

THE CONCEPT OF “HAPPINESS” IN “HARRY POTTER”

Abstract

The name of the present article is The Concept of “Happiness” in “Harry Potter”. The present study investigated the role of friendship in a literary fairy tale “Harry Potter”. During the work there were given the definitions of “the concept of “happiness” and the situations of being happy were pointed out. Thus, the following conclusions can be made: the “happiness” for the antagonist of the fairy tale, Harry, is friendship. The author of the work has pointed out the following: Harry feels happy when he has presents from his friends; Harry felt happy because his best friends were his family; Harry feels happy because his friends helped him to win the game; Hermione helps him with his homework; Harry feels happy that Hermione lies for him; Harry again feels happy about helping his friend; Harry feels happy when having adventures with best friends; Harry feels happy in having a friend to share with his happiness; Harry was happy to be accepted by other children; taking risk in order to protect his friend; friendship helps Harry to reveal his talents that makes him feel happy; Harry feels happy from getting the support from his friends; for Harry is supporting his friends; Harry is sharing with his friends; Harry is happy when making right decisions in choosing a friend; Harry feels happy when he can have a good time with friend.

Atslēgas vārdi: Harry Potter, happiness.

The name of the article is The Concept of Happiness in Harry Potter. The aim of the present article is to reveal the way the concept “happiness” is presented in a literary fairy tale Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone written by J. K. Rowling.

It seems necessary to remind the general plot of a fairy tale to underline the importance of the concept of “happiness” in the context of a given book. The name of the book is “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s stone” written by J. K. Rowling. The book describes the adventures of the young wizard Harry Potter and his best friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger who are students at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. During the story Harry tries to overcome the evil wizard Lord Voldemort. He tried to conquer the wizarding world and subjugate non-magical people (muggles).

Before coming to the analysis of the ‘happiness’ representations it is important to identify what is meant by the word ‘happiness’. In order to find out the meaning of happiness, definitions of happiness were pointed out from different dictionaries. Thus, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary the happiness is 1) obsolete: good fortune: prosperity; 2) a state of well-being and contentment: joy or, pleasurable or satisfying experience; 3) felicity, aptness. (Merriam-Webster dictionary 2011) The Oxford Dictionary and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English provide the same definition of happiness. They say that happiness is 1) the state of being happy. (The Oxford Dictionary 2011) (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 2003:738) According to Cambridge dictionary happiness is 1) the feeling of being happy. (Cambridge Dictionary 2011)

Thus, there can be pointed out several definitions of 'happiness': 1) obsolete: good fortune: prosperity; 2) a state of well-being and contentment: joy or, pleasurable or satisfying experience; 3) felicity, aptness; 4) the state of being happy; 5) the feeling of being happy. In conclusion, happiness in its old meaning is to have a good fortune, to live in prosperity. That is, in former times the word happiness was referred to the material well-being. Later, the meaning changes from material state of human being into the inner state of a human being. In modern society, 'happiness' means to be happy or, to feel happy, or, to feel joy or having a pleasurable or satisfying experience.

To answer the research question of the present article: What is the concept of happiness in modern literary fairy tale? There were pointed out situations for being happy. From the Rowling introduces Harry by presenting us his family. The author tells us about Harry's unhappy state. He is always mistreated: his food, shelter, and clothing were all very limited. When the Dursley's were having for dinner roast pork, Harry was given only 'two slices of bread and a lump of cheese' (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998:10). While Dudley, Harry's cousin, had two rooms in the house, 'one, where Dudley slept, and one, where Dudley kept all the toys and things that wouldn't fit into his first bedroom (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998: 37). But Harry slept in a "cupboard under the stairs". (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998: 19)

1) Harry's life changed when he left his house in order to go to the wizard's school. On the way to the school he meets his future friends for the first time. One of the main themes in the literary fairy tale presented is the friendship. Harry never had friends, but still he wanted to have some, and he obviously knew what a friendship should be like. It is clearly seen from the short conversation with Malfoy, where he said: "'You'll soon find out some wizarding families are much better than others, Potter. You don't want to go making friends with the wrong sort. I can help you there.'" He held out his hand to shake Harry's, but Harry didn't take it. "I think I can tell who the wrong sort is for myself, thanks," he said coolly." (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998:71) So, the conclusion can be made that the first motif of being happy is making right decisions in choosing a friend.

