



A Study about the Types of Characters in the Adam Project Movie

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 11 November 2024	This study explores the diverse types of characters depicted in <i>The Adam Project</i> movie using the characterization frameworks proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2010) and Pope (2005). Employing a qualitative descriptive method, the research identifies and categorizes six main characters-Adam Reed, young Adam Reed, Laura Shane, Louis Reed, Ellie Reed, and Maya Sorian-based on their roles and character traits. The findings reveal that protagonist characters dominate the film, followed by various character types such as major, minor, simple, dynamic, round, static, and antagonist roles. Each character's classification is supported by specific scenes and dialogue extracted from the film and its transcript. The study demonstrates how character types contribute significantly to narrative development and provides a framework for analyzing character roles in cinematic storytelling. This analysis is expected to enhance understanding of character construction in film studies and serve as a reference for future character-based literary research.
Accepted: 18 February 2025	
Published: 05 April 2025	
Keywords: Characters types, Movie, Protagonist, Language, Literature studies	
Doi: https://doi.org/10.59011/austronesian.4.1.2025.30-46	

1. Introduction

The movie has been chosen as one of the literary works in which people are interested nowadays (Wicahyani et al., 2023). It is an art that utilizes innovation as a mechanism of mass diversion and significantly influences the social climate. According to Monaco (1981), the film covers a broad range, from practical (as a technical invention, it is an essential scientific tool) to environmental, through pictorial, dramatic, and narrative, to music. By watching films, individuals can broaden their insight about something. It may be an alternate point of view, language improvement, an unknown dialect or culture, or even values they can apply to their lives. Most people watch

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movies in their spare time to relieve stress and express emotions based on their mood. Cruz (2017) explained that movies are designed to make people feel, whether that is to feel good, sad, or scared; it does not matter as long as something is felt.

Sang & Xu (2010) mentioned from the audience's perspective that the film is alluring and catches their attention since they need to be aware of the character's narrative. The event and characters' communication significantly portray the film's design and content. Character is vital as an ally of the story since it makes an impact by addressing the significant thing a film must convey to the audience. This is in line with Kenney's (1966) statement that character is a critical aspect, because the author built media to make the audience know the kinds of human characters, good and bad. Base character's significance: The character can be separated into two classifications. They are major characters and minor characters (Abrams, 1981). As a rule, a major character shows up in the entire story or is likewise called the main character. On the other hand, minor characters are the people who assume a supporting role that helps improve the main character.

Today's phenomenon is how easy it is for people to watch movies. Since the pandemic began to hit all corners of the world over the last two years, the limited mobility of society has made people think of other ways, both from those who want to release their films and those who want to watch movies as entertainment while staying at home. With technological sophistication, now people can watch not only in cinemas or through DVDs but also through digital platforms such as Netflix, Disney+, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, etcetera. With so many film genres filled with characters and specific characteristics, certain people must critically analyze the various types of characters.

1.1 Concept and Theory

A character takes a strategic position to deliver and convey meanings, messages, moral values, or something purposely targeted to the readers. Characters are made to distinguish one entity from another (humans, animals, spirits, robots, furniture, and other objects) based on mental, emotional, and social qualities. In analyzing a character, the researcher needs to know the kind of the character. Therefore, a theory was needed to analyze the character. There are two theories used as a reference for analyzing the character in this study. The first is a theory from Nurgiyantoro (2010) and supported by a theory from Pope (2005), which is both learned about types of character. There are several classifications about types of character as follows.

a. Protagonist Character & Antagonist Character

The protagonist is the character who has a positive character and carries positive values. The protagonist Character can be called the hero, whom the characters could give a sense of sympathy and empathy. It makes us think that the problem that he/she faced is also a problem that we have. On the other hand, the antagonist is a character who carries a negative value and often contradicts the protagonist.

