

Stereotypical and Multilayered Representations of Masculinity and Femininity in the *Harry Potter* Series: A Corpus-assisted Content Analysis

Wesam M A Ibrahim

Department of Basic Sciences, Applied College,
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University, Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA

email: WMIbrahim@pnu.edu.sa

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Abstract: Gender can be defined as the social and cultural production and reproduction of female and male identities and behaviours, separate from the biological differences between men and women (Flanagan, 2010). The aim of this paper is to probe the question of gender representation in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series using a corpus-assisted approach to content analysis. To fulfil this aim, two research questions were tackled: 1) To what extent is J. K. Rowling balanced/imbalanced in selecting male and female characters and in distributing the major and minor roles between them? and 2) To what extent does J. K. Rowling use stereotypes and/or more complex ways of constructing gender in depicting the male and female characters in the *Harry Potter* series? Content analysis is a systematic way of looking at texts for their content, i.e., what the text is broadly 'about', who the characters are, the plot, and "what happens in the end" (Sunderland, 2010). It involves identifying particular content-related categories, and then counting occurrences of those categories, such as, for the purposes of this paper, the different types of protagonists, whether they are male and female and their various social and occupational roles. In this paper, the corpus-assisted content analysis of the *Harry Potter* series consists of the following procedures: the speech contribution of each character was manually extracted in order to compare the narrative space dedicated to male and female characters; the corpus tool WordSmith 5 (Scott 1999) was used to extract frequency lists for each book in the series; gender-indicative words were then selected from the top 200 most frequent words in each book; names of male and female characters were counted in order to measure the (im)balanced distribution of roles between males and females in each book; and finally, the books were also investigated manually to probe their construal of gender in a more qualitative way. The quantitative and qualitative analyses support the argument that Rowling's representation of males/females is indeed imbalanced although her gender construction of the main characters is complex and multi-layered.

Keywords: content analysis, frequency, gender representation, *Harry Potter*, stereotypes

INTRODUCTION

Corpus Linguistics (CL) provides a kind of objectivity and efficiency that is hard to find in manual analysis, particularly when dealing with large amounts of data. In this paper, I use a corpus-assisted approach to the analysis of gendered representations in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. The methodological combination between CL and discourse analysis facilitates dealing with the whole series and provides statistical evidence for critics' interpretations.

The *Harry Potter* series, which typically addresses children and young adults, provides them with "texts of meanings of femininity and heterosexuality that they may draw on to understand and interpret their place in the social world" (Jackson, 2001: 306). Indeed, reading, for children, is "a particularly influential activity in terms of children's learning of societal expectations" (Wharton, 2005: 239). My interest in exploring the gender construction in the series rises from my belief in its significant impact on "the kinds of masculinity and femininity that child readers have to choose from in constructing their own identities" (Hunt, 2015: 267). Gendered representations in children's books may exert a substantial influence on how young readers perceive the world, particularly in terms of gender appropriate behaviours (Leverato, 2003; Nakamura, 2006; Zipes, 2006). As Hunt (2015) states:

[T]hese iterations and reiterations of ideas about gender are typically below the level of consciousness, and therefore more difficult to resist, but contribute nonetheless to the gradual accumulation of a set of norms, beliefs about how to be a girl, or how to be a boy, made all the stronger through their normative relationship to existing traditional views on gender (Hunt, 2015: 282).

Critics have repeatedly documented gender stereotyping in *Harry Potter* (e.g., Pugh and Wallace, 2006; Mayes-Elma, 2006; Heilman, 2003; Blake, 2002; Eccleshare, 2002) since the series was "produced against a background of several decades of social change as regards gender roles and relations and well-documented gender imbalance in children's fiction" (Sunderland, 2010: 193). Two key groups of critics can be identified in the literature on gender representation in *Harry Potter*, featuring J. K. Rowling as either an enforcer of patriarchal values who mimics gender inequalities that exist in the real world or a hero of feminist writing who empowers her female characters. The advocates of the first group argue that the *Harry Potter* books resonate with gender stereotypes of the worst sort (Cherland, 2008; Gallardo and Smith, 2003; Mayes-Elma, 2006; Schoefer, 2000). These critics maintain that the series presents stereotypical patterns of male and female characters: females are fearful, emotional, and not typically very involved in action; whereas males are predominant, wiser, braver, more powerful, and more fun (Heilman, 2003: 221-239). Many critics are particularly against the stereotypical representations of women in *Harry Potter*. These critics argue that the books allow readers to see "far more images of weak, needy women than strong independent women" (Mayes-Elma, 2006: 104); women are predominately presented as a gaggle of silly, overly-emotional females who conform to traditional gender roles and gender stereotypes; and that they are confined to the roles of wives and mothers who are "emotional or sensitive to the point of irrationality" (Gallardo and Smith, 2003: 194).

The critics of the second group, on the other hand, believe that J. K. Rowling subverts gendered stereotypes by presenting educated and strong female characters who possess loving

hearts and nurturing minds (Zettel, 2005). They maintain that Rowling's female characters are empowered: they are not weak, cowardly, foolish, hysterical, empty-minded witches who are outshined by great, courageous, and flawless wizards. The female characters, actually, are fully developed characters who challenge the typical female stereotypes; they are empowered and rational women who can make their own choices, establish confidence in themselves and have possibilities to form their own identities.

Zettel (2005) confirms that the girls at Hogwarts are educated in complete equality with the boys, and there is no bar to their joining in athletics, or even coaching and captaining the teams.... Beyond their roles as mothers and wives, women are active in government and law enforcement. Women own their own businesses. Women teach, and are and have been headmistresses of magical schools (Zettel, 2005: 92).

Rowling highlights the fluidity of gender in her treatment of her major characters. She illustrates that 'masculine' and 'feminine' qualities often overlap in the same person. This overlapping of masculine and feminine qualities can be spotted in most of the major characters in the books such as, for example, Harry, Ron, Neville, Hagrid, Hermione, Mrs Weasley, and so on. Harry Potter, who is generally viewed by critics as the prototypical 'masculine' hero, exhibits qualities that are conventionally associated with the 'feminine' such as feeling empathy even with his enemies, showing hesitation and even crying in many situations. Neville Longbottom, who has been prematurely described by Heilman (2003) as a "feminised character who lacks self-confidence and stammers through life as a foil for Harry's masculinity", is in fact a complex character who is parallel to Harry in many ways. Hagrid also blends both masculine and feminine qualities: he has a muscular, giant body and is extremely physically strong, but he also knits, bakes cakes and mothers baby creatures. Hermione, who is supposed to be Harry's female sidekick, is a prominent student and a high achiever whose brilliance helps Harry and Ron survive throughout the series. Mrs Weasley, the prototypical mother, is a member of the Order of the Phoenix and a strong fighter. The complexity of these characters supports the argument that the construal of gender in the *Harry Potter* novels is complex and multi-layered.

