

# **Gender and Race Representation in Disney**

**A Study on Stereotypical Women's Language Forms in Racially Diverse Third Era**

**Disney Films**

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*Mariam El Chami*

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## Abstract

This research contributes to the field of Intercultural Communication through analysing the use of stereotypical non-minority American's women language forms by female characters of different races in Disney's third era films. The significance of this study lies in the intersection of children's identity formation, and the key role normative roles and behaviours emphasised through language in films plays into that. Previous research has compared Disney's first and second era films but there is a lack of third era films comparative studies in this field. In addition, the study focuses on third era films due to its diverse cast from different racial backgrounds and the focus on the lead female character. The aim of this research is to examine the function, similarities, and differences of Disney's racially diverse female characters use of these forms, namely *empty adjectives*, *super polite forms*, and *interruptions* in cross-sex conversations. In addition, it observes the use of other gendered language forms and their function in relation to race. The third era films chosen were *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Frozen* (2013), and *Moana* (2016) with a focus on its leading human female characters' conversation with human male encounters. The results and their analysis suggest that although there is no relation between the use of stereotypical women's language forms and race, female and male characters are still put in a normative frame through the use of stereotypical women's language forms and other gendered language forms while following their conventional functions. The results also show that despite the shift in including more diverse female characters from an imagological perspective, Disney's female characters continue to use stereotypical women's language forms for the majority of the time following the functions laid out decades ago by Robin Lakoff (1976) and Deborah Tannen (1994). Overall, this study aims to highlight the importance of analysing the messages sent through children-oriented films, namely Disney, through language forms while taking into account the role gender and race play in the formation of humans' multi-layered identity.

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## 1. Introduction

Disney<sup>1</sup> films have been enchanting children's worlds since the beginning of the twentieth century over three eras (Azmi, 2016). During these decades, a bulk of research has been dedicated to study Disney films' influence on children's identity formation, and particularly in relation to gender. A vast number of scholars claim that girls and boys imitate characters in films in their behaviour; whether in their image, role in society, or the language forms characters use. Scholars emphasised their conclusions through findings of Disney's portrayal of stereotypical examples of both genders that put the male in a position of power and the female in a subordinate position. Some of these studies are dedicated to analysing the effect of media and its reinforcement of stereotypes through the use of stereotypical women's language forms. However, despite the studies' efforts to highlight the significance of Disney films in children's everyday lives, animated films' influence is still often left unnoticed as they are dismissed as an "impression of reality" (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 85). Continued analyses of Disney films have shown that they are not only for entertainment, but also play a role in children's education and therefore act as the "cultural capital of the nations" (Juby & Warner, 2016, p. 6).

In November 2019, Disney launched *Disney Plus* to match the current high-in-demand streaming services. The new platform serves as the online hub for Disney's own productions and the films it acquires, including *Star Wars*, *The Simpsons*, *Marvel*, and *Pixar*. In January 2020, Disney Plus' subscribers reached 28.6 million (in less than three months since its launch) (Sorrentino & Solsman, 2020). Some subscribers took note of a disclaimer Disney Plus has added under the details section of a number of its first and second era films such as *Dumbo*, *Jungle Book*, and *Lady and the Tramp*. The disclaimer reads: "... this program is presented as

<sup>1</sup>Disney and The Walt Disney Company are registered trademarks of The Walt Disney Company.

originally created. It may contain outdated cultural depictions” (Harris, 2019). The disclaimer is not included in any of Disney’s third era films, which might reflect the progress it has achieved from an outer image perspective (Azmi, 2016).

Research has shown that children’s development in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century has been heavily affected by a key factor: mass media (Towbin et al., 2004). Nowadays, mass media has expanded to include many forms, namely television, radio, films, magazines, the internet etc. Walma van der Molen and van der Voort (2000) in their research advised that unlike adults, children acquire emotions, values, beliefs, and attitudes from audio and video as opposed to written text (Towbin et al., 2004). According to the Kaiser Family Foundation report (2010), children watch over 30 hours of television per week, which has contributed to Disney’s increasing success. In 2018, Disney attained its position within the top four reputable companies in the world, with a revenue of more than 59 billion U.S. dollars (Watson, 2019). Today, Disney’s growth crosses screens and borders includes realm of films, merchandise, and theme parks around the world, which witnessed sustained growth across its three eras (Juby & Warmer, 2015, p. 6).

In Disney’s first era between 1937 and 1959, films released included *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (1937), *Cinderella* (1950), and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). With the start of feminist movement in 1960’s, Disney received backlash for portraying its female characters through the society’s stereotypical lens. The Feminist Film Theory (FFT) is one of the main social movements that have shaped the film industry as we know it today, which was established in the 1970s as a consequence of studying female characters in films (Thornham, 1999). FFT’s main objective was to discuss gender portrayal in cinema, beyond the stereotypical image depicted in classical films (Smelik, 2016). After a thirty-year gap, Disney released a second group of films, including *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), *Aladdin* (1992), *Pocahontas* (1995), and *Mulan* (1998). Those were followed by the

recent third era films that include *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Frozen* (2013), *Moana* (2016), and others (England, Descartes, & Collier-Meek, 2011, pp. 555-556).

In its first princess film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), Disney portrayed the leading female character *Snow White* in a traditional image with traits that reflect the 1930's American culture. Disney continued to portray women in stereotypical and traditional roles until the period between 1960 and 1989 where no princess films were produced. During that timeframe, American filmmaking was going through a gender equality rebranding that challenged the previously portrayed traditional roles. Nonetheless, Disney continued to portray women in subordinate roles until its second era films that coincided with the third feminism movement in the late 1980's and beginning 1990's in promotion of the "new womanhood" (Stover, 2013, p. 3). In its third era films, Disney claims to have become more inclusive in portraying female characters from different backgrounds. In addition, Disney says to have revolutionised the plots to reflect the progress feminist movements have achieved. The progress has also been reflected in the dialogue between female and male characters in those films. It is argued that although Disney has made a few steps through empowering female characters in its second generation films (starting with *Beauty & the Beast* (1991)), there is still some progress to be witnessed in its third current era (Craven, 2002).

During the societal gender movements, language was also going through development and as a consequence, gendered language was under the radar. In 1976, Robin Lakoff published her book on stereotypical women language forms and their functions in relation to power in society. Years later, scholars including Jakiela and Ozier (2019) highlighted the fundamental role gendered language plays in shaping societies. They argued that language shapes our thoughts, and the children's thought as well (Jakiela & Ozier, 2019, p. 38). In response, this research examines some of Disney's recent racially diverse films. The films chosen were *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Frozen* (2013), and *Moana* (2016). The corpus choice

considered human female and male leading characters from different racial backgrounds to obtain data that aims to address the research gap in the use of stereotypical women's language forms in the representation of female characters in third era Disney films. The research suggests that although female characters are more visually diverse, the language forms used -to a great extent- continue to follow stereotypical women's language forms coined by Robin Lakoff in 1976 and later elaborated on their function by Deborah Tannen in 1994.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

The following chapter elaborates on theories, previous studies and their findings in relation to Disney films, gender, and race. First, the evolution of portraying gender in Disney films is introduced followed by race. Then the concept of gendered language is highlighted briefly before introducing stereotypical women's language forms. The *Theoretical Background* chapter leads to the formulation of the main research question in the following chapter.

### **2.1 Gender in Disney**

With Disney film's growing popularity globally, researchers' interest increased in analysing Disney's portrayal of gender through language (Davis, 2007). The bulk of research criticises Disney for portraying race and gender under stereotypical light in their classic films from its first and second era (Booker, 2010, p. 176). The stereotypes on gender include presenting female characters in domestic and subordinate positions while men in powerful positions professionally and in the household. Through analysing Disney's films, most research reveals that there is still not a direct answer to whether Disney has shifted away from the stereotypical portrayal of women in its films across its three eras. Some research has indicated that when comparing Disney films from the second era with its third, female characters are still shown "under patriarchal cultural beliefs" as male characters are portrayed as authoritative and powerful, which includes the remakes of films such as *Aladdin* (the original was released in 1992 during the second era while the remake was release in 2019 in the third) (El Chami,



2019). However, according to Towbin et al. (2004) research on gender representation in Disney films, Disney's portrayal of female characters has shifted to include characters that are now depicted as independent and strong when comparing films from the first era with the second including *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Cinderella* (1950), *The Fox and the Hound*, (1981), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), *Mulan* (1998) and others.

On the influence of Disney films on children, data from several studies suggest that children from preschool and thereafter learn more from audio and video in comparison to written texts, which affect their adoption of the relevant normative gender norms (Towbin et al., 2004, p. 20). For instance, Witt (2000) stated that girls tend to imitate female characters in films because they believe it is the expected way a female in real life should behave (Azmi, 2016, p. 235). Additionally, Fought and Eisenhauer (2016) points out that part of the problem in gender representation in Disney is that films are usually filled with male characters who are often portrayed as powerful and respected.

With the rise of the cinema in 1930's until 1950's, Disney films entered the field with female characters solely depicted as domesticated and romantic wives and mothers as in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Cinderella* (1950). In the 1960's, with the Women's Liberation Movement, domesticity and romance became less dominant but remained as the most popular forms of female roles which is reflected in Disney films including *Mary Poppins* (1964). A decade later, films and shows started introducing working female characters which led to the introduction of autonomous female figures in cartoon too in the 1980's. During these times, Disney released one of its most famous films *The Little Mermaid* (1989) that had mixed gendered messages, showing the leading female character Ariel as strong and independent at times but on the other hand sacrifices her freedom (through her voice) for a relationship (Towbin et al., 2004, p. 38). Thus, female characters were still depicted in submissive roles that needed rescuing from the strong leading male character in most Disney films. In cases

where female characters are depicted as “ambitious” and “independent”, they are also represented as “lonely”, such as the lead female character Rapunzel in *Tangled* (2010), or as “bitter spinsters” whose natural next step in their lives is to convince a man to marry them, such as the lead female character Mulan in *Mulan* (1998) (Letaief, 2015, p. 27).

Moreover, in their study on media’s influence on female identity construction, Henke, Umble and Smith (1996) analysed Disney films spanning 50 years across its first and second era, including *Cinderella* (1950), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and *Pocahontas* (1995). The study examined the films’ narratives and scripts, female leads’ roles and positions in their society, their demeanour, and their choice of words. In the findings, the research claims that although female characters have shifted from their normative roles, Disney films remain backward in constructing and reproducing female gender identity via its texts and dialogues (Henke, Umble, & Smith, 1996, pp. 245-246).

## **2.2 Race in Disney**

The term *intersectionality* was coined in early 21<sup>st</sup> century by scholars and activists to explain the complexity of human identity and the diverse factors that influence its formation (Collins & Bilge, 2016, p. 11). Existing research recognises the importance of taking into account the other factors when looking into the difference between gender and communication modes, which include ethnicity (White, 2003, p. 3).

