

Words - the source of magic

A linguistic study on Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape in Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

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Abstract

The aim of this essay is to investigate how language is used in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001), written by J.K. Rowling, through a linguistic study investigating the construction and characterization of the characters Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape. The research aims to compare the characters' linguistic profiles by analyzing both their direct speech and the narrative language used to describe them, which also includes observations and comments from other characters. The study also analyzes the use of speech acts, value words, tone, and attitude, with the results discussed with the help of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (1987). The findings indicate a clear difference in the language used to represent the two characters. Dumbledore's speech and representation align with strategies of positive politeness and respect, whereas Snape's representation is made through his frequent use of face-threatening acts (FTAs) and negative value words in both his own speech and the narrator's description. The study discusses how the consistent difference in language portrays Dumbledore as a kind and highly respected authority figure, while portraying Snape as a character who is hostile and strongly disliked. The results demonstrate the power of linguistic choices in character development, reflecting and shaping the readers' perception of the characters. The didactic application demonstrates how language analysis of character construction through the examination of politeness strategies, evaluative language, and stance supports the development of critical literacy by raising students' awareness of how linguistic choices shape meaning, authority, and moral positioning.

key words: Dumbledore, Snape, speech acts, narration, tone, attitude, value words, Politeness Theory

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1. Introduction

As a form of storytelling, literature triggers imagination, introduces new or different perspectives, and allows readers to experience the creation of characters through the author's use of language. For children, literature can also be a tool for language acquisition. Reading literature is a fundamental component of education as it promotes literacy and critical thinking skills. As Giovanelli (2023) explains, children's literature has played an important role in the development of literacy skills for educational purposes (p. 544). Snow et al. (1998) point out the large number of children in America who do not read well, and they note that the decline of reading skills creates greater demand for increasing literacy (p. 1). Children today are said to read less frequently than previous generations, and they do not show enthusiasm for literature (Ferguson, 2020). Similarly, Creamer (2024) reports a continued decline in reading in the UK where children's reading enjoyment has fallen to its lowest level in almost two decades. The results from an annual literacy survey reveal that only 34.6% of eight- to eighteen-year-olds say that they enjoy reading in their spare time, which is the lowest since 2005 (Creamer, 2024). It is concerning that only one in three children enjoy reading, which affects reading habits and literacy skills.

Consequently, this decline in skills and enthusiasm may lead to difficulty for teachers to engage children in and attract them to literature in classroom activities. Therefore, teachers may want to turn to popular children's literature to increase enthusiasm for reading. This essay suggests the Harry Potter series as a suitable choice for teachers to include as literature in the curriculum, to increase reading time as well as to promote children's literacy.

J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (HPPS) is one of the most popular novels of all time, appealing to both children and adults around the world. The magical Harry Potter book series is expanding to this day, its fandom continues to grow, and social media allows these fans to connect and share their appreciation of novels or their favorite quotes and characters. Davidson (2010) claims that the new media dimension of a "cross media experience" often includes a component of audience interactivity: "it's an experience... that we 'read' by watching movies, dipping into a novel, playing a game, riding a ride, etc." (p. 4). For the Harry Potter book series, the cross-media experience proposes that each media platform, such as TikTok, Instagram, etc., contributes to the construction of the "Potterverse" with the different formats combining to offer a deeper and more engaging feeling whilst reading than just using one type of media. Just as the Harry Potter novels follow a group of characters who grow up from children to teenagers in the course of the series, young readers of the novels can also grow up with Harry Potter and his friends to, later as adults, introduce the books, movies, and other associated material to their own children, contributing to the longevity of the series' popularity.

Upon the release of the first novel (HPPS), the Harry Potter series became an enormous

success among children, and the novels are still, to this day, immensely popular. The series has been translated into over eighty languages and transformed into a film series, playscript and theatrical products. The novels may therefore represent literature that can be used for didactic purposes, as students are either to already be familiar or can be enticed to discover the novels through classroom activity. The Harry Potter novels have been credited with “resuscitating reading” among children with imaginative storytelling, magical settings, and engaging use of language (Kalumuck, 2023).

According to Nikolajeva (2017), a professor of education and literary scholar, children’s literature can be used as a pedagogical tool in teaching in classrooms for exploring literacy and learning through narrative (p. 360). Nikolajeva (2017) emphasizes the impact of the Harry Potter series on the status of children’s literature globally. The series of novels in late 1990s and early 2000s paved the way for modern children’s literature, mostly within the genre fantasy (p. 7). Moreover, Nikolajeva (2017) writes that teachers claimed that, up until the late 1990s, children just managed to read works of literature totaling 120 – 150 pages. In contrast, some of the Harry Potter novels have over 600 pages, which has not been a deterrent for children (p. 7).

The point of departure for this essay (similar to Walker) (2022) is that the Harry Potter novels can be used in the upper-secondary English classroom not only to promote the pleasure of reading but also to teach language and raise linguistic awareness. This essay focuses on HPPS, proposing that an examination of two characters, one protagonist and one antagonist, can reveal how language is used to construct and depict characters differently. In so doing, the essay argues for using the novel to promote an awareness of how the English language can be used for distinct narrative purposes. The characters in focus are Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape. Dumbledore and Snape are colleagues at the Hogwarts School of Wizardry, and both hold positions of authority: Snape as a potions’ master and Dumbledore as the headmaster. Snape wears black clothes and teaches pupils defense against the dark arts. Dumbledore has a long silver beard and teaches pupils, with a different method, to fight darkness with love and light instead of dark magic. However, in the Harry Potter series and especially in the first novel, Snape is an antagonist, disliked and feared, while Dumbledore is a protagonist, liked and respected. While the characters are well known as representing, broadly, the moral poles of bad and good, this essay aims to examine how these characterizations are conveyed through the author’s use of language. In particular, the essay questions how language is used about these characters and by these characters to create one antagonist and one protagonist, representing evil and good, respectively.

This study aims to raise students' awareness of how language is used to construct protagonists and antagonists in fiction. Reading fiction then becomes a way for students to engage critically with a text by exploring how, for example, vocabulary and indications of stance and tone could influence a reader’s perception of good or evil. Teachers can guide students in noticing how language is used

to position characters and groups, and to also connect this usage to real life communication. For students to read and think critically about the role of language in creating characters and conveying their morality is not only good for improving the study of language but also to think about empathy, inclusion, and diversity.

1.1 The world of Harry Potter

The study focuses on the first book in the Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (HPPS, 1997), written by Joanne Kathleen (J.K.) Rowling. The Harry Potter series depicts a fantasy world where magic exists alongside ordinary people called “Muggles” in a Muggle world. In HPPS, we follow a young wizard and orphan named Harry Potter, who discovers his magical abilities and begins his adventures at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The series follows Harry and his friends through their school years and as they fight off the villainous wizard Voldemort, whose goal is to overtake the wizarding world and become immortal.

Within this fictional universe, language plays a significant role in constructing the world of wizardry and witchcraft, the characters in this world, and the relationships between them. As two of the most prominent characters of the book, Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape have different roles and purposes.

1.2 Aim and scope

The aim of this essay is to investigate how the characters of Dumbledore and Snape are constructed through linguistic means, via language used about them and by them, as well as how language constructs narratives. The essay takes as its point of departure the characters of Dumbledore and Snape as representing good and evil, respectively. Since these moral positions are enacted through patterns of authority, respect, and interpersonal interaction, Politeness Theory is applied to guide the analysis of how language is used to differently construct the two characters.

1.3 Research questions

- How is language used about the characters Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape to construct them as a (good) protagonist and an (evil) antagonist, respectively?
- How is language used by the characters Dumbledore and Snape to construct their protagonist and antagonist identities?
- How can analyzing language in character construction promote critical literacy and awareness of how language achieves communicative goals?

