to see the thestrals in the beginning of *Order of the Phoenix*.

The word *thestral* strongly resembles the word *kestrel*, a type of falcon, and it is possible that Rowling drew inspiration from that word. Though both a falcon and a Thestral are winged creatures, their similarities stop there. It is also possible that she drew from the word, *ethereal*, which can mean ghostly or eerie, an adequate description of the appearance of the creatures.

Part III: Problems with Translation

Each of these examples demonstrates not only cleverness, but also playfulness with language. However, no creation is problem free and with these words come certain linguistic issues. One of the larger issues that arises in the use of these neologisms is the translation of them. The series has been translated into over 60 languages and –each translator involved with these books has been faced with the normal challenges of the occupation, but also with a number of unique situations. For example, the Harry Potter series contains many words newly coined for the books by their author|| (Jentsch 285).

In his article –A Descriptive Study of Translating Children’s Fantasy Fiction,|| linguist and professor Dr. Wen-chun Liang posits that –literary translation has long been viewed as a cross-cultural form of communicative behavior and is probably one of mankind’s [sic] most complex activities. Yet, owing to the lack of comprehensive understanding of cultural differences and cross-cultural interactions, translation scholars and translators often find literary translation a thorny issue|| (92). The article discusses the difficulties of translating Fantasy literature, and specifically *Harry Potter*, into Taiwanese. As stated earlier, the problem with translating the *Harry Potter* series goes beyond ordinary translations because of the words

Rowling makes up. There are often cases with common words in one language that cannot be effectively translated into another (hence the phrase, –lost in translation). Add words that aren't even a part of that language's daily lexicon and even more problems arise. For example, in her essay, –Harry Potter and the Tower of Babel: Translating the Magic, Nancy J. Jentsch states, –it could be argued that readers in other countries find words such as ‘Slytherin’ too hard to read and pronounce, and that such words should therefore be translated...[however] many of Rowling's newly coined words are so unusual that even English speakers disagree on their pronunciation (Jentsch 294). Translations of the series can vary even between separate editions in its original language, which can be seen when the original Bloomsbury's title of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was changed to *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* when Scholastic published it in the United States.

So what happens to these neologisms when the books are translated? When unable to maintain the original meanings of the words, translators are forced to try to localize the meanings. In addition, it is also interesting to examine the preservation of spelling patterns. In studying a German translation of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (*Harry Potter und die Kammer des Schreckens*, which is literally translated as *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Terrors*), I found that some of the words remained the same or varied slightly in spelling, while other words, most of which had German equivalents, were translated. For example, *Muggle*, spelled M-u-g-g-l-e in the English version translates as *Muggel*, spelled M-u-g-g-e-l in the German version. The word and spelling *Expelliarmus* remains the same, whereas the spell *Obliviate* is translated into the German equivalent of *Amnesia*. *Quidditch* remained the same and capitalized, as did *Nimbus 2000*, though 2000 was changed to the German equivalent to make it the *Nimbus Zweitausend*. And in some cases, translators have to pay close attention to the

development and importance of a certain word to the plot overall. For example, recall that –I am Lord Voldemort‖ comes from –Tom Marvolo Riddle,‖ with a double play on the word –Riddle‖:

The French solution to the problem of translating ‘Tom Marvolo Riddle’ so that the letters can be arranged to spell ‘I am Lord Voldemort’ is worth noting. Tom Marvolo Riddle becomes Tom Elvis Jedusor. The French last name has a double meaning, as does the English original: the French is phonetically identical to ‘jeu du sort’ (game of the curse). If this meaning isn’t clear to the French reader, it is spelled out in book two when Jedusor explains his identity to Harry in the Chamber of Secrets. Rearranged, the letters spell, of course, ‘je suis Voldemort’ (Jentsch 293-294).

At this moment in the second book, the translator must take into account that Voldemort develops his name from his birth name, which comes into play later in the series. Once that challenge is faced, he or she must also try to retain the word play that Rowling uses with –Riddle.‖

In addition to translation issues, there are also technical issues to consider. Rowling takes liberties with her language and makes careful readers aware of the intricacies of her words even by the capitalization of the verbs Apparate and Disapparate. Rowling also capitalizes and italicizes the names of all spells when they are being used. Nouns such as Quidditch and Muggles are usually capitalized, though other nouns, such as hippogriff or boggart are not. Then there are nouns, such as Dementor, that are sometimes capitalized and sometimes not. Even Vander Ark agrees that –trouble is, the capitalization isn’t always consistent even within the books‖ (vii). Since nouns are always capitalized in German, *Muggle* would always be capitalized

as well. However, *Muggle* translates as *Moldu/moldu* in the French version and *muggle* in the Spanish (Jentsch 291). Notice how the capitalization varies with the French version. It is not capitalized at all in the Spanish version. In addition many of Rowling's neologisms that are not translated in the Spanish version, such as *Muggle*, are placed in italics. Another factor translators must consider is that English nouns do not distinguish between male and female, while nouns in other languages do. To remedy this problem with the word *Muggle*, the French translation uses *Moldu* for male a male Muggle and *Moldue* for a female Muggle, whereas German simply changes the article—making it *der Muggel* for male and *die Muggel* for female (Jentsch 296). However, for the most part, Rowling's grammatical and linguistic style (in the books' original language of English) is consistent, and it is details such as the capitalization of certain words to emphasize their importance which prove pertinent to the successful integration of these words into Harry's world. As Tolkien asserts: –it is precisely the colouring, the atmosphere, the unclassifiable individual details of a story, and above all the general purport that informs with life the undissected bones of the plot, that really count (39).

Harry and the reader must come to recognize and understand these words so they can visualize the world that Rowling creates, a world which can vary from the original, depending on the decisions of the translators. For instance, –in the French version, most people's and place names are reinvented in French...These translations are of questionable value, as they do not add to the reader's understanding of the text and they undermine the importance of the sense of place in the novels (Jentsch 294). In the French version, *Hogwarts* is *Poudlard*, *Slytherin* is *Serpentard*, *Diagon Alley* (which when read, is phonetically similar to *diagonally*) is *Chemin de Traverse*, and *Quaffle* is *Souaffle* (Jentsch 291). Think of the juxtaposition of the names of the schools Harry encounters in the fourth book: *Hogwarts*, *Durmstrang*, and *Beauxbatons*. Each

name connotes a certain image, setting, and character that might be lost if all the names were of similar backgrounds (such as *Poudlard* instead of *Hogwarts*).