This character can cause conflict that becomes the main problem in a story. They created tension between protagonists and antagonists in the film and drama scenario (Nurgiyantoro, 2010).

b. Simple Character & Round Character

Nurgiyantoro (2010) states that a simple character, also called a flat character, is a character who has only one personal quality, confidence, or certain character traits that reflect their characteristic. It does not have a nature and behavior that could surprise the reader. The nature and behavior of simple characters are flat and monotonous and only reflect a particular character. Compared to simple characters, round characters are more like real human life. It is a complex character that has other sides of its personality. Besides having various possible attitudes and actions, they also often give surprises. It means that the characters have many personalities, or they cannot be predicted sometimes.

c. Static Character & Dynamic Character

A static character is a character who does not change or even develop their characteristic. This means there is no personality change from the story's beginning to end. However, a dynamic character is the contradiction of a static character, where the character undergoes significant internal change throughout a story. The development of a dynamic character is often subtle and unstated and is not due to a change in the character's circumstances. A dynamic character learns a lesson or changes as a person, either for better or for worse (Nurgiyantoro, 2010).

d. Major Character & Minor Character

According to Pope (2005), there are two categories of character, namely: (a) major character and (b) minor character. A major character is a character that is emphasized in telling the story. It generally appears in most of the story, either as the subject or as an object. The major character is known as a hero who struggles with the main bad guy and is primarily identified. In the interim, minor characters will probably not be utilized as perspective characters. Pope referenced that the minor characters' appearances in the artistic work will be brief and rare, yet it does not imply that they cannot sparkle at whatever point they are at the centre of attention. Minor characters are two-layered generalizations or level characters. The minor characters contain a wide range of insignificant characters in the story.

2. Literature Review

A thorough examination of academic research on movie character typologies demonstrates a multidimensional methodology that includes computational, psychological, and sociological assessments. Using Egri's three-dimensional theory, Hardiyanti and Novitri (2024) identified the physiological, psychological, and sociological characteristics of the protagonist in the movie *Frances Ha*. Although this

provides a comprehensive perspective, the study's drawback is that it only looks at one character, which may limit its wider application.

In a similar vein, Somanasih et al. (2021) used Wellek and Warren's approach to assess the dimensions of the major characters in *Friends with Benefits*. Although the study successfully emphasizes character development, it is limited to certain characters, which may restrict generalizability, similar to earlier studies. Muthalib et al. (2023) used the theoretical frameworks of Boggs and Petrie to investigate characterisation strategies in *Turning Red*. Their study emphasizes how character development strategically employs appearance, speech, and behaviors. But by concentrating only on three people, the research can miss the movie's larger character dynamics.

Similarly, Siregar and Putri (2022) used Proppian archetypes to analyze *Zootopia* and found that the 'Helper' was the most prevalent of the seven archetypes. Although this structuralist method may reduce intricate characterizations, it provides insights into narrative roles. Skowron et al. (2016) created an integrated approach from a computational standpoint to determine character types from movie dialogues by fusing language analysis with interactive and communicative features. Although this improves identification performance, subtle character qualities might not be fully captured by the method. Character trope categorization is made possible by Chu et al. (2018) introduction of attentive memory networks, which learn personas from speech. This approach may have trouble deciphering complicated emotional circumstances, but it shows promise in capturing character subtleties.

A computer evaluation of gender representativeness in popular films by Mazières et al. (2021) found that women have historically been underrepresented and are now more fairly represented. However, the study could miss slight narrative biases because it relies on automatic identification. Using Goldberg's Big Five theory, Khairunas et al. (2018) examined the personality of *Jobs*' protagonist. Although the research highlights important personality qualities, it does not take into consideration how the character changes during the movie. Hairi (2019) identified moral qualities like honesty and empathy by applying ethical principles to the *Twilight* movie script. Although this emphasizes aspects of character development, cultural views of morality may have an impact on the examination.

Last but not least, a literary psychology research on *Dilan 1990* by Sulistyawati et al. (2020) examined the primary and supporting characters. Although the study offers insightful psychological information, its qualitative character and its subjectivity may restrict its applicability

3. Method

In collecting the data, the researcher used a qualitative method to analyze the data and present it descriptively. Each data is presented and analyzed based on the characterization theory adopted by Nurgiyantoro (2010) and Pope's (2005) theory, which identifies the types of characters. The data was collected by watching the movie to widen the knowledge about the story. The researcher made a list of characters, found

the actions that showed the characters' types or characteristics, found the evidence based on the scene of the movie, and found the minutes of the scene. Not only that, the researcher also downloaded the movie transcript and paid attention to it repeatedly so that no words were missed. There was an attempt to mark every conversation that may be potentially important data.