Gender studies used to focus mainly on the marginalisation and/or the empowerment of women. However, the study of gender has recently become more elaborate by exploring the ways in which the identities of both women and men are multifaceted and affected by gendering. The corpus-based approach is increasingly being utilized in gender studies (e.g., Baker, 2010, 2014; Caldas-Coulthard and Moon, 2010, 2016; Gidengil and Everitt, 2003; Motschenbacher, 2013; Motschenbacher and Stegu, 2013; Moon, 2014; Page, 2003; Pearce, 2008; Zimman et al., 2014). Hunt (2015) uses a corpus-based approach to explore the body parts and material actions in three books of the *Harry Potter* series. She argues that the female characters are passive and ineffectual revealing that the verbs that collocate with male body parts (hands, feet) are more likely to show agency when compared to the verbs collocating with female body parts. She concludes that "[f]emales, as embodied entities in the world of [Harry Potter], are systematically excluded from acting on the world in powerful or meaningful ways and the message is clear: agency is not for girls" (Hunt, 2015: 282). The current paper probes the whole series and is not confined to the consideration of the marginalisation and/or empowerment of the female characters; it will deal with the fashioning of gender identity for both males and females. I will argue that Rowling's construal of gender in the *Harry Potter* series reflects a view of gender that an individual does not have to be stereotyped as masculine or feminine, brave or cowardly, strong or weak. Instead, as my analysis of the *Harry Potter* series shows, characters tend to blend 'masculine' and 'feminine' traits in a way that subverts gendered stereotypes to ultimately engender new ways of thinking about how to be masculine or feminine.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this paper is to examine the gender representations in the *Harry Potter* series using a corpus-assisted content analysis. Content analysis, which is a systematic way of looking at texts for their content, is carried out both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative section of the content analysis is divided into two procedures:

- 1) For each of the seven books in the series, the corpus linguistic tool WordSmith 5 is used to extract a frequency list; the top 200 most frequent words identified in each list are then examined for the presence of gender-indicative words including names of male and female characters; the number of male characters is compared to that of female characters; and finally, the number of occurrences of the name of each character is also taken into consideration.
- 2) For each of the seven books in the series, the speech contribution of each male and female character, identified in the top 200 most frequent words, is manually extracted in order to compare the number of words comprising the speech contributions of the major characters.

The quantitative section of the content analysis, which consists of counting the number of female and male characters in each book as well as the number of words allocated to each character in its speech contribution, provides an answer to the first research question and creates an unambiguous picture of whether J. K. Rowling is (im)balanced in her representation of male and female characters. The qualitative section of the content analysis, on the other hand, includes a survey of the literature on gender representation in the series and a manual analysis of the books to examine the characters, the plot, and any gender-related themes. This section provides an answer to the second research question as to whether J. K. Rowling uses stereotypes and/or more complex ways of constructing gender in depicting the male and female characters in the *Harry Potter* series.

A CORPUS-ASSISTED CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE *HARRY POTTER* SERIES

Frequency of Gender-Indicative Words

The frequency list of each book was produced using WordSmith5. The Top 200 most frequent words in each list were examined and the names of characters and gender-indicative words identified as shown in Tables 1-7. Each table is divided into two main sections: 1. Male and 2. Female. Each section is then subdivided into three subsections: Male/Female characters, Male/Female indicative words, and Male/Female pronouns.

Table 1: The gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book

No.	Word	No. of occurrences	No.	Word	No. of occurrences
1. Male					
Male characters					
1.	Harry	1288	18.	Goyle	24
2.	Ron	427	19.	Fred	29
3.	Hagrid	365	20.	Weasley	21
4.	Snape	167	21.	Flitwick	21
5.	Dumbledore	151	22.	Ronan	20
6.	Dudley	139	23.	Charlie	21
7.	Malfoy	118	24.	Firenze	19
8.	Neville	114	25.	Mr._Ollivander	16
9.	Quirrell	111	26.	Seamus	14
10.	Uncle_Vernon	108	27.	Scabbers	14
11.	Potter	51	28.	Flamel	14
12.	Filch	49	29.	Bane	16
13.	Percy	36	30.	Griphook	12
14.	Voldemort	35	31.	Mr._Potter	12
15.	Peeves	33	32.	Nicolas_Flamel	10
16.	Mr. Dursley	29	33.	Flint	10
17.	HARRY_POTTER	28	34.	Draco_Malfoy	9
Male-indicative words					
1.	boy	84	3.	wizards	20
2.	wizard	48	4.	sorcerer	16
Male pronouns					
1.	he	1757	3.	him	499
2.	his	881	4.	himself	62
2. Female					
Female characters					
1.	Hermione	261	7.	Madam_Pomfrey	14
2.	McGonagall	97	8.	Madam_Hooch	12
3.	Aunt_Petunia	51	9.	Hermione_Granger	9
4.	Mrs._Dursley	19			
Female-indicative words					
1.	Mom	18			
Neutral					
1.	Professor	179			

The top 200 most frequent words in Book 1 include 53 gender-indicative words: 42 Male (34 male characters, 4 Male-indicative words, 4 Male pronouns), 10 Female (9 Female characters, 1 Female-indicative word), and 1 neutral word. The proportion of Female to Male is estimated as 23%. The proportion of Male to all gender-related words is 79%. The proportion of Female to all gender-related words is 18%.

Table 2: The gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book 2

No.	Word	No. of occurrences		No.	Word	No. of occurrences
1. Male						
Male characters						
1.	Harry	1570		21.	Justin	39
2.	Ron	700		22.	Dudley	35
3.	Lockhart	195		23.	Headless_Nick	33
4.	Hagrid	163		24.	Colin	36
5.	Dumbledore	156		25.	Gilderoy_Lockhart	29
6.	DOBBY	152		26.	Peeves	27
7.	Malfoy	138		27.	Ernie	24
8.	Riddle	125		28.	Weasley	21
9.	Snape	96		29.	Aragog	20
10.	Slytherin	96		30.	Neville	21
11.	Fred	98		31.	Lucius_Malfoy	19
12.	HARRY_POTTER	80		32.	Draco	18
13.	Percy	63		33.	Binns	17
14.	George	85		34.	Crabbe	34
15.	Mr._Weasley	53		35.	Wood	42
16.	Filch	51		36.	Draco_Malfoy	16
17.	Mr._Malfoy	44		37.	Fudge	19
18.	Potter	45		38.	Mr._Borgin	14
19.	Uncle_Vernon	39		39.	Lord_Voldemort	13
20.	Goyle	39				
Male-indicative words						
1.	wizard	50		3.	wizards	24
2.	sir	80		4.	heir	29
Male pronouns						
1.	he	1528		3.	him	487
2.	his	1118		4.	himself	78
2. Female						
Female characters						
1.	Hermione	315		5.	Mrs._Weasley	59
2.	Ginny	108		6.	Madam_Pomfrey	29
3.	McGonagall	91		7.	Sprout	26
4.	Myrtle	68		8.	Aunt_Petunia	19
Neutral						
1.	Professor	193				

There are 56 gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book 2: 47 Male (39 Male characters, 4 Male-indicative words, 4 Male pronouns), 8 Female (8 Female characters), and 1 neutral word. The proportion of Female to *Male* is 17%. The proportion of

Male to all gender-related words is 83%. The proportion of Female to all gender-related words is 14%.

