

**A SEMANTIC STUDY OF MIDDLE VOICE IN  
A CHILD FAIRY TALE ENTITLED *SNOW WHITE***

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**Abstrak**

*Studi ini berjudul “A Semantic Study of Middle Voice in A Child Fairy Tale Entitled Snow White” yang bertujuan untuk menganalisis tipe-tipe diatesis medial yang digunakan didalam sebuah dongeng anak-anak yang berjudul Snow White serta guna mengetahui tipe dominan diatesis medial yang ditemukan di dalam dongeng Snow White ini.*

*Data dalam studi ini diambil dari sebuah dongeng terkenal yang berjudul Snow White yang diunduh melalui <http://lightupyourbrain.com/the-story-of-snow-white/>. Metode yang dipergunakan untuk mengumpulkan data adalah studi kepustakaan dan dokumentasi sedangkan dalam menganalisis data mempergunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif berlandaskan teori dari Kemmer (1993).*

*Berdasarkan hasil analisis ditemukan bahwa sembilan dari sepuluh tipe diatesis medial ditemukan pada dongeng ini yaitu medial perawatan tubuh, medial perubahan postur tubuh, medial non-translational, medial translational, medial tak langsung, medial emosi, medial kognisi, medial bersifat spontan, dan medial yang menunjukkan tindakan emosi. Selain itu, analisis lainnya menunjukkan bahwa medial translational adalah tipe dominan diatesis medial yang ditemukan di dalam dongeng ini dengan jumlah keseluruhan sebelas kata kerja.*

***Kata kunci:*** *diatesis medial, kata kerja, aktor*

## **1. Background of the Study**

Voice is a grammatical category that expresses the semantic functions attributed to the referents of a clause. It indicates whether the subject is an actor, patient or recipient. Voice is understood here as the pattern of the form-function correlation along the parameters pertaining to the evolutionary properties of an action. Different voice categories correspond to different conceptualizations of how an action evolves (Shibatani and Artawa, 2003). Voice can be divided into three, they are active voice,

middle voice and passive voice. When the subject is the agent of the action, the verb is in the active voice. When the subject is the patient or target of the action, the verb is said to be in the passive voice. Middle voice is when the subject is the actor and the action conducted by actor refers back to the actor.

Middle voice is classified into ten types based on the semantic action shown by the verbs, proposed by Kemmer (1993), they are (1) Grooming or body care actions middle, (2) Change in body posture middle, (3) Non-translational motion middle, (4) Translational motion middle, (5) Indirect middle, (6) Emotion middle, (7) Cognitive middle, (8) Spontaneous middle, (9) Naturally reciprocal events middle, and (10) Action of emotion.

This topic was chosen as the object of this study was based on the consideration that middle voice is a new interesting topic to be discussed and mostly students analyzed active voice and passive voice, but none chose middle voice as their topic.

## **2. Problems of the Study**

Based on the background described above, there are some problems which are formulated as follows:

- 1) What types of middle voice are used in a child fairy tale entitled *Snow White*?
- 2) What is the dominant type of middle voice found in a child fairy tale entitled *Snow White*?

## **3. Aims of the Study**

This study was aimed to analyze the types of middle voice used in a child fairy tale entitled *Snow White*, and to investigate the dominant type of middle voice found in a children fairy tale entitled *Snow White*.

#### **4. Research Method**

In the research method, there are three steps that would be followed; they are data source, method and technique of collecting data and method and technique of analyzing data.

##### **4.1 Data Source**

The data in this study were taken from a children fairy tale entitled *Snow White*. This fairy tale was downloaded online from <http://lightupyourbrain.com/the-story-of-snow-white/>.

##### **4.2 Method and Technique of Collecting Data**

The method used to collect the data was by doing library research since there is no respondent item collected on process. Also, documentation method because the data were taken by writing and reading sources. In this study below, there were some techniques applied to collect the data:

1. The data source *Snow White* was downloaded online from <http://lightupyourbrain.com/the-story-of-snow-white/>.
2. The story was printed out.
3. The whole *Snow White* story was read thoroughly.
4. The verbs which belong to middle voice categories based on Kemmer's (1993) theory were taken.

##### **4.3 Method and Technique of Analyzing Data**

The method used for analyzing the data was qualitative method because all of the problems stated above needed to be analyzed descriptively. Practically, the techniques used to analyze the data are explained as follows: First, classifying the verbs according to the types of middle voice by Kemmer (1993). After classifying those verbs, choosing some verbs to be present in the thesis randomly. Furthermore, those verbs started to be analyzed using the theory of *Middle Voice Categories* by Kemmer (1993).

## 5. Discussion

Kemmer (1993) states that middle voice is a voice that indicates that the subject is the actor and the action conducted by actor refers back to the actor. Kemmer proposed middle voice is classified into ten types based on the semantic action shown by the verbs, they are (1) Grooming or body care actions middle, (2) Change in body posture middle, (3) Non-translational motion middle, (4) Translational motion middle, (5) Indirect middle, (6) Emotion middle, (7) Cognitive middle, (8) Spontaneous middle, (9) Naturally reciprocal events middle, and (10) Action of emotion.

### 5.1 Analysis of Middle Voice Types in *Snow White*

#### Analysis 1:

She **pricked** her finger with her needle

The verb *prick* in the sentence above can be found in the first paragraph of the story. *Prick* means to make a small hole in the skin so that it hurts or blood comes out (Hornby, 2005:1195).

In this story, a beautiful Queen sat beside the window. She was lonely since she always hoped for had a baby. That time the Queen pricked her finger with her needle coincidentally while she was looking at the falling snow. As result three drops of blood fell upon the snow.