Part IV: Conclusion

As demonstrated by the examples provided, Rowling draws from a variety of inspirations in creating words to fit her Wizarding world. It is evident that she considers how each word would fit the image she has created before presenting it to Harry and the reader. When asked where she gets her names, Rowling states, –I love names; sad to say, I really enjoy reading lists of them, for me it is like casting an eye over a pile of unwrapped presents, each of the names representing a whole person (jkrowling.com). Though these words she develops can prove difficult for translators, it has not seemed to curb the enthusiasm of Pottermania; the series continues to be translated into more languages (such as Latin). The effort and attention Rowling put into Harry’s story is evident through the development and careful detail of these words and their relevance to the setting, plot, and overall experience.

Chapter III: Sharing an Experience

–I had no idea, when Dumbledore told me there might be trouble getting‘ hold of yeh, how much yeh didn‘t know|| (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 54).

Part I: Language Defined by Culture

What is the significance of Rowling’s neologisms to the series overall? To the reader’s experience? To Harry’s experience? In, *How Harry Casts His Spell: The Meaning Behind the Mania for J.K. Rowling’s Bestselling Books*, Granger states, –Rowling has said that she collects names for both their sound and their meaning and no doubt, she has made up a few to suit her purposes|| (109). In this series, Rowling is producing magic. But magic, at least in the literary sense, does not just appear— it has to be created. Beahm says it perfectly when explaining that, –writing novels is all about the magic of words|| (*Fact, Fiction, and Folklore* xvii), or in this case, the creation of words.

It is necessary for Rowling to create or rename things in her world. She plays creator and in doing so, in making not only a world, but a culture, she must define it. In –*The Quantum Mechanics of Hopi Indians*,|| author and columnist Clifford A. Pickover explains:

linguist Edward Sapir (1884-1939) proposed that language and thoughts are interconnected like threads in a complex braid, and that humans are often restricted by their vocabularies and languages. Sapir’s student Benjamin Whorf (1897-1941) extended this concept of linguistic reality-shaping and believed that different world views are shaped by different languages. He also suggested

that what we actually *think* is determined to a large extent by our language (25).

From these two linguists, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis emerged; according to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis –we are thus introduced to a new principle of relativity which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar or can in some way be calibrated (qtd in Schultz 28). In simpler terms, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis tells us that our culture and personal background influence not only our language, but our perception of our world. After all, all language is arbitrary and definitions are agreed upon. When something exists in our world, we find it necessary to define it through language. Yet, something does not exist because there is a word for it. There is a word for it because it exists.

The most well known example of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is that Eskimos have multiple words for snow, whereas English has only one. Yet the data from this example is out of date and often miscited (Martin 419). However, the point of this example—that culture influences language—can be demonstrated through more current studies. For instance, as Pickover explains, –New Guinea language Dani has just two words for colors! One word covers ‘hot’ colors like white, red, and yellow. The other word covers ‘cool’ colors like black, green, and blue. However, this does not mean that the colors don’t exist. Pickover continues, that –[Dr. Paul] Kay has suggested that hunter-gatherers may have needed fewer color words because color data rarely provided much ‘crucially distinguishing information about a natural object or scene’ (21). Five pages into *The Sorcerer’s Stone*, Uncle Dursley –thought he had been called a Muggle, whatever that was. In the Muggle world, Muggles are often not aware of the existence of the Wizarding world, unless they have family who are witches or wizards, and most certainly are not

aware that they are called Muggles. When they witness magic, they either try to develop –reasonable explanations themselves, or they are provided such explanations by the Ministry of Magic. The word *Muggle* exists in the Wizarding world because there is an apparent distinction between magical and non-magical people and, because of this, wizards have found it necessary to identify that distinction by naming the group which differs from them. However, because most Muggles are not aware of the Wizarding world and existence of magical and non-magical people, they do not have the need to identify it and have no reason to even know that they are classified as Muggles. In the Muggle world, there is also no Quidditch; therefore there is no need to come up with a name for it. However, in the Wizarding world, there is a game where players fly around on broomsticks chasing balls called Bludgers, quaffles and snitches. Since this game exists, there is a need to define it and thus Rowling gives us *Quidditch*, just as she gave us *Muggle*.

Harry is aware from the moment he enters Diagon Alley that he has much to learn about the Wizarding world. He is coming to this world as a blank slate, learning everything from scratch, including the vocabulary. Yet, he possesses a fervent ambition to learn as much as he can about this new and exciting culture—a desire that is then transferred to the reader. For instance, Harry is the first, first-year Seeker (a position in Quidditch which chases the golden snitch, ending the game) to make the house Quidditch team in almost a hundred years; he did not try out for the team his first year, but was lucky enough to have a professor spot his talent during flying lessons. Since he has never encountered, let alone played, the game before, he must learn the jargon and strategies from scratch. Just as when he first encounters thestrals and Dementors, Harry has to describe them or associate them with the vocabulary and knowledge of what he has

already experienced, because he does not yet know their official name. Once he has been told what they are called, that one word can sum up all the previous words he used to describe them.

To further demonstrate this hypothesis, we can also look at how little wizards can know of the Muggle culture. Take, for example, the character of Arthur Weasley, –whose job it is to help maintain the division between the Wizarding and Muggle worlds, to make sure that Muggle objects don't get used magically. Yet, quite apart from magic altogether, Arthur is absolutely fascinated with scientific discoveries and inventions like 'electricity' that runs the Dursley's fireplace (Prinzi 6). Arthur, who though exposed to Muggle culture more than most wizards, is rarely immersed in it and often doesn't understand it or mixes things up. In *Prisoner of Azkaban*, his son, Ron, not only doesn't know how to use a telephone, but also does not know the word or what it means, because in the Wizarding world, they don't have telephones (4-5). This scene provides comic relief for the reader and Harry because it highlights wizards' struggles with something so seemingly familiar. To the reader and Harry, who are well aware of what electricity and telephones are, this provides a contrasting perspective, since normally, they are the ones learning the unfamiliar vocabulary. In accordance with the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, it demonstrates that culture and experience influence our language and perspectives. Yet since Harry spends most of his time during the series in the Wizarding world, the main focus is on how he encounters and recognizes the culture of that unfamiliar world—on the exchange of the information.

Because Rowling makes the Wizarding world so intricate and because Harry cannot master it all easily or quickly, she continues the introduction of neologisms throughout the entire series. Of the lexical items I have provided below, four are introduced in the beginning of the series, five are introduced in the middle and two are introduced towards the end of the series.

