

# Concept *EDUCATION* in Harry Potter's Stories by J.K. Rowling

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**ABSTRACT:** The paper offers one of the methods of teaching the foreign language with the help of the intertextuality of the proper names. The paper deals with the necessary changes in the postnonclassical paradigm of the education. The author underlines the urgency of the coincidence of the modern system of education to the requirements of the society (consider, generation Alpha). New technologies of ICT, multidisciplinary researches and magic methods of teaching should be effectively applied in classroom and extracurricular work of students. Therefore, the author studies the specific language devices in Harry Potter's stories to point out the stylistic methods of the intertextuality. The questions of the possibility of the application of the methods used in Harry Potter's series are discussed in the article to follow the study motivation of students. Our research considers the process of the conceptualization of the education and its representation in the literary text. The object of the analysis is the concept EDUCATION being the social and cultural value throughout centuries. We study the ways this concept is refracted in the fantasy by J.K. Rowling. The books about Harry Potter are of great demand in the modern society. They influence the mentality of different ages (especially teens: from 7 to 16 years). This article views one of the sub-slots of concept EDUCATION from the side of the cognitive and discourse analysis that has led to the construction of the frame of concept EDUCATION in Harry Potter's.

**KEYWORDS:** concept EDUCATION, postnonclassical paradigm of education, Harry Potter, ICT, intertextuality in concept

## **Introduction**

This article is devoted to the question of interpretation of the postnonclassical paradigm of the education. Recently the world has passed several qualified changes. The society, science, culture and education have come into the postnonclassical paradigm, i.e. the new era in the technological sphere (consider, nano- and micro-nano levels), together with the new requirements for the specialists who are able to work with such technologies. The teaching principles, being still trapped into the classical paradigm, should undergo significant changes in the whole sphere of education.

Despite the regularity and lasting of education, it should be mentioned that education has the idea of completeness in its basis. This completeness is a kind of the unreached ideal and value with the depth in the thinking. Consider, J.K. Rowling has written not one, but the sequel of the educational fantasy series about Harry Potter, i.e. her character is also eager to continue learning and making his mastership perfect. Consider, in the seventh book (Rowling 2013, 607) at the end of this story, J.K. Rowling has initially made an inheritance lifelong learning. Nineteen years have passed but the process of education in Potter's family hasn't stopped. The five Potters (Harry, his wife Ginny and their three children) are going to the new school year in Hogwarts. Waving to his son, Harry felt himself a first year student again.

## **Main issues**

Modern education requires new approaches to the methodology which can help to master some urgent conceptual problems (consider, the compliance of the teaching programs to the social professional demand).

The main tasks of education (as well as economics and politics) should not be given by force, vice versa, it should be formed in the natural and historical way. Education itself, together with its aims and forms, is the social demand of the society. This demand should be satisfied with the use of modern teaching technologies (Bordovsky 2011, 108).

The necessity to base the educational strategy and logics has become quite urgent. Let us look at “the idea of education” on the whole to consider the aims of education. The education is discussed to be lasting and regular in its core, presenting one of the main categories of Social Humanities. P.G. Schedrovitsky claims the necessity of the initial philosophical and methodological analyses of the classical definitions together with the temporary socio-cultural situation (Schedrovitsky 1993, 416).

The term EDUCATION was rethought by neohumanists (Gerder, Pestalotstsi, Schlegel, Gegel) as the core categorical definition for all Social Humanities. Even today the form of our thinking is based on the basis of the term EDUCATION.

Taking into account humanitarian education, it can be defined as the form of understanding of the world and culture, the formation of the image of a person, who sees himself being a part of this culture. The real humanitarian education is a living one that gives and opens the private sense; it demands the cultural and educational space on the relation level “teacher-student” where an educated person is not the sum of competence but a sum of a person in himself (Arkhipova 2011, 50).

The postnonclassical idea of education combines classical and non-classical approaches which is a kind of reborn to the idea of the antique paidei (Greek school), the basis of which is the return to the thinking and human measure of education. Modern education is modernizing hermeneutic and humanitarian foundations of education. This combination will result in the existentialist educational phenomena (Ogurtsov and Platonov 2004, 26-27).

Modern authors are presenting all future technologies in education in different genres. J.K. Rowling has offered the magic methods of education in the series of Harry Potter. She suggests the mixture of educational principles from the world of Muggles (people) and Non-Muggles (wizards), consider the names of subjects: the Flying Lesson (the analogy of Physical Education), the Portion Lesson (the analogy of Chemistry and Science), the Transfiguration Lesson (the analogy of Physics), the Lesson of the defence of Dark Forces (the analogy of Art, Handicraft and Music), the History of Magic (the analogy of History and Social Studies). Her books are demanded by different ages and generations.