In this research, the data were taken from *The Adam Project* movie by Shawn Levy. This film is about a time-traveller pilot named Adam Reed, who travels from 2050 back to 2018 to search for his wife, who has gone missing in the space-time continuum. As his older self, Reed has to team up with his younger self from 2022 to save the future. This movie was directed by Shawn Levi and released on Netflix in 2022. It stars Ryan Reynolds and Walker Scobell as the main characters.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Various Types of Characters Found in the *Adam Project* Movies

There are 6 characters found in *The Adam Project* movie. They are: (1) old Adam Reed, (2) young Adam Reed, (3) Laura Shane, (4) Ellie Reed, (5) Louis Reed, and (6) Maya Sorian. This section below presents the results and the character's category they fall into based on Nurgiyantoro and Pope's theory about types of character. The classification of the data is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. List of Characters and Character's Category

No	Characters/Actors	Types of character
1.	Adam Reed	MC, ProC, RC
2.	Young Adam Reed	MC, ProC, DC
3.	Laura Shane	MinC, ProC, SC
4.	Louis Reed	MinC, ProC, SC
5.	Ellie Reed	MinC, SC
6.	Maya Sorian	MC, AC, StaC

Note:

MC = Major Character; ProC = Protagonist Character; RC = Round Character; DC = Dynamic Character; MinC = Minor Character; SC = Simple Character; AC = Antagonist Character; StaC = Static Character

Furthermore, from the determination of the types of characters from the six data above, it was found that the most dominant character in this film is the protagonist with 4 data, followed by 3 data that fill each category: major characters, minor characters, and simple characters. The rest are round, dynamic, static, and antagonist characters, each filled with 1 data. The data analysis presented with figures and character dialogues is completed with the following data description.

1. Adam Reed

In this movie, Ryan Reynolds plays Adam Reed, a time-travel pilot from 2050 who takes a risk by returning to 2018 to save his wife. In his journey through time, he gets into an accident and his plane crashes. He is forced to land in 2022, where he meets a 12-year-old boy who turns out to be a younger version of himself.

a. Adam Reed as protagonist character

The protagonist character is usually called the hero in a movie who could give a sense of empathy and carries moral values to the audience, according to Nurgiyantoro (2010). Based on the picture above, Adam was sitting by the lake and talking with his wife, Laura, and the younger version of Adam. This situation occurs after Adam accidentally meets his wife again after his landing, which is tracked by Sorian and her henchmen, who then become involved in a fierce fight. Adam, Laura, and young Adam tried to escape until they arrived at their hideout deep in the forest. Here, the writer found one of the evidences that indicates Adam as a protagonist character.



Figure 1: Adam was asked by his wife to save the future)

Laura : Now you have to go back to 2018, and you have to put things right.
You have to put an end to all this.
Young Adam : What do you mean 'put an end to it'?
Laura : I mean, stop time travel from ever being invented and save the future."
Adam : Fine, come with me

Adam, who feels he has succeeded in finding and saving his wife, initially refuses Laura's request to return to 2018, but Laura convinces Adam to go there to save the future. Adam was worried that if his wife's calculations on the time stream proved wrong, even if it worked, it would mean he would never meet his wife in the future. Finally, he agrees to his wife's request, and throughout the film, he makes efforts to stop time travel from ever being invented and save the future, meaning that he is the hero of this film.

b. Adam Reed as round character

As explained by Nurgiyantoro (2010), round characters, compared with simple characters, are more likely to give audiences various unpredictable actions or attitudes as the other side of their personality. In this movie, Adam is described as having several characteristics, such as being brave, intelligent, annoying, mature, and grumpy. Adam is classified as a round character because, in some scenes, Adam shows some unexpected actions and attitudes to the audience.