Again, it is important to remember that these words did not exist to Harry before he knew he was a wizard, because there was no need for them. They were not a part of the world he lived in before (or at least not to those unaware of a Wizarding world), what readers have now come to know as the Muggle world, and therefore there was no need to classify them.

Imagine seeing an elephant for the first time and trying to describe it without actually using the word, *elephant*. This is what Harry encounters numerous times before he learns the words relevant to each situation. However, as Harry's knowledge of this new world expands, so does his vocabulary. What was once foreign to him and to the reader, becomes known and easily expressed once he can identify and verbalize it. Below, I explain why the examples of neologisms I chose are significant to the series by examining how Harry and, in turn, the reader learn about them and how they affect the perspectives of both Harry and the reader.

Part II: Examples

Muggle

As mentioned earlier, *Muggle* is introduced in *Sorcerer's Stone* when Uncle Dursley thinks he's been called a Muggle. It is initially explained to Harry when Hagrid comes to pick him up and take him to Hogwarts. Hagrid calls Uncle Dursley a Muggle, and when Harry asks what a Muggle is, Hagrid replies that –it is what we call nonmagic folk like them. An' it is your bad luck you grew up in a family o' the biggest Muggles I ever laid eyes on|| (*Sorcerer's Stone* 53). Hagrid refers to them as –the biggest Muggles I ever laid eyes on|| because the Durselys go out of their way to appear –normal,|| or what they define to be normal and proper, which does not include anything remotely magical.

Yet, even before Hagrid comes to rescue Harry from the cupboard under the stairs, Harry knows that he is different. For example, when he goes to the zoo with the Dursleys, he swears he hears the snake talk, and though at the time he thinks it must be impossible, he lets the snake free from its cage without actually doing anything. Though his aunt and uncle know he is somehow responsible for the release of the snake, they continue to keep him ignorant of his origins. Eager to maintain his ignorance, his aunt and uncle also tell him his parents died in a car crash (when they were actually murdered by Voldemort), therefore skewing his perspective of his family, his history, and his world. It is not until Hagrid bursts through the door of the shack that Harry finds out he is a wizard and that anyone who does not possess magical powers is a *Muggle*.

Providing Harry with the term *Muggle* presents him with a way to classify himself and those around him. Before the word, he viewed himself as different, not normal. However, once he learns that he is a wizard, he learns that he belongs to a separate community and that it is these *Muggles* who are different from him. The word provides him a way to officially dissociate himself with his bland and abusive relatives and classify them as unlike him, instead of the other way around. As Hagrid says: –_He’ll be with youngsters of his own sort, fer a change’ ll (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 58).

Because Rowling presents the Wizarding world to Harry in this manner, instead of just submersing him in it from the very beginning, the reader also experiences the Wizarding world in the same way. As Hagrid tells Harry that he is a wizard and that all non-magical humans are Muggles, the reader learns the same. What is established almost immediately, then, with the reader is also what Harry experiences—a sense of belonging. Readers are allowed to know about and experience a world that most non-magical humans do not. Harry and the reader share in Harry’s trials and adventures and are exposed to this new culture simultaneously. Therefore,

when the reader sees the word *Muggle*, he or she does not associate himself or herself as such (whether the reader possesses magical powers or not), because the reader identifies with Harry.

Quidditch

Quidditch is also introduced in *Sorcerer's Stone*. As we now know, it is the most popular sport of the Wizarding world. Quidditch is first mentioned during Harry's conversation with Draco Malfoy in Diagon Alley, when Malfoy asks Harry if he plays at all: –_No,' Harry said again, wondering what on earth Quidditch could be (*Sorcerer's Stone* 77). Again, there is no Quidditch in the Muggle world—the world which, until a few days prior to this encounter, was all Harry knew or remembered. Since there is no Quidditch, then, according to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, there is no reason for a word explaining it to exist in the Muggle world and therefore, no reason for Harry to know it. However, since it is a large part of Wizarding culture, then there is a necessity to identify it with a word. Those who have grown up in or been a part of the Wizarding world most of their lives are comfortable with both the sport and the word *Quidditch*, because it is something they recognize and are familiar with. This is demonstrated in Harry's conversation with Hagrid in Diagon Alley:

–Hagrid, what's Quidditch? ()

–Blimey, Harry, I keep forgettin' how little yeh know—not knowin' about Quidditch! . . .

It is our sport. Wizard sport. It is like—like soccer in the Muggle world—everyone follows Quidditch—played up in the air on broomsticks and there's four balls—sorta hard ter explain the rules (*Sorcerer's Stone* 79).

Notice how Hagrid has difficulty explaining it, because he just expects people to know what it is. And when he tries to explain it to Harry, he has to compare it with something that Harry might

be familiar with, –Muggle soccer.¶ Again, this is because, as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis explains, the language is culture-based. Once Harry becomes aware of the game, the rules, and the words that describe it, he no longer needs the comparison to –Muggle soccer,¶ and the same applies for the reader.

An example of how the reader also applies this is to examine the International Quidditch Association (IQA), which is not in the books, but has been established and run by fans of the series. Since, in the world of the reader, an actual Snitch does not exist, the IQA rulebook calls for a –Snitch runner,¶ or a person dressed in yellow who runs around, chased by the person playing Seeker. Players have adapted the rules and terms to how they would best fit their culture.

Voldemort

Like *Muggle*, and *Quidditch*, Harry comes to learn of *Voldemort* in *Sorcerer’s Stone*. *Voldemort* is also one of Rowling’s more famous neologisms. By the end of the series, the reader is almost as familiar with *Voldemort* as he or she is with Harry. What is particularly interesting in the case of this neologism is that *Voldemort* is constantly referred to by other names. *Voldermort* is an anagram of his birth name, Tom Marvolo Riddle, and his loyal followers, the Death Eaters, address him either by the Dark Lord, or my Lord. The rest of the Wizarding community, with very few exceptions, refers to him as He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named or You-Know-Who. In the beginning of the series, only Dumbledore addresses him as *Voldemort*, telling Harry, –call him *Voldemort*, Harry. Always use the proper name for things. Fear of a name increases fear of the thing itself¶ (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 298).