2) Ron, a friend of Harry, was from a very poor family, besides this, he has a sister and three brothers. When they were proposed to buy some sweets Ron hadn't got any money, and he felt ashamed of it. Harry told Ron that "he'd never had any money in his life until a month ago, and he told Ron so, all about having to wear Dudley's old clothes and never getting proper birthday presents. This seemed to cheer Ron up." (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998:65) So, the second motif for being happy for Harry is supporting his friends.

3)“Go on, have a pasty,” said Harry, who had never had anything to share before or, indeed, anyone to share it with. It was a nice feeling, sitting there with Ron, eating their way through all Harry’s pasties, cakes, and candies (the sandwiches lay forgotten). ” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998:67) It can be pointed out that the third motif of being happy for Harry is sharing with his friends.

4) After sharing with the friend “They had a good time eating the Every Flavor Beans. Harry got toast, coconut, baked bean, strawberry, curry, grass, coffee, sardine, and was even brave enough to nibble the end off a funny gray one Ron wouldn’t touch, which turned out to be pepper. ” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998:68) The next motif for being happy could be having a good time with friend.

5) Harry knows that friends need to protect each other. Together, they become braver and more self-confident ever. Malfoy insulting Ron’s family have met with an unexpected reaction, as he was together with his two strong friends. ““Say that again,” Ron said, his face as red as his hair. “Oh, you’re going to fight us, are you?” Malfoy sneered. “Unless you get out now,” said Harry, more bravely than he felt, because Crabbe and Goyle were a lot bigger than him or Ron.” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998:72) Harry feels glad and happy when protecting his friend.

6) When coming to Hogwarts Harry became very popular, because he was the boy who survived. Harry noticed that not all were happy about his popularity, and in particular, it was professor Snape, the teacher of Potion’s lesson. Therefore, “It was lucky that Harry had tea with Hagrid to look forward to, because the Potions lesson turned out to be the worst thing that had happened to him so far.” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998:89) So, Harry feels happy from getting the support from his friends.

7) After Malfoy stole Neville’s remembrall Harry decided to help a friend and return him a ball. (a small ball made of glass) “He mounted the broom and kicked hard against the ground and up, up he soared; air rushed through his hair, and his robes whipped out behind him — and in a rush of fierce joy he realized he’d found something he could do without being taught — this was easy, this was *wonderful*. ” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998:97) Friendship helps Harry to reveal his talents that makes him feel happy.

8) Trying to protect Ron Weasley, Malfoy makes Harry to participate in dangerous wizard’s duel. “I’d take you on anytime on my own,” said Malfoy. “Tonight, if you want. Wizard’s duel. Wands only — no contact. What’s the matter? Never heard of a wizard’s duel before, I suppose?” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998: 100) Harry is taking risk in order to protect his friend. This makes him happy.

9) Throughout the story Harry Potter and his best friend Ron and Hermione have different adventures. As they always stuck together and helped each other no matter what, they returned to their room safe and happy about what they were doing. “Malfoy couldn’t believe his eyes when he saw that Harry and Ron were still at Hogwarts the next day, looking tired but perfectly cheerful. Indeed, by the next morning Harry and Ron thought that meeting the three-headed dog had been an excellent adventure, and they were quite keen to have another one. ” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998: 108) So, Harry feels happy when having adventures with best friends.

10) When revealing his ability in playing Quidditch, Harry was accepted in Gryffindor Quidditch team. After he received a package with a new broom, “Harry had difficulty hiding his glee as he handed the note to Ron to read.” Harry feels happy in having a friend to share with his happiness. Furthermore, Harry was happy to be accepted by other children, as he wasn’t accepted in his former school, because everyone was afraid of his cousin.