Table 3: The gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book 3

No.	Word	No. of occurrences	No.	Word	No. of occurrences
1. Male					
Male characters					
1.	Harry	2016	19.	George	54
2.	Ron	783	20.	Stan	50
3.	Lupin	406	21.	Sirius_Black	46
4.	Hagrid	262	22.	Mr._Weasley	40
5.	Snape	240	23.	Wood	77
6.	Malfoy	168	24.	Voldemort	37
7.	Dumbledore	158	25.	Goyle	37
8.	Scabbers	112	26.	Weasley	27
9.	Fudge	110	27.	Dudley	25
10.	Crookshanks	103	28.	Flitwick	22
11.	Pettigrew	94	29.	Severus	21
12.	Neville	96	30.	Peeves	21
13.	Buckbeak	93	31.	James	30
14.	Sirius	90	32.	Filch	18
15.	Fred	78	33.	Crabbe	37
16.	Potter	76	34.	Sir_Cadogan	16
17.	Uncle_Vernon	72	35.	Macnair	16
18.	Percy	65			
Male-indicative words					
1.	wizard	43	2.	wizards	18
Male pronouns					
1.	he	2093	3.	him	723
2.	his	1412	4.	himself	119
2. Female					
Female characters					
1.	Hermione	664	7.	Mrs._Weasley	23
2.	McGonagall	110	8.	Madam_Hooch	22
3.	Trelawney	89	9.	Lavender	28
4.	Aunt_Marge	49	10.	Madam_Rosmerta	18
5.	Madam_Pomfrey	38	11.	Parvati	17
6.	Aunt_Petunia	24	12.	Lily	17
Female-indicative words					
1.	witch	41			
Neutral					
1.	Professor	413			

In Book 3, there are 55 gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words: 41 Male (35 Male characters, 2 Male-indicative words, 4 Male pronouns), 13 Female (12 Female characters, 1 Female-indicative word), and 1 neutral word. The proportion of Female to Male is 31%. The proportion of Male to all gender-related words is 74%. The proportion of *Female* to all gender-related words is 23%.

Table 4: The gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book 4

No.	Word	No. of occurrences	No.	Word	No. of occurrences
1. Male					
Male characters					
1.	Harry	3059	20.	Wormtail	133
2.	Ron	1034	21.	George	160
3.	Dumbledore	572	22.	Malfoy	100
4.	Hagrid	373	23.	HARRY_POTTER	94
5.	Moody	334	24.	Uncle_Vernon	80
6.	Snape	241	25.	Neville	78
7.	Cedric	237	26.	Bill	75
8.	Percy	109	27.	Fudge	77
9.	Sirius	219	28.	Frank	58
10.	Mr._Weasley	208	29.	Charlie	56
11.	Voldemort	193	30.	Dudley	55
12.	Fred	187	31.	Ludo_Bagman	51
13.	Dobby	169	32.	Barty	48
14.	Krum	167	33.	Mr._Diggory	47
15.	Mr._Crouch	164	34.	Filch	42
16.	Bagman	155	35.	Goyle	39
17.	Karkaroff	152	36.	Viktor_Krum	34
18.	Crouch	139	37.	Peeves	32
19.	Potter	133	38.	Lord_Voldemort	30
Male-indicative words					
1.	wizards	106	3.	master	75
2.	wizard	80			
Male pronouns					
1.	he	3978	3.	him	1361
2.	his	2452	4.	himself	174
2. Female					
Female characters					
1.	Hermione	862	8.	Ginny	46
2.	Winky	156	9.	Aunt_Petunia	40
3.	Mrs._Weasley	133	10.	Parvati	37
4.	Maxime	98	11.	Trelawney	35
5.	McGonagall	93	12.	Cho	33
6.	Rita_Skeeter	75	13.	Myrtle	32
7.	Fleur	66			
Female-indicative words					
1.	Madam	94	3.	veela	33

2.	witch	38			
Female Pronouns					
1.	she	923		2.	her
Neutral					
1.	Professor	289		2.	champions

Book 4 includes 65 gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words: 45 Male (38 Male characters, 3 Male-indicative words, 4 Male pronouns), 18 Female (13 Female characters, 3 Female-indicative words, 2 Female pronouns), and 2 neutral words. The proportion of Female to Male is 40%. The proportion of Male to all gender-related words is 69%. The proportion of *Female* to all gender-related words is 27%.

Table 5: The gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book 5

No.	Word	No. of occurrences		No.	Word	No. of occurrences
1. Male						
Male characters						
1.	Harry	4036		17.	DUDLEY	116
2.	Ron	1293		18.	Uncle_Vernon	101
3.	Dumbledore	633		19.	Moody	87
4.	Sirius	621		20.	Weasley	68
5.	Hagrid	451		21.	Dobby	62
6.	Snape	375		22.	Seamus	58
7.	Fred	319		23.	Percy	57
8.	Neville	270		24.	James	76
9.	George	277		25.	Mundungus	55
10.	Potter	197		26.	Grawp	48
11.	Voldemort	176		27.	HARRY_POTTER	45
12.	Mr._Weasley	173		28.	Firenze	43
13.	Fudge	171		29.	Filch	45
14.	Malfoy	159		30.	Grubbly-Plank	38
15.	Lupin	159		31.	Goyle	38
16.	Kreacher	116				
Male-indicative words						
1.	wizard	95		2.	wizards	82
Male pronouns						
1.	he	5042		3.	him	1614
2.	his	3080		4.	himself	239
2. Female						
Female characters						
1.	Hermione	1286		9.	Trelawney	78
2.	Umbridge	541		10.	Angelina	77
3.	Ginny	227		11.	Aunt_Petunia	62
4.	Mrs._Weasley	200		12.	Bellatrix	41
5.	McGonagall	178		13.	Mrs._Figg	40
6.	Cho	139		14.	Parvati	39
7.	Luna	122		15.	Molly	36
8.	Tonks	99				

Female-indicative words						
1.	witch	69				
Female Pronouns						
1.	her	1730		2.	she	1572
Neutral						
1.	Professor	585				

The top 200 most frequent words in Book 5 include 56 gender-indicative words: 37 Male (31 Male characters, 2 Male-indicative words, 4 Male pronouns), 18 Female (15 Female characters, 1 Female-indicative words, 2 female pronouns), and 1 neutral word. The proportion of Female to Male is 48%. The proportion of Male to all gender-related words is 66%. The proportion of Female to all gender-related words is 32%.

Table (6) The gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book 6

No.	Word	No. of occurrences		No.	Word	No. of occurrences
1. Male						
Male characters						
1.	Harry	2728		21.	Sirius	53
2.	Dumbledore	1016		22.	Bill	51
3.	Ron	870		23.	Draco	47
4.	Slughorn	383		24.	Borgin	46
5.	Snape	365		25.	Zabini	42
6.	Malfoy	332		26.	Lord_Voldemort	39
7.	Hagrid	227		27.	Dobby	38
8.	Voldemort	197		28.	HARRY_POTTER	36
9.	Riddle	79		29.	Dean	48
10.	Fudge	81		30.	Gaunt	33
11.	Fred	80		31.	Filch	30
12.	Neville	71		32.	Severus	29
13.	Scrimgeour	65		33.	Goyle	29
14.	Ogden	64		34.	George	63
15.	Kreacher	59		35.	Tom_Riddle	28
16.	McLaggen	59		36.	Aragog	24
17.	Morfin	58		37.	Draco_Malfoy	23
18.	Lupin	58		38.	Uncle_Vernon	22
19.	Potter	58		39.	Greyback	22
20.	Mr._Weasley	57				
Male-indicative words						
1.	sir	131		3.	wizards	27
2.	wizard	74				
Male pronouns						
1.	he	3543		3.	him	1025
2.	his	2111		4.	himself	175
2. Female						
Female characters						
1.	Hermione	686		9.	Katie	43
2.	Ginny	228		10.	Lavender	55
3.	Mrs._Weasley	127		11.	Bellatrix	40

4.	McGonagall	83		12.	Trelawney	38
5.	Tonks	60		13.	Madam_Pomfrey	31
6.	Luna	55		14.	Merope	30
7.	Narcissa	48		15.	Hepzibah	22
8.	Fleur	48				
Female Pronouns						
1.	she	834		2.	her	827
Neutral						
1.	Professor	278				

In Book 6, there are 64 gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words: 46 Male (39 Male characters, 3 Male-indicative words, 4 Male pronouns), 17 Female (15 Female characters, 2 Female-indicative words), and 1 neutral word. The proportion of Female to Male is 36%. The proportion of Male to all gender-related words is 71%. The proportion of Female to all gender-related words is 26%.