2. Literary review

To analyze linguistic features and how language is used by and about different characters, this essay will focus on features such as politeness strategies, tone, attitude and stance. These features help explain how language is used within the text to manage social relationships, position speakers, and evaluate others. The essay will explore these aspects to distinguish between the characters Dumbledore and Snape, examining how they are portrayed, and how they portray themselves as antagonist and protagonist. By looking more closely at what they say and what others say about them, the analysis will show how language is used to construct and differentiate the characters. Key findings from previous linguistic research will be presented to emphasize their significance to the present study.

The next section presents literature regarding the topics of Politeness Theory (2.1), tone (2.2) and attitude and stance (2.3).

2.1 Politeness Theory

In the Harry Potter series, the opposition between good and evil is one of the main ideas of the story and is reflected not only in characters' actions but also through the way they speak. Since language is an important way in which characters show power, closeness, and moral positioning, Politeness Theory provides a useful framework for analyzing these differences. Politeness strategies, face-threatening acts, and impoliteness can display respect, care for others, hostility, which are all qualities often linked to whether a character is presented as good or evil. This analysis therefore assumes that characters aligned with good and evil are likely to differ in how they use politeness strategies, making the theory an appropriate tool for examining how moral contrast is expressed through language in Harry Potter.

Brown and Levinson (1978) introduced politeness theory into pragmatics with the observation that people have an innate desire to be treated with politeness and respect. Central to their framework is the concept of face, which in pragmatics refers to your social self-image. Face belongs to the emotional and social identity people hold and expect others to recognize. Politeness, therefore, can be defined as demonstrating awareness of and respect for another person's face (Yule, 2010, p. 135).

When an utterance threatens or fails to consider another person's face, this is known as a face-threatening act (FTA), whereas strategies that minimize such risks are described as face-saving acts (FSA). Brown and Levinson distinguish between negative face, the desire to be independent and free from imposition, and positive face, the desire to belong, be appreciated, and feel included. Examples provided by Yule (2010, p. 135 - 136) illustrate these differences: expressions such as "I'm sorry to bother you...; I know you're busy, but..." attend to negative face acknowledging possible imposition, while phrases like "Let's do this together...; You and I have the same problem,

so...” appeal to positive face by emphasizing solidarity and shared goals.

One of the strongest FTAs occurs when a speaker uses a direct speech act to issue a command, e.g., “Go to your room!”. However, politeness discourse markers such as *please* can mitigate the force of the command (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 191). Another mitigating strategy involves openly apologizing for the imposition, thereby reducing the severity of the act (Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 187 - 189), e.g., “I’m sorry to have to ask you to please leave.”.

In polite speech, an important linguistic device is the use of modal verbs like *can*, *may*, *shall*, *will*, *could*, *might*, *should* and *would*. These modal verbs serve to make the interaction feel less direct, which is often interpreted as more polite (Nakayasu, 2013). In addition, a speaker can convey respect in a formal context by using titles such as *Mr*, *Mrs*. or *Miss* or acknowledging professional status such as *Doctor* or *Professor*, in conjunction with a last name (Yuryeva, 2018, pp. 685 - 695).

Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1987) highlight the role of hedges, or phrases such as *maybe*, *just*, *a little* signal caution or uncertainty, which can soften a statement and make it appear more humble or polite (pp. 145 - 146), e.g., “I’m not so sure, but this answer might be just a little incorrect.”. Additional markers of uncertainty are tag questions, whereby a speaker adds a short question at the end of a statement to check the hearer's agreement with, or acceptance of, the speaker’s proposition, e.g., , “isn’t it?” or “don’t you?”. Tag questions function similarly to hedges by expressing tentative certainty and reducing the imposition of the statement (p. 147).

Finally, it is important to recognize that politeness exists on a continuum rather than as a binary category. Utterances may vary in politeness, directness, formality, and emotional expression depending on factors such as context, relationship, and crucially, tone (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 247 - 253). Taken together, these factors show that politeness is a nuanced and multi-layered linguistic resource that can work in conjunction with tone to construct power relations, social distance and character identity within fictional dialogue.

2.2 Tone

Another area of previous research relevant to the essay is tone, which provides an essential foundation for understanding how language shapes the portrayal of characters in literature. Tone can be defined as “a quality in the voice that expresses the speaker’s feelings or thoughts, often towards the person being spoken to” Tone can take various forms, such as authorial and conversational.

According to Leech and Short (2007) authorial tone refers to the stance or attitude adopted by the author toward both the reader and the message being conveyed:

On the one hand, the authorial address to the reader may be distant, formal, public, or else

intimate, colloquial, private. [...] On the other hand, the relation between author and subject matter is also one of variable distance, which, as already suggested, is a function of the difference between the knowledge, sympathy and values of the implied author, and those of the characters and society which he portrays. (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 225 - 226)

In this quote, Leech and Short highlight that authorial tone shapes how the author speaks to the reader and how closely the author aligns with the events and characters in the story. They also show that tone can create different levels of distance or closeness in the narrative. For instance, positive evaluative descriptions and approving reporting verbs can invite reader alignment with a character. If a narrator writes that a character “bravely defended her friend” and “insisted” on telling the truth, the wording frames her actions as admirable and principled. By contrast, describing the same character as “recklessly interfering” and saying she “claimed” she was right introduces doubt and distance. This way, evaluative language influences whether the reader is encouraged to sympathize with or question a character.

Building on this, conversational tone refers to the attitude or social stance a character adopts when speaking to another character. In contrast to authorial tone, which reflects the narrator’s perspective, conversational tone highlights the interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the listener. This becomes important in fiction because it dramatizes relationships through different degrees of politeness, familiarity, or rudeness in characters’ speech. Leech and Short (2007, pp. 247 - 248) also point out that, even more than literary meaning, tone in real conversation can influence how a message is interpreted. In written form, tone can be conveyed through grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and descriptive commentary about how characters speak.

Tone therefore plays a central role not only in how a message is conveyed but also in how the reader receives it. According to Leech and Short (2007) tone is created through a complex interaction between the author’s linguistic choices and the reader’s pragmatic knowledge. In fiction, conversational tone is shaped by the social status of the speaker in relation to the others, with lexical choices signaling relationships, hierarchies, and contexts. Variety in word choices reflect social relationships in a distinct way, collectively contributing to the tone and atmosphere of that conversational scene (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 247 – 248). If a character uses formal language instead of slang, this more often signals a degree of social distance between the interlocutors rather than indication that the novel’s overall setting is formal. An example could be different titles when characters are addressing each other, which could be a way of showing levels of respect, politeness or closeness. For example, the use of formal titles such as Mr., Ms., Sir or Professor, shows respect and acknowledges authority. How a teacher addresses a student varies depending on the degree of formality of the interaction or the relationship between the interlocutors, some typical titles could be

their name, Mr., Ms. or even “you there”. Titles and terms of address, therefore, can reveal the nature of the relationships between characters such as, for example, professional or personal.

A further aspect linked to tone is irony, which arises when there is a contrast between what is said and what is meant (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 222 - 223). By drawing attention to lexical incongruities, an ironic text invites the reader to assume a critical or amused distance from the literal phrasing. In this way, irony becomes a stylistic tool that subtly shapes our alignment with the authorial viewpoint. Irony may occur at the level of a sentence, a conversation or across a whole novel, serving a variety of functions within language. It can also be used aggressively, as criticism or impoliteness, or more subtly as a rhetorical or humorous device (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 223 - 225). One prominent form of irony is sarcasm, which is typically intended to mock or criticize the listener/reader and, within a politeness framework, often manifests as “mock politeness” (Filik, et al., 2019).

Such research suggests that tone in literature, whether authorial, conversational, or ironic, plays a central role in shaping how the characters of a story are presented and how their relationships are interpreted by the reader, making it a key linguistic feature for analyzing characters such as Dumbledore and Snape.

