

Friendship, Courage, and Conflict in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001): A Dramatic Analysis

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Abstract

This study presents an analysis of character development and narrative conflict in the film *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001), directed by Chris Columbus and based on the novel by J.K. Rowling. The purpose of this study is to examine how the main characters, conflicts, and themes contribute to the development of the narrative and the delivery of moral messages in the film. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach using narrative analysis to interpret scenes, dialogues, and character actions presented in the film. The findings show that the main characters Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, and Ron Weasley demonstrate significant character development throughout the story. Harry develops from an insecure and passive child into a courageous and responsible individual, while Hermione and Ron contribute to the narrative through their intelligence, loyalty, and cooperation. The study also finds that the central conflict involving Lord Voldemort's attempt to obtain the Philosopher's Stone functions as the primary narrative driver that shapes the progression of the plot. In addition, several key themes are identified, including friendship, courage, moral choice, and sacrifice. These themes are conveyed through character interactions, important scenes, and symbolic elements within the film. Overall, the analysis indicates that *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* not only provides an engaging fantasy narrative but also communicates important moral values related to cooperation, responsibility, and ethical decision-making.

Keywords: Character Development; Conflict; Friendship; Moral Values; Harry Potter

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Introduction

Drama and film are important forms of artistic and literary expression that reflect human experiences, social values, and moral perspectives. Through characters, conflicts, and narrative structures, dramatic works allow audiences to understand different aspects of human life and relationships. Films, in particular, combine visual storytelling, dialogue, performance, and setting to communicate meaningful messages to viewers. Because of these elements, films can be analyzed not only as entertainment but also as narrative texts that reveal deeper themes related to identity, morality, and social interaction (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019).

One film that presents strong narrative elements and character development is *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001), directed by Chris Columbus and based on the novel written by J.K. Rowling. The film tells the story of Harry Potter, an orphaned boy who discovers that he is a wizard and begins studying at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. At Hogwarts, Harry forms friendships with Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley, and together they face various challenges that shape their personal growth. The film introduces audiences to a magical world while also presenting a narrative that explores friendship, courage, and moral responsibility.

The story begins with Harry living with the Dursley family, who treat him unfairly and limit his freedom. As a result, Harry grows up feeling isolated and uncertain about his identity. However, his life changes significantly when he learns about his magical background and enters Hogwarts. Within this new environment, Harry begins to discover his abilities and develop meaningful relationships with others. These experiences contribute to his personal transformation as he learns to confront challenges and accept greater responsibility.

Another important aspect of the narrative is the central conflict involving Lord Voldemort's attempt to regain power by obtaining the Philosopher's Stone. This magical object is believed to grant immortality and unlimited power. The presence of the stone creates tension throughout the story, as Harry and his friends gradually realize that someone is attempting to steal it. Their investigation leads them to confront a series of obstacles designed to protect the stone, which ultimately reveal the hidden threat within the school.

From a narrative perspective, conflict functions as an important element that drives the progression of the story and influences character development. Stanton (2007) explains that conflict is essential in shaping dramatic narratives because it creates tension and encourages characters to make decisions that define their identities. In *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, the conflict not only develops the plot but also allows the characters to demonstrate courage, loyalty, and cooperation. In addition to conflict, the film also presents several important themes. Friendship is one of the most dominant themes, as the relationship between Harry, Ron, and Hermione becomes the foundation for overcoming challenges. Their cooperation demonstrates that trust and teamwork are essential in facing difficult situations. Courage is another significant theme, illustrated by the characters' willingness to confront danger in order to protect others. Furthermore, the narrative highlights the importance of moral choices, emphasizing that a person's identity is shaped not only by their abilities but also by the decisions they make.