According to Kemmer (1993), a verb can be said to belong to grooming or body care actions middle if it shows that the action affects the actor and there is no other person who is involved in the action. The action done by the actor must be related to the action of body care.

The verb *pricked* in the sentence above is an action acted only by the actor herself, there is no other person who did it. The Queen pricked her finger with needle and it affected herself. Because of that action, the result was that three drops of blood fell. It can be seen that the subject or actor did something with her body and the action is affected the actor too.

“Finger” is one part of body proved that the action occurred in the actor’s body. The result “three drops of blood fell” proved that the action affected the actor herself.

It can be concluded that the verb *prick* in this sentence belongs to grooming or body care action middle because the action acted by the Queen affected herself.

### **Analysis 2:**

She **climbed** the seven mountains

The sentence above belongs to paragraph twelve of the story. *Climb* is the keyword of this sentence. *Climbed* in this context means to go up something towards the top (Hornby, 2005:276).

In this story, Snow White step mother was very angry after hearing the fact that Snow White was still alive. She thought how she might kill Snow White. Then, she decided to paint her face and dressed herself like an old peddler woman, so that no one could recognize her. She climbed the seven mountains until she arrived at the dwarf’s house.

Kemmer (1993) stated that a verb can be categorized as translational motion middle if the activity conveyed by the verbs involves a transfer of position from one place to other place and the activity also requires the whole body of the actor to following the transfer position.

*Climb* in this sentence is an activity which requires a change of position of the actor’s whole body. Snow White step mother experienced a transfer of position as she had to go up the mountain to reach the dwarf’s house. The whole body of Snow White’s step mother is involved in this activity because it followed the transfer of position from her castle into the dwarf’s house

Therefore, from the description above it can be concluded that *climb* is considered translational motion middle because the whole body of Snow White step mother followed the transfer position from castle to dwarf’s house.

## 5.2 The Dominant Type of Middle Voice Found in *Snow White*

The table below shows the number of each type of middle voice found in the fairy tale *Snow White*.

No.	Type of Middle Voice	Sentence	Total
1.	Grooming or body care action middle	a. She <b>pricked</b> her finger with her needle b. She <b>painted</b> her face and <b>dressed</b> herself like an old peddler woman	3
2.	Change in body posture middle	a. A beautiful Queen <b>sat</b> beside her window b. She <b>stood</b> before her mirror c. Who has been <b>sitting</b> on my chair? d. Snow White <b>lying</b> upon the ground e. They <b>lifted</b> her gently f. She opened her eyes and <b>sat up</b> , alive once more	6
3.	Non-translational motion middle	a. Snow White <b>peeped</b> from the window b. She <b>held up</b> a bright-coloured one c. Snow White <b>looked out</b> of the window d. When the Queen heard these words she <b>shook</b> with rage e. <b>Stretched out</b> her hand	5
4.	Translational motion middle	a. <b>Take</b> the child <b>away</b> to the woods b. He bade her <b>run away</b> c. She had <b>run</b> on until she reached the little house d. She began to <b>run</b> e. The first <b>looked around</b> and saw that his bed was rumpled f. The others <b>looked around</b> and each one cried g. The dwarfs <b>went off</b> early in the morning h. She <b>climbed</b> the seven mountains climbed (3) i. She <b>went away</b>	11
5.	Indirect middle	She <b>took</b> a little food from each of the seven plates	1
6.	Emotion middle	a. The Queen was <b>horrified</b> b. Oh! How <b>frightened</b> she was c. She <b>trembled</b> at every leaf that rustled d. They cried aloud with <b>surprise</b> e. How <b>angry</b> she was f. They were very <b>grieved</b> g. The good little dwarfs <b>pitied</b> him h. How angry the wicked woman was then, and so <b>terrified</b> too i. She was very beautiful but so <b>haughty</b> j. They were so <b>pleased</b> with her beauty	10

7.	Cognitive middle	a. She did not <b>wish</b> to take everything away b. The Queen, <b>believing</b> , of course, that Snow White was dead	2
8.	Spontaneous middle	a. She could not breathe, but <b>fell down</b> upon the ground b. She <b>opened</b> her eyes	2
9.	Naturally reciprocal events middle	-	-
10.	Action of emotion	a. The little maid <b>begged</b> him to spare her life b. The good little dwarfs <b>warned</b> her to be careful to let no one into the house	2

From the table above it can be seen that translational middle is the most dominant type because there are eleven (11) verbs which belong to this type, they are *take away*, *run away*, *run* (2), *look around* (2), *went off*, *climb* (3), and *went away*. It is caused by many activities showing action of translational motion middle which require the transfer of position from one place to another place and it is followed by the whole body of the actor.

## 6. Conclusion

The analysis of type of middle voice in a child fairy tale entitled *Snow White* showed that only nine (9) types of middle voice occurred, they are grooming or body action middle, change in body posture middle, non-translational motion middle, translational motion middle, indirect middle, emotion middle, cognitive middle, spontaneous middle, and action of emotion. Unfortunately, one of the type that is naturally reciprocal events middle is not found in this story.

The dominant type of middle voice occurring in the story *Snow White* is translational motion middle with total eleven (11) verbs; those verbs are *take away*, *run away*, *run* (2), *look around* (2), *went off*, *climb* (3), and *went away*. It is caused by few verbs which appear more than one time. Another reason is because the story *Snow White* is full of activities done by the actor. Most those activities showed action of translational motion middle requiring the transfer of position from one place onto another place and it was followed by the whole body of the actor.

## 7. Bibliography

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