Figure 2. Adam surprisingly punches his dad's face



Figure 3. Adam being dodgy

Adam shows an unexpected attitude when he gets into an argument with his father. Adam, who looked annoyed with his father and did not allow him to explain why he returned to 2018, immediately punched his father in the face, as seen in Figure 2. It surprised his father because he did not expect his son, who he thought loved him, to be so rude.

Another unexpected thing Adam did was when he tried to buy time to give Sorian the drive. It begins when Sorian holds little Adam hostage and threatens to shoot him in the head if Adam does not give him his accelerator drive, which also means that he will die if Sorian shoots little Adam in the head. When everyone forced Adam to give him the drive immediately, Adam said to give himself time to think whether he should give it or not (figure 3), and at that moment, he gave little

Adam some code to immediately get the gun out of his head which made the bullet miss.

c. Adam Reed as major character

Adam Reed is considered a major character because he is the main character. He appears from the beginning until the end of the story as the hero who struggles with the bad character to save the future.

2. Young Adam Reed

Walker Scobell plays the young version of Adam Reed. He plays a witty yet intelligent kid with an acute asthma condition who is always bullied at school. When his mother leaves him home alone, young Adam senses something strange in the woods near his home after his dog keeps barking. The dog then runs into his father's garage, and there, it meets middle-aged Adam, who is injured.

a. Young Adam Reed as protagonist character

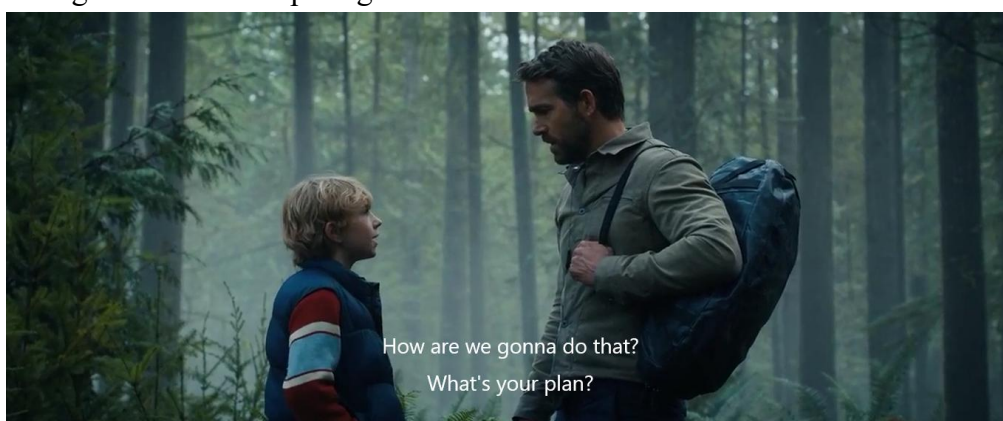


Figure 4: young Adam willing to join Adam to save the future

Referring to Nurgiyantoro's (2010) theory about the protagonist character, little Adam, or the younger version of Adam, is categorized as the protagonist because he also plays a significant role in helping Adam destroy time travel to save the future. The following dialogue with the picture above is one piece of evidence that indicates that young Adam is a protagonist.

Adam : *We can fix it*

Young Adam : *By destroying time travel?*

Adam : *That's right*

Young Adam : *How are we gonna do that? What's your plan?*

This scene above is when Adam and little Adam rushed to save themselves from Sorian's attack after being asked by Laura to return to 2018 using a jet. Little Adam also initially refused to join Adam back in 2018, but he finally felt he was responsible for fixing his future later. Adam could not do it alone because he

needed the same DNA to power the jet. The word 'we' in the dialogue above shows that Adam is finally willing to come with Adam back to 2018 to meet his father.

b. Young Adam Reed as dynamic character



Figure 5. Young Adam hugging his mother

As Nurgiyantoro (2010) pointed out, a dynamic character is a character who experiences changes or development of personality, where they learn from a mistake that can lead them into a better or worse person. At the story's beginning, young Adam is depicted as a character still mourning his father's death. He often argues with his mother and feels that her mother is not sad about their loss. Young Adam often fought against his mother, but soon, he realized that her mother was now the only thing he had, and that was all that mattered. Towards the end of the story, Adam asks a younger version of himself to hug his mother for his sake. It means that young Adam can always love and care for his mother and treat her well.

c. Young Adam Reed as major character

A major character is a character who shows up in the entire story and often being an important role that may spark the story's conflict (Pope, 2005). In this film, both Adam is the main character and although they are differentiated by the version of their-self, young Adam still plays a big and no less important role in the continuity of the storyline of this film. He appears from the beginning to the end of the story.