When Harry first enters into the Wizarding world, he is not aware of either Voldemort or Voldemort's relation to him and his parents. Just learning Voldemort's name alone suddenly carries so many meanings for Harry. When Harry lived with the Dursleys, he was told that his parents died in a car accident. When he learns of Voldemort, he learns how his parents died, how he got his scar, and how he was the only one of Voldemort's victims to survive:

-It begins, I suppose with—with a person called—but it is incredible yeh don't know his name, everyone in our world knows—

-Who?||

-Well I don't like sayin' the name if I can help it. No one does...his name was...|| Hagrid gulped, but no words came out.

-Could you write it down?|| Harry suggested.

-Nah—can't spell it. All right—*Voldemort*.|| Hagrid shuddered. -Don't make me say it again|| (*Sorcerer's Stone* 55).

Filled with a newly-found rage at finding out that his parents were murdered and by whom, Harry joins the elite and begins to address Voldemort as Dumbledore does. Being able to address Voldemort by his name enables Harry to see the Dark Lord less as an immortal being and more as a conquerable opponent. Seeing his name also allows the reader to compare him to Harry and the contrast they represent between good and evil; without Voldemort, there is no other side to the conflict.

Dementor

Harry is first introduced to *Dementors* on the Hogwarts Express in the beginning of *Prisoner of Azkaban*. Luckily, Professor Lupin, the professor of the Dark Arts that year is in the

same car with him and is able to cast a Patronus spell. Not knowing what a *Dementor* is, Harry has to use what he knows so far of this world he's lived in for only two years now to try and explain what's happened to him:

Standing in the doorway...was a cloaked figure that towered to the ceiling. Its face was completely hidden beneath its hood. Harry's eyes darted downward, and what he saw made his stomach contract. There was a hand protruding from the cloak and it was glistening, grayish, slimy-looking, and scabbed, like something dead that had decayed in water....

And then the thing beneath the hood, whatever it was, drew a long, slow, rattling breath, as though it were trying to suck something more than air from its surroundings.

An intense cold swept over them all. Harry felt his own breath catch in his chest. The cold went deeper than his skin. It was inside his chest, it was inside his very heart. . . .

Harry's eyes rolled up into his head. He couldn't see. He was drowning in cold. There was a rushing in his ears as though of water. He was being dragged downward, the roaring growing louder....

And then, from far away, he heard screaming, terrible, terrified, pleading screams. He wanted to help whoever it was, he tried to move his arms, but couldn't...a thick white fog was swirling around him, inside him! (*Sorcerer's Stone* 83-84).

What Harry experiences here is his initial encounter with a *Dementor*. Since he has never encountered one before, instead of automatically thinking that it is a Dementor in their train car, he tries to describe it, to make sense of it, using vocabulary that he, and consequently the reader, already knows and understands. Of course, he isn't able to describe much before the Dementors begin to work their dark magic. Observe, also, when Harry says, —The thing beneath the hood, whatever it was|| and remember that Uncle Dursley said a similar thing when he thought he'd —been called a Muggle, whatever that was.|| Neither knows what has happened to him and can only refer to it as —whatever,|| as a general qualifier.

Although Harry is confused by the attack and what exactly has happened to him, his professors, well aware of Dementors and what they do, know exactly what has happened to Harry. Lupin gets rid of the Dementor with a Patronus, gives Harry some chocolate and explains *Dementors*—yet another word Harry has to encounter and quickly become familiar with. Because Harry has such a drastic reaction to the Dementors, Lupin decides to teach Harry how to defend himself against their attacks using a Patronus spell. This introduces another term which Harry has to quickly become familiar with: *Expecto Patronum*.

In the beginning of the fifth book, Harry uses the *Patronus* charm to defend his cousin and himself from a couple Dementors in an alley near his house. When they return home, Dudley is shock and Harry has to explain what has happened to his cousin:

—What happened then, Dudders?||

—Felt...felt...felt...as if...as if...||

—As if you'd never be happy again,|| Harry supplied tonelessly.

—Yes,|| Dudley whispered, still trembling.

-So,|| said Uncle Vernon, voice restored to full and considerable volume as he straightened up. -So you put some crackpot spell on my son so he'd hear voices and believe he was—doomed to misery, or something, did you?||

-How many times do I have to tell you?|| said Harry, temper and voice rising together.

-*It wasn't me!* It was a couple of Dementors!||

-A couple of—what's this codswallop?||

-De—men—tors,|| said Harry slowly and clearly. -Two of them.||

-And what the ruddy hell are Dementors?||

-They guard the wizard prison, Azkaban,|| said Aunt Petunia.

Two second's ringing silence followed these words and then Aunt Petunia clapped her hand over her mouth as though she had let slip a disgusting swear word (*Order of the Phoenix* 31).

Here, two years after he met the Dementor on Hogwarts Express, both Harry and the reader are now not only familiar with the term, *Dementor*, but all that the term implies. He has witnessed someone else's first encounter with a Dementor and knows exactly what he is trying to express, verbalizing Dudley's thoughts by explaining, -as if you'd never be happy again.|| He has to explain to Uncle Dursley what has really happened to his son, saying -it was a couple of Dementors!|| This passage also helps the reader to better compare the two cultures, Muggle and Wizarding. The reader has now been familiar with the term *Dementor* and all that it implies for two books, and it is easy to forget that some characters are still unfamiliar with it. Uncle Dursely's ignorance only solidifies his place in the Muggle category—a category, remember, with which the reader does not identify.

However, what is also interesting about this passage is that even though Harry now has the knowledge of Dementors and what they do, it is Aunt Petunia who says what they actually are. It is one of the very few times during the series where she acknowledges that she is somewhat familiar with the Wizarding world. Aunt Petunia learned some terms from her late sister, who was the only witch in their family, but never mentions them, thinking they are -freaks.¶ For just a moment, she shares knowledge with Harry of which others in the house are unaware. However, though she has heard the word and know their occupation, she has not encountered a Dementor or what they can actually do to a person. She is not aware of what has happened to Dudley and, until Harry repeats the word, does not apply Dudley's condition to a Dementor.

Expecto Patronum/ Patronus

The *Expecto Patronum*, or *Patronus Charm* is also first introduced in *Prisoner Azkaban*, after Harry does not handle his first encounter with Dementors well. Following his first encounter in the third book, Harry faces Dementors throughout the rest of the series; this spell saves him and his friends numerous times. When teaching Harry how to cast a Patronus, Professor Lupin explains that this is a complicated piece of magic and that the caster must maintain cheerful thoughts:

-The spell I am going to try and teach you is highly advanced magic, Harry—well beyond Ordinary Wizarding Level.⁵ It is called the Patronus Charm.¶

-How does it work?¶

⁵ Ordinary Wizarding Levels, or OWLS are exams which Wizarding students must take their fifth year of study at Hogwarts.

