



College of Graduate Studies

English Department

Analysis of Women's Speech in a Disney Movie *Raya and the Last Dragon*

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this master thesis and that I have not used any sources other than those listed as references. I further declare that I have not submitted this thesis at any other institution to obtain a degree.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my mother and the soul of my father, who taught me to be strong and believe in myself and to my wife for being such a great source of encouragement.

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Ahmad Atawneh for offering me encouragement and guidance on every aspect of my thesis work. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Raghad Dweik, Dr. Naji Al-Zaru for their immense support and Dr. Nimer Abu Zahra and Dr. Mohammed Tamimi for their enlightening feedback. In addition, I would like to acknowledge my wife, Mrs. Abeer Basbous for her work in translation and Ms. Zeiadee Marie Khalil for her invaluable recommendations and assistance in revision which have contributed greatly to the completion of this dissertation. I am beyond grateful to all of you.

Abstract

This study undertakes an analysis of female discursual features in Disney's 59th animated production, *Raya and the Last Dragon*. For comparative purposes, the study also included an analysis of leadership discourse in single sex interactions in a US TV show. Movies produced in the Revival Era (2009 – present) are known for modern storytelling techniques and their portrayal of leading female characters who are independent, persistent, and determined to achieve their goals without being reliant or submissive to male counterparts. The researcher adopted Lakoff's (1975) approach with respect to the characteristics of women's speech to determine the most prominent linguistic features used by the female characters in the movie. Content analysis of the movie script revealed 199 instances where women's linguistic attributes were used. The results showed that the most common linguistic features employed by the primary female characters are as follows: (1) lexical hedges or fillers, (2) intensifiers, (3) emphatic stress, and (4) super polite forms. The second piece of data was a recording of a TV show of two teams titled: *Language and gender in a US reality TV show: An analysis of leadership discourse in single-sex interactions*. In the analysis, the different gender groups were compared to examine whether the features of their language are similar or different and the findings suggest that each gender employs a different set of speech characteristics. Furthermore, the study supports the notion that gender greatly influences language production and that gender-exclusive forms are easily traced through the analysis of their speech.

Keywords: Lakoff's language and gender, feminism, Disney's Revival Era, *Raya and the Last Dragon*, women's linguistic features, reality TV shows

الملخص

خصصت هذه الدراسة للتحليل الأسلوبي في خصائص الخطاب النسوي لفيلم ديزني التاسع والخمسين "رايا والتنين الأخير" من سلسلة الأفلام التي أنتجتها الشركة. بالإضافة الى ذلك، تم عمل تحليل للخطاب القيادي لشخصيات من نفس الجنس من خلال العلاقات المتبادلة بينهم في برنامج تلفزيوني أمريكي. الأفلام المنتجة في عصر النهضة أي منذ عام 2009 حتى الوقت الحالي معروفة في المقام الأول بتقنياتها الحديثة في سرد القصص، بالإضافة إلى تصوير شخصيات نسائية رائدة يتميزن بالاستقلالية والمثابرة والتصميم على الوصول لأهدافهن دون الحاجة للاعتماد أو الخضوع لشركائهم الذكور. ارتكز الباحث على نظرية روبن لاكوف لعام 1975 المتعلقة بخصائص الخطاب النسوي لتحديد أكثر الخصائص اللغوية استخداماً من قبل الشخصيات الأنثوية بالفيلم. بيّن تحليل محتوى سيناريو الفيلم 199 حالة تم فيها استخدام الخصائص اللغوية للمرأة. أظهرت النتائج أن السمات اللغوية الأكثر شيوعاً التي استخدمتها الشخصيات الأنثوية الأساسية هي كما يلي: (1) تعبيرات لغوية ملطفة، (2) النبرة التوكيدة، (3) النبرة الخطابية، (4) واصطلاحات مهذبة. نتائج هذه الدراسة تدعم فكرة أن الجنس يؤثر على إنتاج اللغة إلى حد كبير، وأن الأنماط اللغوية الحصرية لجنس معين يمكن تتبعها بسهولة من خلال تحليل خطابهم. الجزء الآخر من التحليل هو تسجيل لبرنامج تلفزيوني يعرض فريقين، فريق من الرجال وآخر من النساء، تحت عنوان "اللغة والجنس في برامج الواقع الأمريكية": تحليل للخطاب القيادي في العلاقات بين الجنس الواحد. لكل فريق ردود فعل تجاه مشروعه، اعتمد التحليل مقارنة لخصائص اللغة لكلا الفريقين لاكتشاف إن كان هنالك تشابه أو اختلاف بينهم. تشير النتائج إلى أن كل جنس يستخدم مجموعة مختلفة من خصائص الكلام. علاوة على ذلك، تدعم الدراسة الفكرة القائلة بأن الجنس يؤثر بشكل كبير على إنتاج اللغة وأن الأشكال الحصرية للجنس يمكن تتبعها بسهولة من خلال تحليل كلامهم.

كلمات مفتاحية: لاكوف " اللغة والجنس"، النسوية، عصر نهضة أفلام ديزني، رايا والتنين الأخير، الخصائص

اللغوية النسوية وبرامج التلفزيون.