The fantasy concept EDUCATION in Harry Potter’s series is viewed in our research on three main levels:

- Global (concept EDUCATION is the universal, cultural and human one)
- Special (it is viewed on the national level, consider, the English system of education)
- Particular (it is the author’s individual style; how J.K. Rowling has managed to create her own educational world, which has a great success among readers).

The cognitive discourse analysis has made it possible to form the frame of concept EDUCATION based on Harry Potter’s stories. The main part of this frame is slot TEACHING which includes subjects of teaching and objects of teaching. The objects of teaching consist of school subjects, classrooms, school equipment.

### ***Objects of teaching***

*Slot – SCHOOL SUBJECTS*

**Herbology**

**History of Magic**

**The Charms**

**Transfiguration**

**Defence Against the Dark Arts**

**The Potions Lesson**

**Flying Lessons**

The verbal representatives of concept EDUCATION show the characteristics of the author's language creativity and intertextuality of Rowling's style.

Consider, the verbal representative – **Herbology**. This name is given to the school subject that studies magic and fantasy plants (phytonyms or potterisms). The naming is based on the language play.

**Herbology** – Latin origin [ED: p. 1442], means *grassy or herbal*. Students of Hogwarts study the diverse world of magic plants on this fantasy school subject. Herbology can be associated with Botany in the world of muggles (ordinary people, non-wizards).

The author uses the following ways of the actualization of the semantics in the naming of viewed school subject.

1. The actualization due to the description of the content of the fantasy school subject.

Consider,

*Three times a week they went out to the greenhouses behind the castle to study Herbology, with a dumpy little witch called Professor Sprout, where they learned how to take care of all the strange plants and fungi, and found out what they were used for* (Rowling 1997, 142).

To characterize this subject the author uses the word combination *to take care of*; the epithet phrase *the strange plants and fungi, found out, were used for*. Let us take a close look on the naming *fungi* – why the author does not take *mushrooms*? In the botany reference book, **fungi** belong to the family of imperfect mushrooms (Deuteromycot class), these fungi are asexual, parasitizing on higher plants, causing crop diseases. In addition, ringworm fungus, fungi that cause diseases of the nails and skin of the feet belong to this class. Note that not all mushrooms from this family represent the “evil, dark” side. For example, the soil fungus of this family *Tolypocladium inflatum* is involved in the creation of the drug cyclosporine, which is used in medicine for organ transplants; *Penicillium* and *Aspergillus* fungi are used in biotechnological production of a number of organic acids (citric, gluconic, etc.), enzymes (proteinases, amylases, etc.) and antibiotics (Belyakova, Dyakov, Tarasov 2006). To sum up, the aim of Herbology not only to do dark things, but also how to cure and save lives.

Consider some examples of the phytonyms' naming which we come across in the first book of Harry Potter:

- **Mandragora** – a word of Central English origin Mandrake, meaning a plant with a root; in German, the name Ernest. Writer Theodore Amadeus Hoffman calls his fairy-tale character Ernest who was a physicist and an alchemist in his stories [ES p. 1908]. In the flower dictionary, the word **mandrake** means horror [The Language of Flowers: An Alphabet of Floral Emblems. - London, 1875: p. thirteen]. D.P. Oznobishin in his book “Selam, or the language of flowers” describes the **mandrake** as a sorcerer's grass; Adam's head; sleep potion; with the meaning - I am happy if you are happy [Oznobishin 1830: p. 85]. J.K. Rowling characterizes the phytonym **Mandrake** as “screeching” - a plant that begins to squeal when it is touched or transplanted. **Mandrake** is an indispensable ingredient in a number of magic potion recipes.
- **Devil's Snare** – this phrase is from Old English, meaning devil, bad, evil, scar, wound [ЭС c. 2125]. There is no analogy for this in the flower language. Let us see how the author negatively actualizes the use of this phytonym (it is one of the author's potterisms) – falling down in the first book the main characters are turned out to be trapped in this plant:

*"Lucky this plant thing's here, really," said Ron.*

*"Lucky!" shrieked Hermione. "Look at you both!"*

At first they were glad to survive not noticing the trap. The author uses anadiplosis with the contra meaning of the same word: **lucky** (the first time something smoothened the fall, but the second time was the warning of coming danger).

She leapt up and **struggled** toward a damp wall. She had to **struggle** because the moment she had landed, **the plant had started to twist snakelike tendrils around her ankles**. As for Harry and Ron, their legs had already been **bound tightly in long creepers without their noticing**. Hermione had managed to free herself **before the plant got a firm grip on her**. Now she watched in horror as the two boys fought to pull the plant off them, but **the more they strained against it, the tighter and faster the plant wound around them**.

The author points out the biological characteristics of the phytonym-potterism, using the following phrases: verbs **struggle**; **twist**; comparison **snakelike tendrils**; personification **bound tightly in long creepers without their noticing**, description **before the plant got a firm grip on her**. At the end the author uses the climax describing the trapping situation: **the more they strained - the tighter and faster the plant wound around them**.