–Well, when it works correctly, it conjures up a Patronus,‖ said Lupin, –which is kind of anti-dementor—a guardian that acts as a shield between you and the Dementor.‖

Harry had a sudden vision of himself crouching behind a Hagrid-sized figure holding a large club. Professor Lupin continued, –The Patronus is a kind of positive force, a projection of the very things that the Dementor feeds upon—hope, happiness, the desire to survive—but it cannot feel despair, as real humans can, so the Dementors can’t hurt it. But I must warn you, Harry, that the charm might be too advanced for you. Many qualified wizards have difficulty with it‖ (*Prisoner of Azkaban* 237).

Dementors are not creatures that most wizards typically encounter, and therefore, learning this spell is usually meant for hypothetical situations. However, Harry, at the age of 13, has encountered his first Dementor and is sure to meet more. The Dementors are just one more thing in the Wizarding world with which Harry, unfortunately, must quickly familiarize himself and, consequently, must also quickly familiarize himself with the *Patronus Charm*:

–What does a Patronus look like?‖ said Harry curiously.

–Each one is unique to the wizard who conjures it.‖

–And how do you conjure it?‖

–With an incantation, which will work only if you are concentrating, with all your might, on a single, very happy memory.‖

–The incantation is this—‖ Lupin cleared his throat. –*Expecto Patronum!*”(*Prisoner of Azkaban* 237 & 238).

Since it takes so much concentration and effort to maintain those happy thoughts in the midst of danger, the spell is emotionally draining. It took Harry many months to produce a full Patronus (which turned out to be a stag, like his father’s) and much more practice to actually master the

spell. However, once he did, it became a reflex. When confronted with Dementors towards the end of the series, Harry knows exactly what spell to cast, each time, without really thinking about it. It has been drilled into his memory. Once the reader reaches the second half of the series, he or she is also familiar with the spell. Ask any fan how to get rid of a Dementor and he or she will tell you: *Expecto Patronum*.

Apparate/Disapparate

First introduced in *Goblet of Fire*, *Apparition* (to *Apparate*) is a form of magical transportation –used to disappear from one place and appear almost instantly somewhere else (Vander Ark 12). Though *Apparition* is first mentioned in *Goblet of Fire*, the first time Harry actually *Apparates* is by side-*Apparition* (where one wizard holds on to the *Apparating* wizard, allowing them to travel together) with Dumbledore in *Half Blood Prince*:

The next thing he knew, everything went black; he was being pressed very hard from all directions; he could not breathe, there were iron bands tightening around his chest; his eyeballs were being forced back into his head; his eardrums were being pushed deeper into his skull and then...his comprehension catching up with his senses, Harry realized he had just *Apparated* for the first time in his life (*Half Blood Prince* 58).

It takes Harry a moment to realize what has happened to him (he was not told he would be *Apparating* before they did so). Once he does, he identifies the sensations he's experienced with what he has been told about *Apparition* and correctly assumes that he has just *Apparated* for the first time.

Though he hadn't experienced it until the moment in *Half Blood Prince*, Harry knows that Apparition is difficult and uncomfortable from what he has learned of it before. For those who cannot Apparate— i.e. wizards under 17 and wizards without their Apparition licenses—the other forms of magical transportation include brooms, floo powder, and portkeys. Apparition is difficult and those not properly trained can suffer physical consequences, as Mr. Weasley explains to Harry in *Goblet of Fire*:

–The Department of Magical Transportation had to fine a couple of people the other day for Apparating without a license. It is not easy, Apparition, and when it is not done properly, it can lead to nasty complications. The pair I'm talking about went and splinched themselves.¶

Everyone around the table except Harry winced.

–Er—*splinched*?¶ said Harry.

–They left half of themselves behind,¶ said Mr. Weasley, now spooning large amounts of treacle onto his porridge. –So, of course they were stuck. Couldn't move either way. Had to wait for the Accidental Magic Reversal Squad to sort them out. Meant a fair old bit of paperwork, I can tell you, what with the Muggles who spotted the body parts left behind...¶

Harry had a sudden vision of a pair of legs and an eyeball lying abandoned on the pavement of Privet Drive (*Goblet of Fire* 66-67).

Notice that –everyone around the table except Harry winced.¶ The others around the table either grew up in the Wizarding world or were somehow already knowledgeable of Apparition. Harry, the only outsider in this sense, is aware of the word Apparition at that point, but not all that it entails. Thus, he is the only one to ask for an explanation, thereby providing the reader with a

better visual of the consequences of those who Apparate improperly. He tries to imagine what it is like, having –a sudden vision of a pair of legs and an eyeball lying abandoned,|| but it isn't until he has experienced it himself that he can fully comprehend the word and explain the sensations that come with it.

Parseltongue

Parseltongue is the language of snakes. It is uncommon for wizards to possess this power, but it is a power that Voldemort and Harry share. Though Harry talks to a snake in *Sorcerer's Stone*, he doesn't actually find out that he is a Parselmouth until *Chamber of Secrets* during a duel against Malfoy. A snake erupts from Harry's wand and goes to attack a fellow student, Justin, and when Harry tells the snake not to attack as everyone watches:

Harry wasn't sure what made him do it. He wasn't even aware of deciding to do it. All he knew was that his legs were carrying him forward as though he was on casters and that he had shouted stupidly at the snake, 'Leave him alone!' and miraculously—inexplicably—the snake slumped to the floor, docile as a thick black garden hose, its eyes now on Harry. Harry felt the fear drain out of him. He knew the snake wouldn't attack anyone now, though how he knew it, he couldn't have explained (*Chamber of Secrets* 194).

The way that Rowling establishes this, in the third person limited, allows the reader to read and perceive what Harry says. The reader, like Harry, is unaware why everyone is staring at Harry after he talks to the snake, because as far as the reader and Harry know, he has told the snake to

save Justin. Those witnessing the event hear differently, and this has to be explained to both Harry and the reader:

-You're a Parselmouth. Why didn't you tell us?||

-I'm a what?|| said Harry.

-A *Parselmouth*!|| said Ron. -You can talk to snakes!||

-So?|| said Harry. -I bet loads of people here can do it.||

-Oh, no they can't,|| said Ron. -It is not a very common gift. Harry, this is bad.||

(*Chamber of Secrets* 195 & 196).