Table 7: The gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words in Book 7

No.	Word	No. of occurrences		No.	Word	No. of occurrences
1. Male						
Male characters						
1.	Harry	3048		24.	Ollivander	54
2.	Ron	1169		25.	Grindelwald	53
3.	Dumbledore	539		26.	Draco	52
4.	Voldemort	412		27.	Severus	48
5.	Snape	276		28.	Gregorovitch	48
6.	Hagrid	168		29.	Kingsley	47
7.	Lupin	160		30.	Doge	46
8.	Kreacher	135		31.	Dobby	46
9.	Potter	123		32.	Regulus	45
10.	Bill	122		33.	Malfoy	44
11.	Griphook	119		34.	Mad-Eye	44
12.	Xenophilus	84		35.	Dudley	46
13.	Fred	92		36.	Mundungus	42
14.	Neville	84		37.	Travers	39
15.	Albus	79		38.	George	74
16.	Aberforth	73		39.	James	49
17.	HARRY_POTTER	70		40.	Krum	34
18.	Sirius	69		41.	Uncle_Vernon	33
19.	Greyback	66		42.	Lord_Voldemort	32
20.	Mr._Weasley	64		43.	ALBUS_DUMBL EDORE	32
21.	Scrimgeour	63		44.	Percy	31
22.	Godric	58		45.	Phineas	30
23.	Yaxley	55				
Male-indicative words						
1.	wizard	110		3.	wizards	77
3.	master	79				

Male pronouns						
1.	he	4211		3.	him	1302
2.	his	2443		4.	himself	214
2. Female						
Female characters						
1.	Hermione	1216		7.	Lily	75
2.	Luna	140		8.	McGonagall	68
3.	Ginny	121		9.	Tonks	63
4.	Fleur	98		10.	Bathilda	54
5.	Bellatrix	95		11.	Ariana	47
6.	Mrs._Weasley	87		12.	Umbridge	43
Female-indicative words						
1.	witch	42				
Female Pronouns						
1.	she	1043		2.	her	1034
Neutral						
1.	Professor	93				

Book 7 includes 68 gender-indicative words in the top 200 most frequent words: 52 Male (45 Male characters, 3 Male-indicative words, 4 Male pronouns), 15 Female (12 Female characters, 1 Female-indicative words, 2 Female pronouns), and 1 neutral word. The proportion of Female to Male is 28%. The proportion of Male to all gender-related words is 76%. The proportion of Female to all gender-related words is 22%.

As indicated in Table (8) below, the *Harry Potter* books are dominated by male characters.

Table 8: Proportion of Male, Female and Neutral words in Harry Potter series

	Gender-related words in top 200 words	Male	Female	Neutral
Book 1	53	42	10	1
Book 2	56	47	8	1
Book 3	55	41	13	1
Book 4	65	45	18	2
Book 5	56	37	18	1
Book 6	64	46	17	1
Book 7	68	52	15	1
Total	417	310	99	8
	%100	%74	%24	%2

In this section, I have identified a huge imbalance in J. K. Rowling’s distribution of male and female characters in favour of males. Looking at the number of occurrences of the name of each character, it is also noticeable that the starring roles are dedicated to males and the supporting roles reserved for females.

Speech Contributions of Major Characters

I manually extracted the speech contributions of both male and female characters in each book in the series. Then, I counted the number of words uttered by each male and female character and refer to the results as his/her narrative space. A character's narrative space can be seen as an indicator of the prominence of this character in the story.

Table 9: Characters' Speech Contributions in Book 1

Male characters	Number of words	Female characters	Number of words
Harry	4606	Hermione	1791
Hagrid	4477	Prof. McGonagall	1509
Ron	3195	Aunt Petunia	392
Dumbledore	2049	Mrs Weasley	250
Prof Quirrell	603	Madam Pomfrey	47
Draco Malfoy	560		
Snape	516		
Neville	427		
Fred	365		
Voldemort	183		
George	106		

As shown in Table 9, male characters, particularly 'Harry', 'Ron', 'Hagrid' and 'Dumbledore', are allocated much larger narrative spaces compared to those of the females. Only 'Hermione' and 'Professor McGonagall' stand out among the female characters with relatively large narrative spaces. However, 'Hermione' is likely to be compared to 'Ron', since both are close friends and helpers of the main protagonist 'Harry'. Hermione's narrative space consists of 1,791 words which is almost half the size of Ron's (56%).

Table 10: Characters' Speech Contributions in Book 2

Male characters	Number of words	Female characters	Number of words
Harry	4593	Hermione	1958
Ron	4066	Prof. McGonagall	875
Prof Lockhart	2643	Mrs Weasley	817

Voldemort	1916	Myrtle	413
Dumbledore	1360	Ginny	209
Dobby	1082	Madam Pomfrey	107
Draco Malfoy	984	Aunt Petunia	80
Hagrid	624		
Snape	519		
Lucius	507		
Neville	72		

In Book 2, ‘Ron’ (4,066 words) is very close to ‘Harry’ (4,593 words) in the size of his narrative space. ‘Hermione’ (1,958 words) gets less than half of Ron’s share. ‘Prof. McGonagall’ (875 words) and ‘Mrs Weasley’ (817 words), who get relatively large spaces compared to the rest of the female characters, are still marginal when compared to the males.

Table 11: Characters’ Speech Contributions in Book 3

Male characters	Number of words	Female characters	Number of words
Harry	5115	Hermione	3894
Prof Lupin	5070	Prof. McGonagall	1277
Ron	4035	Prof. Trelawney	1167
Snape	2109	Rosmerta	410
Hagrid	1929	Mrs Weasley	235
Sirius Black	1888	Madam Pomfrey	201
Dumbledore	1586	Parvati	82
Draco Malfoy	626		
Neville	208		

It is noticeable that Hermione’s narrative space (3,894 words) has expanded to become 96% of Ron’s space (4,035 words). Female characters, with the exception of Hermione, are still dedicated smaller narrative spaces compared to the males. Prof. McGonagall (1,277 words) and another female professor, ‘Prof. Trelawney’ (1,167 words), are prominent among the female characters; but their narrative spaces are still smaller than those of their fellow male professors such as Snape (2,109 words), Hagrid (1,929 words), and Dumbledore (1,586 words).

Table 12: Characters' Speech Contributions in Book 4

Male characters	Number of words	Female characters	Number of words
Harry	7348	Hermione	6260
Ron	6008	Mrs Weasley	1249
Dumbledore	5867	Prof. McGonagall	871
Moody/Crouch Jr	3243	Winky	775
Arthur Weasley	2698	Rita	567
Voldemort	2677	Fleur	272
Sirius	2559	Ginny	213
Hagrid	2117	Maxime	172
Snape	982	Pravati	122
Draco Malfoy	918	Aunt Petunia	33
Cedric	414		
Krum	227		

Hermione's space (6,260 words) is larger than that of Ron (6,008 words) for the first time in the series. The narrative spaces of the females are still strikingly smaller than those of the males.