In Disney’s first era classics, the main heroes and heroines have one thing in common: they were all white and Caucasian. Disney’s continued portrayal of protagonists as white has popularised whiteness (Letaief, 2015). In later classics in Disney’s second era films, some non-White characters have started to appear in effort to be inclusive and diverse. Although non-White characters made it to the lead in the second era, those films continued to show stereotypes about the subjected ethnicities and races namely Arabs in *Aladdin* (1992), Native Americans in *Pocahontas* (1995), and Chinese in *Mulan* (1998). The stereotypes on race

include presenting non-White characters as savage and backwards while the White characters are portrayed as intelligent and well-mannered (Letaief, 2015). Thus, studies analysing race portrayal in Disney films especially in its second era, also known as the “renaissance era”, suggest that minority groups remain portrayed as inferior, savage, backward, morally loose, and marginalised (Letaief, 2015). Following the third era, despite the efforts made by Disney to portray minority groups in a more positive light, the corporation continues to be criticised on portraying minority groups in a stereotypical manner. Similarly, Graves (1999) focused on studying the lack of racial diversity in television and claims that stereotypes are still visible when portraying people of colour in films (May, 2011). Relatedly, Hurley’s (2005) research on the relationship between gender identity construction and portrayal in Disney films suggested that Disney’s lack of portraying diverse races and ethnicities has left children of minority groups with no character to view as a role model.

Additional research on Disney’s portrayal of gender and race analysed the texts and images of female white characters and female characters of other ethnicities in some of Disney’s second era films, including: *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), *Aladdin* (1992), *Pocahontas* (1995) and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996) (LaCroix, 2004). The study argues that the pattern in these films in portraying female characters of other ethnicities is increasingly exotic and sexual in comparison to the white female characters, such as Esmeralda in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996) portrayed as an exotic and lustful street dancer. However, both female character categories remain equal in terms of marginalised roles that are subordinate to male characters in films, such as Belle in *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) who sacrifices her freedom to serve the Beast, and Princess Jasmin in *Aladdin* (1992) who although fights for her freedom, does not become a Sultan but a wife to one (LaCroix, 2004, p. 18).

Furthermore, Letaief (2015) claims that even when female heroines from different racial backgrounds are included, they are still depicted with lighter skin tone than other female characters in the same film (such as Jasmin in *Aladdin* in comparison to the other harem). Additionally, those heroines belonging to minority groups are fluent and master American English, a matter that highlights Disney's non-minority Americanised depiction of minority heroes and heroines of minority groups (Letaief, 2015, p. 83).

### **2.3 Gendered Language**

Humans use language in order to express their thoughts and communicate with each other. Since humans belong to different and diverse backgrounds, this leads to using languages belonging to different language families in interaction. Several studies have explored the connection between language and gender. Some languages, such as Finnish and Swahili, have non-categorised pronouns like masculine or feminine where many other languages classify males and females through using different pronouns such as "he" and "she" in English. In their book *Language and Gender*, Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet (2003) highlight that in English speaking communities, the forming of men and women starts from birth by assigning them with gendered pronouns (shifting from "it" to "he" or "she") in addition to gendered names (p. 15). This also results in assigning them the role of a male or a female that will accompany them through their lifetime.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Robyn Lakoff (1976) shed light on the reinforcement of sexism in the everyday language forms used by men and women in cross-sex conversations. She called on feminist sociolinguistics in the field of gender and language to shift the focus from grammar and phonetics towards a syntactic, semantic, and stylistic focus (Wright, 2002, p. 2). Following her footsteps, Deborah Tannen (1990) elaborated on the different functions of specific language forms between men and women. For instance, Tannen argues that through examining cross-sex conversations, she found that women interrupt men to ask for their

cooperation and/or to encourage them while men do it to compete and/or win a conversation (p. 93).

## **2.4 Women's language forms**

According to Yokoyama (1999), gender linguistic distinctions are learnt through external influences that fill a child's surrounding. Research also claim that children are prone to internalising gender-specific language portrayed in films as they develop their own gender identity. These studies reflect the third wave feminist theory that argues humans are not born inherently male or female, but gender is formed though "contextualised gendered practices" (Eisenhauer, 2017, p. 4).

The body of research in the gendered language field highlight opposing analyses on women's role in society, and often follow one of two distinct approaches: the *dominance approach* or the *difference approach*. The first views language differences between genders as a reflection of traditional social roles where men are dominant and women are subordinate whereas the latter links the gendered linguistic differences to two different subcultures. Those two subcultures are divided as follows: one that brings women together in a solidarity and intimacy while the other reflect men's independent minds and hierarchy (White, 2003, p. 3).

Following the *dominance approach*, although female characters in media and films are not an exact depiction of reality, their influence on children's behaviour should not be overlooked. Lippi-Green suggests that the stereotypical depiction of genders in films has resulted in a difference in the way women and men speak in cross-sex conversations, often placing the women in a weaker position and after which both parties are rewarded for following the gendered language models (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 85). As such, many social and culture factors play a role in influencing female language including social status (labour) and sex role socialisation.

Similarly, sociolinguists identified distinct forms that are believed to be typical of women's language, including Lakoff's foundational work following the *dominance approach* on women's language forms. Lakoff claims that women are seen as the subordinate group who use different language forms than men due to patriarchy and the higher positions men hold in the workplace and the society on a bigger scale. Therefore, Lakoff believes that women speak in a certain way that reflects their inferiority and their submissive role in societies (Hall, 2004, p. 171). She emphasises the power men hold through the institutionalised masculinity associated with language as opposed to women's language forms that lead to their inferior state, which is reflected in the institutionalised gender norms (Hall, 2004, p. 172). These stereotypical women's language forms coined by Lakoff include:

- empty adjectives (expressing admiration or approbation; ex.: cool or terrific),
- question intonation (tag-questions and rising intonation when giving a statement such as “it's so cold, isn't it?”),
- hedges (words having a filler form in a sentence and are used to reduce the force of a statement such as “kinda”),
- intensifiers (words which have little meaning itself but is used to add force to another adjective, verb or adverb),
- use of the intensive “so” (to say “I like him so much” instead of “very much”),
- hypercorrect grammar,
- women don't tell or get jokes,
- and super polite forms (use of polite language including please, thank you and apologising, in addition to using epistemic modal forms – modal auxiliary verbs – like could, may, might, should and would to avoid conflict during conversation) (Lakoff, 1976, pp. 53-64) .

On super polite forms, Lakoff states that there are three “Rules of Politeness”: (1) keep aloof, (2) give options, (3) show empathy. The first two functions according to her are heavily used by women to show formality (as in using titles when addressing men superior at work) and deference (as in tag questions, hedges, and intonation too) while the third is also used by men to show comradery in a society primarily ruled by them (Lakoff, 1976, p. 64).

It is worth noting that these forms can also be used by men who are excluded from “male realms of power”, namely men who belong to minority groups (Hall, 2014, p. 173). Decades following Lakoff’s book on women’s language forms, O’Barr & Atkins (1998) analysed language and gender in American culture and confirmed that women’s language reflect their subordinate and powerless role in society (p. 376). According to them, women employ a “powerless language” because they occupy powerless positions in societies at their households and in the workplace too (O’Barr & Atkins, 1998, pp. 385-386).

Additionally, advocating the *difference approach*, Tannen (1994) in her book *Gender and Discourse* elaborates on the several differences between women and men use of language forms, including: indirectness (women using it in defensiveness and men to build rapport), interruption (as a mean of cooperation seeking for women and establishing dominance for men), silencing (submissive women silenced by dominant men), raising topics (women to evade disagreements and men to dominate conversations) and adversativeness (women only use it to avoid conflict).

A considerable amount of literature has been published on studies that confirms Lakoff’s (1976) and Tannen’s (1994) theories on women’s use of stereotypical language forms. For instance, West and Zimmerman in analysing cross-sex conversations found that men interrupt women more frequently to establish control, while women interrupt to signal interest in the conversation (Hedenmalm, 2012, p. 4). Additionally, in his research on the different functions of language forms between men and women, Andrew White (2003) argues that men use

commands in a more straight-forward manner in comparison to women, where they pitch suggestions for actions (p. 6).

The literature on women's language forms is rich with a variety of studies; mainly based on Lakoff's forms (Pebrianti, 2013). However, Hedenmalm (2012) suggests in her study on gendered language in Disney films that inconsistency in using women's language forms in drawing a concrete conclusion on the extent of using these forms harder (p. 25).

### **3. Research Question and Sub-Questions**

The study aims at investigating Disney's use of women's language forms through examining cross-sex conversations in three films from Disney's third era, which is more racially diverse. To address the research gap in the use of stereotypical women's language forms in the representation of female characters in third era Disney films, this research raises the below main question:

*To what extent are Disney's leading female characters using stereotypical women's language forms (empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions) in cross-sex conversations in the racially diverse third era films?*

The main research question will be answered through three sub-questions that will start by identifying the frequency and function of women's language forms (empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions) in cross-sex conversations in the chosen films. The second sub-questions will explore other forms used by female characters apart for the chosen forms. Finally, the third sub-question will compare the forms in the films in relation to race. The sub-questions are:

- > *How often and when are leading female characters in The Princess and the Frog (2009), Frozen (2013), and Moana (2016) using empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions in comparison to male characters in cross-sex conversations?*



- > *If the chosen stereotypical women's language forms are not used by leading female characters, what other gendered language forms are used in cross-sex conversations in the three films?*
- > *Comparing the stereotypical women's language forms used in the three films, how are they similar or different in relation to race?*

#### **4. Method**

The chosen films (*The Princess and the Frog* 2009, *Frozen* 2013, and *Moana* 2016) are produced in the span of seven years, with four and three years gap respectively. The films include at least one female character in the leading role that each film revolves around and are supported by other leading male characters. The films' genres, although overlapping, have minor differences in plots including the presence of a Prince as a leading male character. This is due to the fact that Disney's inclusion of female leading characters from different racial backgrounds is recent and thus the choices remain limited.

##### **4.1 Qualitative Research**

Qualitative methods provide an effective way of analysing choice of words in films as opposed to focusing on numbers in showcasing a research's final findings, and thus is considered a "language based analysis" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 243). Additionally, qualitative research is iterative and data-led through which the researcher views the films repeatedly when attempting to collect verbal data depending on the surfacing results (Dörnyei, 2007, pp. 243-244). Following this approach, the researcher watched the three films multiple times when deciding on the women's language forms, while focusing on their function and relevance to the research question. During the repeated viewing of films, the researcher observed the similarities and differences in using language forms to find an answer to the three sub questions and the main question.

The method also included content analysis which uses qualitative categories that are originated inductively from the collected and analysed data (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 245). The relevant qualitative categories to this research are the derived three stereotypical women's language forms that are significant to answering the main research question. Additionally, the content analysis approach follows four analytical phases: (1) transcribing the films, (2) pre-coding the language forms categories and revising the coding during multiple viewing, (3) growing ideas on language forms functions in relation to race, and (4) analysing the results and concluding (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 246). These phases were crucial in drafting results, analysing them, and drawing a conclusion based on findings.

