

**REFERENTIAL MEANING OF SUPERHEROES' NAME IN
MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE MOVIES**

A GRADUATING PAPER

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining
The Bachelor Degree in English Literature**



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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

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REFERENTIAL MEANING OF SUPERHEROES' NAME IN MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE MOVIES

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to analyze the naming process of the Superheroes' name and to identify the types of superhero characters in Marvel Cinematic Universe movies. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. The research data are taken from superheroes' names in 21 MCU movies. This data is analyzed by using a referential meaning theory. The theory is used to identify the naming process based on the types of a superhero character. The results of the research are: (1) Naming process of superheroes' name in MCU movies shows the most of names meaning based on the prominent characteristic of the superhero. While the naming process based on the place of origin, similarity characteristic, material, and imitation of sound is only used a small part. (2) Superheroes' names in MCU movies have clear references and meanings. References used to refer to superhero types based on their strength.

Keywords: *Marvel Cinematic Universe, Superheroes' Name, Type of Superhero, Referential Meaning, Naming Process*

REFERENTIAL MEANING OF SUPERHEROES' NAME IN MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE MOVIES

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis proses penamaan nama superhero dan mengidentifikasi tipe-tipe karakter superhero dalam film-film Marvel Cinematic Universe. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Data penelitian ini diambil dari nama-nama superhero di 21 film MCU. Data ini di analisis dengan menggunakan teori makna referensial. Teori ini digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi proses penamaan berdasarkan tipe karakter superhero. Hasil dari penelitian ini yaitu: (1) Proses penamaan nama superhero dalam film-film MCU memperlihatkan makna nama superhero. Proses penamaan yang paling banyak berdasarkan sifat-sifat superhero yang menonjol, sedangkan proses penamaan berdasarkan tempat asal, kesamaan ciri, bahan, dan tiruan bunyi hanya dipakai sebagian kecil. (2) Nama superhero dalam film-film MCU memiliki referensi dan makna yang jelas. Referensi yang digunakan mengacu pada tipe-tipe superhero berdasarkan kekuatannya.

Kata kunci: *Marvel Cinematic Universe, Nama Superhero, Tipe Superhero, Makna Referensial, Proses Penamaan*

MOTTO

Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease (QS Al-Insyirah: 6)

The more you give, the more you will get!

Win without bragging, lose without complaining!



DEDICATION

This graduating paper is dedicated to:

Almamater

English Literature Department

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Yogyakarta, July 4th 2019

The Researcher



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Language is one of the human needs to communicate. It cannot be separated from all human activities as a society. According to Hornby (1995: 662), language is the system of sounds and words used by humans to express their thoughts and feelings. The expression of thought, for instance, can be seen in the mass media. It means that language is the biggest part of mass media to attract attention. Cangara (2006: 119) argues that media is used to convey messages from speakers to audiences, while the understanding of mass media itself is a tool used to delivered messages from any sources to audiences using communication tools such as newspapers, movies, radio and television. Therefore, the movie is one of the tools used to delivered message to society in a different way. In other words, a movie is part of the mass media.

Refers to McQuail (2011: 35), as mass media, movie is part of the response to leisure time, time off, and an answer how to spend family leisure time that is affordable. From the McQuail statement above, movie has function as entertainment platform to the society. Movie becomes one of the best-selling, that makes many companies start to producing more entertainment movies in this 20th-century. An entertainment movie that becomes one of the most sought is a superhero movie.

One of the biggest companies that has made many superhero-themed is *Marvel*. *Marvel* is a superhero producing company that is different from other

companies. Superhero stories in Marvel are imaginative fiction that has a vast world with various images of the galaxy planets in the solar system and its complex problems. While the other superhero producing companies are usually just fixated in the story of self-problems in the superhero figure itself. From the website (marvel.com: 2019), *Marvel* is a wholly-owned subsidiary of *The Walt Disney Company*, it is one of the world's most prominent character-based entertainment companies. It has more than 8,000 characters featured in a variety of media over seventy-five years. Part of the *Marvel* that produces movies based on *Marvel's* comic characters is Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU).

The Marvel Cinematic Universe is a shared universe created by *Marvel Studios*. MCU is comprised mainly of films independently made by *Marvel Studios*, that are always set within this same MCU, much like *Marvel* has done with their comics. In *Marvel*, the stories of superhero characters have many versions. But from this MCU, the superhero stories that are presented have a story that only taken from the original version of its creator, Stan Lee. Thus, the flow of movies produced by the MCU from the beginning until now is connective and moving forward.