Here, Ron explains that he just spoke *Parseltongue*, a language of snakes, therefore making him a *Parselmouth*. Again, Harry has spoken with snakes before, though he was usually unaware that he was doing so; others around him simply heard hissing sounds.

As with the other encounters with the snakes, both Harry and the reader are able to understand what the snakes say because of Rowling's use of third person limited. In *The Chamber of Secrets*, Harry constantly hears a voice that others cannot. When Ron tells Harry he can speak what is called *Parseltongue* and that it is unusual for wizards, it also explains the voice that he can hear, as it later turns out to be a basilisk, a snake-like creature, moving through the pipes of Hogwarts.

Durmstrang

Durmstrang is introduced in *Goblet of Fire* when the visiting schools come for the Triwizard tournament. As mentioned earlier, this word carries certain significance because it is the first encounter that Harry has with Wizarding schools outside of Hogwarts. True, he has had contact with wizards from other countries, especially at the World Quidditch Cup, which is also

in *Goblet of Fire*; however, it doesn't really occur to him to consider other schools. This is Harry's fourth year at Hogwarts; he is no longer one of the younger students and has become familiar and comfortable with the setting at Hogwarts. He is starting to find a place for himself in this world apart from Muggles, and just when he thinks he has learned much of the Wizarding world, the appearance of schools with different rules and customs than his shows him that he still has much to learn. Harry first hears of Durmstrang and other Wizarding schools on the train to Hogwarts in the beginning of *Goblet of Fire* after overhearing Draco Malfoy discuss his desire to go there, instead of Hogwarts:

-Durmstrang's another Wizarding school?|| said Harry.

-Yes,|| said Hermione sniffily, -and it is got a horrible reputation. According to *An Appraisal of Magical Education in Europe*, it puts a lot of emphasis on the Dark Arts.||

-I think I've heard of it,|| said Ron vaguely. -Where is it? What country?||

-Well, nobody knows, do they?|| said Hermione, raising her eyebrows.

-Er—why not?|| said Harry.

-There's traditionally been a lot of rivalry between all the magic schools. Durmstrang and Beauxbatons like to conceal their whereabouts so nobody can steal their secrets,|| said Hermione matter-of-factly (*Goblet of Fire* 165-166).

In this example, it is Hermione, the well-read Muggle-born, who is most familiar with the word. Ron has heard of these other schools and some rumors surrounding them, but doesn't know too many specifics, and Harry hasn't heard of Durmstrang at all until this conversation. As Hermione explains, it is because the schools don't interact much. As opposed to placing importance on the *defense* against the Dark Arts, *Durmstrang* places more importance on teaching the Dark Arts themselves. They concentrate on different aspects of magic and don't want the interference of

others. This is part of the reason Harry has managed to go three full years without considering other schools and Wizarding students outside the realm of Hogwarts. *Hogwarts* has become a comforting word for Harry—a word he considers coincidental with the word *home*. The harsh sound of *Durmstrang*, this new, alien world presents a contrast in the two. Suddenly, Harry and the reader are faced with a much broader view of the Wizarding world.

Expelliarmus

Expelliarmus, or the Disarming spell, first appears in *Chamber of Secrets*, when Snape demonstrates it in a duel against fellow professor, Gildroy Lockhart: –Both of them swung their wands above their heads and pointed them at their opponent; Snape cried: ‘*Expelliarmus!*’ There was a dazzling flash of scarlet light and Lockhart was blasted off his feet; He flew backward off the stage, smashed into the wall, and slid down it to sprawl on the floor! (*Chamber of Secrets* 190). *Expelliarmus* is a disarming spell, causing your opponent to lose his or her weapon. Those not ready for it, as Lockhart wasn’t, can also be knocked off balance.

This spell is one of the most recognizable to both Harry and the reader, as it becomes Harry’s go-to spell in many of his fights. Even when surrounded by Death Eaters, who are likely to mortally wound him in a fight, he instinctively chooses to disarm them first. In the beginning of *Deathly Hallows*, it is this spell that gives Harry away to the Death Eaters. Six other people disguised themselves as Harry to help him escape, but when attacked, Harry uses the Disarming spell instead of a spell that would wound or kill. Recognizing his weakness, compassion, the Death Eaters know they have found the right Harry. Afterwards, Lupin warns Harry, –Expelliarmus is a useful spell, Harry, but the Death Eaters seem to think it is your signature move, and I urge you not to let it become so! (*Deathly Hallows* 71). Despite this, it does

become his signature spell, a reflex almost—one that both he and the reader are familiar with. As Vader Ark explains, –In the end, J.K. Rowling writes Harry as a person not of violence and murder, but of compassion and mercy—of love. And it is love which defeats evil in the end|| (Vander Ark 107).

Horcrux

As explained first in *Half-Blood Prince*, –a Horcrux is the word used for an object in which a person has concealed part of their soul|| (497). Harry learns about Horcruxes from a memory he obtains from Professor Slughorn. In the memory, a young Voldemort, then known as Tom Riddle, asks Slughorn about this unusual practice:

–Well, you split your soul, you see,|| said Slughorn, –and hide part of it in an object outside the body. Then, even if one’s body is attacked or destroyed, one cannot die, for part of the soul remains earthbound and undamaged. But of course, existence in such a form...||

Slughorn’s face crumpled and Harry found himself remembering words he had heard nearly two years before: –*I was ripped from my body, I was less than spirit, less than the meanest ghost. . . but still, I was alive.*”

–...few would want it, Tom, very few. Death would be preferable.||

But Riddle’s hunger was now apparent; his expression was greedy, he could no longer hide his longing.

–How do you split your soul?||

–Well,|| said Slughorn uncomfortably, –you must understand that the soul is supposed to remain intact and whole. Splitting it is an act of violation, it is against nature.||

-But how do you do it?||

-By committing murder. Killing rips the soul apart. The wizard intent upon creating a Horcrux would use the damage to his advantage|| (*Half Blood Prince* 497-498).

Notice that Slughorn says that -existence in such a form...few would want it, Tom. Very few. Death would be preferable.|| Remember that *Voldemort* means -flight from death||—Voldemort was trying for immortality at a very young age. While Slughorn is explaining a Horcrux, Harry finds himself remembering words Voldemort had told him two years prior, at the end of the Triwizard tournament. With the knowledge of this one word, Harry and the reader also learn how Voldemort managed to live after the killing spell backfired on him, and how he was able to reconstruct himself and regain power. Knowing about the *Horcrux* tells Harry and the reader that Voldemort will not die until each of his *Horcruxes*, his bits of soul, is destroyed first.