Moreover, following the *Cultural Representation Approach* in Intercultural Communication, the study followed the imagological approach (Ten Thije, 2020, pp. 10-12). According to Beller and Leerssen (2007), imagology investigates the expression of countries and their cultures in text (p. 7). With the growth of visual media, the term has expanded to include TV, radio and films and the focus has shifted to mass media and its (re)production of cultural representations. This approach was also regarded due to its relevance to the notion of identity formation as a whole which includes gender identity and the effect of media and its enforcement of stereotypes such as women's language forms.

It is worth noting that given the diversity the *thematic analysis* approach provides, the concepts drawn from Lakoff (1976) and Tannen (1994) slightly differ in interpretation; a matter heavily influenced by the time gap between the publication of those women's language forms in 1976 and 1994, and the year this paper was carried out in 2020.

## **4.2 Materials**

### ***4.2.1 Corpus Background Information***

The corpus included three animated Disney films: *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Frozen* (2013), and *Moana* (2016) watched via Disney+, the streaming portal for Disney. Those

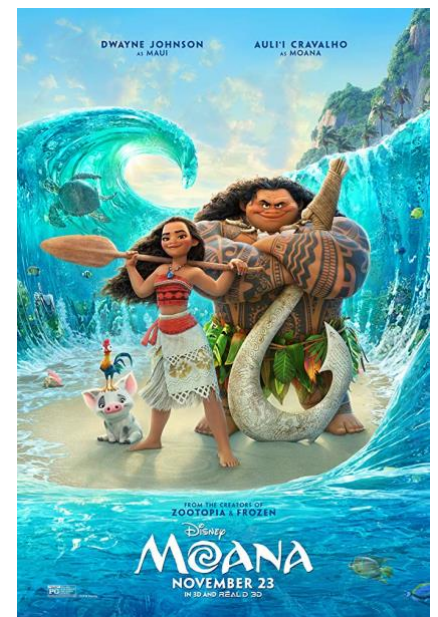
Disney third era films have a relatively constant time gap and include female leading characters from different racial backgrounds. The original films posters are displayed below. Today, viewers have access to the films via Disney+. In Appendix A, Table 1 is added and includes additional information on the films' genre, characters main language(s), countries and cultures presented in the films or that have served as an inspiration, duration, director(s), main cast and up-to-details.



*The Princess and the Frog, 2009*



*Frozen, 2013*



*Moana, 2016*

#### ***4.2.2 Films Plot Summary***

**The Princess and the Frog (2009).** Set in New Orleans, A hopeless and hardworking waitress Tiana and an arrogant Prince Naveen cross paths. Prince Naveen is bewitched by a voodoo magician that turns him into a frog. Mistaking her for a princess, he kisses Tiana to break the spell but ends up turning her into a frog as well. Their adventure to break the spell starts in hopes of fulfilling Tiana's dream of owning her own restaurant, like her late father has wished for them. After adventures that led to life realisations about the true meaning of love and richness, Tiana and Naveen fall in love, get married, and open the restaurant Tiana has set

her eyes on from the beginning. A detailed synopsis and information on main characters can be found [here](#).

**Frozen (2013).** In the mystical Kingdom of Arendelle, Princess Elsa and her sister Anna are trapped in their castle due to a childhood accident where Elsa hits Anna on the head with her freezing power. Years after, at Elsa's coronation, the castle gates open to public, during which Anna meets Prince Hans who deceived her into falling in love with him to take over Arendelle. Elsa disapproves and loses control of her powers and freezes once spring-filled Arendelle. Elsa exiles herself to the mountains where Anna finds her and brings her back with the peasant Kristoff. During this adventure, Elsa accidentally hits Anna's heart, a deadly matter than can only be cured with true love; i.e. sisters love. A detailed synopsis and information on main characters can be found [here](#).

**Moana (2016).** On Motunui, one of the Polynesian islands, a teenager who is set on her journey to become the Chief is eager to leave the island to explore what lies before the ocean. Against her parents' wishes, Moana sails into the ocean and meets the demigod Maui. He once stole the heart of the goddess Te Fiti who brought life to the ocean in order to provide humanity with the power of creation. During his battle with Te Fiti, Maui was attacked and lost his magical fishhook and Te Fiti's heart. Moana and Maui sail the ocean and find the heart, return it to Te Fiti and the new Chief discovers her identity along the way. A detailed synopsis and information on main characters can be found [here](#).

### **4.3 Procedure and Coding**

The films analysis process followed an inductive research approach which included the researcher beginning with watching the films first, followed by analysing them to gain adequate data (Dörnyei, 2007; Alagić, 2017). Through an inductive process, three women's language forms were identified for documentation:

- Empty adjectives: adjectives used to express extreme admiration or empathy such as “*You are gorgeous*” and “*That is horrible*”
- Super polite forms: utterance to politely put down an offer or taking the blame such as *giggling in response* and “*I’d really like to help you but...*”
- Interruptions: men interrupting women in conversations as a sign of dominance vs. women interrupting men to show confidence (Hedenmalm, 2012; Tannen, 1994).

These three categories were chosen to investigate Disney’s leading female characters use of stereotypical women’s language forms in cross-sex conversation in its third era films and their possible relevance to the characters’ racial backgrounds. In the following chapters, the categories will be elaborated on in relation to the films. The excerpts divided by feature in each film can be found in Appendix B.

A comparison was made between the films on the chosen categories’ functions in cross-sex conversations (female vs. male) followed by the role of racial background of leading female characters. Following thematic analysis as the process of identifying patterns or themes within collected qualitative data, the scenes chosen were based on leading human female characters interaction with human male characters in all three movies (Braun & Clarke, 2013). First, three separate schemes were created for each film comparing the female and male characters use of these language forms in cross-sex conversations while noting the function of each occurrence. The reason behind this was to investigate whether Disney is still relying on the stereotypical women’s language forms in cross-sex conversations while portraying the female characters in its third era films. This was followed by creating a fourth scheme that compares only the female characters use of the language forms to investigate its relevance to their racial background and setting.

## 5. Results

This chapter elaborates on the findings of stereotypical women's language forms used by Disney female and male characters in cross-sex conversations in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Frozen* (2013), and *Moana* (2016). The forms of focus are empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions. The categories below are split by the frequency and function of those forms in each movie between female and male contribution.

### 5.1 Empty Adjectives

**The Princess and the Frog (2009).** Seven total instances were found of characters using empty adjectives in cross-sex conversations. The frequency of empty adjectives by female characters were four while for male characters were three. Female characters used: *pretty*, *best*, *cute*, and *peachy-keen* to express loyalty, admiration, nurturing nature, and seek approval. Male characters used: *best*, *marvellous*, *fine-smelling*, *beautiful*, and *magnificent* to express admiration and win and/or manipulate conversations.

Below are four extracts of female utterances of empty adjectives and their operational function. More examples can be found in Appendix B.

-----  
Charlotte Labouff is showing her father Eli Labouff the dress Eudora has made for her. She is seeking approval from her father through using a question intonation using the empty adjective *pretty* to describe the dress.

1)

-Charlotte: Daddy! Daddy! look at my new dress, isn't it **pretty**?

-Eli: Look at you. Why, I'd expect nothing less from the finest seamstress in New Orleans.

-----  
Eli asks Eudora to make another dress for Charlotte. She is expressing her loyalty towards the family using the empty adjective *best* to describe the status she holds for Labouff's family.

2)

-Eli: Eudora, you suppose you could whip something up like that?

*-Eudora: Anything for my **best** customer.*

---

Eli Labouff gives Charlotte Labouff a dog as a present. She is expressing her nurturing nature towards the dog using the empty adjective *cute*.

3)

*-Eli: Now, who wants a puppy?*

*-Charlotte: I do! I do! He's so **cute**!*

---

Tiana complements the restaurant she is buying from the Fenners (Mr. Fenner 1 & Mr. Fenner 2). She is expressing her admiration towards the place to the owners using the empty adjective *peachy-keen* to reflect her eagerness to buying the restaurant as it is her dream.

4)

*-Tiana: Everything looks **peachy-keen**, Mr. Fenner and Mr. Fenner.*

*-Mr. Fenner 1: We'll have all the paperwork ready to sign, first thing after Mardi Gras.*

---

Below are two extracts of male utterances of empty adjectives and their operational function. More examples can be found in Appendix B.

---

Frog Naveen is correcting Tiana that she is not the princess he promised to give the restaurant. The focus here is on the fact that she is not a princess and not on her beauty. He is trying to win the conversation using the empty adjective *beautiful* to emphasise that she is not the princess he thought she was nor that she is beautiful.

5)

*-Tiana: You are going to keep your promise and get me my restaurant, right?*

*-Naveen: Not so fast. I made that promise to a **beautiful** princess, not a cranky... Why are those logs moving? \*he cuts his sentence when he sees alligators in the pond\*.*

---

Mr. Fenner 2 initiates small talk with Tiana while she is trying to steer the conversation back to the restaurant she intends to buy from them. He is expressing admiration towards her beignets

using the empty adjective *fine-smelling* to describe them in effort to distract her from the restaurant's subject.

6)

-Mr. Fenner 2: ***Fine-smelling*** beignets.

-Tiana: *Going to be the house specialty once I sign those papers y'all brought.*

---

**Frozen (2013).** Four total instances were found of female characters using empty adjectives in cross-sex conversations and no male usage was registered. Female characters used: *gorgeous*, *horrible*, *beautiful*, and *wonderful* to express empathy, admiration and to lift the male character up (reassurance).

Below are three extracts of female utterances of empty adjectives and their operational function. More examples can be found in Appendix B.

---

Anna is empathetic towards Hans' story about his upbringing and siblings. She uses the empty adjective *horrible* to describe what has happened to him to express her empathy towards his situation.

7)

-Hans: *Twelve older brothers. Three of them pretended I was invisible... literally...for two years.*

-Anna: *That's **horrible**.*

-Hans: *It's what brothers do.*

---

Anna and Hans are on a boat. The boat tipped to one side and Anna lands on top of Hans and is nervous because she instantly falls for him. She is expressing her admiration towards him through the empty adjective *gorgeous* to describe him while describing herself as awkward.

8)

-Anna: *Ha, this is awkward. Not you're awkward, but just because we're -- I'm awkward. You're **gorgeous**. Wait, what?*

-Hans: *I'd like to formally apologise for hitting the Princess of Arendelle with my horse...and for every moment after.*

---



Kristoff takes Anna to meet his “family and friends”. He is nervous and Anna interrupts him to reassure and calm him through using the empty adjective *wonderful* to describe his family and friends. She wants him to know that she approved of them before the meeting.