Previous studies on fantasy narratives have also emphasized the importance of character development and moral themes in shaping audience interpretation. Research suggests that fantasy stories often present universal values such as friendship, bravery, and ethical responsibility through the experiences of young protagonists (Brown, 2021; Williams, 2022). These narratives allow audiences to explore complex moral questions within imaginative storytelling contexts. Although the *Harry Potter* series has been widely discussed in literary and cultural studies, further analysis of character development and conflict in the first film remains valuable because it introduces the foundation of the entire narrative. Understanding how the initial story constructs character identity and narrative tension helps explain the development of the broader series.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the character development, narrative conflict, and thematic messages presented in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001). The analysis focuses on how the interactions among the main characters and the conflicts they encounter contribute to the overall narrative and moral messages of the film. Through this analysis, the study seeks to demonstrate that the film not only presents an engaging fantasy narrative but also communicates important values related to friendship, courage, and ethical decision-making.

Literature Review

a. Narrative and Film Analysis

Literary and film analysis are commonly used to examine how narratives reflect human experiences, cultural values, and moral perspectives. Films function as narrative texts that combine visual storytelling, dialogue, acting performance, and setting to communicate ideas and emotions to audiences. According to Bordwell and Thompson (2019), films present structured narratives that guide viewers through character actions, conflicts, and resolutions. Through narrative analysis, researchers can identify how storytelling techniques shape audience understanding and interpretation of dramatic works.

Narrative theory also emphasizes that stories typically follow structured patterns that organize events and conflicts within a coherent storyline. Todorov's narrative model explains that narratives often progress through several stages, including equilibrium, disruption, recognition, attempt to repair the damage, and restoration of a new equilibrium (Todorov, 1973). These stages illustrate how stories move from stability to conflict and eventually toward resolution. Recent studies on narrative structures in films also highlight the importance of storytelling techniques in building emotional engagement and audience understanding of character journeys (Li, 2024; Zhou & Bamman, 2024).

b. Characterization in Narrative Works

Characterization is a fundamental element in literary and dramatic analysis. Characterization refers to the process through which authors or filmmakers present and develop characters through dialogue, behavior, and interactions with other characters. Abrams and Harpham (2012) state that characters in literary works are interpreted through their speech, actions, and relationships within the narrative context.

Characters can be categorized as static or dynamic depending on whether they experience significant development throughout the story. Dynamic characters undergo noticeable transformation as they encounter conflicts and challenges, while static characters remain relatively unchanged (Stanton, 2007). In many narrative works, character development occurs as a result of interactions with other characters and responses to difficult situations.

Recent research in narrative studies emphasizes that character development is closely connected to psychological growth and identity formation within stories (Rahman, 2022; Kim, 2023). Through narrative conflicts and social interactions, characters gradually develop new perspectives, attitudes, and moral awareness. This process is particularly visible in coming-of-age narratives where young characters experience personal growth through challenges and relationships.

c. Conflict as the Driving Force of Narrative

Conflict is another essential element that shapes narrative development in drama and film. Conflict refers to the struggle between opposing forces that drives the progression of the story and motivates character actions. According to Stanton (2007), conflicts may appear in two forms: internal conflict, which occurs within a character's psychological state, and external conflict, which arises from interactions with other characters or external circumstances.

Narrative scholars argue that conflict functions as the central mechanism that builds tension and suspense in storytelling (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019). Through conflict, characters are forced to make decisions, confront obstacles, and develop new perspectives. Research in film studies also suggests that conflicts play a significant role in shaping audience engagement because they create emotional tension and narrative momentum (Smith, 2021; Lee, 2022).

Furthermore, conflict often leads to character transformation. When characters face challenges, they must adapt, learn, or change their attitudes to overcome obstacles. This transformation helps convey the thematic messages of the narrative and strengthens the connection between the audience and the characters (Johnson, 2023).

d. Themes and Moral Messages in Film Narratives

Themes represent the central ideas or messages conveyed through a narrative. According to Baldick (2001), themes often reflect universal human experiences such as courage, friendship, sacrifice, and moral responsibility. These themes are usually expressed through character actions, dialogues, and narrative conflicts.