3. Laura Shane

Laura is Adam's wife, whom she met while they were still in college in the future. She is portrayed as a brave and intelligent woman who finds out that Sorian has altered the time stream. Then, she takes a risk by jumping back to 2018 after she finds something strange in the jump logs, where a time jet returns from 2018. Zoe Saldana plays this role.

a. Laura Shane as protagonist character



Figure 6. Laura seeing Adam managed to fly the jet

Laura is the next character to be categorized as a protagonist. Based on the theory proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2010) about the protagonist character, Laura fulfills the requirements as a positive character who provides positive value when she helps prevent Sorian from altering the time stream. She also indirectly helps her husband, Adam, to escape from Sorian by buying time for him to get a chance to jump back to 2018 and destroy the time travel made by Adam's father in order to save the world in the future. Laura explained Sorian's plan to Adam and asked him to leave her immediately.

b. Laura Shane as simple character



Figure 7. Laura asked Adam to destroy Sorian's plan)



Figure 8. Laura bravely shoots Sorian's troops)

A simple character has only one particular trait that reflects their personality (Nurgiyantoro, 2010). This movie depicts Laura as a brave yet intelligent woman who reveals what Sorian did in 2018. Here is a dialogue that proves Laura's intelligence:

Adam : *What if... what if you're wrong?*
Laura : *When am I ever wrong?*

The picture and dialogue above were when Laura explained to Adam why she jumped back to 2018 and Sorian's plan to alter the time stream. She then asked Adam to destroy the time-travel project and correct the time stream with the faith that they would find each other again. Laura's dialogue shows that she has proactively concocted a game plan and knows precisely what Adam needs to do to fix the time stream, even before Adam's appearance. She can explain clearly what Sorian did and why she returned to 2018. Laura is likewise far in front of every other person in sorting out some way to fix the mess, which means she is pretty intelligent. She is also brilliant and valiant enough to acknowledge that Adam needs to leave her behind for the arrangement to work.

c. Laura Shane as minor character

In this movie, Laura is considered a minor character because she only appears briefly in the middle of this story. It is based on the understanding of minor characters, those who appear at a glance or briefly in the story, but it does not infer that they cannot shimmer whenever they are at the focal point of consideration. (Pope, 2005). Laura becomes an important role in the story even though she is only a supporting role. Her efforts in helping direct Adam in trying to improve the time stream made her a point of attention in revealing Sorian's evil plan.

4. Louis Reed

In this film, Louis Reed, played by Mark Ruffalo, plays Adam's father, who invented time travel under Sorian's company's funding. He then died in a car accident in 2021. He is also the person Adam turns to when things go wrong in the future. He is the only one who knows the solution to the huge problem Sorian has created.