2.3 Attitude and stance

The last section on previous linguistic research focuses on attitude and stance in character-construction as well as how language constructs narratives.

Historically, attitude has had different definitions as reported by Garrett’s (2010) research on language. For instance, psychologist Thurstone defined attitude in 1931 as the ‘affect for or against a psychological object’. This explains how attitudes shape positive or negative feelings towards an object/person. However, Thurstone’s view is narrow because it reduces attitudes to emotional reactions, overlooking broader evaluation and cognitive elements (Garrett, 2010, p. 19).

Later, in 1954 psychologist Allport had a slightly different definition of attitude which was ‘a learned disposition to think, feel and behave toward a person (or object) in a particular way’. If these two definitions are compared, Thurstone only considered affect in his definition, while Allport also included behavior and thoughts. Allport also explained that attitudes are something people learn, not something people are born with. This suggests that external factors could have an influence on people’s attitudes (Garett, 2010, p. 19).

Attitude also constructs character as well as stance (linguistic expression) reveals character in an interaction and interlace when language constructs narratives. As noted by Eberhardt (2017) linguistic forms support character-construction in literature (p. 228). An example of this could be that a word or a phrase in patterns could trigger a certain stereotype (p. 242), which, in the present

study, can apply to stereotypes of good and evil, for example through recurring evaluative vocabulary, reporting verbs, and interactional patterns which systematically position characters positively or negatively. For instance, if one character is repeatedly described as having “smiled” or “gently said,” while another consistently “snapped” or “sneered,” these recurring patterns may gradually construct the first as kind and the second as hostile. Eberhardt (2017) notes repeated speech patterns in children’s fiction and the fantasy genre in which voice qualification verbs (i.e. *groans*) indicate the speaker’s negative attitude or emotional state, such as irritation, frustration, or reluctance, at the time of the speech utterance (p. 232).

McCallum and Stephens (2011) state that texts in children’s literature can shape readers’ attitudes toward societal values and cultural awareness by presenting characters, actions, and outcomes that implicitly promote particular norms, beliefs, and moral perspectives (p. 361). Furthermore, they describe social values and attitudes as conveying *significance*, one of three parts of narration, which is a factor when readers align with or against characters and interpret a text according to their own personal social attitudes. As an illustration for significance, they refer to a text’s contextual meaning and cultural attitudes which, among other things, shapes readers’ understanding of character’s significance. In other words, significance means the organization of social attitudes and values (pp. 361 - 362). Another component of a narrative are the linguistic and structural elements which comprise *discourse*. Discourse, how the story is told, can be used as a tool in narrative structures and through narrative choices. Furthermore, McCallum and Stephens (2011) describe linguistic discourse, as well as interactions between characters in their work on children’s literature. For example, they explain that ideological positions may be topicalized, appearing explicitly in text, or embedded implicitly through narrative focus, lexical choices, and conversational dynamics. Additionally, they explore the concept of narrative distance which uses the narrator's perspective, to investigate underlying social attitudes that are conveyed (p. 361 - 362). The third part of narrative in children’s literature is *story*, which focuses on characters, their actions, and the importance of a cultural context beyond the plot (p. 370). The plot of a story is constructed, arranged and sequenced by an author, for a broader narrative on how the story is told as well as how the plot impacts the characters. McCallum and Stephens (2011) explain that these three narrative components can provide a framework for understanding how different linguistic interactions could shape readers’ attitudes toward different characters.

Following McCallum and Stephens’ framework, attention to linguistic features such as direct speech acts, terms of endearment, and face-threatening acts can provide a productive foundation for examining how character relationships are constructed in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*. As McCallum and Stephens demonstrate, such interactions are not ideologically neutral but work in conjunction with story and closure to shape readers’ alignment with characters and social values.

The creation and telling of stories - what we will refer to as *narrative discourse* - is a particular use of language through which a society expresses and imparts its current values and attitudes, and this happens regardless of authorial intention” (McCallum & Stephens, 2011, p. 360).

Just as McCallum and Stephens focused on three concepts to understand the process of storytelling, the present study will focus on three different but related aspects (description by narrator, by other characters and characters’ own voices) to understand language usage in character-construction of a (good) protagonist and an (evil) antagonist.

3. Method and data

This study adopts a qualitative textual analysis approach as a method, focusing on linguistic features in the use of language for character-construction as well as construction of narratives in HPPS. Furthermore, the analysis is supported by quantitative descriptive data based on frequency counts of identified direct speech events, narratorial evaluations, and also other characters’ references to Dumbledore and Snape, which are categorized according to disposition and action in narratorial comments; positive and negative evaluative stance in both narration and other characters’ speech, and face orientation (FSA/FTA) in direct speech. These categories are used to provide an overview of speech acts and evaluative patterns and to contextualize the qualitative analysis.

3.1 Data collection methodology

The data for this research was collected by first reading HPPS and then searching for occurrences of Dumbledore and Snape in the PDF version. For each occurrence, three types of language use could be noted: (1) direct speech produced by Dumbledore and Snape, (2) narratorial descriptions and evaluations of these characters, and (3) speech and observations by other characters about them. Qualifying examples from the novel were collected and organized according to these three categories.

3.2 Data analysis methodology

The data collection populated the three categories of language usage in focus: language used by Dumbledore and Snape, language used about Dumbledore and Snape in narration, and language used about Dumbledore and Snape by other characters. The data analysis entailed further categorization in the form of identifying 1) politeness strategies in the speech by Dumbledore and

Snape, focusing on the face-threatening acts in the form of direct speech acts and face-saving acts in the form of hedging, 2) tone, attitude and stance in narration about Dumbledore and Snape, focusing on positive and negative value words, and 3) tone, attitude and stance in the language used by other characters to or about Dumbledore and Snape, focusing on positive and negative value words.

4. Results

In this part, results of the data analysis are presented according to the data collection categories: narrator speech about Dumbledore and Snape (4.1), other character speech about and to Dumbledore and Snape (4.2) and direct speech events by Dumbledore and Snape (4.3). A direct speech event is defined as an instance of quoted dialogue produced by either Dumbledore or Snape. Each direct speech event begins at the opening quotation mark of the utterance and ends at the closing quotation mark and corresponds to a single utterance analyzed as one speech act.

Table 1: Corpus overview – Language about and by Dumbledore and Snape

| Category | Snape | Dumbledore | Total |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Narrator | 18 | 14 | 32 |
| Other characters' speech | 18 | 12 | 30 |
| Direct speech events | 18 | 52 | 70 |
| Total instances analyzed | 54 | 78 | 132 |

In total, 132 instances were analyzed. These include 70 direct speech events by Snape and Dumbledore (52 by Dumbledore and 18 by Snape), 32 narrator stance events (14 concerning Dumbledore and 18 concerning Snape), and 30 instances of other characters' speech (12 referring to Dumbledore and 18 referring to Snape). Direct speech events were categorized according to face orientation and politeness strategy.

Narratorial stance instances (32) are analysed in Section 4.1, other characters' speech (30) in Section 4.2, and direct speech events (70) in Section 4.3.

4.1 Narration about Dumbledore and Snape

In order to provide a quantitative overview of narration about Dumbledore and Snape, all instances of narratorial descriptions and evaluations were collected and categorized according to the type of narrator comment and evaluative stance prior to closer analysis.

Table 2: Types of narrator comments about Dumbledore

| Type of narrator comment | Instances |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Disposition | 5 |
| Action | 9 |
| Total | 14 |

Table 3: Types of narrator comments about Snape

| Type of narrator comment | Instances |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Disposition | 10 |
| Action | 8 |
| Total | 18 |

Table 4: Narrator stance towards Dumbledore

| Narrator stance | Instances |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Positive evaluative stance | 14 |
| Negative evaluative stance | 0 |
| Total | 14 |

Table 5: Narrator stance towards Snape

| Narrator stance | Instances |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Positive evaluative stance | 0 |
| Negative evaluative stance | 18 |
| Total | 18 |

Dumbledore is presented in the narration through words with positive connotations,

contributing to the construction of a warm and lovable image of Dumbledore. The following narrative descriptions illustrate how this positive evaluation stance is established.