**"Stop moving!"** Hermione ordered them. **"I know what this is — it's Devil's Snare!"**

**"Devil's Snare, Devil's Snare... what did Professor Sprout say? — it likes the dark and the damp**

**"So light a fire!"** Harry choked. **"Yes — of course — but there's no wood!"** Hermione cried, wringing her hands.

**"HAVE YOU GONE MAD?"** Ron bellowed. **"ARE YOU A WITCH OR NOT?"**

The author shows the emotional rise during looking for the exit with the help of the imperative mood: **Stop moving! So light a fire!**; anadiplosis: **it's Devil's Snare!** **"Devil's Snare, Devil's Snare...** And again at the end we come across the apotheosis of the climax when Ron cried at Hermiona to calm down and save them: **"HAVE YOU GONE MAD?" "ARE YOU A WITCH OR NOT?"**

**"Oh, right!"** said Hermione, and she whipped out her wand, waved it, muttered something, and sent a jet of the same bluebell flames she had used on Snape at the plant. In a matter of seconds, the two boys felt it loosening its grip as it cringed away from the light and warmth. Wriggling and flailing, it unraveled itself from their bodies, and they were able to pull free.

**"Lucky you pay attention in Herbology, Hermione,"** said Harry as he joined her by the wall, wiping sweat off his face.

**"Yeah,"** said Ron, **"and lucky Harry doesn't lose his head in a crisis -- 'there's no wood,' honestly."**

The author shows that the main characters saved from the phytonym with the help of magic – fire from the wizard wand. Using previous anaphora **lucky**, it is shown that the heroes are happy they have studied Herbology and phytonyms to struggle the Devil's Snare.

J.K. Rowling created an interesting fantasy school subject where students study magis flora, including phytonyms. All contexts are working on the actualization of the semantics of the naming.

**History of Magic** – *history* - a word of Latin, ancient Greek origin [ES: p. 1460], meaning possessing knowledge; *magic* - a word of Latin origin, meaning magical, wonderful [ES: p. 1888]. On this fantasy subject in Hogwarts students study the history of magic. The subject reminds history lessons at a Muggle school.

The author uses the following ways of the actualization of the semantics in the naming of viewed school subject.

1. The actualization due to the description of the content of the fantasy school subject.

Consider,

**Easily the most boring class** was *History of Magic*, which was **the only one taught by a ghost**. Binns droned on and on while they scribbled down names and dates, and got Emetic the Evil and Uric the Oddball mixed up (Rowling 1997, 142).

The author describes this subject with hyperbolas **the most boring class, the only one taught by a ghost**; as well as with metaphoric phrase with onomatopoeia **they scribbled down names and dates**, to put an accent on the boring atmosphere on this magic school.

**The Charms** – word of old French origin [ES: p. 505], meaning strongly attract, sing and dance. On this fantasy subject at Hogwarts students learn various spells. The content of the subject strongly reminds foreign language lessons at a Muggle school.

The author uses the following ways of the actualization of the semantics in the naming of viewed school subject.

1. The actualization due to the description of the content of the fantasy school subject.

Consider,

*Even better, Professor Flitwick announced in Charms that he thought they were ready to start making objects fly, something they had all been dying to try since they'd seen him make Neville's toad zoom around the classroom. Professor Flitwick put the class into pairs to practice. "Now, don't forget that nice wrist movement we've been practicing!" squeaked Professor Flitwick, perched on top of his pile of books as usual. "Swish and flick, remember, swish and flick. And saying the magic words properly is very important, too — never forget Wizard Baruffio, who said 's' instead of 'f' and found himself on the floor with a buffalo on his chest" (Rowling 1997, 183).*

The author uses gerundial constructions to describe this magic class: **to start making objects fly** together with the metaphorical expression: **had all been dying to try**; verbs with onomatopoeia as epiphora **swish and flick** to show the highest level of motivation in the Charms.

The author creates deep semantic contexts which work on the intertextuality of the naming.

**Transfiguration** – word of old French origin [ES: p. 1123], meaning redoing the form. On this fantasy subject in Hogwarts students learn how to turn objects into other objects, people into animals, etc. The content of the subject resembles physics at a Muggle school.

The author uses the following ways of the actualization of the semantics in the naming of viewed school subject.