Based on the website (marvel.com: 2019), MCU has produced 21 titles of the movie from 2008 to March 2019 through 3 phases. The phase one has 6 movies, namely: *Iron Man* (2008), *The Incredible Hulk* (2008), *Iron Man 2* (2010), *Thor* (2011), *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011), and *The Avengers* (2012). The phase two has 6 movies, namely: *Iron Man 3* (2013), *Thor: The Dark World* (2013), *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014), *Guardians of The Galaxy* (2014), *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015), and *Ant-Man* (2015). The phase three has 9

movies, namely: *Captain America: Civil War* (2016), *Doctor Strange* (2016), *Guardians of The Galaxy 2* (2017), *Spider-Man: Homecoming* (2017), *Thor: Ragnarok* (2017), *Black Panther* (2018), *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018), *Ant-Man and the Wasp* (2018), and *Captain Marvel* (2019).

From those 21 titles of the movie, there are many names of *Marvel* superhero characters released. Coogan and Rosenberg (2013: 3) argue that superheroes have nicknames and costumes that are characteristic. Someone's name can be the characteristic of that person, even the characteristic of someone can be the name for them. It is common in a particular society. A name can be taken from how one looks of things and how one does. It may sound harsh and unpleasant, especially when used by people who hate someone who is called. It can be heard and felt spoiled when used by people who love and care for that person. A name can be characterized by a personality or characteristic of someone that is easy to remember. Bald Man, it can be used to the person who is bald. However, a name can also be interpreted as an *alias* or pseudonym, for example, Rooster of The East is for the Sultan Hasanuddin because of his courage to against the Dutch colonialists.

In MCU movies, some of the superhero characters use real names, some of them use names with certain terms, even some of them has both real name and certain names. Superheroes' names with particular term are very diverse. The names of superhero characters are sometimes obtained from animal names, plant parts, costumes, even from their abilities.

The researcher takes superheroes' name to be the data of the research because it is very challenging. Not only because it is in a big amount, but also has varied in the meaning and the shape. In fact, a fictional superhero has already existed since ancient age. A fictional superhero has existed for a long time, for example, the Hercules superhero. Hercules is a mythical superhero in ancient Greece. He is the son of Zeus. From his childhood to a superhero, he was still named as Hercules. His name does not change. At that time, the superheroes were named according to their original name. Today, more and more fictional superheroes are created. *Marvel* is one of the companies that creates many superhero characters. Giving the name of a fictional superhero on *Marvel* is based on several factors. It happens because of the development of the era and many existing technologies. The superheroes' names are created based on technological developments. Even superheroes have various names according to their abilities, conditions, and shapes such as Iron Man, Spider-Man, Rocket Raccoon, etc. Knowing the referential of the superheroes' name is important to make the viewer easier in understanding every superhero character. Thus, this research is important to be done.

In this research, the researcher analyzes superheroes' name with certain terms based on the classification of superhero types. The superheroes' name and the types of superheroes are very related. To understand the name of superhero characters, the researcher needs to analyze the types based on the strength. The ability of the superhero is very different, such as flying, martial arts, using weapons, and even creating weapons. This will determine the types of superheroes.

In every superheroes' name in these movies have its own referential. From MCU movies, the researcher is capable to relate with the Islamic perspective. Islam gives thought about the giving name and it has been stated in Hadith:

عَنْ ابْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ ، قَالَ : قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : ” مَا اسْمُكَ ؟ قُلْتُ : حَزْنٌ ، قَالَ : بَلْ أَنْتَ سَهْلٌ ، قَالَ : لَا أُغَيِّرُ اسْمًا سَمَّانِيهِ أَبِي ” ، قَالَ ابْنُ الْمُسَيَّبِ : فَفِينَا تِلْكَ الْحَزُونَةُ بَعْدُ

From Sa'id bin Musayyab, from his father, from his grandfather said, Rasulullah asked me, "What is your name?" and Sa'id's grandfather answered, "My name is Hazn (sadness)" Rasulullah said, "But you are Sahl (ease/friendliness)" Then Sa'id's grandfather said, "I will not change the name given by my father" Then Ibn Al-Musayyab said, "After that trouble always befalls us" (HR. Bukhari no. 5837; Imam Ibnu Hajar Al Asqalani, Fathul Bari, 10/591)

In hadith above contains a prohibition on using and giving a bad name. From Islamic perspective, the names are prayers. When giving a good name, it will be good. When giving a name with something that is not good, it is going to be bad. But the name can also be given according to the person. It includes giving names in a superhero's names in MCU.