Male characters	Number of words	Female characters	Number of words
Harry	13937	Hermione	12451
Ron	7045	Umbridge	5209
Dumbledore	6829	Mrs Weasley	2276
Hagrid	4934	Prof. McGonagall	2004
Sirius	4376	Ginny	1119
Snape	2531	Angelina	1061
Mr Weasley	1827	Luna	937
Lupin	1365	Cho	871
Malfoy	1083	Tonks	808

Neville	563	Trelawney	466
Voldemort	174	Bellatrix	422

The narrative spaces of the female characters are expanded compared to the earlier books in the series but they are still insignificant when compared to the males. The size of Hermione's narrative space (12,451 words) has become closer to Harry's (13,937 words) and almost double Ron's (7,045 words). This expansion and development of Hermione's space indicates the growing importance and prominence of Hermione's role in the later books. Another female character, namely Prof. Doloris Umbridge, is dedicated a leading role in this book with a narrative space that consists of 5,209 words. Ginny's narrative space (1,119 words) is also expanded as well as that of Mrs Weasley (2,276 words).

Table 14: Characters' Speech Contributions in Book 6

Male characters	Number of words	Female characters	Number of words
Dumbledore	16958	Hermione	6010
Harry	12599	Mrs Weasley	1479
Ron	4170	Prof. McGonagall	1323
Snape	3360	Ginny	1164
Prof. Slughorn	3326	Bellatrix	619
Hagrid	1466	Luna	534
Draco Malfoy	1464	Narcissa	501
Lupin	1261	Tonks	466
Fudge	1127	Fleur	356
Voldemort	660	Katie	181
Neville	161	Lavender	106

Overall, the spaces of the females are still insignificant in terms of size when compared to the males. Harry (12,599 words) and Dumbledore (16,958 words) are dedicated the largest narrative spaces in this book. It should be noted that for the first time in the series a character, Dumbledore, is given a larger narrative space than Harry's. Hermione's space (6,010 words) is diminished when compared to her space in the previous book; but it is still significantly larger than Ron's (4,170 words).

Table (15) Characters' Speech Contributions in Book 7

Male characters	Number of words	Female characters	Number of words
Harry	14023	Hermione	10628
Ron	7470	Prof. McGonagall	869
Dumbledore	4463	Mrs Weasley	765
Voldemort	2393	Bellatrix	620
Lupin	2223	Luna	590
Aberforth Dumbledore	1672	Lily	561
Snape	1536	Ginny	367
Neville	1246	Umbridge	256
Xenophilius Lovegood	1120	Fleur	242
Hagrid	556	Petunia	212
Draco Malfoy	124	Tonks	211

In the final book, Harry (14,023 words) is still in the leading position followed by Hermione (10,628 words), then Ron (7,470 words). The imbalanced distribution of male and female roles, which was observed in the earlier books, is maintained and further emphasized in this book. The spaces of the male characters are more significant than those of the females. Actually, the spaces of the female characters have diminished, compared to the earlier books.

From the tables above, it is strikingly noticeable that J. K. Rowling is imbalanced in allocating narrative spaces to male and female characters in favour of the male characters. A simple examination of the number of words comprising the speech contribution of males and females throughout the series indicates the over-representation of male characters in the *Harry Potter* novels. Although I acknowledge the development of the female characters particularly in the later books, it is clearly visible that the important characters are predominantly male.

Stereotypes in the *Harry Potter* Series

Stereotypes are false or misleading generalizations about groups held in a manner that renders them largely, though not entirely, immune to counterevidence. In doing so, stereotypes powerfully shape the stereotyper's perception of stereotyped groups, seeing the stereotypic characteristics when they are not present, failing to see the contrary of those characteristics when they are, and generally homogenizing the group. (Blum, 2004: 251)

What people normally think of as a stereotype involves not just any generalisation about or image of a certain group, but “widely-held and widely-recognized images of socially salient groups” (Blum, 2004: 252). Women, for example, are generally stereotyped in Western societies as being submissive, nurturing, dependent, unintelligent, incapable, emotional, sensitive,

irrational, receptive, intuitive, weak, timid, passive, and attractive because of their physical beauty. In addition, they are mainly seen as sex objects. Men, on the other hand, are viewed as dominant, independent, intelligent, competent, rational, assertive, analytical, strong, brave, ambitious, active, competitive, insensitive, sexually aggressive and attractive because of their achievements.

As mentioned in the introduction above, one group of critics argue that the *Harry Potter* novels are sexist and hold the view that Rowling uses stereotypes and clichés of men and women in the portrayal of her male and female characters (Blake, 2002; Cherland, 2008; Gallardo and Smith, 2003; Heilman, 2003; Mayes-Elma, 2006; Schoefer, 2000).

Examples include Molly Weasley and Narcissa Malfoy, typical ‘mothers’, who do not have a career, who are mainly associated with the domestic sphere and whose only focus is the wellbeing of their children; Bellatrix Lestrange, the evil and dangerous woman who poses a threat to the hero; Ginny Weasley, the beautiful girl who falls in love with the hero; and Hermione Granger who is seen by many critics as the helper of the two boys, Harry and Ron, and as an enabler of the boys’ adventures rather than an adventurer in her own right.

In the *Harry Potter* world, men work outside the house, filling most of the highly ranked jobs in the Ministry of Magic while women are primarily presented as wives and mothers. Even when women have a career, Rowling’s selection of teaching and nursing as the main forms of public labour for these women is conventional. Not only does Rowling assign to women traditional categories of labour but also depicts them as weak and dependent on men for protection. Elizabeth E. Heilman (2003: 222) comments on the “Troll in the Bathroom scene” which takes place in Book 1: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (Rowling, 1997: 174-176) as follows:

I really hated the way Hermione cowered in fear when faced with the troll, and I was disappointed that she had to be rescued by the boys. While Ron and Harry successfully face a horrible twelve-foot-tall troll [...], Hermione couldn’t move. She was ‘flat against the wall in terror’ (p.175), while Harry and Ron both respond bravely and effectively. Hermione had been portrayed as a girl who knew a lot of spells, but when she needed to put that knowledge to use, she failed. (Heilman, 2003: 222)

Men are portrayed as the knights in shining armour who show courage in rescuing the damsels in distress. In addition to this, the men in the series seem more fun than the women, mostly because they are curious and adventurous. Harry, Ron, James Potter, and Sirius Black exemplify the motto of Gryffindor House: “Brave and Daring,” whereas the female Gryffindors including Hermione, Professor McGonagall, and Mrs Weasley exemplify responsible rule-enforcement (Gallardo and Smith, 2003: 194). Women are just sticklers for rules who keep reminding men not to break the rules.

Research on boys’ school culture suggests that bookishness and academic achievement are considered feminine (Epstein, 1998). Hermione is portrayed as a high achiever who spends most of her time in reading and studying. She can be seen as an encyclopaedia, a source of knowledge. However, Hermione’s knowledge is instrumentally exploited by her male friends, Harry and Ron. Some critics claim that Hermione has been dehumanised and objectified as a mere reference, despite being continually consulted by Harry and Ron. Another female

stereotype, the chatterbox, is associated with Hermione. In Book 1, she is represented as 'irritating' to the boys with her constant talk, and most importantly, her extensive bookish knowledge (Gallardo and Smith, 2003: 194).

Most women in the series are emotional and sensitive. They show weakness by *crying* and *shedding tears*. "[A]gain and again, we see girls so caught up in their emotions that they lose sight of the bigger picture. "We watch them 'shriek', 'scream', 'gasp', and 'giggle' in situations where the boys retain their composure" (Schoefer, 2000: 5). Even Professor McGonagall, the authoritarian deputy headmistress of Hogwarts and the Head of Gryffindor House, constantly struggles to refrain from emotional outbursts (Gallardo and Smith, 2003: 193).