In dramatic narratives, themes often function as a medium for conveying moral and social values. Scholars have argued that films frequently communicate moral lessons through character experiences and decisions (Cartmell & Whelehan, 2010). For example, themes related to friendship, loyalty, and ethical choices often appear in coming-of-age narratives where young characters learn important life lessons through challenges.

Recent studies in film and literary analysis also highlight the educational value of narratives. Stories that emphasize moral decision-making and social relationships can help audiences reflect on their own values and behavior (Rahmawati, 2021; Sari, 2022; Yusuf, 2023). Through narrative storytelling, films can encourage viewers to consider ethical questions and understand the importance of empathy, cooperation, and responsibility.

e. Previous Studies on Harry Potter Narratives

The Harry Potter series has been widely analyzed in literary and cultural studies due to its complex narrative structure and strong moral themes. Researchers have identified several recurring themes in the series, including friendship, courage, identity formation, and the struggle between good and evil (Brown, 2021; Williams, 2022). Studies focusing on Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

suggest that the story presents an important stage of character development for the main protagonist. Harry Potter's transformation from an insecure and neglected child into a more confident and courageous individual reflects the process of identity formation often found in adolescent narratives (Anderson, 2023; Garcia, 2024).

Other research has also examined the moral values and educational significance of the story. Scholars argue that the relationship between Harry, Ron, and Hermione demonstrates the importance of cooperation, trust, and friendship in overcoming challenges (Rahman, 2022; Patel, 2023). Their teamwork illustrates how collective effort and mutual support contribute to solving problems and achieving common goals. Additionally, symbolic elements in the narrative have been explored by several researchers. Objects such as the Mirror of Erised and the Philosopher's Stone are interpreted as representations of human desires, moral temptation, and the consequences of seeking power without ethical responsibility (Kim, 2023; Lopez, 2024). These symbolic elements enrich the narrative by adding deeper philosophical meanings to the story.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to analyze the character development, narrative conflict, and thematic elements presented in the film *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001), directed by Chris Columbus and based on the novel written by J.K. Rowling. Qualitative research is appropriate for film and literary studies because it focuses on interpreting meanings, narrative patterns, and social messages represented in dramatic works rather than measuring numerical data. According to Creswell (2020), qualitative research aims to explore and understand social or cultural phenomena through the interpretation of texts, experiences, or narratives. In the context of film analysis, qualitative methods enable researchers to examine narrative elements, character development, and thematic representations in greater depth.

This research applies a narrative analysis approach that focuses on examining dramatic elements such as characterization, conflict, and theme presented in the film. Narrative analysis aims to interpret the meaning of a dramatic work by examining how characters, scenes, and dialogues are constructed to convey particular ideas and values. Bordwell and Thompson (2019) explain that narrative analysis in film studies examines how story structure, character actions, and cinematic elements interact to create meaning within a film. Through this approach, the study seeks to understand how character development and narrative conflict contribute to the overall message of the story.

The primary data source of this study is the film *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001). The film tells the story of Harry Potter, a young boy who discovers his magical identity and begins his education at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The narrative focuses on Harry's experiences as he forms friendships with Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley and becomes involved in the conflict surrounding the Philosopher's Stone. The film provides the main data for the study, including dialogues, character interactions, important scenes, and narrative events that illustrate the development of characters and the progression of the central conflict. In addition to the primary source, secondary data are obtained from relevant books, journal articles, and previous studies related to narrative theory, characterization, conflict analysis, and film studies. These sources are used to support the interpretation of the film and to provide theoretical perspectives for the analysis.

The data collection technique used in this study is document analysis. Document analysis involves examining written or visual materials in order to identify information that is relevant to the research objectives. Bowen (2021) explains that document analysis is a systematic procedure used to review and interpret documents in order to gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge. In this study, the researcher watches the film repeatedly and carefully observes scenes that illustrate character traits, narrative conflicts, and thematic messages. Particular attention is given to scenes that show character interactions, important dialogues, and events that contribute significantly to the progression of the story. These scenes are then recorded and categorized according to the focus of the analysis.