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Analysis of Women's Speech in a Disney Movie *Raya and the Last Dragon*

“Differences between women and men have always been a topic of interest to the human species and supposed linguistic differences are often enshrined in proverbs” (Coates, 2014, p. 9). In her book titled: *Women, Men and Language: A Sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language*, Coates (2014) provides evidence of “folklinguistic” beliefs related to the differences between genders and the way they use language. For instance, in England, one might say “A woman’s tongue wags like a lamb’s tail”. This translates into women as being chatterboxes who talk people’s ears off. Similarly, the French have their own saying: “Où femme il y a, silence il n’y a” whose English equivalent would be “Where there’s a woman, there’s no silence”. These culture-specific proverbs support Deborah Tannen’s view regarding the miscommunication between the sexes; in plain English, how men and women speak on conflicting wavelengths (Coates, 2014). For example, according to Tannen, a typical American home usually consists of a still man and a chatty woman. This in turn, gave rise to the stereotype that females are more talkative than males and perhaps leads people to think that since women talk more, they are more dominant in a relationship. Nevertheless, in other societies and cultures, such claims are disregarded since “linguistic data supports the view that women are often assigned subordinate status by virtue of their gender alone, and treated linguistically as subordinate, regardless of their actual power social status in a particular context” (Holmes, 2013, p. 329).

Language and Gender

Language and gender greatly influence one another in the sense that men have their own sets of peculiar expressions which women comprehend. In the same manner, women convey meaning and express their ideas and emotions using words and phrases which men refrain from

to spare themselves embarrassment. That stated, men and women use language differently; and evidence of gender-exclusive language forms can be found in their day-to-day speech.

Hedenmalm (2016) asserts that “the contrast between male and female speech is justified by the notion that language represents society” (p. 4). Correspondingly, Holmes (2013) asserts that “the difference between women and men in ways of interacting may be the result of different socialization and acculturation patterns” (p. 315). In other words, language that is produced by the sexes is a mere reflection of their ideologies, personalities, and other relevant and equally important social factors such as age, gender, status, and culture. In addition, the way in which individuals interact and mix with others influences their linguistic choices.

Lakoff's Approach to Language and Gender

As mentioned earlier, many societies share the common stereotypical view that presents women as more talkative than men and that conversational exchanges between females are best described as chatter or gossip. Despite that, women are considered more polite than men and are generally more encouraging and positive. Male conversations, on the other hand, are characterized by opposition, competition, insults and arguments (Hedenmalm, 2016, p. 4). Not to mention, in most cases, men are perceived as straightforward and more dominant in their linguistic utterances. White (2003) argues that women's speech is measured against that of their counterparts and is rather inferior. The dominance approach to gender differences in speech concerns the imbalance of power between men and women (White, 2003). Strictly speaking, women employ powerless speech features to stabilize a subordinate status within their societies; meanwhile, men showcase their power and dominance via their linguistic behaviors and choices. Likewise, Coates (2014) affirms that “the dominance approach sees women as an oppressed group and interprets linguistic differences in women's and men's speech in terms of men's dominance and women's subordination” (p. 6). The effect of such imbalance in power on

gender-specific speech is best attributed to Robin Lakoff, a pioneering sociolinguist in the area of language and gender (Hedenmalm, 2016; Voegeli, 2005; White, 2003). Lakoff's (1973) study titled *Language and Women's Place* is widely accredited for making the topic of language and gender a major debate in linguistics and across other disciplines. Lakoff analyzed the relationship between the notions of language, gender, and power; thus, claiming that language is a crucial aspect of gender inequality since the way a language is used showcases and builds gender-related imbalances and discrimination that exist in societies. Additionally, Lakoff argued that there were certain elements or features of women's language that make women seem intrinsically unassertive, deficient, or even less certain when compared to men and that if women want to be taken seriously, they need to adjust their speeches and avoid what may reflect fragility. To illustrate, according to Lakoff, women are known for using super polite forms especially when making requests such as "Would you please"; as a result, their constant need to refine their utterances gives the impression that tactfulness is rather a sign of inferiority and lack of confidence.

Purpose of the Study

Over the years, as the issues of gender inequality and discrimination against women continued to rise and after being the subject of a countless criticism in terms of practices and content, Disney, a pioneering company in the animation industry, aimed to transform the manner in which gender roles are represented and opted for the portrayal of stronger and independent female characters in their latest animated productions as opposed to the weak and rather submissive princesses shown in older movies (Itmeizeh and Ma'ayeh, 2017). Thus, the present study is an attempt to analyze the linguistic features used by female characters in Disney's 59th production, *Raya and the Last Dragon* and to investigate whether there has been a transformation in gender roles with respect to women's language and depiction in the movie. The

current study also deals with the analysis of leadership discourse in single-sex interactions in the US reality TV show, *The Apprentice*. The main objectives of the study are as follows: (1) to analyze the language used by the female characters in the film's script based on Lakoff's female language analysis framework; (2) investigate the presence of the suggested notion - evolution of gender roles - in recent animated movies; and (3) analyze the ways that two male and female managers demonstrate leadership in single-sex groups interactions. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no previous research has addressed the notion of language and gender in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon* since it is a recent movie which was released in 2021. The gap in literature became evident while searching for women's language in *Raya and the Last Dragon*; hence, the present study aims at filling the gap.