Another criticism that Elizabeth Heilman (2003) has of the representation of the school girls within the *Harry Potter* world is that aside from the main female characters of Hermione, Ginny and Luna, the girls are presented to readers in groups, rather than as individuals. Heilman is critical of this 'grouping' of female characters such as, for example, the group of Alicia Spinnet, Angelina Johnson, and Katie Bell who play on the Gryffindor Quidditch team and that of Parvati Patil and Lavender Brown. Heilman (2009:150) goes on to argue that these girls are also all presented as "giggly, emotional, gossipy, and anti-intellectual"; and adds that the repeated grouping of female characters reinforces a tendency for readers to interpret females as types, rather than as individuals.

In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (Rowling, 2000), Rowling introduces the Veela, i.e., the mascots of the Bulgarian team at the Quidditch World Cup. These creatures offer an extremely 'feminine' performance of gender in being so seductive. They are "the most beautiful women" Harry has ever seen, with skin shining "moon-bright" and "white-gold hair" fanning out behind them without the wind blowing (Rowling, 2000: 93). The Veela have strange mesmerising powers over men and even Harry becomes bedazzled when he sees them:

The Veela had started to dance, and Harry's mind had gone completely and blissfully blank [...]. And as the Veela danced faster and faster, wild, half-formed thoughts started chasing through Harry's dazed mind. He wanted to do something very impressive, right now. Jumping from the box into the stadium seemed a good idea (Rowling, 2000: 94).

The Veela and their mesmerising effect can be linked to the Sirens of Greek mythology, whose seductive singing lured sailors to shipwreck. This association between the Veela and the Sirens evokes the stereotype of women as sexual beings who are dangerously seductive and hold destructive power over men (Cherland, 2008: 275).

The series introduces two further stereotypical themes, namely, love triangles and marriage as a happy ending. A number of typical love triangles are exhibited throughout the series including: 'Harry – Cho – Cedric', 'Harry – Ginny – Dean', 'Hermione - Ron – Lavender', and 'James – Lily – Snape'. The Epilogue, at the end of Book 7: *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, presents the typical happy ending of love, i.e., marriage, settling down and having kids for the couples: Harry- Ginny and Ron-Hermione.

Finally, the *Harry Potter* series certainly features a number of male and female character archetypes:

- the male hero (Harry Potter),
- the supporter of the hero/ the hero's sidekick (Ron Weasley),
- the female helper (Hermione Granger),

- the mother of the hero, who cares for and protects the hero from her position in the domestic sphere (Lily Potter, Molly Weasley and Narcissa Malfoy),
- the beautiful maiden who loves the hero (Ginny Weasley),
- and the men and women who present a threat to the hero (Voldemort and Bellatrix Lestrange, etc.).

I acknowledge that the *Harry Potter* books do contain gender stereotypes and portrayals of women and men, but I do not agree that Rowling reinforces sexism. I adopt, however, a postmodernist view of gender, which is known as “blending/overlapping masculine and feminine traits in one person” (Athenstaedt, 2003; Choi and Fuqua; 2003; Croft et al, 2014; Diekman and Eagly, 2000; Ebert et al., 2014; Kachel et al., 2016; Lippa, 2005; Niedlich et al., 2015; Spence and Buckner, 2000; Wilde and Diekman, 2005). This view is based primarily on the idea that individuals are not supposed to be stereotyped as masculine or feminine, strong or weak but rather they blend ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ traits in a way that subverts the typical ideals of male and female characters, to ultimately engender new ways of thinking about how to be masculine or feminine. In this respect, Wannamaker (2006) states that “the *Harry Potter* novels are complex, character-driven works that often depict gender in nuanced, layered and contradictory ways”. It is my view too that Rowling has presented some conventional themes and stereotypical male and female characters which are likely to be used as a comparison point to the major characters that are more fluid in their treatment of masculinity and femininity. The fluidity of gender treatment in Rowling’s major characters enables readers to appreciate these characters as multilayered individuals rather than mere representatives of two disparate and opposing gender types: masculine and feminine.

A Complex Construal of Gender: Multilayered Representations of Masculinity and Femininity

The reason behind Rowling’s use of stereotypical character roles such as the male hero, the hero’s sidekick and the female helper can be explained as an attempt to undermine these roles, and to show how men and women can be restrained by cultural expectations of gender. Rowling’s construction of the principal female and male characters, however, is subversive in including contemporary gender patterns which suggest different ideas about how the hero, heroine, and the sidekick, among others, might be. In this section, I will examine a number of the major male and female characters in the series in order to investigate whether and to what extent Rowling’s construal of gender is multilayered in nature.

Male Characters

In the *Harry Potter* world, heteronormative/hegemonic masculinity is much appreciated. This form of masculinity portrays the culturally ‘appropriate’ ways of being masculine, as the “strong, adventurous type of male serving as a heroic expression of masculinity, while the weak, unsuccessful male is mocked and sometimes despised” (Heilman, 2009:155). Heilman (2009:155) argues that hegemonic masculinity is performed by males who are “straight, strong, domineering, and oppresses not only women, but also the many men excluded from it”. It should be noted, however, that many of Rowling’s male characters are not portrayed negatively although they do not conform to the norms and assumptions of hegemonic masculinity. I will

support my argument by exploring a number of male characters including Harry, Ron, and Dumbledore.

Harry Potter

Harry was introduced in the first book as an average looking boy, with messy hair and broken glasses. When he was eleven, he learned the story of his parents and how they lost their lives at the hands of the evil wizard, Voldemort. As a young wizard, he had gone to Hogwarts School to study the arts of magic. There, he made friends with Ron and Hermione, and together they form a trio. Every year at Hogwarts, the three friends face trouble and go through an adventure. During Harry's school years, Voldemort, the evil wizard who was supposed to be vanquished earlier in the story, reappears and threatens Harry. Harry, together with his friends, Ron and Hermione, and under the patronage of his mentor, Dumbledore, fought Voldemort's attempts to control the world and destroy the non-magical people.

Harry is portrayed as a typical masculine hero (Heilman, 2009): he is athletic, popular, bright at school but not a genius, heroic, and strong, as well as stubborn, quick to act, and prone to breaking the rules. Harry's popularity among readers emanates mainly from his portrayal as a skinny, orphaned outsider who moves into success in every area of his life, and every important avenue of masculinity (Heilman, 2009:156). Being athletic is a prominent feature in Harry's character. He realises that he is an excellent broomstick flyer from the first moment he handles a broomstick (Rowling, 1997) and becomes the youngest Seeker in a century (Rowling, 1997:113). In Book 4, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (Rowling, 2000), he manages to win the Triwizard Tournament Cup, though certainly he receives a lot of help from others. In Book 6, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (Rowling, 2005), Harry becomes the captain of the Gryffindor Quidditch team.

Harry is a hero who manages to save himself, his friends, and probably the world at the end of the story. He defeats Prof. Quirrel whose body was inhabited by Voldemort; he opens the Chamber of Secrets, kills the basilisk, and destroys Voldemort's diary which is later identified as one of his horcruxes; he fights dementors and saves the life of his godfather, Sirius Black; he goes through all the hardships of the Triwizard Tournament: fights a dragon, saves his friends under the water, survives the maze, and fights against Voldemort; he fights against Voldemort's followers, the Death Eaters; he hunts down the horcruxes in which Voldemort has hidden parts of his own soul in order to become immortal, finds all the horcruxes, destroys them and kills Voldemort. It should be noted, however, that Harry would not have managed to survive any of these adventures without the help of his friends, Hermione and Ron.

Although the traits and adventures I have just listed make Harry a prototypical fantasy hero, it should be noted that Harry does not perfectly fit the picture of the prototypical masculine hero. I will argue that Harry offers a blend of masculine and feminine traits. There are many situations throughout the narrative that supports my argument.