a. Louis Reed as protagonist character

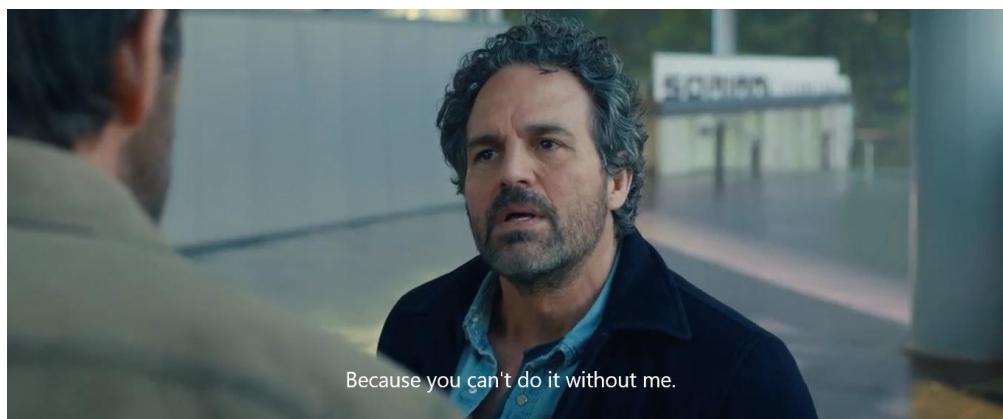


Figure 9. Adam's father trying to help Adam to destroy time travel

The picture above shows a scene when Louis Reed (Adam's father) meets Adam, who is trying to break into Sorian's company's security to steal the hard drive and blow up the electromagnetic accelerator. As Sorian's army attacked Adam, Louis Reed crashed his car into Sorian's army to save him. This shows that Louis Reed is the protagonist, following the theory initiated by Nurgiyantoro (2010). The dialogue below is another proof of Louis Reed's positive character.

Louis : Where the hell are you going?
Adam : To destroy your accelerator, and I'm gonna enjoy it!
Louis : Do you realize that you have broken every rule? You've blown past every conceivable ethical boundary like it wasn't there
Adam : Yeah? then why are you here, Dad?
Louis : Because you can't do it without me

From the dialogue above, the last line that Louis said to Adam implicitly means that Louis will go with him to destroy the accelerator to prevent the creation of time travel. Sometimes, Implicit meaning can be left implicit yet can likewise be unequivocal when considered significant or there are other contemplations (Larson, 1984). At first, Louis vehemently opposes Adam's attempts to destroy the time travel project, considering he has no scientific proof that Sorian has changed the time stream. However, ultimately, he helps Adam steal the hard drive and prevent time travel from being invented.

b. Louis Reed as simple character

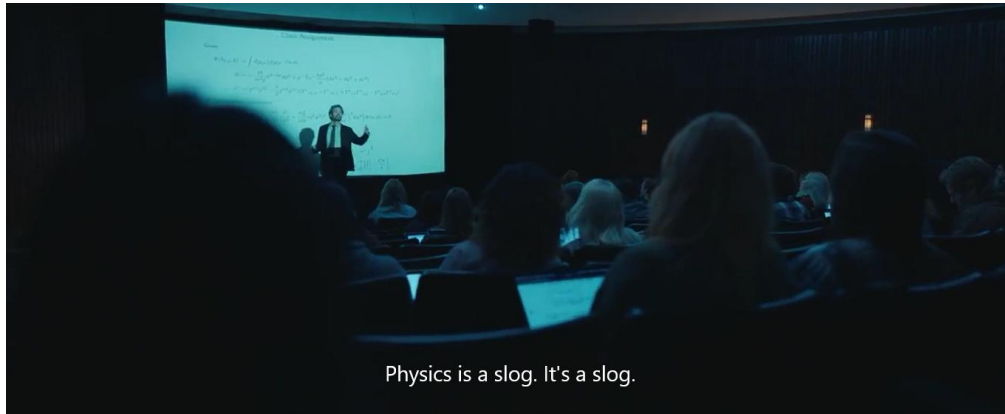


Figure 10. Louis Reed teaches quantum physics in front of student

Based on the theory of Nurgiyantoro (2010) about simple characters, Louis Reed in this film can also be categorized as a simple character because he has only a single trait that reflects his personality, which is an intelligent person. It can be seen from his profession as a brilliant scientist who invented time travel and wrote the algorithm necessary for controlled time travel. The scientist is amazing. The battle with Sorian is the moment that genuinely shows how much more brilliant he is in contrast to all the others there. Only he seems to understand how the magnetic field created by the deteriorating particle accelerator would bend the bullet and kill the villain. As a bonus, he gives both Adams the closure they both need from their father, who is smart enough to accept that he should not avoid his death, which is just around the corner.

c. Louis Reed as minor character

Louis Reed is considered a minor character in this movie because he plays a supporting role. Although his role is quite influential in Adam's success in destroying time travel, his presence does not appear throughout the film. He only appears from the middle of the story until near the end of the story.