[Example 1]: “He was beaming at the students, his arms opened wide, as if nothing could have pleased him more...” (Rowling, 2012, p. 91)

In example 1, the use “beaming” relates to smiling or visible happiness and functions as a positive value word that encourages the reader to interpret Dumbledore’s authority as welcoming rather than intimidating.

[Example 2]: “Harry looked up into Dumbledore’s smiling face.” (Rowling, 2012, p.164)

In example 2, the reporting verb “smiling,” carries a positive evaluative force in this specific context. The description occurs during Harry’s conversation with Dumbledore in the hospital wing, after Harry has faced danger and is seeking answers. Although a smile can convey irony or menace, there is no accompanying negative qualifier (such as “coldly” or “mockingly”), and the surrounding narration presents Dumbledore as calm and composed. The smile is therefore interpreted as signaling comfort and reassurance rather than a threat or manipulation. This description presents Dumbledore as calm and benevolent, reinforcing his role as a caring authority figure.

The narrator’s authorial tone toward Dumbledore is warm and approving, which follows Leech and Short (2007), encouraging trust and reinforcing his moral authority within the narrative.

As shown in Table 5, all 18 narrator stance instances concerning Snape are realized as negative evaluative stance, with no positive evaluations recorded. These words with negative connotations in the narrative descriptions illustrate how Snape is constructed as an emotionally hostile and morally questionable character.

[Example 3]: “Snape didn’t dislike Harry – he hated him” (Rowling, 2012, p. 101)

In example 3, a relatively mild term “dislike” is juxtaposed with the more extreme verb “hated”, thereby emphasizing intense and enduring hostility. In typical teacher–student relationships, the teachers are expected to remain emotionally neutral. In this case, however, this word choice presents Snape’s attitude as excessive and morally questionable.

[Example 4]: “Sit down,’ he snapped at Hermione” (Rowling, 2012, p. 103)

There is negative evaluation that is being carried by the reporting verb “snapped”, shown in example 4. Instead of a neutral verb such as “said”, the choice made conveys irritation and aggression toward the student, encouraging the reader to interpret Snape’s behavior as harsh and hostile. While the utterance itself is an FTA in the form of a direct speech act, the narratorial emphasis lies in the described tone as well as authority. Although “snapped” is a speech presentation verb, it is here analysed for its evaluative function within narration rather than as a separate category of dialogue delivery.

[Example 5]: “Snape was sweeping about in his usual bad temper” (Rowling, 2012, p. 167)

In example 5, the explicitly evaluative phrase “bad temper,” is reinforced by the modifier “usual,” that suggests that Snape is depicted as someone who usually has a bad temper. Together, these examples show how the narrator guides the reader’s judgement of the character Snape using words with negative connotation, predisposing readers to interpret his actions through a lens of hostility.

4.2 Other character speech associated with and toward Dumbledore and Snape

In order to provide a quantitative overview of stance, attitude, and tone in other characters’ speech associated with and toward Dumbledore and Snape, all instances were categorized as neutral, negative evaluative, or positive evaluative.

Table 6: Evaluative stance in other characters’ speech toward Dumbledore and Snape - Overview

| Stance | Instances |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Neutral | 4 |
| Negative evaluative / forceful | 14 |
| Positively / softly evaluative | 12 |
| Total | 30 |

Table 6 provides a quantitative overview of other characters’ speech associated with and toward Dumbledore and Snape. The table displays a predominance of negative evaluative instances overall. Positive evaluative instances, though less frequent as displayed in the table above, are usually

associated with expressions of respect and admiration toward Dumbledore, while the negative evaluative instances reference Snape, reflecting a recurring hostile or distancing tone. These patterns establish a contrast in interpersonal stance and motivate closer qualitative analysis.

To further clarify how evaluative stance is distributed across the two characters, Tables 7 and 8 present the quantity of stance patterns for Dumbledore and Snape separately.

Table 7: Evaluative stance in other characters' speech toward Dumbledore

| Evaluative stance | Instances |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Positive stance | 12 |
| Neutral stance | 0 |
| Negative stance | 0 |
| Total | 12 |

As shown in Table 7, other characters' speech toward Dumbledore is exclusively positive. All instances express attitudes of respect, trust, admiration, or loyalty through positive words of connotations, respectful terms of address, and affiliative stance taking, with no neutral or negative evaluations collected. The lack of negative evaluations (0) contributes to Dumbledore's construction as respectable, kind, and reliable.

Table 8: Evaluative stance in other characters' speech toward Snape

| Evaluative stance | Instances |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Positive stance | 0 |
| Neutral stance | 4 |
| Negative stance | 14 |
| Total | 18 |

In contrast, Table 8 shows that evaluative speech toward Snape is overwhelmingly negative. The majority of instances realise hostile or critical stances, constantly framing Snape as threatening, unfair, or morally questionable. A smaller number of utterances collected were neutral, reflecting uncertainty or attempts to mitigate accusations rather than genuine positive evaluations. Notable is the lack of positive evaluations collected which were 0 in comparison to Dumbledore.

The exclusive use of positive evaluative stance toward Dumbledore shown in Table 9 is realised through lexical items with positive connotations, shown through attitudes of admiration, trust and loyalty, and is further realised through respectful and affiliative tones in other characters' speech.

[Example 6]: “Great man, Dumbledore” (Rowling, 2012, p. 48)

In example 6, the adjective “great” functions as a strong positive value word, explicitly expressing a positive attitude toward Dumbledore, showing admiration and approval. Through this evaluation, the speaker adopts an affiliative stance, which positions Dumbledore as worthy of the respect and loyalty. The certainty of the utterance arises from the absence of any hedging or softening, contributing to a sincere and approving conversational tone, presenting admiration as sincere and unquestioned.

[Example 7]: “Sir – Professor Dumbledore? Can I ask you something?” (Rowling, 2012, p. 157)

In example 7, Harry's use of “sir” and the formal title “Professor Dumbledore” signals respect and recognition to his institutional authority. As discussed in Section 2.2, such titles function as linguistic markers of respect and social hierarchy. These choices encode a respectful attitude and positions Harry in a subordinate but trusting stance. The hesitation after “Sir” contributes to a polite and cautious conversational tone, portraying Dumbledore as both authoritative and approachable.

[Example 8]: “I think he sort of wanted to give me a chance. I think he knows more or less everything that goes on here.” (Rowling, 2012, p. 219)

In example 8, Harry reflects on Dumbledore's actions in a way that combines praise and trust. The content expresses a positive attitude toward Dumbledore's intentions, presenting him as well-intentioned and knowledgeable. Through this reflection, Harry can be interpreted as taking an affiliative stance which is grounded in trust and reliance. The calm and reflective formulation by Harry can be interpreted as contributing to an appreciating conversational tone, which therefore reinforces Dumbledore's portrayal as benevolent and wise.

[Example 9]: “NEVER –’ he thundered, ‘– INSULT – ALBUS – DUMBLEDORE –

IN – FRONT – OF – ME!” (Rowling, 2012, p. 48)

Although Hagrid uses a forceful way of speaking, the tone here functions protectively rather than aggressively toward Dumbledore. The delivery of this statement shows loyalty and solidarity, redirecting confrontation away from him and toward the offender. The tone therefore enhances Dumbledore’s positive social standing rather than threatening it. Hagrid’s way of defending Dumbledore displays a strongly positive attitude and stance through expressing loyalty and admiration.