The prototypical fantasy hero has to be in complete control of his environment and the choices he must make and can never be a "prey to self-doubt or uncertainty" (Hourihan 1997:72). For the majority of the narrative, Harry is a child who is not in control of his life. He also constantly struggles with his emotions in an attempt to reconcile his positive feelings about his friends with his responsibility to fight Voldemort and save the world. In addition to his lack of control over his environment and his emotions, Harry suffers from self-doubt and uncertainty throughout the series, and more particularly in the later books. Harry's doubts cast their shadows over his mind in relation to a number of situations: his ability to resist Voldemort's power to

penetrate his mind (Book 5: *Harry Potter and the Order of the Pheonix*), his relationship with his friends, particularly Ron and Dumbledore, his ability to find the horcruxes (Book 7: *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*), and so on.

Harry possesses some personality traits that can be seen as more ‘feminine’ or unconventionally masculine, such as feeling compassion for others and longing for his family. Harry feels compassion even for those he dislikes. When Harry saw a part of Snape’s memory about being abused by Harry’s father, James Potter, and godfather, Sirius Black (Rowling, 2003), Harry feels compassion for Snape, despite their mutual dislike for the majority of the narrative and says ‘I just never thought I’d feel sorry for Snape’ (Rowling, 2003: 592). Harry also feels compassion for Draco Malfoy, who has been pressurised by Voldemort to murder Dumbledore, or die with his family as victims of Voldemort’s wrath (Rowling, 2005:596).

Another aspect of Harry’s character that is not conventionally masculine is his longing for his family. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (Rowling, 1997: 153), Harry finds the Mirror of Erised which is an enchanted mirror that displays to the person his/her heart’s deepest desire. Instead of seeing himself rich or famous, Harry sees his parents in the Mirror alive and waving at him.

Compassion and longing for one’s family are not typical traits of the fantasy male hero (Hourihan, 1997). Through portraying Harry in such a way, Rowling creates the character of a complex, imperfect boy who subverts the typical notion of the masculine superhero. Harry offers a blend of masculine and feminine traits in being a hero who has not abandoned his humanity and compassion.

Ron Weasley

Ron is described as “tall, thin and gangling, with freckles, big hands and feet and a long nose” (Rowling, 1997:70) and later as “long and lanky” (Rowling, 2007: 44). He becomes Harry’s best friend during their first trip to Hogwarts and remains as such throughout the series. Ron, Harry and Hermione form a trio and are partners in most of the adventures in the series. Ron displays a remarkable courage in each adventure: he decides to sacrifice himself during the brutal chess game so that Harry can complete his quest for the Philosopher’s Stone; he accompanies Harry into the Chamber of Secrets, which is the dwelling place of the basilisk, in order to save his sister Ginny; he fights valiantly against Voldemort’s followers, the Death Eaters in the Department of Mysteries; he accompanies Harry and Hermione in the quest to track down and destroy Voldemort’s horcruxes; and he also fights valiantly in the final battle at Hogwarts against Voldemort and his Death Eaters.

Ron’s masculinity is questioned when we consider his lack of confidence in himself. He constantly feels overshadowed by his talented brothers as well as Harry. During their first year at Hogwarts, he describes to Harry how he feels pressurised to keep up with his brothers’ legacy:

I’m the sixth of our family to go to Hogwarts. You can say I’ve got a lot to live up to. Bill and Charlie have already left – Bill was Head Boy and Charlie was captain of Quidditch. Now Percy’s a Prefect. Fred and George mess around a lot, but they still get really good marks and everyone thinks they’re really funny. Everyone expects me to do as well as the others, but if I do, it’s no big deal, because they did it first. You never get anything new, either, with five brothers. I’ve got Bill’s old robes, Charlie’s old wand and Percy’s old rat. (Rowling, 1997:75)

The pressure on Ron to live up to his aspirations is increased when he makes friends with Harry and Hermione. Ron's view of himself as a second-rate person is further enhanced when he looks at his friends: Harry (the boy who has survived Voldemort's death curse, the talented Quidditch seeker, and the Chosen One to vanquish Voldemort) and Hermione (the cleverest witch of her age with her encyclopedic knowledge and sharp mind). Ron's jealousy of Harry's fame is spotted in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (Rowling, 2000) when Harry is announced to be the champion of the Triwizard Tournament. This jealousy is also clear in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (Rowling, 2007) and is disclosed by Voldemort's horcrux: "*Least loved, always, by the mother who craved a daughter ... least loved, now, by the girl who prefers your friend ... second best, always, eternally overshadowed*" (Rowling, 2007: 306).

Ron, then, presents a complex and multilayered character who develops and matures over the course of the series. He manages to conquer his fears and lack of self-confidence and to achieve his aspirations of becoming a successful Quidditch player and a prefect and winning the girl he loves, Hermione.

Albus Dumbledore

Dumbledore is the wise headmaster of Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry. He is venerated by all witches and wizards in the magical world and is considered by many as the greatest wizard of all time. He is an immensely talented and a very resourceful wizard. He initiated and led the Order of the Phoenix which resisted Voldemort's evil attempts to take over the world. He also saved the magical world from another evil wizard, his former youth friend, Grindelwald, who had a lust for power and supremacist ideals. Dumbledore's powers as a wizard are acknowledged by the magical world when he defeats Grindelwald in combat despite the latter's possession of the most powerful wand in the world, the Elder Wand.

He knows that Harry is the Chosen One, the only one able to save the world from Voldemort. He takes Harry under his patronage and discloses to him information about Voldemort's past and about the horcruxes, the objects through which Voldemort is able to keep pieces of his soul in order to stay alive even with the destruction of his body. Dumbledore's ultimate goal has always been the greater good, that is, to rid the world of Voldemort once and for all.

Dumbledore, however, has another side to his character. Despite his fame as a great and powerful wizard (which is conventionally masculine), Dumbledore has an eccentric nature: he defies the dress code of masculinity by putting on purple and crimson-red robes; he sometimes changes his hat for a flowery bonnet to amuse his students; he has a childlike fondness for sweets; he often welcomes his students at the beginning of the school year using incomprehensible, nonsensical language; he uses absurd passwords for the entrance of his office; he enjoys chamber music and claims to like knitting patterns, and so on. Dumbledore, then, can be seen as a complex and multilayered character.

Female Characters

I will argue that the female characters in *Harry Potter* series are also multilayered rather than stereotypical: they offer a mix of feminine and masculine traits. I will support my argument by exploring the characters of Hermione Granger and Professor McGonagall.

Hermione Granger

Hermione Granger offers a blend of feminine and masculine qualities: she has several “feminine” traits such as giggling, worrying, and sticking to rules, and “masculine” traits including being rational, analytical, adventurous, brave, competent, ambitious, and competitive. She is not a stereotypical, one-dimensional female character who acts as the hero’s sidekick.

Hermione’s lack of attention to her appearance is not conventionally feminine. There is one exception in the series, the Yule Ball which takes place in Book 4: *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Hermione attempts to fix her outward appearance by performing a spell that fixes her teeth and by wearing in a brand-new gown: “‘Hermione,’ said Ron, looking sideways at her, suddenly frowning, ‘your teeth’... ‘... I mean, they’re different to how they were before he put that hex on you ... they’re all ... straight and – and normal sized’” (Rowling, 2000:261). Hermione’s concern with her looks and being on a date with Victor Krum, a famous and muscular Quidditch player/student is not missed by either her male or female friends:

‘It was Hermione. But she didn’t look like Hermione at all. She had done something with her hair; it was no longer bushy, but sleek and shiny, and twisted up into an elegant knot at the back of her head. She was also smiling – rather nervously, it was true – but the reduction in the size of her front teeth was more noticeable than ever’ (Rowling, 2000: 267).