Pateda (2010: 125) states that giving a referential meaning of a word on the other side cannot be separated from the understanding of the meaning of the giver itself to the referent characteristics that he refers to. Superheroes' names are taken from various sources, such as names of animals, plants, jobs, and others. The names of these superhero characters will be the object of research by the researcher.

The common goal is to raise awareness of giving a name for others with the goodness in all aspect and benefit for many social elements. Especially, to understand the superheroes' names by knowing their meanings, and their types according to the strengths of superheroes. To limit the research, the researcher focuses on the superhero' names that have certain terms in Marvel Cinematic Universe movies by using referential meaning theory.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background of the research above, there are two problem statements that will be discussed in this research. They are:

1. What are the types of the superhero in MCU movies?
2. How are the reference meanings of superheroes' name in MCU movies?

1.3. Objectives of Study

Related to the problem of research, the objectives of study are to identify the reference meaning of superheroes' name and the type of superheroes in the MCU movies from 2008 to March 2019 by analyzing the meaning of superheroes' name with referential meaning theory.

1.4. Significances of Study

This research is expected to have benefits in two categories, theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is for the development of linguistics study. It testifies to the referential meaning theory which can be used to understand the reference of superheroes' name in MCU movies. Practically, this research can be beneficial as the reference for the next research in MCU movies or the object superheroes' name for students, lecturers, and the researcher.

1.5. Literature Review

The researcher finds some prior researches related to this research. The first thesis is written by Dimas Aditya Krisna from Bandung Institute of Technology entitled “Revitalisasi Karakter Komik Superhero Lokal Indonesia di Tengah-tengah Dominasi Budaya Komik Global”. This research gives a point of view that people need a change in effort to revitalize Indonesian superheroes characters through new adaptation, new point of view and new visualization for the local superheroes characters. Using the qualitative methods and literacy study in some vintage superheroes comics, researcher tries to offer some alternative solutions to answer how to use visual strategy in order to revitalize local superhero characters. This research gives alternative solutions to develop new visualization for Indonesian superheroes characters by doing character study, reconstruction and revisualization in Indonesian superheroes characters with new visual style characters. Thus, it will be received by the new generations.

The second is “Makna Referensial pada Nama Toko di Kecamatan Pedan Kabupaten Klaten” by Ika Setyaningsih from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. This research discussed about how is the process of giving a name and how is the referential meaning of shops at Sub-District Pedan, Klaten Regency. Ika used a qualitative method in collecting data by using observation and dialogue. The result indicated that: (1) the naming process of the shop in the Pedan District, the prominence of its meaning is prioritized on the personal name of the shop owner. The naming process based on properties, objects, places, and numbers is only a small part. (2) The names of shops in the Pedan, Klaten Regency have clear

references and meanings. The reference used is referring to the name of the shop owner, properties, objects, places, and numbers. (3) Based on the referential meaning of the shop name analyzed, there are several store names that experience a shift in referential meaning.

The third is written by Agus Riyanto from Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto. This thesis entitled “Analisis Makna Referensial dan Makna Nonreferensial pada Nama-nama Dusun di Kecamatan Tonjong Kabupaten Brebes Tahun 2015”. The aim of this research is to describe the village names belong to referential and non-referential meaning. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative and taken from the name of villages in Tonjong, Brebes. The result of the research shows that the name of villages with referential meaning are 35 villages and the village with non-referential meaning is only one village.

The fourth thesis is written by Nanang Rahmat Hidayat from Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto. This thesis is entitled “Analisis Jenis Penamaan dan Jenis Makna Nama Panggilan Unik pada Remaja di Desa Losari Kecamatan Rawalo Kabupaten Banyumas”. The aim of this research is to describe naming types and meaning types of teenagers’ unique appellation in Losari Village Rawalo sub district Banyumas Regency. The method used is descriptive qualitative method. The data is taken from 50 teenagers’ appellations in Losari Village Rawalo Sub District Banyumas Regency. The result shows that there are 27 data if naming types that are based on special characteristics such as physical characteristics (18 data) and character (9 data). There is only one data that is based on the hometown. There are 13 data that are based on the similarity appellation, 2 data of short term

appellation, 6 data of finding appellation that consist of five data of 'plesetan' appellation and a data of favorite appellation. The meaning types consist of 23 data of denotative meaning, 2 data of connotative meaning, 50 data of referential meaning and no non-referential meaning.