9)

*-Kristoff: Yea, I don't want to scare you, they might be a little bit inappropriate... and loud.. very loud. They're also stubborn at times, and a little overbearing. And heavy. Really, really heavy... But they're fine.. You'll get it. They mean well...*

*-Anna: Kristoff, they sound **wonderful**.*

---

**Moana (2016).** Four total instances were found of characters using empty adjectives in cross-sex conversations. The frequency of empty adjectives that were uttered by female characters and male characters were equal: two each. Female characters used: *cute* and *amazing* to express nurturing nature and to provide the male character with positive reinforcements to get what she wants. Male characters used: *little* and *coolest* to belittle the female character and show-off.

Below are two extracts of female utterances of empty adjectives and their operational function. More examples can be found in Appendix B.

---

Moana speaking to Maui about the Kakamora fighters. They are vicious but she thinks otherwise, reflecting on her nurturing nature through using the empty adjective *cute*. She also uses hedge *kind of* to balance their *murdering* nature with their *cute* appearance. Maui uses *little* to describe their small size.

10)

*-Maui: Kakamora!*

*-Moana: Kaka... what?*

*-Maui: Murdering little pirates. Wonder, what they're here for.*

*-Moana: They're kind of **cute**.*

---

Moana is trying to convince Maui to save the world with her by reminding him of his greatness to get what she wants. She uses the empty adjective *amazing* to describe him as she knows he cares about his high status.

11)

-Moana: *put this back (referring to the heart of Te Fiti). Save the world.  
You'd be everyone's hero.  
Maui... Maui... Maui... You're so **amazing!***

---

Below are two extracts of male utterances of empty adjectives and their operational function.

---

Moana is challenging Maui on his hero status. He belittles her by calling her *little* girl to emphasise her powerless position due to her young age that he perceives as a disadvantage that reflects her inexperience.

12)

-Moana: *You want to be a hero, that's what you are about, right?*  
-Maui: **Little** girl, I am a hero.  
-Moana: *Maybe you were but now...Now you're just the guy who stole the heart of Te Fiti. The guy who cursed the world.*

---

Maui is showing off and saying that his hook is the coolest thing the evil crab Tamatoa has from his collection of valuable things. He describes his hook as the *coolest* thing Tamatoa has collected.

13)

-Moana: *You're sure this guy's gonna have your hook?*  
-Maui: *Tamatoa... oh he'll have it. He's a scavenger, collects stuff, things that make him look cool. And for Tamatoa, trust me, my hook is the **coolest**.*

---

In summary, female characters used empty adjectives to express loyalty, admiration, nurturing nature, empathy and to seek approval while male characters used them to reclaim their status through manipulating conversations in addition to expressing admiration at times for the same purpose.

## 5.2 Super Polite Forms

**The Princess and the Frog (2009).** Six total instances were found of characters using super polite forms in cross-sex conversations. The frequency of those forms that were uttered by

female characters were four and by male were two. Female characters giggled in response to express shyness, put down an offer politely, apologise for someone else's fault (took the blame), and express empathy. Male characters expressed super polite forms through repeating *sorry* and *please*.

Below are three extracts from female use of super polite forms and their operational function. More examples can be found in Appendix B.

---

Frog Naveen is trying to enchant frog Tiana as he is in love with her. He has a bow with the help of a flying insect on and asks if she likes it. She *giggles* in response as she finds his efforts admirable but remains coy following conventional women's behaviour.

14)

-Tiana: *All my years no one's ever done anything like this for me. **Giggles**.*

-Naveen: *It is too much, is it not?*

-Tiana: **Giggles**.

-Naveen: *Thank you Beaux. I thought it was a nice touch. Pretend you did not see that.*

-Tiana: **Giggles**.

---

Tiana refuses to kiss Frog Naveen politely with an apology at first as she thinks she might have an alternative but ends up doing it.

15)

-Naveen: *You will enjoy, I guarantee. All women enjoy the kiss of Prince Naveen.*

-Tiana: *Look, **I'm sorry. I'd really like to help you** but I just do not kiss frogs.*

---

Charlotte apologises to the fake Prince Naveen about the mess that happened during the party. This wasn't her fault but she wants to make sure he is not upset with her.

16)

-Charlotte: *I am **positively mortified** you had to endure that frog fiasco last night. Well, when you're next in line for the throne, you're poised like a panther, ready to expect the unexpected.*

*\*The spell starts wearing off and the true person that is not Naveen starts appearing\**

*Your ear? \*commenting on it becoming larger\**

*-Fake Prince Naveen: What? Oh! Those peaky mosquitos, they're everywhere.*

---

Below are two extracts of male use of super polite forms and their operational function.

---

Tiana panics the moment Frog Naveen talks for the first time. He apologises *repeating the word sorry*. He is using what stereotypically is women's language form to appeal to her.

17)

*-Naveen: So what now? I reckon you want a kiss? Kissing would be nice, yes?  
\*Tiana screams\*  
-Naveen: ***I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry!*** I did not mean to scare you. I...  
wait, no no no! Wait, hold on a sec... \*Tiana is throwing things at Naveen\**

---

Tiana panics the moment Frog Naveen talks for the first time. He begs her to stop trying to hurt him *repeating the word please*. He is using what stereotypically is women's language form to appeal to her.

18)

*\*Tiana continues to throw things at Naveen\*  
-Naveen: You have a very strong arm, Princess. Okay, please put the monkey down. Stay back or I'll... ***please please please***. Allow me to introduce myself. I am prince Naveen of Maldonia.  
-Tiana: Prince? But I didn't wish for any...*

---

**Frozen (2013).** Five total instances were found of female characters using super polite forms in cross-sex conversations and no male usage was registered. Female characters empathised with male characters, took the blame, put down an offer, and giggled in response to express shyness.

Below are three extracts of female use of super polite forms and their operational function.

More examples can be found in Appendix B.

---

Hans and Anna are on a boat. Anna falls back because of Hans. She repeatedly says she is fine. She hides that she is hurt because she falls for him. She takes the blame to avoid hurting his feelings.

19)

-Hans: *I'm so sorry. Are you hurt?*

-Anna: *Hey. I- ya, no. **No. I'm okay.***

-Hans: *Are you sure?*

-Anna: *Yeah, **I just wasn't looking where I was going. But I'm okay. I'm great, actually.***

---

Elsa puts down an offer to dance with Duke of Weselton politely during her coronation. She offers an alternative.

20)

-Duke: *Your Majesty, as your closest partner in trade, it seems only fitting that I offer you your first dance as queen.*

-Elsa: ***Thank you...only I don't dance... But my sister does***

---

Anna giggles in response when Hans uses her words to propose to her. She is practicing stereotypical women's behaviour through giggling in agreement instead of voicing it.

21)

-Hans: *Can I say something crazy...? Will you marry me?*

-Anna: ***\*giggles shyly\*** Can I just say something even crazier? Yes.*

---

**Moana (2016).** No super polite forms were used in cross-sex conversation in this film.

---

In summary, while *Moana* (2016) did not have any super polite forms, female characters in the other two films used them to show empathy and shyness, take blame, and put down an offer while male characters used them to appeal to the female characters using stereotypical women's language form, namely repeating the word *sorry* and *please*.

### 5.3 Interruptions

**The Princess and the Frog (2009).** Seven total instances were found of characters interrupting each other in cross-sex conversations. The frequency of those interruptions by female

characters was four and by male was three. Female characters used interruptions to establish confidence, fact-check (correct male character), and express excitement. Male characters used interruptions to establish control, have the final say in conversations, change the subject, steer conversations, and put blame on the female character.

Below are three examples of female interruptions and their operational function. More examples can be found in Appendix B.

---

Tiana interrupts Eli to acknowledge that her beignets are indeed are his favourite. She is confident about her cooking and her knowledge of his preferences.

22)

*-Eli: Now, how about I celebrate with...*

*-Tiana: **\*interrupts\*** Beignets? Got a fresh batch just waiting for you.*

*-Eli: Well, keep them coming till I pass out.*

---

The Labouff's interrupt each other in cohesion when talking about the masquerade ball they are hosting and Prince Naveen coming. Charlotte interrupts her father because she is excited about the ball and Prince Naveen's visit. She is completing his sentence.

23)

*-Charlotte: Tia, Tia, Tia, did you hear the news?*

*-Tiana: Hey Charlotte.*

*-Charlotte: Tell her. Oh, tell her Big Daddy!*

*-Eli: Oh yea, Prince Naveen...*

*-Charlotte: **\*interrupts\*** Prince Naveen of Maldonia is coming to New Orleans!*

---

Tiana interrupts Naveen to correct him on what really happened when she kissed him and they both became prince and princess. She does not mean to compete with him but rather does it playfully.

24)

*-Naveen: This is going to be good! Like I told you, kissing a princess breaks the spell. Once you became my wife, that made you...*

*-Tiana: **\*interrupts\*** A princess. You just kissed yourself a princess.*

*-Naveen: And I am about to do it again.*

---

Below are three examples from male interruptions and their operational function.

---

The Labouff's interrupt each other when talking about the masquerade ball they are hosting and Prince Naveen coming. Eli interrupts his daughter to establish control and have the final say by taking her turn in speaking.

25)

*-Charlotte: Tell her what else you did, Bid Daddy. Go on.*

*-Eli: And he's staying... And he's staying... **\*stuffs Charlotte's mouth with beignets so she doesn't interrupt him\*** And he's staying in our house as my personal guest.*

---

Mr. Fenner 2 interrupts Tiana to change the subject after he dropped the news that she won't be getting the restaurant after all. He is steering the conversation and taking control over the situation entirely.

26)

*-Mr. Fenner 1: A fellow came in, offered the full amount in cash. Unless you can top his offer by Wednesday... You can kiss that place goodbye.*

*-Tiana: You know how long it took me to save that money?*

*-Mr. Fenner 1: Exactly! Which is why a little woman of your background would have had her hands full trying to run a big business like that.*

*-Tiana: Now, wait a minute...*

*-Mr. Fenner 2: **\*interrupts\*** Love those beignets, though.*

---

Frog Tiana and Frog Naveen are fighting over their current situation and he interrupts her to blame her for their current situation.

27)

*-Naveen: This is all your fault.*

*-Tiana: My fault? My fault...*

*-Naveen: **\*interrupts\*** Let me tell you something. I was having a wonderful time until...*

---

**Frozen (2013).** Seven total instances were found of characters interrupting each other in cross-sex conversations. The frequency of those interruptions by female characters is one and male

is six. Female characters used interruptions to reassure and calm the male character. Male characters used interruptions to establish authority, express/push opinion, show superior knowledge, and calm down/reassure the female character.

Below is an extract from female interruption and its operational function.

---

Kristoff takes Anna to meet his “family and friends”. He is nervous and Anna interrupts him to reassure and calm him. She is showing solidarity through her interruption.

28)

*-Kristoff: Yea, I don't want to scare you, they be a little bit inappropriate... and loud.. very loud. They're also stubborn at times, and a little overbearing. And heavy. Really, really heavy... But they're fine.. You'll get it. They mean well...*

*-Anna: **\*interrupts\*** Kristoff, they sound wonderful.*

---

Below are four extracts of male interruptions and their operational function.