Across these examples, other characters are frequently positioned as taking a positive evaluative stance toward Dumbledore, shown through being respectful, admiring, and loyal attitudes and conversational tone. This aligns with the quantitative distribution shown in Table 7 and also supports Dumbledore’s construction as an admired, kind, and respected headmaster. In contrast, the predominance of negative evaluative stance toward Snape shown in Table 10 is realised through constantly hostile attitudes and a distancing interactional tone in other characters’ speech.

[Example 10]: “Snape can turn very nasty” (Rowling, 2012, p. 104)

In example 10, Ron attributes a clear negative personal quality to Snape through the adjective with the negative connotation “nasty”. This lexical choice encodes a negative description, positioning Snape as threatening and unpredictable. Through this judgement, Ron insinuates a hostile stance toward Snape. The unmitigated formulation of the utterance contributes to what can be interpreted as a blunt and dismissive conversational tone. The word “nasty” primarily connotes hostility, contributing to a broader negative and distancing portrayal of Snape within the interaction.

[Example 11]: “I hope it’s really hurting him” (Rowling, 2012, p.134)

In example 11, Ron refers to Snape’s limp, which expresses lack of empathy and kindness towards Snape. The lack of empathy conveyed here reflects a negative evaluative attitude, which reinforces Ron’s hostile (negative) stance toward Snape. The tone displayed by Ron can be interpreted as contributing to an openly cruel and harsh conversational tone, further distancing Snape from the group and positioning him as an acceptable target of ridicule. Rather than functioning ironically, the utterance by Ron is a direct and malicious comment about Snape, contributing to a conversational tone that is openly hostile rather than humorous or sarcastic.

[Example 12]: “I hate them both” (Rowling, 2012, p.144)

Harry groups Snape together with Malfoy, a character already established as an antagonist in the book. The verb “hate” functions as a very strong value word, expressing a hostile attitude. This utterance from Harry establishes a clear stance of opposition toward Snape. The emotionally charged formulation, signaled by the use of “hate”, the absence of mitigating expressions, and a hostile attitude, contributes to a rejecting and distancing conversational tone toward Snape.

Together these examples illustrate how other characters repeatedly adopt a hostile stance toward Snape, shown through negative attitudes and conversational tones which can be interpreted as contributing to a broader pattern of social distancing toward Snape. This pattern corresponds directly to the distribution shown in Table 8, reinforcing Snape’s construction as negatively evaluated and positioned in opposition to other characters.

4.3 Speech by Dumbledore and Snape

In order to provide a quantitative overview of the direct speech produced by Dumbledore and Snape, all instances were identified and categorized according to speech act type and face orientation.

Table 9: Dumbledore’s consideration of the hearer’s face

| Face orientation | FSA (hedged) | FTA (direct) | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Positive face | 18 | 0 | 18 |
| Negative face | 15 | 11 | 26 |
| Overlapping positive & negative | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Total | 39 | 13 | 52 |

Table 10: Snape’s consideration of the hearer’s face

| Face orientation | FSA (hedged) | FTA (direct) | Total |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| Positive face | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| Negative face | 1 | 7 | 8 |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Overlapping positive & negative | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Total | 1 | 17 | 18 |

As can be seen in Table 9 above, Dumbledore’s direct speech is predominantly realized as face-saving acts (FSAs). Out of the 52 instances of direct speech collected, the majority (39) functioned as FSAs. Dumbledore is seen as a calm and a highly respected wizard, good and kind if eccentric with a unique linguistic style. Moreover, Dumbledore’s sense of humor and gentleness sets him apart from Snape’s strict leadership as they both are figures of authority by virtue of their roles as leaders at Hogwarts.

[Example 13]: “Would you care for a sherbet lemon?” (Rowling, 2012, p. 13)

In example 13, the utterance by Dumbledore is realized as a direct question and functions as a friendly offer. The modal construction “would you care” serves as a hedge, softening the act. By allowing the hearer the freedom to accept or decline, he protects the hearer’s negative face. The utterance also functions as an instance of positive politeness, as the offer expresses friendliness and consideration toward the listener.

[Example 14]: “My dear professor, surely a sensible person like yourself can call him by his name?” (Rowling, 2012, p. 14)

In example 14, the term of address “my dear professor” functions as a term of endearment, while the hedge “surely” mitigates as the force of request. Rather than issuing a bare command, Dumbledore frames the direct speech act in a way that affirms the hearer’s competence and rationality and therefore reinforcing the hearer’s positive face, while being portrayed to the reader as a kind, friendly headmaster.

A further illustration of Dumbledore’s face-saving orientation appears in many situations in the novel as acknowledged in Table 9, particularly in situations involving refusal, where the potential for face threat is high.

[Example 15]: “I beg you’ll forgive me.” (Rowling, 2012, p. 216)

Dumbledore employs a polite and respectful expression to soften the face threat inherent in refusing the request made by another character. The expression shown in example 15, signals humility and respect, thereby protecting the hearer’s positive face, while also functioning as a negative face-saving act “I beg” by acknowledging the imposition involved, despite Dumbledore’s institutional authority.

As shown in Table 10, Snape’s direct speech contains multiple instances of face-threatening acts (FTAs), primarily directed at students. In example 16, Snape directly threatens the hearer’s positive face.

[Example 16]: “Idiot boy!” snarled Snape. (Rowling, 2012, p. 103)

One might assume it is important for a student’s positive face to be recognized as intellectually competent or respected by their teachers; however, Snape’s utterance explicitly denies this by positioning the addressee as inferior. The lack of any mitigating politeness strategies further intensifies the face threat, which suggests a deliberate disregard for the student’s social self-image. This extracted utterance is as follows; the full table appears in the appendix (appendix B):

[Example 17]: “I can teach you how to bottle fame, brew glory, even stopper death – if you aren’t as big a bunch of dunderheads as I usually have to teach.” (Rowling, 2012, p. 102)

Example 17 represents a strong threat to the students’ positive face. Although the first part of this utterance shows Snape’s authority and expertise, the conditional insult presented in the latter part can be considered a threat to the collective capability of students. As in the former case, Snape does not employ any strategy of politeness, which shows that this threat towards face is deliberate.

[Example 18]: “Five points from Gryffindor, Weasley, and be grateful it isn’t more. Move along, all of you.” (Rowling, 2012, p. 144)

In example 18, Snape’s utterance contains threats of both positive and negative face. The way Snape deducts points from their house threatens the addressed student’s positive face by invoking shame and social disapproval, while the direct speech acts “be grateful” and “move along” restrict all of the students’ freedom, therefore threatening their negative face.

In addition to functioning as FTAs, Snape’s utterances are marked by a consistently hostile

conversational tone, characterized by contempt and emotional distance as expressed in direct speech acts and insults. Following Leech and Short (2007), this tone reflects Snape's stance toward students and reinforces his strict, controlling character, discouraging readers from identifying with him.

Overall, Snape's speech shows a pattern where FTAs are very common, achieved mainly through insults and direct speech acts, some of which are facilitated by Snape's status as a teacher. This suggests that Snape speaks in an unmitigated way of using face-threatening strategies, reinforcing his characterization as strict, controlling and emotionally distant.

5. Discussion

The study examined how linguistic choices contribute to the construction of Albus Dumbledore as a (good) protagonist and Severus Snape as an (evil) antagonist in HPPS. Drawing on politeness theory, stance and attitude analysis, the results show a consistent evaluative contrast operating across three discourse levels: the narrator's descriptions, other characters' speech, and the characters' own direct speech. Rather than differing substantially, these levels reinforce one another through similar linguistic patterns that cumulatively construct opposing moral identities. While similar types of language are used to describe and represent both characters, they are used to position Dumbledore through positive evaluation and face-saving strategies, whereas Snape is constructed through negative evaluation and frequent face-threatening acts, which results in contrasting moral alignments. The following sections discuss these findings in relation to the three research questions.