The fifth thesis entitled "Entertainment Assembled: The Marvel Cinematic Universe, A Case Study in Transmedia" by Drew Menard from Liberty University. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the extent to which Marvel has applied the principles of transmedia to its Cinematic Universe, to investigate how strongly it tied its various media installments together into one compelling, overarching grand narrative. It is no secret that the movies that make up the MCU are set within the same fictional universe. Furthermore, Marvel has incorporated a serial television series into this grand narrative and incorporated secondary elements, including short films and comic books, in order to take audiences deeper. This method resembles an emerging topic of interest in communication studies, that of transmedia storytelling (often referred to simply as transmedia). This research found that the MCU is needed saturated with connections between its individual stories, across all media platform. In short, not only is Marvel a leader in terms of box office success, it is a narrative innovator, a frontrunner in the emerging realm of transmedia storytelling.

All the researches above have similarities and differences with this research. From the first to forth they discuss the same theories, the types of superhero and referential meaning, but they used the different focus of the object. The fifth research has same object that is taken MCU as the object but uses different theory

to analyze. This research will be different from those five priors because, in this research, the researcher uses superheroes' name in MCU and analyzes the object using types of superhero and referential meaning.

1.6. Theoretical Approach

As mentioned in the scope of the study, this research focuses on superheroes' name. Name is an expression used in how people address others. A name used to the person when people are talking to. It is used to define the character and the ability of the superhero character. To analyze the superheroes' name, the researcher uses the theory of referential meaning that will be explained in detail below:

1.6.1. Referential Meaning

Referential meaning is the meaning of the referral, the word is referring directly to objects, events, attributes, or a particular relationship that can be seen or imagined. Djajasudarma (1999: 11) explained, referential meaning is a meaning that is directly related to reality or reference, the referential meaning is also called cognitive meaning because it has a reference. Superheroes' name in the MCU movies have variety names refer to the basic ability or history of the superhero, as Pateda (2010: 125) stated that referential meaning is the meaning directly related to the reference designated by the word. From the definitions above, it can be concluded that referential meaning is a meaning directly related to the reference.

In relation to the name of superhero characters in MCU movies can be quoted from the opinion of Suwandi. He presents various types of naming as (1) imitation of sound, (2) part of the whole, (3) prominent character, (4) inventor of

creator, (5) place of origin, (6) material, (7) similarity characteristic, (8) abbreviation, (9) new naming (Suwandi, 2008: 136).

1.6.2. Types of Superhero

To explain more the process of naming of superhero characters in MCU movies, Aditya (2008: 25) states that the superhero characters have 15 types based on the strength and the peculiarity of the heroes, they are Super strength, Tanker, Blaster, Marksman, Mage, Gadgeteer, Armored Hero, Dominus, Speedster, Mentalist, Elementalist, Shape-shifter, Size Changer, Acrobatic, Martial Artist.

1.7. Method of Research

This part presents the methods that are used by the researcher to analyze the names. Some kinds of systematic steps in this part will help the researcher to determine the purpose of the research, they are: Types of Research, Data Source, Data Collection Technique, and Data Analyze Technique.

1.7.1. Types of Research

The type of this research uses qualitative research design. According to Khotari (2009: 5), a qualitative research design is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions, and behavior. In other words, it is a method to explore and understand the meaning which is known by some groups of people comes from social problems or humanity (Creswell, 2010: 4). Meanwhile, in this research, the researcher uses library research to analyze the data and uses some references to support analysis of the data. Library research is a research activity done by collecting the data from some sources either from a library or other places (Nawawi, 2005: 31).

1.7.2. Data Source

Arikunto (2002: 67) states that the source of data refers to the subject from which the data are obtained. Based on that, the source of data in this research is the superheroes' name of the superhero characters in MCU movies from 2008 to March 2019 which amounts 22 superheroes' name. According to the movies, there are many various types of superhero used to show the meaning of the superheroes' name. That makes the researcher challenged to choose the MCU to be the main source of data.