5. Ellie Reed

Jenifer Garner played the role of Ellie Reed, Adam's mother, in this movie. She manages to portray a single mother who shows both her gigantic internal strength and reasonable weakness. Ellie also indirectly took on the role of a father after Adam's father died in a car accident in 2021. Although she felt a little overwhelmed in dealing with the change in little Adam's attitude, she still loved her son with all her heart.

a. Ellie Reed as simple character



Figure 11. Ellie Reed kisses Adam

Refers to the notion of simple character in Nurgiyantoro (2010) theory, Ellie is indicated as a simple character because her character only shows a wise and caring personality like most mothers in this world. There are no other traits of Ellie shown throughout the film that could provide a surprise effect for the audience.

b. Ellie Reed as minor character

Judging by her appearance throughout the film, Ellie Reed only appears at the beginning and end, which means her role in this movie is only a complement to the story and as a supporting actor—the influence of her role for Adam as a mother who always strengthens him.

6. Maya Sorian

Maya Sorian is a businesswoman who owns Sorian Technology Company. She is a friend and funded Adam's father, Louis Reed's, time travel project. After Louis died, she took advantage of his death to monopolize it for her benefit and create a future where she was the most powerful woman in the world.

a. Maya Sorian as antagonist character



Figure 12. Young Maya Sorian told her older version to not coming to 2018

According to Nurgiyantoro (2010), the antagonist is a character that brings problems to the protagonist, which becomes the story's central conflict. Maya Sorian's character fills the requirement as an antagonist because she is the only one who contradicts the protagonist characters. She changed the time stream and monopolized the invention of the time travel machine. Maya decides to return to 2018 to meet the younger version of herself to give some future intel to protect her wealth.

Maya : *Anyway, times have changed.*

Young Maya : *You can't be here. You know the potential for catastrophic changes to the stream. It's incalculable.*

Maya : *God, I was such a nerd. Will you please just stop talking?*

Young Maya : *Everything you asked me to do; the stock buys, the offshore accounts, all of it. it's unethical.*

Maya : *And illegal.*

The dialogue above shows that Maya maliciously alters the flow of time, which is strictly prohibited and has a bad impact on the future. Sorian figured out how to trick everybody for quite a while, causing them to accept that she is legitimately in control over the most valuable asset on the planet, namely time.

b. Maya Sorian as static character

Maya is indicated as a static character because she does not have any significant change from her characteristics. It aligns with Nurgiyantoro's (2010) theory, where he pointed out that a static character does not experience personality change in the story. Her character in this film reflects their personality as an antagonist, such as arrogance, cunning, and evil, without any character development from the beginning until the end of the film.

c. Maya Sorian as major character

Based on the theory proposed by Pope (2005), Maya Sorian can be categorized as a significant character because she appears from the beginning until the end of the story. She plays a significant role in providing conflict or problems in this film. She has been knowledgeable about time travel and the mechanisms behind it. She also used to regard its risks. Sorian's more skeptical self may not be as intelligent and idealistic as her younger version. However, she is still strategic and cutthroat, which is how she is ready to conceal her wrongdoing.

5. Conclusion

The characters in this film play an essential part in the smooth plot of this sci-fi film so that it produces an extraordinary film. In a movie, the types of characters can be determined through the characters' dialogue and actions, while the writer's portrayal is

very little or, in some cases, non-existent. There were six characters found: Adam Reed, young Adam Reed, Laura Shane (Adam's wife), Louis Reed (Adam's father), Maya Sorian, and Ellie Reed (Adam's mother). These characters fill each category of characters based on the theory proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2010) combined with Pope (2005). The most dominant characters in this movie are the protagonist characters, with four data points, followed by three data points that fill each category, namely major characters, minor characters, and simple characters. Other characters, such as dynamic, static, and antagonist, are each filled with one data. Furthermore, the researcher hopes this study can be helpful for people who are trying to discuss film, especially when identifying the types of characters.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this research.

Authors' contribution

The authors made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the study. The authors took responsibility for data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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