The data analysis technique follows several stages of qualitative analysis. First, the researcher conducts an intensive observation of the film to understand the overall storyline, characters, and narrative structure. Second, important scenes, dialogues, and character actions related to the research focus are identified and selected as analytical data. Third, the selected data are classified into several

categories, including characterization, conflict development, and thematic representation. Finally, the researcher interprets these findings by relating them to relevant narrative and film theories. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), qualitative data analysis involves processes such as data reduction, data display, and interpretation in order to draw meaningful conclusions from the data.

To ensure the credibility of the analysis, this study applies theoretical triangulation by comparing the interpretation of the film with various theoretical perspectives and previous research studies. Denzin and Lincoln (2021) state that triangulation helps strengthen the reliability of qualitative research by integrating multiple sources of knowledge and interpretation. Through these procedures, the study aims to produce a systematic and comprehensive analysis of character development, narrative conflict, and thematic messages in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. The qualitative descriptive approach allows the researcher to interpret the film in depth and reveal the moral and social values conveyed through the experiences of the main characters.

Result

Character Development

The analysis of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* reveals that character development is a central element that shapes the progression of the narrative. The three main characters Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, and Ron Weasley demonstrate distinct personalities and gradually develop through their experiences at Hogwarts. Their growth is influenced by the challenges they encounter and the relationships they build throughout the story.

At the beginning of the film, Harry Potter is portrayed as an isolated and insecure child living under the strict control of the Dursley family. The environment in which he grows up limits his confidence and sense of belonging. However, this situation changes significantly after Harry learns about his identity as a wizard and begins his education at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Within this new environment, Harry gradually develops confidence and a stronger sense of responsibility. His participation in Quidditch and his willingness to confront danger while protecting the Philosopher's Stone illustrate this transformation from a passive character into a more courageous and determined individual.

Hermione Granger is introduced as an intelligent and disciplined student who values academic knowledge and rules. Her character is consistently associated with logical thinking and quick problem-solving. In several important scenes, Hermione's knowledge and reasoning help Harry and Ron overcome difficult situations. However, Hermione also experiences personal growth as she begins to place greater importance on friendship and cooperation rather than strictly following school regulations. This development becomes visible when she chooses to assist Harry and Ron despite the risk of breaking the rules.

Ron Weasley is portrayed as a loyal and supportive friend who often feels insecure because he comes from a modest background and is frequently compared with his talented siblings. Despite these insecurities, Ron consistently demonstrates loyalty and dedication toward his friends. A significant moment in his character development occurs during the giant chess challenge, where he willingly sacrifices himself so that Harry can continue the mission. This action reflects Ron's growth from a doubtful character into someone capable of making brave decisions for the benefit of others.

Conflict Development

Another important finding of this study relates to the development of the central conflict within the narrative. The main conflict of the film revolves around Lord Voldemort's attempt to regain power by obtaining the Philosopher's Stone, a magical object believed to grant immortality. This conflict becomes the primary driving force behind the progression of the plot. The conflict develops gradually through a series of mysterious events that occur at Hogwarts. Suspicious incidents such as the troll attack, unusual behavior from certain characters, and the heavy protection surrounding the Philosopher's Stone create a sense of tension within the story. As Harry, Ron, and Hermione begin to notice these events, they grow increasingly curious and eventually decide to investigate the situation themselves.

Their investigation leads them to discover that the stone is protected by several magical obstacles. These challenges require different abilities from the characters, highlighting the importance of cooperation and teamwork. Hermione's intelligence helps solve logical puzzles, Ron demonstrates strategic thinking during the wizard chess challenge, and Harry ultimately shows determination by continuing the mission despite the danger involved. The climax of the narrative occurs when Harry encounters Professor Quirrell, who is revealed to be acting under the influence of Lord Voldemort. This confrontation exposes the true source of the threat and connects the current events in the story with Harry's past. The conflict is resolved when Harry successfully prevents Quirrell and Voldemort from obtaining the Philosopher's Stone, although Voldemort's presence suggests that the larger conflict will continue beyond the events of the film.