5.1 Narrator stance and evaluative language in construction of protagonist and antagonist

With regard to the first research question, the analysis shows that language used about both Dumbledore and Snape plays an important role in constructing their different identities. The narrator consistently adopts a positive evaluative stance toward Dumbledore, realized through words with positive connotations, approving descriptions, and positively loaded reporting verbs such as "smiled," "chuckled," or "beamed," which frame his speech and actions as warm and reassuring. In line with Leech and Short's (2007) concept of authorial tone, these repeated positive evaluations contribute to an overall narratorial tone which presents Dumbledore as calm, benevolent, and trustworthy.

In contrast, Snape is consistently associated with negative evaluative language, including reporting verbs such as "snapped," "sneered," or "spat," which attribute irritation, contempt, or hostility to his speech. These narratorial choices frame Snape as emotionally hostile and morally questionable, while Dumbledore is positioned as a trustworthy authority figure through contrasting positive evaluation elsewhere in the narration. This pattern of evaluative language contributes to Snape's construction as an antagonist through how he is described, voiced, and responded to by other characters.

These interpretations are further reinforced through conversational tone, as realised in the speech of other characters. Utterances about Dumbledore are characterised by positive politeness, formal forms of address, and explicit praise. In terms of Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), such features function as face-saving and affiliative strategies, while Leech and Short's (2007) discussion of stance explains how they contribute to a consistently positive positioning of

Dumbledore in the narrative. Together these linguistic choices construct Dumbledore as a respected and trusted authority figure. In contrast to other characters, utterances about Snape repeatedly employ words with negative connotations and unmitigated evaluative statements. In terms of stance (Leech & Short, 2007), these linguistic choices help position Snape negatively within the social relations of the narrative. From a politeness perspective (Brown & Levinson, 1987), they function as face-threatening acts that construct him in opposition to Dumbledore.

5.2 Politeness strategies, tone, and facework in Dumbledore's and Snape's speech

When applied to the second research question, the findings demonstrate that Dumbledore and Snape construct their identities through different interactional styles. Dumbledore's speech shows a consistent tendency to employ politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987), such as face-saving acts, the use of hedges, and terms of endearment. These different strategies save both positive and negative face and present Dumbledore's authority as benevolent. Even in potentially highly face-threatening situations, such as refusals, Dumbledore mitigates his utterances through the use of hedging, indirect formulations, and polite terms of address. In terms of Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), these strategies function as face-saving acts that reduce imposition and contribute to a more respectful and supportive interactional style. Dumbledore's use of language is characterized by FSAs and respectful terms of address, which function to mitigate face-threatening potential and contribute to a consistently polite and respectful interactional style.

In contrast to Dumbledore, Snape's speech is characterized by face-threatening acts (FTAs) directed primarily at students but sometimes at other authority figures. His frequent use of direct commands, insults, and unmitigated criticism threatens both positive and negative faces. This interactional pattern frames Snape's authority through unmitigated face-threatening acts. Even though his authority as a teacher enables such directness as shown in some examples, his limited use of politeness strategies and frequent reliance on unmitigated FTAs reinforce his construction as an antagonistic authority figure. Snape's speech is characterized by a sharp, hostile tone that immediately commands obedience and distance.

The findings in this essay support the view that politeness strategies are not merely interpersonal tools but also function as narrative devices through which character identities are constructed. The contrast between Dumbledore's mitigated authority and Snape's coercive authority may push readers to align with Dumbledore and take distance from Snape.

5.3 Linguistic character analysis as a tool for critical literacy

With regard to the third research question, the findings suggest potential for didactic application. By analyzing how the linguistic choices construct characters, students can be guided to recognize that

characters are not inherently “good” or “evil,” but are constructed through systematic patterns of language use. HPPS can be effectively used for students in the classroom to collect evidence of Dumbledore as protagonist and Snape as antagonist, examining how character construction can be achieved through language use, not only in how characters are described but also how characters themselves use language, and how other characters use language about them. Examining narrator stance, politeness strategies, and evaluative language encourages learners to question how texts guide interpretation and reader alignment.

Such guided analysis promotes critical literacy by raising awareness of how language achieves communicative goals, such as establishing authority, expressing stance, or influencing moral judgement. These analytical skills can be transferred to the reading of other literary texts and the chance to gain broader communicative contexts, enabling students to critically evaluate how language positions speakers, constructs identities, and shapes meaning. In this way, students raise their awareness of the role of character construction in storytelling and can apply this critical literacy awareness to other examples of literature or transfer these skills to communicative situations.

5.4 Study limitations

The essay had limits due to scope, investigating only the first novel out of the seven in the Harry Potter series, and focusing only on two characters.

One limitation anticipated before the study concerned a methodological issue with the selection of only one book (HPPS) from the Harry Potter series and the resulting sample size for statistical measurements. This could affect the reliability of the data which could be remedied in future studies by including all books in the series to draw firmer conclusions. More extensive studies would provide stronger evidence to improve generalizability and more valid results. While the present study undertook an in-depth analysis, the limited sample size and narrow scope of one book restricts the generalizability and reliability of the findings. Future research could further investigate other or additional novels, where character development becomes more complex, or explore how similar linguistic strategies operate across different genres of children’s literature.

Another limitation of the analysis is the reliance on politeness theory as the primary theoretical framework. Brown and Levinson’s concept of positive and negative face provide useful tools for examining character interaction; they are not always sufficient to fully reveal differences in characters. In several instances, it was difficult to clearly categorise utterances as either positive or negative politeness strategies, because the interpretation often depended on subjective judgement and contextual assumptions. This ambiguity limits the reliability of the analysis and could oversimplify complex character dynamics. As a result, an alternative theoretical framework might

have focused more directly on the types of speech acts used (e.g., commands, threats, refusals) or on the institutional roles of teacher and student in classroom interaction. Such an approach could have reduced the need to interpret whether an utterance counts as positive or negative politeness and instead analysed how authority and power are enacted through specific linguistic functions. Finally, the findings are subject to reader interpretation. Someone familiar with the books and movies may form their own interpretations, which may differ from this analysis. A key challenge was to focus strictly on the textual evidence rather than being influenced by prior knowledge of the story.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, this essay set out to investigate how linguistic choices contribute to the construction of Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape as a (good) protagonist and an (evil) antagonist, respectively in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. By examining the use of language by the characters, narrator and other characters' speech associated with them, the analysis demonstrates that politeness strategies, tone, and evaluative stance play a central role in shaping characters and influencing reader alignment.

Based on the analysis and discussion above, the first concluding point concerns the language used by and about Dumbledore and Snape. The findings display how Dumbledore and Snape are constructed through systematically contrasting patterns of language use. Dumbledore's speech is mainly characterized by face-saving acts (FSAs), hedging, indirectness, and terms of endearment. These politeness strategies address both positive and negative face, presenting his authority as benevolent, inclusive and morally legitimate. Even when there were refusals, Dumbledore mitigates potential face threats through polite formulation and a calm conversational tone, which is realized through hedging, indirectness, and face-saving acts, as well as the absence of explicit or implicit threats. This interactional style, reinforced by the narrator's and other characters' evaluative stance, positions him as a respected and trusted authority figure, which reinforces his role as (good) protagonist aligned with values of empathy and care.

In contrast, Snape's speech is constantly realized as face-threatening acts (FTAs). The frequent use of direct commands, insults, sarcasm, and explicit or implicit threats is consistently realized as threatening both positive and negative face, specifically in his interaction with students. The lack of politeness mitigation, which is realized through the absence of hedging, indirectness, and face-saving acts, together with the dominance of a sharp, hostile tone characterized by direct commands, insults, sarcasm, and explicit or implicit threats, construct Snape's authority as coercive rather than relational. Although his role as a teacher legitimizes a certain degree of directness, the systematic use of unmitigated FTAs can encourage readers to interpret his behavior as emotionally distant, hostile, unfriendly, and morally problematic, thereby reinforcing the reader's interpretation of his identity as the (evil) antagonist.