---

Kristoff interrupts Anna twice to establish his negative opinion on her engagement to Hans. He is forceful and competitive in nature and wants his opinion to come across directly.

29)

*-Kristoff: So tell me, what made the Queen go all ice-crazy?*

*-Anna: Oh well, it was all my fault. I got engaged but then she freaked out because I'd only just met him, you know, that day. And she said she wouldn't bless the marriage...*

*-Kristoff: **\*interrupts\*** Wait. You got engaged to someone you just met?*

---

Kristoff interrupts Anna and commands her to stop talking while she is giving details of her engagement.

30)

*-Anna: Are you some sort of love expert?*

*-Kristoff: No, but I have friends who are.*

*-Anna: You have friends who are love experts.... I'm not buying it...*

*-Kristoff: **\*interrupts\*** Stop talking.*

---



During Elsa's coronation, Duke of Weselton grabs Anna to dance with her although she is trying to say that she doesn't want to but he interrupts her to establish authority and control.

31)

*-Duke: Lucky you! (on dancing with him)*

*-Anna: Oh, I don't think--*

*\*The Duke grabs Anna's arm and starts dancing with her\**

*-Duke: **\*interrupts\*** if you swoon, let me know, I'll catch you.*

---

Anna was struck by Elsa's powers in her heart. Anna was worried about her sister when Kristoff interrupts her to calm her down and shifts the focus back to her.

32)

*-Anna: Now what? (Now what?! Oh! What am I gonna do? She threw me out. I can't go back to Arendelle with the weather like this. And then there's your ice business...*

*-Kristoff: **\*interrupts\*** Hey, hey, don't worry about my ice business... (noticing something) Worry about your hair?!*

---

**Moana (2016).** Six total instances were found of characters interrupting each other in cross-sex conversations. The frequency of those interruptions by female characters is one and male is five. Female characters used interruptions to establish control and empower others. Male characters used interruptions to establish power, take control, express superior knowledge, and show-off.

Below is an extract from female interruption and its operational function.

---

Moana interrupts chief Tui, her father, while he is trying to calm down the village people about the dire current situation. She, unlike her father, wants to push them beyond their village and empowers them to take action to show solidarity.

33)

*-Tui: Please please settle down. We will dig new fields. We will find a way...*

*-Moana: \*interrupts\* We can stop the darkness! Save our island. There is a cave with boats. Huge canoes. We can take them to find Maui. Make him restore the heart. We were voyagers. We can voyage again.*

---

Below are three extracts from male interruptions and their operational function. More examples can be found in Appendix B.

---

Tui interrupts his mother while she is telling the story of their ancestors to the kids. He claims that he knows the history better and is competing for his place in power.

34)

*-Tala: The heart will be found by someone who would take the journey beyond the reef, find Maui, deliver him across the great ocean... To restore Te Fiti's heart and save us all...*

*-Tui: \*interrupts\* Thank you mother, that's enough. No one goes outside the reef. We're safe here. There is no darkness. There are no monsters.*

---

Moana meets Maui for the first time. She tries to convince him to come with her, but he interrupts her from the beginning to correct his own titles as she was addressing him. He is confirming he is in power.

35)

*-Moana: Maui, Shape shifter, Demigod of the wind and sea, I am Moana...*

*-Maui: \*interrupts\* Hero of Man.*

*-Moana: Wh..What ?*

*-Maui: It's actually Maui, the Shape Shifter, Demigod of Wind and Sea, Hero of Man.*

---

Moana wants to go in to fight Tamatoa but Maui won't let her. He is the hero and interrupts her to establish his power and control over the situation. However, he ends up using her as the bait to distract Tamatoa.

36)

*-Moana: Sorry, I thought you're a monster, but I find your hook and you're right... This Tamatoa guy really likes his treasure.*

*-Maui: Stay.*

*-Moana: What? No! I'm... I'm the one who...*

*-Maui: \*Interrupts\* Listen... For a thousand years I've only been thinking of keeping this hair silky, getting my hook and being awesome again. And it's not getting screwed up by a mortal who has no business in a monster cave...*

---

In summary, female characters used interruptions to reassure male characters, express excitement, establish control and confidence while empowering others while male characters used them to establish power, take control, put blame on female characters, express superior knowledge and opinion, and show-off. Male characters rarely used interruption to calm down the female character and show solidarity.

## **6. Discussion**

Analysing race and gender in Disney films has been on the radar of scholars for many years. The bulk of research found on race and gender representation through language forms in Disney films has been done between the three eras or across the first era or the second era only (see Chapter 2). Thus, this research aims at comparing three movies from the third era that represent different races to investigate whether Disney female characters use stereotypical women's language forms in cross-sex conversations, and whether Disney uses it differently depending on the race portrayed in each film. To analyse and summarise the findings of this research, answers to the three sub-questions from Chapter 3 will be laid out leading into answering the main research question.

### **6.1 – Use of Women's Language Forms**

*How often and when are leading female characters in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Frozen* (2013), and *Moana* (2016) using empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions in comparison to male characters in cross-sex conversations?*

**Empty Adjectives.** An empty adjective is usually used by the speaker to express an emotional reaction in a conversation in order to soften sentences. It is also important to note that they do not add any particular meaning to the content. According to Lakoff (1976), using empty

adjectives is a language form of women's speech. In chapter 5, results show that in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), female characters (n=4) used empty adjectives more than male characters (n=3). In *Frozen* (2013), only female characters used empty adjective (n=4) while in *Moana* (2016) both genders used them equally (n=2).

As for the functions of empty adjectives, female characters use them differently than male characters. They mainly followed the functions set by Lakoff (1976) and reflected in Tannen's (1994) theory on the indirectness of women's speech, namely to express admiration ("Everything looks **peachy-keen**"), empathy ("[How your siblings have treated you] is **horrible**."), nurturing nature ("[The puppy is] so **cute!**"), and loyalty ("Anything for my **best customer**.") in addition to reassuring the male character and calm him down ("Kristoff, [your family and friend] sound **wonderful**"). However, Moana also uses empty adjective to manipulate her male encounter to get what she wants with his help ("Maui... You're so **amazing!**"). While male characters at times use empty adjectives to express admiration ("**Fine-smelling** beignets."), they also use them to win a conversation ("I made that promise to a **beautiful** princess, not a cranky [princess]"), belittle female characters ("**Little** girl, I am a hero."), and show off their status ("And for Tamatoa, trust me, my hook is the **coolest**"). In these examples, although both genders use empty adjectives to express admiration which might appear a similarity, the context which they are used are different. Tiana in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009) uses "peachy-keen" while addressing the owners of the restaurant she wants to buy. She uses the empty adjective to gain the trust and admiration of the owners (Mr. Fenner 1 and Mr. Fenner 2) to facilitate the buying of the restaurant. The function here contradicts Tannen's (1994) theory on the use of indirect speech through empty adjectives, as Tannen claims men use it to build rapport while the example suggests a female character using the form for that function. Additionally, Mr. Fenner describes the beignets as "fine-smelling", he uses

the empty adjective to distract Tiana from the restaurant topic as the owners changed their mind and will no longer sell it to her.

Although the findings in terms of frequency suggest that the latest films have less empty adjectives uttered by female characters, the different functions between the genders point out that decades after Lakoff (1976) and Tannen's (1994) researches and books, Disney is slightly shifting from the preliminary findings on the different functions of empty adjectives between men and women, which gives the man a higher and more powerful role in conversations. Moreover, the shift in plot away from the princess fairy tale namely in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009) and *Frozen* (2013) is evident in *Moana* (2016) and that might have played a role in the findings that the female characters in first two films abide by Lakoff's (1976) stereotypical women's language forms and their functions for the majority of it while *Moana* does not.

**Super Polite Forms.** Lakoff (1976) claims that the use of super polite forms by females in cross-sex conversations places them in weaker positions. Further research has also embraced that claim including Lippi-Green's remark (1997) on media following gendered language models. In this study, results show that in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), female characters (n=4) used super polite forms twice as much as male counters (n=2). In *Frozen* (2013), while no male character used any super polite form, female characters used them more than any other film in this study (n=5). However, no female or male character used super polite forms in the most recent movie *Moana* (2016). Thus, in terms of frequency, it is interesting to note that there is a shift in minimising the use of super polite forms by female characters. In terms of the context around these, female characters would either giggle in response to express shyness and keep aloof (Anna giggles shyly in response to a marriage proposal), or they would apologise for someone else's mistake and take blame for it (“*I am **positively mortified** you had to endure...*”). Additionally, female characters also used super polite forms to put down an offer

made by the male character gently and gave alternatives (“*Thank you...only I don’t dance... But my sister does*”). On the other side, male characters only used super polite forms when they are found in an awkward positions that is their fault (“*I’m sorry I’m sorry I’m sorry! I did not mean to scare you.*”) or to appeal to female characters.

Looking at both the frequency and the function of super polite forms, female characters presented in those movies across the examined cross-sex conversations are indeed in a weaker positions even in times where they are thought to be the ones in power as they have abided by the “Rules of Politeness” set by Lakoff (1976) while male characters did not. Female characters used super polite forms to keep aloof and give options while male characters used them to blame others, which does not follow any of the Rules mentioned in chapter 2 . The different functions between genders further emphasises the differences in portraying normative gender roles through the use of these language forms.

**Interruptions.** Both *Frozen* (2013) and *Moana* (2016) show that male characters interrupt female characters much more frequently, where female characters interrupted men only once in each movie while male characters in *Frozen* (2013) (n=6) and *Moana* (2016) (n=5). In *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), male characters (n=3) interrupted female characters less (n=4). The frequency of interruptions made by men increases in time across the three films. This finding emphasises the conclusion of a previous study on language forms in cross-sex conversation. In the study, men were found to frequently interrupt women (as much as 96%) which is thought to play a role in men being more dominant and women more submissive (West & Zimmerman, 1975, pp. 115-116).

As for the functions of interruptions, it appears that the female characters were not always portrayed to be in the submissive and weaker position. Although interruptions by female characters were done mainly to express solidarity when they were expressing excitement (Charlotte interrupts Eli “*Prince Naveen of Maldonia is coming to New Orleans!*”) or

reassuring male characters (Ana interrupts Kristoff “*Kristoff, [your family and friends] sound wonderful.*”). Female characters also interrupted male characters to show confidence (Tiana interrupts Eli “*Beignets? Got a fresh batch just waiting for you.*”), establish and take control (Moana interrupts Tui “*We can stop the darkness!*”), or state facts/correct male counter (Tiana interrupts Naveen “*A princess. You just kissed yourself a princess.*”). The different functions of interruptions by female characters go against Tannen’s (1994) theory on interruptions and their different functions by genders. According to Tannen (1994), women use interruptions to ask for men’s cooperation while men interrupt to establish dominance. In the films, male characters used interruptions to establish or take control over the situation (Tui interrupts Tala “*Thank you mother, that’s enough. No one goes outside the reef.*”), have the final say (Maui interrupts Moana “*Listen... For a thousand years I’ve only been thinking of keeping this hair silky, getting my hook and being awesome again*”), blame the female character for their current dire situation (Frog Naveen interrupts Frog Tiana “*Let me tell you something. I was having a wonderful time until [you showed up]*”), force their opinion (Kristoff interrupts Ana “*Wait. You got engaged to someone you just met?*”), reflect on their high status (“*[I am] Hero of Man*”), or establish superior knowledge (Kristoff interrupts Ana “*Stop talking*”). Less frequently do male characters use interruptions to reassure female characters and calm them down such as when Kristoff interrupted Anna to calm her down while she was panicking over saving her sister and ignoring her own health (*Hey, hey, don’t worry about my ice business...*). Thus, the majority of male characters’ use of interruptions confirms to Tannen’s (1994) theory while the females ‘do not.