Thestral

What is interesting about this word is the way in which Harry learns about it. *Thestrals* are first mentioned by name in *Order of the Phoenix*. As explained earlier, the Thestrals were always there, drawing the carriages from the Hogwarts Express to the castle, but since they can only be seen by some, the carriages are viewed by most, simply as -horseless carriages,|| or as if they worked on their own. This is seen towards the end of *Prisoner of Azkaban*, when the students are leaving for the summer: -Harry, Ron, and Hermione followed the rest of the school along the platform and out onto a rough mud track, where at least a hundred stagecoaches awaited the remaining students, each pulled, Harry could only assume, by an invisible horse because when they climbed inside and shut the door, the coach set off all by itself, bumping and swaying in procession|| (*Prisoner of Azkaban* 87).

At the end of the next book, *Goblet of Fire*, Harry witnesses Voldemort kill his classmate, Cedric Diggory. When Harry returns to school at the beginning of the following year, he has slowly been coming to terms with this death and, in consequence, realizes that the –horseless carriages¹¹ are not horseless. Yet, they are not quite horses either; Harry doesn't recognize the creatures pulling the carriages and therefore has to use what he does know of this culture and language to try and comprehend them:

There were creatures standing between the carriage shafts; if he had had to give them a name, he supposed he would have called them horses, though there was something reptilian about them too. They were completely fleshless, their black coats clinging to their skeletons, of which every bone was visible. Their heads were dragonish, and their pupil-less eyes white and staring. Wings spouted from each wither—vast, black leathery wings that looked as though they ought to belong to giant bats. Standing still and quiet in the gathering gloom, the creatures looked eerie and sinister. Harry could not understand why the coaches were being pulled by these horrible horses when they were capable of moving by themselves (*Order of the Phoenix* 197).

Notice how Rowling states that, –if he had to give them a name, he supposed he would have called them horses.¹² According to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, Harry has to identify these creatures with what he has already encountered or what he already knows. He compares them to horses because as far as he can tell, that is what they most resemble. He then goes on to explain that –their heads were dragonish¹³ and that their wings —looked as though they ought to belong to

giant bats. Because Harry cannot sum up the animals in one word, as he would be able to were they simply horses, he must search to define them in the limits of the vocabulary that he does know. But this is just Harry's experience. He has not encountered them and therefore cannot define them using a singular word of his vocabulary. However, these creatures do exist in the Wizarding world, and as a result, those who are familiar with *thestral*, know the word that defines them.

The only other one on the carriage with him who is able to see them is Luna Lovegood, who saw her mother die when she was younger: –‘Oh, yes,’ said Luna, ‘I’ve been able to see them ever since my first day here. They’ve always pulled the carriages. Don’t worry. You’re just as sane as I am’ (*Order of the Phoenix* 199). Many of the other students view Luna as peculiar (calling her –Loony Lovegood) and don’t often pay attention to her or her odd, yet insightful, comments. Because of this, it is of no comfort to Harry that, when he can see these creatures pulling the carriages, Luna is the only other one who sees them. –Harry did not want to tell the others that he and Luna were having the same hallucination, if that was what it was, so he said nothing about the horses as he sat down inside the carriage and slammed the door behind him (*Order of the Phoenix* 200). Even when Luna says she can see them, he is unsure of their existence, calling them a –hallucination.

It is not until later in that same year when Harry feels some relief about his ability to see these creatures. It is during one of Hagrid’s Care of Magical Creature lessons that Harry finally learns what they are. When Harry first sees the thestrals coming out the forest, –a great wave of relief broke over Harry. Here at last was proof that he had not imagined these creatures, that they were real (*Order of the Phoenix* 445). However, even at this point, only Harry and two other classmates can see them. Hagrid describes the creatures as *thestrals*, and in answer to one

of Hagrid's questions, Hermione explains that —the only people who can see thestrals...are people who have seen death (*Order of the Phoenix* 446). This is one of the few times that Harry (and consequently, the reader) is aware of and can identify something in the Wizarding world that most others around him cannot.

Part III: Conclusion

Now I return to the questions introducing this chapter: What is the significance of Rowling's neologisms to the series overall? To Harry's experience? To the reader's experience? Throughout the series, the reader travels with Harry and experiences what Harry experiences. Thanks to Rowling's use of third person limited, Harry and the reader simultaneously learn about Muggles and Quidditch and Voldemort. When Rowling takes Harry through Platform 9 ¾ to the Hogwarts Express, the reader is right beside him:

With Harry, the readers start off in a world not unlike their own, with its seemingly boring repetition and technology-driven pace, empathizes the 'unfair' treatment he receives, and is [sic] suddenly whisked away from that world to a place where, with Harry, they are valued, loved, and full of excitement about new possibilities. This interplay between the Muggle and Wizarding Worlds make, literally and metaphorically, a world difference. (Prinzi 30)

These neologisms are words that link Harry to the Wizarding world. They are magical vocabulary that, unlike spell or witch or wizard, he had to learn and familiarize himself with in order to belong to the Wizarding world.

Rowling has said that –in the Harry books you go into a world within a world that you see if you happen to belong. A lot of the humour comes from collisions between the magic and the everyday worlds (Renton). Both Harry and the reader are in on the joke. The reader, like Harry, learns these neologisms, these words available only to a certain few. In the beginning of the series, the reader laughs easily at Mr. Weasley and Ron, who cannot fully comprehend electricity or telephones. Whereas towards the end of the series the same concept is reversed when the Dursleys or other Muggles may not know of Quidditch or Voldemort. One of Tolkien's characteristics of a fairy-story is that it take its magic seriously (33). Rowling does just that. By providing these words, she is solidifying both the words and their meanings into the minds of Harry and the reader. Remember, according to The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, something does not exist because there is a word for it. There is a word for it because it exists. In *Harry Potter*, Rowling has brought the Wizarding world into existence; she has created things foreign and familiar and must name them accordingly. In each of the lexical items provided above was an examination of how both Harry and the reader first encountered them. Each of the items ends up playing a separate, but vital role in the course of the series and Harry and the reader's knowledge of them is essential.