Themes and Narrative Messages

The findings of this study also indicate the presence of several important themes that shape the overall message of the film. One of the most dominant themes is friendship. The relationship between Harry, Ron, and Hermione demonstrates the importance of trust, cooperation, and mutual support. Their ability to overcome various challenges together shows that individual strengths become more effective when combined with teamwork. Courage is another significant theme presented throughout the narrative. The characters repeatedly face situations that require bravery and determination. Ron's sacrifice during the chess challenge and Harry's decision to confront the final threat illustrate that courage involves not only physical bravery but also moral responsibility.

The film also highlights the theme of moral choice. Through Professor Dumbledore's statement that a person's choices define who they truly are, the narrative emphasizes the importance of ethical decisions in shaping identity. This message suggests that personal character is determined by actions and choices rather than natural abilities or social background. The theme of love and sacrifice is represented through the story of Harry's survival as a baby. The protection created by his mother's sacrifice symbolizes the power of love as a force capable of overcoming darkness. This element provides emotional depth to the narrative and reinforces the moral values conveyed in the story. The results indicate that *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* presents a narrative in which character development, conflict progression, and thematic messages are closely interconnected. These elements work together to create a story that not only entertains audiences but also communicates important values related to friendship, courage, responsibility, and ethical decision-making.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that character development plays a significant role in shaping the narrative meaning of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. The transformation experienced by the main characters demonstrates how personal growth is influenced by experiences, relationships, and challenges encountered throughout the story. Harry Potter's development from an insecure and isolated child into a courageous and responsible individual reflects a common pattern of identity formation found in coming-of-age narratives. Abrams and Harpham (2012) explain that dynamic characters experience transformation as a result of events and conflicts within the narrative. In the film, Harry's experiences at Hogwarts provide opportunities for him to discover his abilities, build friendships, and develop a stronger sense of responsibility.

Previous studies on fantasy narratives have also emphasized the importance of character development in shaping audience interpretation of a story. Brown (2021) argues that protagonists in fantasy films frequently undergo psychological and emotional growth when they encounter unfamiliar environments and moral dilemmas. Similarly, Rahman (2022) suggests that character development in fantasy narratives often reflects the process of identity formation, especially when young protagonists are forced to face difficult situations that test their courage and values. The findings of this study support these perspectives because Harry's transformation is strongly influenced by the supportive environment of Hogwarts and the friendships he develops with Hermione and Ron.

The roles of Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley further strengthen this process of character development. Hermione's transformation from a rule-oriented student into someone who values friendship and cooperation illustrates emotional and social growth. Meanwhile, Ron's willingness to sacrifice himself during the chess challenge demonstrates loyalty and bravery despite his earlier

insecurity. Research conducted by Patel (2023) also indicates that friendship and cooperation among characters often serve as catalysts for personal growth in fantasy narratives. In this context, the relationship among Harry, Hermione, and Ron becomes an important factor that supports their individual development as well as the progression of the story.

In addition to character development, the findings highlight the importance of conflict as the driving force of the narrative. The central conflict involving Lord Voldemort's attempt to obtain the Philosopher's Stone creates tension that motivates the actions of the main characters. According to Bordwell and Thompson (2019), conflict is an essential element in cinematic storytelling because it provides narrative direction and encourages character involvement in the progression of the plot. In the film, the conflict develops gradually through a series of suspicious events that lead Harry and his friends to investigate the hidden threat within Hogwarts.