Although female characters have used interruptions to ask for the male’s cooperation, which is the main function according to Tannen (1994), they were sometimes portrayed in the leading position as more direct and assertive. This is evident in Moana’s conflict with her father Tui.

33)

*-Tui: Please please settle down. We will dig new fields. We will find a way...*

*-Moana: \*interrupts\* We can stop the darkness! Save our island. There is a cave with boats. Huge canoes. We can take them to find Maui. Make him restore the heart. We were voyagers. We can voyage again.*

This excerpt shows that even when female characters interrupt to take control over the situation, she is still seeking cooperation through bringing the community together to achieve the best for all. While when male characters use interruptions for the same function (Tui interrupts his mother Tala “*Thank you mother, that's enough. No one goes outside the reef.*”), they are aiming to remain in the powerful position and have the final say in matters. To a certain extent, the results and analysis suggest that the functions of interruptions have ever so slightly shifted from Tannen’s (1994) theory.

## **6.2 – Use of Other Gendered Language Forms**

*If the chosen stereotypical women’s language forms are not used by leading female characters, what other gendered language forms are used in cross-sex conversations in the three films?*

As mentioned in the section above, *Moana* (2016) female characters did not use super polite forms. During the iterative process of data collection, it was noted that female characters in *Moana* (specifically Moana herself) uses commands. Commands is another language form that scholars claim that men and women use differently. Men are thought to use commands in a more straight-forward manner in comparison to women, where they suggest actions (White 2003, p. 6). In the film *Moana* (2016), the lead female character Moana addresses Maui (the lead male character) with five commands during their conversations. Below are the five excerpts showing direct commands by the lead female character in *Moana* (2016):

Moana is addressing Maui when they first met. She is introducing herself and commanding her to help her on her journey to save her village. He interrupted her three times to establish his high-status, but she remains forceful and repeats her command.

*-Moana: I am Moana, Chief of Motunui.  
You will board my boat.*



*Sail across the sea.  
And restore the heart of Te Fiti.*

---

During their journey, Moana and Maui get attacked by the pirates known as Kakamora. They steal her chicken companion who has swallowed the heart of Te Fiti. Moana commands Maui to follow them and rescue the chicken and the heart.

*-Moana: Maui! They took the heart. The heart is in the chicken, we have to get it back. Mauiii!*

---

Moana is trying to convince Maui in the beginning to teach her how to sail to bring him back to the village and save her people with her.

*-Moana: teach me to sail. My job is to deliver Maui across the great ocean. I should be sailing!*

---

The above excerpts suggest that all commands uttered by the lead female character are direct commands demanding the male character to carry out action(s). This contradicts Tannen's (1994) claim that states women use indirect language approaches in commands as a powerful means depending on the context. In this specific context, the female character is direct, assertive, and powerful. Comparing this with the other two films, Charlotte, the white leading female character in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), is the one uttering direct commands while the female character of colour, Tiana, is bossed around. In *Frozen* (2013), the only noted direct command is from Elsa asking people to leave her alone to avoid freezing them to death. Therefore, although commands were not a focal point in this research, it is still important to note that in contrast to sociolinguists claim that men give orders more than women, some of Disney's latest films show otherwise (Talbot, 1998, pp. 87-90).

### 6.3 – Women’s Language Forms and Race

*Comparing the stereotypical women’s language forms used in the three films, how are they similar or different in relation to race?*

From an imagological perspective, Disney has practiced inclusion in promoting different cultures and ethnicities in its third era films (see Appendix C). However, reflecting on the findings on the frequency and function of empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions in the three films, the study concludes that Disney continues to promote some stereotypical women’s language forms, especially through its White female characters. This might be influenced by the fact that all leading female characters -to a great extent- follow the stereotypical -White- women’s language forms set by Lakoff in 1976. As mentioned in Chapter 5, female characters mostly used empty adjectives to express admiration and/or approbation, whereas they used super polite forms to request collaboration, uplift the man, or take blame. However, when female characters interrupted the male characters, they did so at times to take control and establish confidence, which is a shift from previous films where female characters are seen to interrupt each other far more than interrupting male characters, such as Cinderella and her step sisters versus Cinderella and the Prince.

Moreover, since the *Princess and the Frog* (2009) marked the first non-White Disney film, it was worth diving a little deeper into the social role impact on language according to LaCroix (2004). Tiana, who was born to a seamstress mother and a father who works double shifts and dreams of owning a restaurant, grows up to be a waitress who also carries on other house chores; a role commonly associated with women. Similar to first era Disney films where the leading female characters such as in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Cinderella* (1950) are put in traditional feminine roles, decades later *The Princess and the Frog* (2009) follows the same path (England, Descartes, and Collier-Meek, 2011, p. 564). This further confirms LaCroix’s (2009) conclusion that women are portrayed as subordinated to men

regardless of race while conforming to stereotypical White women roles and language forms (p. 18). Thus, the findings suggest the leading female characters from different racial backgrounds continue to follow the stereotypical White women's language forms regardless of their race. In the case of *Frozen* (2013), the characters represent a White racial background, a matter that might have played a role in female characters following stereotypical women's language forms. However, none-White female characters, namely Moana in *Moana* (2016), illustrate a shift in using one of these language forms, such as using direct commands to establish control rather than indirect requests. This result does not correspond to the general findings of previous studies where men tend to exercise direct commands more than women (Talbot, 1998, pp. 87-90).

## **7. Conclusion**

The research aimed at investigating Disney's use of stereotypical women's language forms in their racially diverse third era films, with a focus on the function of three of those forms: empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions. The qualitative research was conducted on three films, which are: *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Frozen* (2013), and *Moana* (2016), through the means of finding answers to the following sub-questions leading to an answer to the research question.

*To what extent are Disney's leading female characters using stereotypical women's language forms (empty adjectives, super polite forms, and interruptions) in cross-sex conversations in the culturally/racially diverse third era films?*

First, the research data shows that in all three films, the frequency of using empty adjectives decreased, however the function remains the same as female characters used them to generally appease to male characters while male used them to belittle and degrade the female character to remain in power. As for super polite forms, there was inconsistency with their frequency in films but the functions illustrate the weaker position female characters are portrayed in as

opposed to male characters who also remain in powerful positions and only use these forms to appeal to the female characters. Furthermore, results on interruptions indicate that although male characters interrupted female characters on more occasions at times, most female characters used interruptions to establish power and take control; contrary to previous claims by Tannen (1994) that women use interruptions to show solidarity.

Second, during the data collection, the results also show that although no female characters used super polite forms in the *Moana* (2016), they used commands in cross-sex conversations in a straight-forward manner, which is also contrary to Tannen's (1994) claims that state women use commands less than men, and if so, not in a straightforward way.

Last, when comparing all three films and the similarities and differences in using those language forms in relation to race, no suggestive findings can be concluded. This is probably influenced by the fact that all leading female characters speak American English fluently which was the base of the women's language forms set by Lakoff in 1976.

Overall, taking into account the intersectionality of the human's identity formation, the role gender and race play in the formation of human's complex and multi-layered identity, and the impact Disney films has on children's development, this study further highlights the importance of dedicating the time and effort into analysing the messages sent through these films not only through images, but language too. It is true that visually speaking Disney might have been more inclusive in its third era films, however although no fixed pattern is depicted, the truth remains that the corporation is still using stereotypical women's language forms that reinforce conventional ideologies about women and their role in societies.

Since the research follows qualitative methods, the results and the claims can be subjective and influenced by the researcher's bias although it was kept at check during the process through results-based interpretations and analysis. However, a level of subjectivity was foreseeable given the nature of the research and its proximity to the researcher belonging to the minority

group portrayed by Disney as well, a matter that might have affected the outcome of the research. Additionally, the timeframe of the research is short which limited the corpus and therefore the result cannot be generalised on all third era Disney films. Moreover, very little research has been done on comparing gender and race representation through language forms in Disney's third era films. The bulk of the research compared the first and the second era films with the third.

For future research, it would be recommended to expand the corpus of the research to include all the current third era films to make sure the results are representative of the genre. The investigated language forms could be expanded beyond only three to make sure comparisons between films are not skewed and are encompassing all possible variables. Additionally, it would be advisable to link the visual representation of those different races to the language used by the female characters and investigate the link if available. Last, with more time, it would be worth exploring the societal factors that influence the film industry in general, and films targeting children in specific, and their effect on any possible shifts on film productions. This research aims at highlighting the significance of stereotypical women's language forms that continue to be used by Disney. Although from an imagological perspective Disney has become more inclusive, it still uses language forms that encourage stereotypical gender identity norms, which affects Disney's vulnerable target audience, children, who is in the stage of forming their identity.

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## Appendices:

### Appendix A - Table 1: Films Information

Film	Genre	Language	Presented Time & Country	Duration	Director(s)	Main Cast	Gross Revenue
<i>The Princess and Frog (2009)</i>	Animation, musical, adventure, comedy	African-American Vernacular English	Mid 1920s in New Orleans, USA	1h 37min	Ron Clements, John Musker	Anika Noni Rose, Keith David, Oprah Winfrey	\$267,045,765
<i>Frozen (2013)</i>	Animation, musical, adventure, comedy	American English	1839 in fictional land of Arendelle; Norwegian inspired	1h 42min	Chris Buck, Jennifer Lee	Kristen Bell, Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff	\$1,280,802,282
<i>Moana (2016)</i>	animation, musical, adventure, comedy	American English, Polynesian	3,000 years ago in Polynesia <sup>2</sup>	1h 47min	Ron Clements, John Musker, Don Hall	Auli'i Cravalho, Dwayne Johnson,	\$643,321,195



					Chris Williams	Rachel House	
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**Appendix B – Women’s language forms, their frequency, and their functions in the three films**

Empty Adjectives

*The Princess and the Frog (2009)*

**Empty Adjectives: 4 F & 3 M**

→ F: pretty, best, cute, peachy-keen

>>> *seeking approval, expressing loyalty, nurturing nature, expressing admiration*

→ M: fine-smelling, beautiful, magnificent

>>> *expressing admiration, winning argument*

<b>Female (F) /Male (M)</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Excerpt</b>
<b>F</b>	Charlotte Labouff is showing her father Eli Labouff the dress Eudora has made for her.  <i>seeking approval</i>	Charlotte: Daddy! Daddy! look at my new dress, isn't it <i>pretty</i> ?  Eli: Look at you. Why, I'd except nothing less from the finest seamstress in New Orleans.