Together, the findings show that politeness strategies, tone and face management function not only as interpersonal tools, but also as a powerful narrative device in character construction. The systematic contrast between FSA and FTA behavior displays how authority can be linguistically framed as either morally legitimate or oppressive. This highlights the role of pragmatics and evaluation in shaping readers' moral interpretation of characters.

Another concluding point deals with the fact that character construction can promote critical literacy and awareness of how language achieves communicative goals. To become critically aware,

students need to move beyond comprehension of text to a deeper understanding and awareness of linguistic features. From a didactic perspective, the findings show how linguistic analysis of literary texts can promote the development of children's critical literacy. By examining how politeness, tone, and evaluative language help construct characters as "good" or "evil," students can be encouraged to see that moral positioning in fiction is achieved through language rather than inherent character traits. Such an analysis can foster awareness of how communicative goals are achieved and can be transferred to broad contexts beyond literature. Therefore, using HPPS as literature in the curriculum can get students more involved and engaged in the material and develop improved language and pragmatic skills.

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Appendix

Appendix A:

| No. | Speaker | Quotation (excerpt) | Page | FSA / FTA | Face orientation |
|-----|------------|---|-------|--------------|---------------------|
| A1 | Dumbledore | “You can’t blame them.” | 13 | FSA | Positive |
| A2 | Dumbledore | “We’ve had precious little to celebrate for eleven years.” | 13 | FSA | Positive |
| A3 | Dumbledore | “It certainly seems so.” | 13 | FSA | Positive |
| A4 | Dumbledore | “We have much to be thankful for.” | 13 | FSA | Positive |
| A5 | Dumbledore | “Would you care for a sherbet lemon?” | 13 | FSA | Positive |
| A6 | Dumbledore | “You flatter me.” | 14 | FSA | Positive |
| A7 | Dumbledore | “Voldemort had powers I will never have.” | 14 | FSA | Positive |
| A8 | Dumbledore | “I know... I know...” | 14–15 | FSA | Positive |
| A9 | Dumbledore | “We can only guess.” | 15 | FSA | Negative |
| A10 | Dumbledore | “We may never know.” | 15 | FSA | Negative |
| A11 | Dumbledore | “Hagrid’s late.” | 15 | FSA | Negative |
| A12 | Dumbledore | “I suppose it was he who told you I’d be here?” | 15 | FSA | Negative |
| A13 | Dumbledore | “I’ve come to bring Harry to his aunt and uncle.” | 15 | FTA | Negative |
| A14 | Dumbledore | “It’s the best place for him.” | 15 | FTA | Negative |
| A15 | Dumbledore | “His aunt and uncle will be able to explain everything to him.” | 15 | FTA | Negative |
| A16 | Dumbledore | “I would trust Hagrid with my life.” | 16 | FSA | Positive |
| A17 | Dumbledore | “No problems, were there?” | 16 | FSA | Negative |
| A18 | Dumbledore | “Even if I could, I wouldn’t.” | 17 | FSA | Negative |
| A19 | Dumbledore | “Scars can come in useful.” | 17 | FSA | Positive |
| A20 | Dumbledore | “Well – give him here, Hagrid.” | 17 | FTA | Negative |
| A21 | Dumbledore | “We’d better get this over with.” | 17 | FTA | Negative |
| A22 | Dumbledore | “We’ve no business staying here.” | 17 | FSA | Negative |
| A23 | Dumbledore | “We may as well go and join the celebrations.” | 17 | FSA | Positive |
| A24 | Dumbledore | “I shall see you soon, I expect, Professor McGonagall.” | 17 | FSA | Positive |

| No. | Speaker | Quotation (excerpt) | Page | FSA / FTA | Face orientation |
|------------|----------------|---|-------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| A25 | Dumbledore | “Welcome!” | 91 | FSA | Positive |
| A26 | Dumbledore | “Welcome to a new year at Hogwarts!” | 91 | FSA | Positive |
| A27 | Dumbledore | “Nitwit! Blubber! Oddment! Tweak!” | 91 | FSA | Positive |
| A28 | Dumbledore | “A few more words now we are all fed and watered.” | 94 | FSA | Positive |
| A29 | Dumbledore | “The forest is forbidden to all pupils.” | 94 | FTA | Negative |
| A30 | Dumbledore | “No magic should be used between classes.” | 94 | FTA | Negative |
| A31 | Dumbledore | “The third-floor corridor is out of bounds.” | 94 | FTA | Negative |
| A32 | Dumbledore | “Everyone pick their favourite tune.” | 95 | FSA | Positive |
| A33 | Dumbledore | “Off you trot!” | 95 | FSA | Positive |
| A34 | Dumbledore | “Prefects, lead your houses back to the dormitories immediately!” | 128 | FTA | Negative |
| A35 | Dumbledore | “So, you have discovered the Mirror of Erised.” | 156 | FSA | Positive |
| A36 | Dumbledore | “Does that help?” | 156 | FSA | Positive |
| A37 | Dumbledore | “It shows us nothing more or less than the deepest desire of our hearts.” | 157 | FSA | Positive |
| A38 | Dumbledore | “I ask you not to go looking for it again.” | 157 | FTA | Negative |
| A39 | Dumbledore | “It does not do to dwell on dreams.” | 157 | FSA | Positive |
| A40 | Dumbledore | “Why don’t you get off to bed?” | 157 | FSA | Negative |
| A41 | Dumbledore | “You may ask me one more thing.” | 157 | FSA | Positive |
| A42 | Dumbledore | “I see myself holding a pair of socks.” | 157 | FSA | Positive |
| A43 | Dumbledore | “Well done.” | 164 | FSA | Positive |
| A44 | Dumbledore | “Good afternoon, Harry.” | 214 | FSA | Positive |
| A45 | Dumbledore | “Calm yourself, dear boy.” | 214 | FSA | Positive |
| A46 | Dumbledore | “Please relax.” | 214 | FSA | Positive |
| A47 | Dumbledore | “Call him Voldemort.” | 216 | FTA | Negative |
| A48 | Dumbledore | “The truth is a beautiful and terrible thing.” | 216 | FSA | Positive |
| A49 | Dumbledore | “I cannot tell you.” | 216 | FTA | Negative |
| A50 | Dumbledore | “Your mother died to save you.” | 216 | FSA | Positive |
| A51 | Dumbledore | “Another year gone!” | 220 | FSA | Positive |

| No. | Speaker | Quotation (excerpt) | Page | FSA / FTA | Face orientation |
|-----|------------|-----------------------------------|------|--------------|---------------------|
| A52 | Dumbledore | “There are all kinds of courage.” | 221 | FSA | Positive |