Rowling has been criticised for Hermione’s physical transformation at the Yule Ball since Hermione has “transformed to become physically acceptable” which is likely to send a message to girls that they have to get a “makeover” because they are “not okay” (Heilman, 2003: 228-229) and to emphasise the stereotypical significance of a woman’s physical attractiveness. However, it should be noted that Hermione has dressed up for a special occasion and that her transformation is a one-off affair, which she discards the next day because it proves to be too taxing and time-consuming. “‘Hermione’s hair was bushy again; she confessed to Harry that she had used liberal amounts of Sleekeazy’s Hair Potion on it for the ball, ‘but it’s way too much bother to do every day,’ she said matter-of-factly” (Rowling, 2000: 280). Although the nerd’s transformation into a beauty queen is a pervasive theme, Hermione does not fall into this trap and remains independent, strong, and active.

Indeed, she outshines the hero, Harry, and her other male friend, Ron, in many aspects as she proves to be an authority on magic, facts, people and relationships. Her indispensable help enables Harry and Ron to survive all the adventures and difficulties they encounter throughout the narrative. Also, Hermione is academically more gifted and informed than both Harry and Ron. Due to her intelligence and strength, she has been praised as a role model for female readers; but has been criticised for using this intelligence only in the service of her male companions, Harry and Ron. Professor Lupin acknowledges Hermione’s superior intelligence when commenting “‘you’re the cleverest witch of your age I’ve ever met, Hermione’” (Rowling, 1999: 222). Dumbledore also shows he had faith in Hermione’s abilities when he bequeaths her the book ‘Tales of Beetle Bard’ upon his death. He was sure she would detect the clues, solve the mystery of the Deathly Hallows, and hence, guide Harry in destroying Voldemort’s Horcruxes (Rowling, 2007).

Hermione is also given far from feminine traits when she challenges authority and breaks the rules when it is necessary. She is particularly rebellious and vocal against the abuse of power. When Snape takes over Lupin’s classes, in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Rowling, 1999: 109-110), Hermione protests and becomes increasingly nervous at Snape’s manner as he

provides students with clues to realise Lupin's condition as a werewolf. She protested against Professor Dolores Umbridge, as she misused her authority in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (Rowling, 2003), in insisting to teach students *Defense against the Dark Arts* theoretically instead of giving them practical training. Hermione takes the initiative of forming a group called Dumbledore's Army (D.A.) where Harry Potter trains students how to defend themselves against the dark arts by casting powerful spells. Hermione, in this incident, stands up for her beliefs and challenges the abuse of authority regardless of the consequences: "d' you know ... I think I'm feeling a bit ... *rebellious*" (Rowling, 2003: 472).

It should be noted, however, that Hermione acts as a leader and takes charge of situations when leadership is needed: she manages to obtain ingredients for potions when no one else can; she takes the initiative to help others when they are in danger; and she influences others' perceptions and actions in many situations throughout the series. She stands up for what she believes: she founds an organization called the Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare (S.P.E.W.) to defend the rights of house-elves; and helps in the construction of Dumbledore's Army (D.A.) to teach and train students in magical arts.

The development of Hermione's character appears clearly in her character's speech contribution across the series. Although the first few novels of the series do not distinguish Hermione as a truly influential character, the later novels go a long way in changing the reader's perspective of this young woman.

Some critics point out that J.K Rowling has offered a new perspective on women's empowerment through Hermione. Brown and St. Claire (2002) suggest that, in the Harry Potter world, men's empowerment is seen through domination over others or engaging in battles whereas women's comes from knowledge and a sense of gaining confidence in themselves. In other words, "men and women are treated equally most of the time but they have different strengths"; the "male characters are often at their best in the heat of battle" while "female characters often use their wit and logic to get out of dangerous situations" (Sammons, 2013: 12). An empowered woman can make full use of her unique talents and capabilities to make a difference and she can also challenge authorities for the common good (Felski, 1989; Wood, 2005). Hermione can be truly described as a strong and ethical person that embodies wisdom and proves that possessing knowledge leads to power (Dresang, 2002: 235). Krunoslav Mikulan (2009: 292) sums up Hermione's character saying that

"Rowling has succeeded in developing the character of a child who transforms herself into a young woman and who is able to resist the traps connected with her sex: she does not retreat into passivity and silence, she is not scared of the world dominated by men, she does not 'lose her voice.'"

Professor McGonagall

Minerva McGonagall is the Transfigurations Professor, the Head of Gryffindor House, and the Deputy Headmistress. Her first name, Minerva, which associates her with the Roman goddess of wisdom and war, truly reflects her character. Wannamaker (2006) describes McGonagall's first appearance in Book 1: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* saying:

In addition to first coming on the scene transformed as a cat, McGonagall is described as a severe-looking woman wearing an emerald-green cloak and looking 'distinctly ruffled'. Our first impression of these great and powerful wizards [Dumbledore and McGonagall]

is that they are quirky folk who don't quite perform their gender properly.'
(Wannamaker, 2006)

Schoefer (2000) provides an apt description of McGonagall's mixed and androgynous qualities:

The only female authority figure is beady-eyed, thin-lipped Minerva McGonagall, professor of transfiguration and deputy headmistress of Hogwarts. Stern instead of charismatic, she is described as eyeing her students like a "wrathful eagle". McGonagall is Dumbledore's right hand and she defers to him in every respect. Whereas he has the wisdom to see beyond the rules and the power to disregard them, McGonagall is bound by them and enforces them strictly. Although she makes a great effort to keep her feelings under control, in a situation of crisis she loses herself in emotions because she lacks Dumbledore's vision of the bigger picture. When Harry returns from the chamber of secrets, she clutches her chest, gasps and speaks weakly while the all-knowing Dumbledore beams. (Schoefer, 2000)

McGonagall exhibits a range of "masculine" qualities, which tend to eclipse her "feminine" traits, which causes her to be regarded as excessively stern and stiff. However, despite her tendency to abide by and enforce the rules, she breaks the rules when the school and its pupils are threatened by Umbridge and, later, the Death Eaters. She openly defies Umbridge and participates in the final battle against Voldemort and the Death Eaters.

CONCLUSION

In order to form an opinion on how Rowling constructs gender in the *Harry Potter* series, I have conducted a corpus-assisted content analysis of the series to look at the presence of stereotypes, the portrayal of characters, the ratio of men to women in the books, and the contribution of characters in speech. The quantitative section of the content analysis, which consists of counting the number of female and male characters in each book as well as the number of words allocated to each character in its speech contribution, provides an answer to the first research question: J. K. Rowling is imbalanced in her representation of male and female characters in favour of male characters. The quantitative analysis indicated the over-representation of male characters. There is enough evidence through frequency and narrative space analysis that J.K. Rowling throughout the series has fictionally reproduced an imbalanced gender representation of the male and female characters. The qualitative section of the content analysis, which includes a survey of the literature on gender representation in the series and a manual analysis of the books to examine the characters and gender-related themes, provides an answer to the second research question: J. K. Rowling tends to use both stereotypes as well as more complex ways of constructing gender in the *Harry Potter* series. There is enough evidence through manual analysis of Rowling's use of stereotypical characters, plot elements and themes, and also of her more complex, multi-layered gender representation. Rowling's multilayered portrayal of femininities and masculinities provides us with an authentic view of contemporary gender relations in our complex world.

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