<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Eli asks Eudora to make another dress for Charlotte.</p> <p><i>expressing loyalty</i></p>	<p>Eli: Eudora, you suppose you could whip something up like that?</p> <p>Eudora: Anything for my <i>best</i> customer.</p>
<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Eli gives Charlotte a dog as a present.</p> <p><i>nurturing nature</i></p>	<p>Eli: Now, who wants a puppy?</p> <p>Charlotte: I do! I do! He's so <i>cute</i>!</p>
<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Tiana comments on the restaurant she is about to buy from the Fenners.</p> <p><i>expressing admiration</i></p>	<p>Tiana: Everything looks <i>peachy-keen</i>, Mr. Fenner and Mr. Fenner.</p> <p>Mr. Fenner 1: We'll have all the paperwork ready to sign, first thing after Mardi Gras.</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Mr. Fenner 2 continuing the small talk with Tiana.</p> <p><i>expressing admiration</i></p>	<p>Mr. Fenner 2: <i>Fine-smelling</i> beignets.</p> <p>Tiana: Going to be the house specialty once I sign those papers y'all brought.</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Frog Naveen is correcting Tiana that she is not the princess he promised the restaurant to.</p> <p><i>winning conversation</i></p>	<p>Tiana: You are going to keep your promise and get me my restaurant, right?</p> <p>Naveen: Not so fast. I made that promise to a <i>beautiful</i> princess, not a cranky... Why are those logs moving? *he cuts his sentence when he sees alligators in the pond"</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Frog Naveen commenting on Tiana's cooking.</p>	<p>Tiana: Anyone up for seconds?</p>

	<i>expressing admiration</i>	Naveen: That was <i>magnificent!</i> You truly have a gift. Tiana: Why, thank you.
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Frozen (2013)

Empty Adjectives: 4 F & 0 M

→ F: gorgeous, horrible, beautiful, wonderful

>>>lift man up, empathy, admiration

Female (F) /Male (M)	Context	Excerpt
<b>F</b>	Anna and Hans are on a boat. Anna lands on top of him and starts acting in a weird manner because she instantly likes him.  <i>Express admiration</i>	Anna: Ha, this is awkward. Not you're awkward, but just because we're -- I'm awkward. You're <i>gorgeous</i> . Wait, what? *Hans quickly gets to his feet and helps Anna up again. Hans: I'd like to formally apologise for hitting the Princess of Arendelle with my horse...and for every moment after.
<b>F</b>	Anna is empathetic towards Hans' story about his upbringing and siblings.	Hans: Twelve older brothers. Three of them pretended I was invisible... literally...for two years. Anna: That's <i>horrible</i> .

	<i>empathy</i>	Hans: It's what brothers do.
<b>F</b>	<p>Going up the mountains to see Elsa and save her, Anna and Kristoff walk beneath frozen willows that Anna admires.</p> <p><i>Express admiration</i></p>	Anna: I never knew winter can be so <i>beautiful</i> .
<b>F</b>	<p>Kristoff takes Anna to meet his "family and friends". He is nervous and Anna interrupts him to reassure and calm him.</p> <p><i>lift man up</i></p>	<p>Kristoff: Yea, I don't want to scare you, they might be a little bit inappropriate... and loud.. very loud. They're also stubborn at times, and a little overbearing. And heavy. Really, really heavy... But they're fine.. You'll get it. They mean well...</p> <p>Anna: Kristoff, they sound <i>wonderful</i>.</p>

*Moana (2016)*

Empty Adjectives: 2 F & 2 M

→ F: cute, amazing

>>>nurturing, positive reinforcements to get what she wants

→ M: little, coolest

>>>belittling female, arrogance

Female (F) /Male (M)	Context	Excerpt
<b>F</b>	<p>Moana speaking to Maui about the Kakamora fighters. They are vicious but she thinks otherwise.</p> <p><i>nurturing</i></p>	<p>Maui: Kakamora!</p> <p>Moana: Kaka... what?</p> <p>Maui: Murdering little pirates. Wonder, what they're here for.</p> <p>Moana: They're kind of <i>cute</i>.</p>
<b>F</b>	<p>Moana is trying to convince Maui to save the world with her by reminding him of his greatness to get what she wants and needs out of him.</p> <p><i>positive reinforcements to get what she wants</i></p>	<p>Moana: put this back (referring to the heart of Te Fiti). Save the world.</p> <p>You'd be everyone's hero.</p> <p>Maui... Maui... Maui... You're so <i>amazing!</i></p>
<b>M</b>	<p>Moana is challenging Maui on his hero status. He belittles her back.</p> <p><i>belittling female</i></p>	<p>Moana: You want to be a hero, that's what you are about, right?</p> <p>Maui: <i>Little</i> girl, I am a hero.</p>

		Moana: Maybe you were but now...Now you're just the guy who stole the heart of Te Fiti. The guy who cursed the world.
<b>M</b>	Maui is blowing his own horn and saying that his hook is the coolest thing the evil crab Tamatoa has from his collection of valuable things.  <i>arrogance</i>	Moana: You're sure this guy's gonna have your hook?  Maui: Tamatoa... oh he'll have it. He's a scavenger, collects stuff, things that makes him look <i>cool</i> . And for Tamatoa, trust me, my hook is the <i>coolest</i> .

### Super Polite Forms

*The Princess and the Frog (2009)*

#### Super Polite Forms: 4 F & 2 M

>>>F: giggles in response\*2, putting down an offer, apologising when it is not her fault (empathy)

>>>M: repetitive sorry (to apologise), repetitive please (to plead)

<b>Female</b>  (F)  /Male  (M)	<b>Context</b>	<b>Excerpt</b>
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<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Naveen makes an appearance and is charming the women around him while talking about jazz music. The women only giggles shyly in response to he says.</p> <p><i>giggles in response</i></p>	<p>Naveen: It's jazz. It's jazz music! It was born here. Is beautiful, no?</p> <p>Women: <i>giggles in response.</i></p>
<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Tiana refuses to kiss Frog Naveen politely at first but ends up doing it.</p> <p><i>putting down an offer</i></p>	<p>Naveen: You will enjoy, I guarantee. All women enjoy the kiss of Prince Naveen.</p> <p>Tiana: Look, <i>I'm sorry. I'd really like to help you</i> but I just do not kiss frogs.</p>
<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Charlotte apologises to the fake Prince Naveen about the mess that happened during the party. This wasn't her fault.</p> <p><i>apologising when it is not her fault</i></p>	<p>Charlotte: <i>I am positively mortified</i> you had to endure that frog fiasco last night. Well, when you're next in line for the throne, you're poised like a panther, ready to expect the unexpected.</p> <p>*The spell starts wearing off and the true person that is not Naveen starts appearing*</p> <p>Your ear? *commenting on it becoming larger*</p> <p>Fake Prince Naveen: What? Oh! Those peaky mosquitos, they're everywhere.</p>

<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Frog Naveen is acting cute in front of frog Tiana. He has a bow on and asks if she likes it. She giggles shyly in response.</p> <p><i>giggles in response</i></p>	<p>Tiana: All my years no one's ever done anything like this for me. <i>Giggles.</i></p> <p>Naveen: It is too much, is it not?</p> <p>Tiana: <i>Giggles.</i></p> <p>Naveen: Thank you Beaux. I thought it was a nice touch. Pretend you did not see that.</p> <p>Tiana: <i>Giggles.</i></p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Tiana panics the moment Frog Naveen talks for the first time. He apologises repeating the word <i>sorry</i>.</p> <p><i>Repetitive sorry to apologise</i></p>	<p>Naveen: So what now? I reckon you want a kiss? Kissing would be nice, yes?</p> <p>*Tiana screams*</p> <p>Naveen: <i>I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry!</i> I did not mean to scare you. I... wait, no no no!</p> <p>Wait, hold on a sec... *Tiana is throwing things at Naveen*</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Tiana panics the moment Frog Naveen talks for the first time. He begs her to stop trying to hurt him repeating the word <i>please</i>.</p> <p><i>Repetitive please to plead</i></p>	<p>*Tiana continues to throw things at Naveen*</p> <p>Naveen: You have a very strong arm, Princess.</p> <p>Okay, please put the monkey down. Stay back or I'll... <i>please please please.</i></p> <p>Allow me to introduce myself. I am prince Naveen of Maldonia.</p> <p>Tiana: Prince? But I didn't wish for any...</p>



Super Polite Forms: 5 F & 0 M

>>>F: *making man feel better* \*3, *taking blame and/or responsibility, putting down an offer, giggling in response*

<b>Female</b>  <b>(F)</b>  <b>/Male</b>  <b>(M)</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Excerpt</b>
<b>F</b>	<p>Help in the palace is waking Anna up for her sister's coronation. She denies that she is sleeping when he apologises for waking her up to not make him feel bad about it.</p> <p><i>making man feel better</i></p>	<p>Kai: Sorry to wake you, madam...</p> <p>Anna: No no no, you didn't. I've been up for hours.</p>
<b>F</b>	<p>Hans and Anna are on a boat. Anna falls back because of Hans. She repeatedly says she is fine. She lies and hides that she is hurt to make him feel better as she likes him instantly. She even blames herself.</p> <p><i>making man feel better/taking blame and/or responsibility</i></p>	<p>Hans: I'm so sorry. Are you hurt?</p> <p>Anna:</p> <p>Hey. I- ya, no. No. I'm okay.</p> <p>Hans: Are you sure?</p> <p>Anna: Yeah, I just wasn't looking where I was going. But I'm okay. I'm great, actually.</p>

F	<p>Anna says she is fine again after Hans apologises again for hitting her by mistake.</p> <p><i>making man feel better</i></p>	<p>Hans: I'd like to formally apologise for hitting the Princess of Arendelle with my horse...and for every moment after.</p> <p>Anna: No no no. It's fine. I'm not THAT Princess.</p>
F	<p>Elsa puts down an offer to dance with Duke of Weselton gently &amp; politely during her coronation.</p> <p><i>putting down an offer</i></p>	<p>Duke: Your Majesty, as your closest partner in trade, it seems only fitting that I offer you your first dance as queen.</p> <p>Elsa: Thank you...only I don't dance... But my sister does!</p>
F	<p>Anna giggles in response when Hans uses her words to propose to her.</p> <p><i>giggling in response</i></p>	<p>Hans: Can I say something crazy...? Will you marry me?</p> <p>Anna: *giggles shyly* Can I just say something even crazier? Yes.</p>