11) Having an own broom in the first year of studies, was a violation of rules in Hogwarts. However, the Harry’s case was an exception, as Harry was in a school team. “Harry and Ron headed upstairs, smothering their laughter at Malfoy’s obvious rage and confusion.” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998: 109) Harry felt happy for Malfoy wasn’t able to make the teacher to take off points from Gryffindor. (a group of people, where good magicians study)

14) Another case when Harry feels braver and stronger can be pointed out in the episode with the troll who threatened Hermione’s life. “Harry then did something that was both very brave and very stupid: He took a great running jump and managed to fasten his arms around the troll’s neck from behind.” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998: 116) Thus, Harry again feels happy about helping his friend.

15) After the incident with the troll, and breaking a set of strict school rules, it was for sure that Harry and Ron will get a severe punishment by taking off points from the Gryffindors. When they were asked about what happened “Harry was speechless. Hermione was the last person to do anything against the rules, and here she was, pretending she had, to get them out of trouble. It was as if Snape had started handing out sweets.” (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone 1998: 118) Here it is pointed out that Harry feels happy that Hermione lies for him. And furthermore, he knew how hard it was for her to step over herself and lie to the professor. But from that moment on, Hermione Granger became their friend.

16) It was really lucky that Harry now had Hermione as a friend. He didn’t know how he’d have got through all his homework without her. Because he was busy with the

preparation for his first Quidditch play. Thus, Harry feels happiness, because his best friend Hermione helps him with his homework.

17) Harry's friends were supporting him during his first game. During the game "suddenly, people were pointing up at Harry all over the stands. His broom had started to roll over and over. There was someone who was using his magic over Harry. Considered it to be Snape, Hermione reached him, pulled out her wand, and whispered a few, well-chosen words. Bright blue flames shot from her wand onto the hem of Snape's robes." (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998: 125) Harry won the game, with the help of Hermione. Therefore, Harry feels happy because his friends helped him to win the game.

18) After Harry had won the game Malfoy, jealous and angry, had gone back to taunting Harry about having no proper family. But Harry did not pay any attention to that, because he was happy as his friends were besides him. In other words, Harry felt happy because his best friends were his family. Another episode that proves that Harry feels happy without his family, is the time before Christmas holidays. He was staying at school, as his aunt and uncle did not want to see him at their house and to "spoil" the holidays. Nevertheless "he didn't feel sorry for himself at all; this would probably be the best Christmas he'd ever had. Ron and his brothers were staying, too, because Mr. and Mrs. Weasley were going to Romania to visit Charlie." (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998: 128)

19) "On Christmas Eve, Harry went to bed looking forward to the next day for the food and the fun, but not expecting any presents at all. When he woke early in the morning, however, the first thing he saw was a small pile of packages at the foot of his bed." (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998: 131) Harry felt happy and surprised because he'd got presents from his friends for the first time in his life. Thus, Harry feels happy of having presents from his friends.

20) While unpacking his presents, Harry found one from Ron's Weasley mother. "Hey, look — Harry's got a Weasley sweater, too!"-said twin brothers, who had the same sweaters too. Harry felt happy as he was considered to be Weasleys' family member. It was said, that "it had been Harry's best Christmas day ever". (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone 1998: 133)

Having done the research the conclusion can be made. The book 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' written by J. K. Rowling is a literary fairy tale. The analysis was carried out by implying the structural analysis presented by pointing out the situations of being happy. Thus, the following conclusions can be made: the "happiness" for the antagonist of the

fairy tale, Harry, is friendship. The author of the work has pointed out the following: Harry feels happy when:

- having presents from his friends;
- Harry felt happy because his best friends were his family;
- Harry feels happy because his friends helped him to win the game;
- Hermione helps him with his homework;
- Harry feels happy that Hermione lies for him;
- Harry again feels happy about helping his friend;
- Harry feels happy when having adventures with best friends.
- Harry feels happy in having a friend to share with his happiness;
- Harry was happy to be accepted by other children;
- taking risk in order to protect his friend;
- Friendship helps Harry to reveal his talents that makes him feel happy;
- Harry feels happy from getting the support from his friends;
- for Harry is supporting his friends;
- Harry is sharing with his friends;
- Harry is happy when making right decisions in choosing a friend;
- Harry feels happy when he can have a good time with friend.

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