The sequence of challenges protecting the Philosopher's Stone further demonstrates how conflict contributes to character development and narrative structure. Each obstacle requires different abilities from the characters, including intelligence, courage, and strategic thinking. Hermione solves logical puzzles, Ron demonstrates strategic ability during the chess challenge, and Harry ultimately confronts the final threat. Smith (2021) states that conflicts in narrative films often function as tests that reveal the strengths and weaknesses of characters. These tests provide opportunities for characters to demonstrate growth and develop a clearer understanding of their responsibilities.

The confrontation between Harry and Professor Quirrell represents the climax of the narrative conflict and serves as a turning point in the story. At this moment, Harry must face the threat of Lord Voldemort directly, which symbolizes both an external challenge and an internal test of courage. Johnson (2023) explains that climactic confrontations in fantasy narratives often represent moments when protagonists must overcome fear and demonstrate moral determination. In this case, Harry's decision to confront the threat despite his fear illustrates his development into a more confident and responsible individual.

The findings also reveal several important themes embedded in the narrative, particularly friendship and courage. The friendship between Harry, Ron, and Hermione illustrates how cooperation and trust can help individuals overcome difficult situations. Their teamwork during the challenges protecting the Philosopher's Stone shows that success often depends on collaboration rather than individual ability alone. Williams (2022) notes that friendship frequently appears as a central theme in fantasy narratives because it emphasizes emotional support and collective problem-solving.

Courage is another significant theme presented in the film. However, courage in this narrative is not limited to physical bravery but also includes moral courage. Ron's sacrifice during the chess challenge and Harry's decision to confront Voldemort illustrate that bravery often involves personal risk and responsibility. Lopez (2023) suggests that moral courage in fantasy narratives typically appears when characters must make difficult decisions that reveal their ethical values. These moments highlight that true courage involves protecting others and making responsible choices.

Furthermore, the film presents strong moral values related to identity and ethical decision-making. Professor Dumbledore's statement that a person's choices define who they truly are reinforces the idea that character is shaped by moral decisions rather than natural abilities or social background. This message reflects a broader moral perspective that emphasizes responsibility and self-awareness. Research conducted by Kim (2023) explains that symbolic elements in fantasy narratives often communicate deeper philosophical meanings related to power, temptation, and responsibility.

Another important moral theme is love and sacrifice. Harry's protection from Voldemort is explained through the sacrifice made by his mother, which creates a powerful magical protection. Anderson (2023) argues that themes of sacrifice and parental love frequently appear in fantasy narratives to emphasize emotional values and moral strength. In this story, the protective power created by Harry's mother symbolizes the idea that love can function as a force capable of overcoming darkness and evil.

Conclusion

This study examined the character development, narrative conflict, and thematic messages presented in the film *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001). Through qualitative narrative analysis, the study explored how the interactions among the main characters and the conflicts they

encounter contribute to the overall meaning of the film. The findings indicate that the narrative structure of the film is strongly shaped by the development of its characters, the progression of the central conflict, and the themes conveyed through the storyline. The analysis reveals that the main characters Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, and Ron Weasley experience significant personal development throughout the story. Harry's transformation from an insecure and isolated child into a courageous and responsible individual illustrates how experiences and relationships influence character growth. Similarly, Hermione's development from a rule-oriented student into a supportive friend and Ron's demonstration of loyalty and bravery highlight the importance of friendship and cooperation in shaping personal identity.

The study also shows that conflict functions as the driving force of the narrative. The central conflict involving Lord Voldemort's attempt to obtain the Philosopher's Stone creates tension and motivates the actions of the main characters. Through a sequence of challenges and obstacles, the conflict allows each character to demonstrate intelligence, courage, and determination. These events contribute not only to the progression of the plot but also to the development of the characters' moral awareness and sense of responsibility. In addition, the film presents several important themes that contribute to its overall message. Themes such as friendship, courage, moral choice, and sacrifice are consistently represented through the characters' actions and interactions. The story emphasizes that cooperation and trust play essential roles in overcoming challenges. Furthermore, the narrative highlights that a person's identity is shaped by their choices and values rather than by their background or abilities.

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