## Interruptions

*The Princess and the Frog (2009)*

**Interruptions: 4 F & 3 M**

*>>>F: establishing confidence, excitement, correcting (fact-checking)*

*>>>M: establishing control, having the final say, changing subject, steering conversation, blaming the other person*

<b>Female</b>  <b>(F)</b>  <b>/Male</b>  <b>(M)</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Excerpt</b>
<b>F</b>	<p>Tiana interrupts Eli to acknowledge that her beignets are indeed are his favourite.</p> <p><i>establishing confidence</i></p>	<p>Eli: Now, how about I celebrate with...</p> <p>Tiana: <i>*interrupts*</i> Beignets? Got a fresh batch just waiting for you.</p> <p>Eli: Well, keep them coming till I pass out.</p>
<b>F</b>	<p>The Labouff's interrupt each other when talking about the masquerade ball they're hosting and Prince Naveen coming.</p> <p><i>excitement</i></p>	<p>Charlotte: Tia, Tia, Tia, did you hear the news?</p> <p>Tiana: Hey Charlotte.</p> <p>Charlotte: Tell her. Oh, tell her Big Daddy!</p> <p>Eli: Oh yea, Prince Naveen...</p> <p>Charlotte: <i>*interrupts*</i> Prince Naveen of Maldonia is coming to New Orleans!</p>
<b>F</b>	<p>The Labouff's interrupt each other when talking about the masquerade ball they're hosting and Prince Naveen coming.</p> <p><i>excitement</i></p>	<p>Charlotte: Oh isn't he the bee's knees? Tell her what you did, Bid Daddy. Tell her!</p> <p>Eli: Well, I invited...</p> <p>Charlotte: <i>*interrupts*</i> Big Daddy invited the prince to our masquerade ball tonight!</p>
<b>F</b>	<p>Tiana interrupts Naveen to correct him on what has really happened in</p>	<p>Naveen: This is going to be good! Like I told you, kissing a princess breaks the</p>

	<p>a playful manner when she kissed him and they both became prince and princess.</p> <p><i>correcting (fact-checking)</i></p>	<p>spell. Once you became my wife, that made you...</p> <p>Tiana: <i>*interrupts*</i> A princess. You just kissed yourself a princess.</p> <p>Naveen: And I am about to do it again.</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>The Labouff's interrupt each other when talking about the masquerade ball they're hosting and Prince Naveen coming.</p> <p><i>establishing control; having the final say</i></p>	<p>Charlotte: Tell her what else you did, Bid Daddy. Go on.</p> <p>Eli: And he's staying... And he's staying...<i>*stuffs Charlotte's mouth with beignets so she doesn't interrupt him*</i></p> <p>And he's staying in our house as my personal guest.</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Mr. Fenner 2 interrupts Tiana to change the subject after he dropped the news that she won't be getting the restaurant after all.</p> <p><i>changing subject/control</i></p>	<p>Mr. Fenner 1: A fellow came in, offered the full amount in cash. Unless you can top his offer by Wednesday... You can kiss that place goodbye.</p> <p>Tiana: You know how long it took me to save that money?</p> <p>Mr. Fenner 1: Exactly! Which is why a little woman of your background would have had her hands full trying to run a big business like that.</p> <p>Tiana: Now, wait a minute...</p> <p>Mr. Fenner 2: <i>*interrupts*</i> Love those beignets, though.</p>

<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Frog Tiana and Frog Naveen are fighting about their current situation and blaming each other.</p> <p><i>blaming the other person</i></p>	<p>Naveen: This is all your fault.</p> <p>Tiana: My fault? My fault...</p> <p>Naveen: <i>*interrupts*</i> Let me tell you something. I was having a wonderful time until...</p>
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*Frozen (2013)*

<p><b>Interruptions: 1 F &amp; 6 M</b></p> <p>&gt;&gt;&gt;F: <i>reassuring and calming</i></p> <p>&gt;&gt;&gt;M: <i>establishing authority, establishing his opinion, knows better, calming woman down/reassuring</i></p>		
<p><b>Female</b> (F) /Male (M)</p>	<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><b>Excerpt</b></p>
<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Kristoff takes Anna to meet his “family and friends”. He is nervous and Anna interrupts him to reassure and calm him.</p> <p><i>reassuring and calming</i></p>	<p>Kristoff: Yea, I don’t want to scare you, they be a little bit inappropriate... and loud.. very loud. They’re also stubborn at times, and a little overbearing. And heavy. Really, really heavy... But they’re fine.. You’ll get it. They mean well...</p>

		Anna: <i>*interrupts*</i> Kristoff, they sound wonderful.
<b>M</b>	<p>During Elsa's coronation, Duke of Weselton grabs Anna to dance with her although she is trying to say that she doesn't want to but he interrupts her.</p> <p><i>establishing authority</i></p>	<p>Duke: Lucky you! (on dancing with him)</p> <p>Anna: Oh, I don't think--</p> <p><i>*The Duke grabs Anna's arm and starts dancing with her*</i></p> <p>Duke: <i>*interrupts*</i> if you swoon, let me know, I'll catch you.</p>
<b>M</b>	<p>Kristoff interrupts Anna twice to establish his negative judgement on her engagement to Hans.</p> <p><i>establishing opinion</i></p>	<p>Kristoff: So tell me, what made the Queen go all ice-crazy?</p> <p>Anna: Oh well, it was all my fault. I got engaged but then she freaked out because I'd only just met him, you know, that day. And she said she wouldn't bless the marriage...</p> <p>Kristoff: <i>*interrupts*</i></p> <p>Wait. You got engaged to someone you just met?</p>
<b>M</b>	<p>Kristoff interrupts Anna twice to establish his negative judgement on her engagement to Hans.</p> <p><i>establishing opinion</i></p>	<p>Anna: Yeah. Anyway, I got mad and so she got mad and then she tried to walk away, and I grabbed her glove...</p>

		<p>Kristoff: <i>*interrupts*</i> Hang on. You are telling me that got engaged to someone you just met?!</p> <p>Anna: Yes, pay attention...</p>
<b>M</b>	<p>Kristoff shushes Anna when they are still discussing her engagement to Hans to save their lives as he suspects danger in the woods. He knows that area better.</p> <p><i>knows better; establishing authority</i></p>	<p>Anna: Are you some sort of love expert?</p> <p>Kristoff: No, but I have friends who are.</p> <p>Anna: You have friends who are love experts.... I'm not buying it...</p> <p>Kristoff: <i>*interrupts*</i></p> <p>Stop talking.</p>
<b>M</b>	<p>Kristoff shushes Anna when they are still discussing her engagement to Hans to save their lives as he suspects danger in the woods. He knows that area better.</p> <p><i>knows better; establishing authority</i></p>	<p>Anna: No no no. I'd like to meet these...</p> <p>Kristoff: <i>*interrupts*</i></p> <p>I mean it. SHHH.</p>
<b>M</b>	<p>After Elsa has kicked out Anna and Kristoff from her new frozen palace up the mountains, Anna was struck by Elsa in her heart. Anna was rambling and worried still about her sister when Kristoff interrupts her to calm her down.</p>	<p>Anna: Now what? (</p> <p>Now what?! Oh! What am I gonna do?</p> <p>She threw me out. I can't go back to Arendelle with the weather like this. And then there's your ice business...</p> <p>Kristoff: <i>*interrupts*</i> Hey, hey, don't worry about my ice</p>

	<i>calming woman down/reassuring</i>	business... (noticing something) Worry about your hair?!
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Moana (2016)

<p><b>Interruptions: 1 F &amp; 5 M</b></p> <p>&gt;&gt;&gt;F: <i>establish control, empower</i></p> <p>&gt;&gt;&gt;M: <i>knows better, arrogance *3, taking control/establishing power</i></p>		
Female (F) /Male (M)	Context	Excerpt
<b>F</b>	<p>Moana interrupts chief Tui her father while he is trying to calm down the village people about the dire current situation. She, unlike her father, wants to push them beyond their village and empowers them to take action.</p> <p><i>establish control, empower</i></p>	<p>Tui: Please please settle down. We will dig new fields. We will find a way...</p> <p>Moana: <i>*interrupts*</i> We can stop the darkness!</p> <p>Save our island. There is a cave with boats. Huge canoes. We can take them to find Maui. Make him restore the heart. We were voyagers. We can voyage again.</p>



<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Tui interrupts his mom while she is telling the story of their ancestors to the kids. He claims that he knows the history better.</p> <p><i>knows better</i></p>	<p>Tala: The heart will be found by someone who would take the journey beyond the reef, find Maui, deliver him across the great ocean... To restore Te Fiti's heart and save us all...</p> <p>Tui: <i>*interrupts*</i> Thank you mother, that's enough. No one goes outside the reef. We're safe here. There is no darkness. There are no monsters.</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Moana meets Maui for the first time. She tries to convince him to come with her but he interrupts her from the beginning to correct his own titles as she was addressing him.</p> <p><i>arrogance</i></p>	<p>Moana: Maui, Shape shifter, Demigod of the wind and sea, I am Moana...</p> <p>Maui: <i>*interrupts*</i> Hero of Man.</p> <p>Moana: Wh..What ?</p> <p>Maui: It's actually Maui, the Shape Shifter, Demigod of Wind and Sea, Hero of Man.</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Moana meets Maui for the first time. She tries to convince him to come with her but he interrupts her from the beginning to correct his own titles as she was addressing him. He interrupts again.</p> <p><i>arrogance</i></p>	<p>Moana: I am Mo ...</p> <p>Maui: <i>*interrupts*</i> Sorry, Sorry, Sorry, Sorry, and women. Man and women, both, all, not a girl guy thing.</p> <p>Ah, you know, Maui is a hero to all.</p>

<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Moana meets Maui for the first time.</p> <p>She tries to convince him to come with her but he interrupts her again when she is trying to tell him why she is here. He mistakes her for a fan.</p> <p><i>arrogance</i></p>	<p>Moana: No, I came here to ...</p> <p>Maui: Of course, of course.</p> <p>Yes, yes, yes, yes. Maui always has time for his fans.</p>
<p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Moana wants to go in to fight Tamatoa but Maui won't let her. He is the hero. However, he ends up using her as the bait to distract Tamatoa.</p> <p><i>taking control/establishing power</i></p>	<p>Moana: Sorry, I thought you're a monster, but I find your hook and you're right... This Tamatoa guy really likes his treasure.</p> <p>Maui: Stay.</p> <p>Moana: What? No! I'm... I'm the one who...</p> <p>Maui: <i>*Interrupts*</i> Listen...</p> <p>For a thousand years I've only been thinking of keeping this hair silky, getting my hook and being awesome again.</p> <p>And it's not getting screwed up by a mortal who has no business in a monster cave...</p>

**Appendix C – Diversity in Disney Third Era Films**  
*(from an imagological perspective)*

*The Princess and the Frog* (2009): African American Female Lead



*Frozen* (2013): Norwegian (inspired) Female Lead



*Moana* (2016): Polynesian Female Lead