Appendix B:

| No. | Speaker | Quotation (excerpt) | Page | FSA / FTA | Type of act |
|-----|---------|--|------|--------------|-------------|
| B1 | Snape | “Ah, yes... Harry Potter. Our new celebrity.” | 101 | FTA | Positive |
| B2 | Snape | “If you aren’t as big a bunch of dunderheads as I usually have to teach.” | 102 | FTA | Positive |
| B3 | Snape | “Potter!” | 102 | FTA | Positive |
| B4 | Snape | “Tut, tut – fame clearly isn’t everything.” | 102 | FTA | Positive |
| B5 | Snape | “Sit down.” | 103 | FTA | Negative |
| B6 | Snape | “Why aren’t you all copying that down?” | 103 | FTA | Positive |
| B7 | Snape | “A point will be taken from Gryffindor house for your cheek, Potter.” | 103 | FTA | Negative |
| B8 | Snape | “Idiot boy!” | 103 | FTA | Positive |
| B9 | Snape | “Take him up to the hospital wing.” | 103 | FTA | Negative |
| B10 | Snape | “That’s another point you’ve lost for Gryffindor.” | 104 | FTA | Negative |
| B11 | Snape | “Library books are not to be taken outside the school.” | 134 | FTA | Negative |
| B12 | Snape | “Give it to me. Five points from Gryffindor.” | 134 | FTA | Negative |
| B13 | Snape | “GET OUT! OUT!” | 135 | FTA | Negative |
| B14 | Snape | “Fighting is against Hogwarts rules.” | 144 | FTA | Negative |
| B15 | Snape | “Be grateful it isn’t more.” | 144 | FTA | Negative |
| B16 | Snape | “You don’t want me as your enemy.” | 166 | FTA | Negative |
| B17 | Snape | “We’ll have another little chat soon.” | 166 | FTA | Negative |
| B18 | Snape | “Any more night-time wanderings and I will personally make sure you are expelled.” | 195 | FTA | Negative |

Appendix C:

| No. | Character | Narrative description (excerpt) | Page | Evaluative stance |
|------------|------------------|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| C19 | Dumbledore | “His blue eyes were light, bright and sparkling.” | 12 | Positive |
| C20 | Dumbledore | “For some reason, the sight of the cat seemed to amuse him.” | 12 | Positive |
| C21 | Dumbledore | “He chuckled.” | 12 | Positive |
| C22 | Dumbledore | “He was beaming at the students.” | 91 | Positive |
| C23 | Dumbledore | “Nothing could have pleased him more.” | 91 | Positive |
| C24 | Dumbledore | “Dumbledore was smiling.” | 156 | Positive |
| C25 | Dumbledore | “Harry looked up into Dumbledore’s smiling face.” | 164 | Positive |
| C26 | Dumbledore | “The smiling face of Albus Dumbledore swam into view.” | 214 | Positive |
| C27 | Dumbledore | “Dumbledore smiled.” | 157 | Positive |
| C28 | Dumbledore | “Dumbledore looked calm.” | 214 | Positive |
| C29 | Dumbledore | “Dumbledore sounded relieved.” | 16 | Positive |
| C30 | Dumbledore | “Dumbledore nodded glumly.” | 15 | Positive |
| C31 | Dumbledore | “Dumbledore was beaming.” | 91 | Positive |
| C32 | Dumbledore | “Dumbledore was smiling.” | 157 | Positive |

Appendix C2:

| No. | Character | Narrative description (excerpt) | Page | Evaluative stance |
|-----|-----------|---|------|-------------------|
| C1 | Snape | “Snape didn’t dislike Harry – he hated him.” | 101 | Negative |
| C2 | Snape | “His eyes were cold and empty.” | 102 | Negative |
| C3 | Snape | “Snape’s lips curled into a sneer.” | 102 | Negative |
| C4 | Snape | “Snape was sweeping about in his usual bad temper.” | 167 | Negative |
| C5 | Snape | “Snape made them all nervous.” | 191 | Negative |
| C6 | Snape | “Harry felt a hand on his shoulder... Snape spat bitterly on the ground.” | 164 | Negative |
| C7 | Snape | “Snape’s face was twisted with fury.” | 135 | Negative |
| C8 | Snape | “Snape was breathing down their necks.” | 191 | Negative |
| C9 | Snape | “Snape was limping.” | 134 | Negative |
| C10 | Snape | “He seemed to be looking for a reason to tell them off.” | 134 | Negative |
| C11 | Snape | “Snape made them all nervous.” | 191 | Negative |
| C12 | Snape | “Snape didn’t look at him again.” | 94 | Negative |
| C13 | Snape | “Harry had the horrible feeling that Snape could read minds.” | 162 | Negative |
| C14 | Snape | “Snape was sweeping about in his usual bad temper.” | 167 | Negative |
| C15 | Snape | “Snape was white-faced and tight-lipped.” | 164 | Negative |
| C16 | Snape | “Snape was looking so angry.” | 163 | Negative |
| C17 | Snape | “Snape had none of Hagrid’s warmth.” | 102 | Negative |
| C18 | Snape | “Snape was sweeping about in his usual bad temper.” | 167 | Negative |

Appendix D:

| No. | Target | Speaker | Quotation (excerpt) | Page | Evaluative stance |
|-----|------------|---------|--------------------------|------|-------------------|
| D19 | Dumbledore | Hagrid | “Great man, Dumbledore.” | 48 | Positive |

| No. | Target | Speaker | Quotation (excerpt) | Page | Evaluative stance |
|-----|------------|---------------|---|------|-------------------|
| D20 | Dumbledore | Hagrid | “NEVER INSULT ALBUS DUMBLEDORE IN FRONT OF ME!” | 48 | positive |
| D21 | Dumbledore | Harry | “Sir – Professor Dumbledore? Can I ask you something?” | 157 | Positive |
| D22 | Dumbledore | Ron | “Dumbledore’s barking, all right.” | 219 | Positive |
| D23 | Dumbledore | Hermione | “He must have asked Dumbledore to keep it safe.” | 161 | Positive |
| D24 | Dumbledore | Harry | “He wanted to give me a chance.” | 219 | Positive |
| D25 | Dumbledore | Ron | “With Dumbledore around, You-Know-Who won’t touch you.” | 190 | Positive |
| D26 | Dumbledore | Hagrid | “Dumbledore trusted me.” | 57 | Positive |
| D27 | Dumbledore | Hermione | “We’ve got to go to Dumbledore.” | 180 | Positive |
| D28 | Dumbledore | Ron | “Dumbledore’s the only one he was ever afraid of.” | 190 | Positive |
| D29 | Dumbledore | Madam Pomfrey | “That was the Headmaster, quite different.” | 218 | Positive |
| D30 | Dumbledore | Hagrid | “Not a soul knows except me an’ Dumbledore.” | 170 | Positive |

Appendix D2:

| No. | Target | Speaker | Quotation (excerpt) | Page | Evaluative stance |
|-----|--------|----------|--|---------|-------------------|
| D1 | Snape | Ron | “Snape can turn very nasty.” | 104 | Negative |
| D2 | Snape | Ron | “I hope it’s really hurting him.” | 134 | Negative |
| D3 | Snape | Harry | “I hate them both.” | 144 | Negative |
| D4 | Snape | Hermione | “Snape – look.” | 140 | Negative |
| D5 | Snape | Harry | “Snape was trying to save me?” | 209 | Positive |
| D6 | Snape | Ron | “He always favours the Slytherins.” | 100–101 | Negative |
| D7 | Snape | Harry | “Why does he hate me so much?” | 104 | Negative |
| D8 | Snape | Ron | “Snape’s refereeing this time.” | 159 | Negative |
| D9 | Snape | Ron | “I wouldn’t put anything past Snape.” | 135 | Negative |
| D10 | Snape | Hermione | “He wouldn’t try and steal something Dumbledore was keeping safe.” | 135 | Positive |
| D11 | Snape | Harry | “Snape’s after the Stone.” | 161 | Negative |
| D12 | Snape | Harry | “Snape’s going through the trapdoor tonight.” | 195 | Negative |
| D13 | Snape | Ron | “Do you want to stop Snape or not?” | 205 | Negative |
| D14 | Snape | Quirrell | “Severus does seem the type, doesn’t he?” | 209 | Negative |
| D15 | Snape | Quirrell | “He never wanted you dead.” | 210 | Positive |
| D16 | Snape | Hagrid | “Snape’s a Hogwarts teacher, he wouldn’t do nothing of the sort.” | 141 | Positive |
| D17 | Snape | Harry | “But Snape tried to kill me!” | 209 | Negative |
| D18 | Snape | Harry | “Snape always seemed to hate me so much.” | 210 | Negative |