As Tolkien explains, –Faërie cannot be caught in a net of words; for it is one of its qualities to be indescribable though not imperceptible (32). The Wizarding world is exotic to newcomers, such as Harry, and therefore the words must have an exotic feel to them as well. However, by the end of the series, there must also be some familiarity with them. Harry has now spent seven years in the Wizarding world and has come to call it home. By the end of the seventh novel, the reader has shared in that seven year experience and is now familiar with the

same words, the same culture. The reader is not a wizard, but he or she is not quite a Muggle either.

Chapter IV: The Overall Experience

–Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?‖ (*Deathly Hallows* 723)

When discussing stories he heard or read as a child, Tolkien explains, –belief depended on the way in which stories were presented to me, by older people, or by the authors, or on the inherent tone and quality of the tale‖ (54). What Rowling gives the reader is not just a story, but an experience. Rowling is –tapping into her readers‘ imaginations, creating a space between Hogwarts and readers‘ hearts where magical wonder can inspire and transform‖ (Prinzi 35).

Pickover expands this idea to other language acquisitions:

Our discussion on language and vocabulary interacting with reality reminds me of my own ‘mind alteration‘ when studying entymology and learning all the insect orders (like Odonata, Coleoptera, and Hymenoptera) and external body parts (like thoracic spiracles, tympanum, and pronotum). When I had names for everything, I perceived insects *so* differently, remembered insects so differently, and communicated about insects so differently. The names helped focus and consolidate my attention in strikingly new ways. Certainly, before I knew the names, I could see that one bug had large wings and another did not, or one had a hypognathous jaw and another did not, but I doubt that my mind

was tuned to manage, compartmentalize, and take note of this new information. (23)

Like Pickover's experience, through her neologisms and the way she lets Harry and the reader encounter them, Rowling makes something foreign and exotic feel as if it were home. Whereas in Narnia or Wonderland the protagonists can question the reality of their experiences in another world, Harry is too involved, his experience too real to ever question. Tolkien asserts, —since the fairy-story deals with _marvels', it cannot tolerate any frame or machinery suggesting that the whole story in which they occur is a figment or illusion (35). Rowling takes her magic seriously and that dedication is transferred to the reader.

According to Benjamin Whorf, —language divides the world into different categories. Whether one language chooses to distinguish one thing versus another affects how an individual perceives reality (qtd. in Pickover 22). Harry's reality of entering a Wizarding world is reflected in the new vocabulary he learns. When Harry enters Hogwarts school of Witchcraft and Wizardry, the reader shares in that experience, and learns as he does: —most readers feel empowered by vicariously experiencing Harry's adventures in which he gains control over himself and his surroundings (Schafer 13). The reader learns of *Muggles* and *Quidditch* and *Voldemort* at the same time that Harry does and in doing this, the reader is not just reading, but taking an active part in the story. Imagine if Harry had known of these things before the reader. Some important questions to ask are how would the experience differ for the reader? Would the reader feel as attached to a character who is already more knowledgeable than he or she is? Would he or she relate as well to a character who, for example, knows what *Quidditch* is but has never heard of a television? What would happen to the humor of being able to compare the two

worlds? If these words were not explained to Harry and the reader, would the reader be able to familiarize himself or herself with Harry's world as quickly?

In the end, there is a reason that Rowling presents Harry's story as she does. She specifically makes the Wizarding world seem exotic, paying special attention to her language, and—as exemplified by the reader's association with Harry himself through the third person limited omniscient viewpoint, meaning, we're seeing things as though it were an objective, third person narrative, but in reality, most of the story is limited to Harry's perception. We experience the world as Harry does (Prinzi 35). And because of this, the reader feels more attached to Harry, can relate more to Harry, understands the humor more, and is able to better familiarize himself or herself with the Wizarding world, which allows the reader a more involved reading. As Prinzi elucidates:

He goes through the experience of discovering that there is more to him than he ever realized, but no Muggle can experience any such thing. At the same time our experience with Harry is precisely the point of the fairy-story...Readers identify with Harry, the wizard, and as such, our imaginations explore the wilder aspects of the world through participation in Faerie....This underscores an important principle of reading literature, particular of the fairy tale variety: the individual reader is the bridge between two worlds—the one we live in, and the one we're visiting. The individual reader *is* every place and moment in which a wizard and a muggle cross paths (40-41).

True, the *Harry Potter* reader is not a witch or a wizard, and in that way will never be able to relate to Harry. However, the reader is not quite a Muggle either. Most Muggles would not be able to tell someone what a *Dementor*, *Parseltongue*, or *Patronus* is, but the reader can. And in that way, with that experience, vocabulary, and knowledge, the reader is able to dissociate from Muggles. A *Harry Potter* reader would also be able to identify a *thestral* or *Horcrux*—things even some wizards cannot identify.

Tolkien clarifies that —the human mind is capable of forming mental images of things not actually present. The faculty of conceiving the images is (or was) naturally called Imagination|| (59). The first time Harry sees a dementor or a thestral, Rowling has him explain its appearance to the reader. However, every time after that, Rowling only need mention the name and the reader can automatically imagine what was described. By the end of the series, the reader is just as familiar with the Wizarding world, and its vocabulary, as Harry is. As Granger emphasizes, —it is the literary artistry that engages and transforms readers that is the real magic of the books|| (*Bookshelf* x).

In *Exploring Harry Potter*, published in 2000, author Elizabeth Schafer projected, —someday, ‘_Quidditch’ and ‘_Muggle’ may define more than a game played on broomsticks and dull people because readers will expand its meaning to incorporate applications in their environment|| (215-216). As demonstrated by the *OED* example from Chapter III, Schafer was right in her prediction. These neologisms that Rowling gave Harry and the reader carry on even after the book is closed and have made their way into the world of the reader. Even if not reading the series, the reader can find some way to relate back to it through these neologisms.

The effect and importance of the —magical|| words, the neologisms, in the *Harry Potter* series, how both Harry and the reader encounter these words, and how they affect the overall

experience for both Harry and the reader, by now is now evident. They provide both Harry and the reader a distinction between the Wizarding world and reality (the Muggle world). Even from their etymologies alone, these words imply certain images and ideas. When Harry enters the Wizarding world, taking the reader with him, these words go from alienating to comforting. Rowling uses her neologisms to both include and separate—the Muggles and the believers. With that, I leave you with Hogwarts motto: *Draco dormiens nunquam titillandus*⁶.

⁶ “Never tickle a sleeping dragon.”

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