1. The actualization due to the description of the content of the fantasy school subject.

Consider,

*Transfiguration is some of the most complex and dangerous magic you will learn at Hogwarts," she said. "Anyone messing around in my class will leave and not come back. You have been warned." Then she changed her desk into a pig and back again. They were all very impressed and couldn't wait to get started, but soon realized they weren't going to be changing the furniture into animals for a long time. After taking a lot of complicated notes, they were each given a match and started trying to turn it into a needle (Rowling 1997, 143).*

The author uses hyperbolic epithets **the most complex and dangerous**; metaphorical actions **changed her desk into a pig**; stressed the verb with the adverb **were all very impressed**; using phrasal verb **couldn't wait to get started**; epithet **taking a lot of complicated notes**; showing the profound level of this fantasy subject **and started trying to turn it into a needle**.

There are a lot of verbs of action here to point out the practical side of this magic school subject.

**Defense Against the Dark Arts** – *defense* - a word of medieval English origin [ES: p. 1108], meaning the act of self-defense with a sword; *against* - a word of medieval English origin [ES: p. 76], meaning to oppose; *dark* - a word of medieval English origin [ES: p. 726], meaning early twilight, gloomy weather; *arts* - a word of Latin origin [ES: p. 176], meaning the way of playing, skill, talent. On this fantasy subject in Hogwarts students learn how to protect themselves from dark forces. The content of the subject reminds self-defense lessons at a Muggle school.

The author uses the following ways of the actualization of the semantics in the naming of viewed school subject.

1. The actualization due to the description of the content of the fantasy school subject.

Consider,

*The class everyone had really been looking forward to was Defense Against the Dark Arts, but Quirrell's lessons turned out to be a bit of a joke (Rowling 1997, 143).*

The author uses oxymoron to characterize this subject to show that students did not get what they had wanted: *had really been looking forward to*; in opposition *turned out to be a bit of a joke*.

J.K. Rowling created this fantasy subject and the teacher as a weak and foolish person who later turned out to be in Voldemort's team.

**The Potions Lesson** – *potion* is a word of Old French origin [ES: p. 2520], meaning a drink, give a drink, present; *lesson* is a word of Latin origin [ES: p. 1749], meaning a place to read. On this fantasy subject in Hogwarts students learn how to prepare various magic broths and potions. The content of the subject resembles chemistry at a Muggle school.

The author uses the following ways of the actualization of the semantics in the naming of viewed school subject.

1. The actualization due to the description of the content of the fantasy school subject.

Consider,

*There was a sudden rummaging for quills and parchment. Snape put them all into pairs and set them to mixing up a simple potion to cure boils. He swept around in his long black cloak, watching them weigh dried nettles and crush snake fangs, criticizing almost everyone except Malfoy, whom he seemed to like* (Rowling 1997, 143).

The author uses the epithet *a sudden rummaging for quills and parchment*; metaphor, *mixing up a simple potion to cure boils*; then comes several practical actions that are non-typical for ordinary school - *weigh dried nettles*; *crush snake fangs*. All contexts underlines extraordinary fantasy subject and strict requirements for learning it.

**Flying Lessons** – *flying* - a word of Old English origin [ES: p. 1146], meaning to move on wings; *lesson* is a word of Latin origin [ES: p. 1749], meaning a place to read. On this fantasy subject in Hogwarts students learn to fly on a broomstick. The content of the subject resembles physical education at a Muggle school.

The author uses the following ways of the actualization of the semantics in the naming of viewed school subject.

1. The actualization due to the description of the content of the fantasy school subject.

Consider,

*"Stick out your right hand over your broom," called Madam Hooch at the front, "and say 'Up!'" "UP" everyone shouted. Harry's broom jumped into his hand at once, but it was one of the few that did. Perhaps brooms, like horses, could tell when you were afraid, thought Harry; there was a quaver in Neville's voice that said only too clearly that he wanted to keep his feet on the ground. Madam Hooch then showed them how to mount their brooms without sliding off the end, and walked up and down the rows correcting their grips* (Rowling 1997, 156-157).

The author uses onomatopoeia for describing commands and requirements on this fantasy lesson: *stick out your right hand over your broom*; *jumped into*; comparison *brooms, like horses*; metaphorical phrase *how to mount their brooms*. All verbal representatives show the unusual side of teaching and subject itself.

## Conclusion

Summarizing the whole situation of the postnonclassical paradigm of education, it is clear that the development of new technologies demands the development of a person himself. It is the first question for modern education to be solved, especially in the sphere of methodology.

Exactly here, the ideas of literature can be used to provide the originality and the uniqueness of methods. Adding some special ideas into the traditional methods can increase the motivation for studying of new generations (consider, using multimodal dictionaries of phytonyms on Botany lessons or adding History of Magic in ordinary textbooks, or why not inventing flying motor brooms?). Such integration can lead to a successful migration in the widespread sphere of professional activity and to an adequate reaction to all changes and shifts (consider, changing roles or integrating from one sphere to another).

“The information era needs to save knowledge as money on a credit card. In order to have a possibility to take them when needed” (Arkhipova 2011). We can only add that your card will not be accepted in two cases: when it is empty or when it has non-converted currency.

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