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique

The data collection steps include of setting the boundaries for the research, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents and audiovisual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information (Creswell, 2010: 183). The data in this research is superheroes' name that equipped by audiovisual recording materials and focuses on the addressing term, so the researcher uses the documentation method in collecting data. Koentjaraningrat (1981: 173) says that a method to collect data through the documents, artifact, a collection of the photographs, and other written data is called documentation. The steps of collecting the data in this research are:

- 1) The researcher watches the movies of the research closely and repeatedly
- 2) The researcher notes the names and characteristics of the superheroes appeared from the MCU movies, this is as the main data
- 3) The researcher identifies the superheroes' name with the referential meaning theory

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis is an attempt by researchers to directly deal with the problems contained in the data. The researcher takes referential identity method from Einar Haugen to analyze the data by using the determinants that are outside, regardless and not part of language (Sudaryanto, 1993: 13). There are some steps in analyzing the data of this research. They are:

- 1) The researcher presents the data in a table of the superheroes' name
- 2) The researcher classifies the data into the superheroes' name and its types
- 3) The researcher analyzes the data by using referential meaning theory
- 4) The researcher makes a conclusion

1.8. Paper Organization

This research is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is an introduction. This chapter contains general information in this research and consists on background of study, research questions, objectives of study, significances of study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter is a theoretical approach that explains about how the researcher applies the theories and the object in this research. The third chapter is discussion that explains how applies theories in analyzing the naming process of the superheroes' name. The last chapter is conclusion and suggestion. In this chapter, the researcher makes conclude and gives suggestion for other researchers in the future.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter provides the conclusion of this research. It is the answer to the research questions presented by the researcher in the first chapter. On the other side, this chapter also provides a suggestion for future research.

4.1. Conclusion

After analyzing all of the data from Superheroes' name, the researcher concludes the referential naming process of superheroes' names consist of five groups: imitation of sound, prominent character, place of origin, material, and similarity characteristic. From 22 superheroes' names in MCU movies, the researcher finds naming process based on the Imitation of sound in one superheroes' name, it is Groot. In the prominent character are 18 superheroes' names, they are Ant-Man, Black Panther, Falcon, Hawkeye, Spider-Man, Wasp, Scarlet Witch, Doctor Strange, Winter Soldier, Captain Marvel, Hulk, War Machine, Black Widow, Star-Lord, Drax the Destroyer, Vision, Groot, and Captain America. While based on the place of origin is one superheroes' name, it is Captain America. Based on the material are two superheroes' names, Iron Man and Quicksilver. The last is based on the similarity characteristic is 2 superheroes' names, Rocket Raccoon and Mantis. Because of Captain America, Quicksilver and Groot have two naming process, thus they are put in two groups.

4.2. Suggestion

The researcher realizes that this graduating paper is far from perfect. There are a lot of mistakes, from human errors to minimum explanation. The researcher suggests for the future researchers who are interested to analyze this Marvel Cinematic Universe or superheroes' name, they can discuss it deeper.

Furthermore, the readers can take a moral value from this research. Superheroes' name selected is name that the nicknames of the superheroes. They have the original name in their life, but superheroes' name in this research are taken from their history, their abilities, and their appearance. This can be applied in everyday life, that when giving a nickname to someone else, give a name with a good name, because a good name will affect him. Name is a prayer. The hope that a good name will make people who are named be better. The researcher hopes that this research will be useful for the readers. By understanding the superheroes' character from the name, the strength and history will be able to better understand the MCU movies that will be watched.

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APPENDIX

Group	Superheroes' name	Types	Naming Process
Animal	Ant-Man	size changer, armored hero	Prominent character
	Black Panther	armored hero, martial artist	Prominent character
	Falcon	marksman, blaster, armored hero, martial artist	Prominent character
	Hawkeye	blaster, marksman, martial artist, acrobatic	Prominent character
	Mantis	mentalist	Similarity characteristic
	Rocket Raccoon	marksman	Similarity characteristic
	Spider-Man	blaster, acrobatic	Prominent character
	Wasp	size changer, blaster, martial artist, armored hero	Prominent character
Occupation	Scarlet Witch	blaster, mage, martial artist	Prominent character
	Captain America	martial artist, acrobatic	Prominent character, Place of origin
	Doctor Strange	mage, martial artists,	Prominent character
	Winter Soldier	marksman, martial artist	Prominent character

	Captain Marvel	super strength, blaster, acrobatic, martial artist	Prominent character
Object	Hulk	tanker, shape-sifter	Prominent character
	Iron Man	blaster, marksman, gadeteer, armored hero	Material
	War Machine	blaster, marksman, martial artist, armored hero	Prominent character
	Groot	size changer	Imitation of sound, prominent character
States	Black Widow	acrobatic, martial artist, marksman	Prominent character
	Star Lord	marksman, martial artist	Prominent character
Character	Drax the Destroyer	acrobatic, martial artist, tanker	Prominent character
	Vision	blaster, elemental	Prominent character
	Quicksilver	speedster, elemental, martial artist	Material, prominent character

Table 2: the data of types of Group, Superheroes' Names, Types of Superhero, and the Nomenclature