Research Questions

The present study seeks to address the following research questions:

- (1) What are the most common linguistic features of the female characters in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon*?
- (2) What are the evident changes in the representation of female roles in the new era of Disney movies?
- (3) What characteristics of language do female speakers and male speakers use in same-sex interaction groups?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be addressed in the present study:

- (H1) The most common linguistic features of the female characters in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon* fall under the list of features proposed by Robin Lakoff in her classification of women's language.

(H2) The representation of female roles in the new era of Disney movies is moving towards a more feministic approach.

(H3) Female and male speakers employ different sets of language characteristics in same-sex interaction groups.

Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of the current study is the lack of previous studies in the research area of language and gender in recent Disney animated productions. Not to mention, only the ten linguistics features of Lakoff's theory were used to analyze the speech of the female characters in the movie. Other theories relevant to the characteristics of women's speech were not considered.

Literature Review

History of Film

Film production began in the late 19th century after Thomas Edison and William Dickson's 1881 invention of the kinetoscope, an early motion-picture device in the form of a cabinet with a window. A strip of film containing a sequence of images passed between a lens and electric light bulb and individuals viewed pictures through a peephole (Groot, 2018). Viewers were able to see images of captured social and entertainment events such as performances, dances, and sport matches. Due to its success and popularity at that time, the device was then installed by the Edison Company into different public locations such as parks, arcades, and hotel lobbies. Not long after that, kinetoscope parlors were introduced, and image-viewing was accessible to all customers across the United States. In the absence of an international patent, replicas of Edison's kinetoscope were distributed all over Europe. After several attempts, inventors and mechanics were able to produce different variations and models

of the same device that projected the same moving pictures onto a large screen for audience viewing. In 1895, two brothers, Auguste and Louis Lumière, were the most successful in their endeavors as they patented the cinématographe (from which the term cinema is derived). The Lumière cinématographe, unlike the kinoscope, was a lightweight film projector that could easily be transported and used like a camera and printer. The Lumière brothers took over a thousand short films showcasing scenes from daily life and in 1895, they hosted the world's first commercial film screening in Paris.

The Silent Age of Cinema

The demand for motion pictures grew rapidly throughout Europe and this paved the way for the emergence of numerous competing film-producing companies in America and Great Britain. The image-projecting inventions of Edison and the Lumière brothers led to the Silent Age movie era (1894-1929). The Silent Age got its name from the movies which did not include any form of talking or music. However, the silent movies did not stop filmmakers from finding ways to attract larger audiences. They put together longer movie scenes, played live music in sync with the actions on the big theater screens, and included written titles to help in narrating stories; hence, creating drama and excitement for the public. Prominent filmmakers of this era experimented with special effects and magically transforming tricks to create illusions that could heighten the intensity of certain actions and scenes (Groot, 2018).

The Silent Age is best described as simple in nature; yet engaging and entertaining. Some of the famous films made during the silent film era were *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), *Ben-Hur* (1925) and *The Circus* (1928). Not to mention, this age gave rise to many silent, yet brilliant movie stars. One of the most influential actors during this period was comedian and director Sir Charlie Chaplin. Despite having acted in silent films without uttering a word, his body language

and talent made him a worldwide success. Chaplin's hard work and unique directorial style inspired many directors and actors over the years. His humorous productions and slapstick comedy were considered uplifting for audiences during the spars of the Great Depression and World Wars. His creations not only made him an influential icon in cinematic history, but also made comedy a fundamental genre of cinema.

The Birth of Animation

Animation gained popularity shortly after the breakthrough of cinematography and was introduced during the Silent Age. As filmmakers continued to build and develop their production expertise, they explored different techniques and tricks which enabled objects drawn as images to move on their own or "come to life". This process was known as stop animation where an object is photographed, moved a few millimeters, and then photographed again. Once the object has been photographed at different locations and angles, the images were played back quickly, creating the illusion that the object is moving, resulting in what is known as an animated picture (Beesley, 2004). A common misconception nowadays is that animated films were first introduced by the Walt Disney as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937)*; nevertheless, they existed long before that. Some of the first animated films include the following: Blackton's (1906) *Humorous Phases of Funny Faces*, Cohl's (1908) *Fantasmagorie*, and McCay's (1914) *Gertie the Dinosaur*.

Walt Disney

Walt Disney is considered one of the most prominent and leading American animation production companies. It was founded by Walter Elias Disney and his brother, Roy, in the early 1920s. "The company operated under several names including: Disney Brothers Cartoon Studio, The Walt Disney Studio, and Walt Disney Productions before officially changing the company's

name to “The Walt Disney Company” in 1986”. Many of the movies which Disney produces are based on the oral tales written by the Grimm brothers, Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm.

The “Brothers Grimm”, as they were called, were 19th century German authors who published a collection of children stories sourced from fairytales and folklore tales called *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* in German or *Children's and Household Tales* (Itmeizeh and Ma'ayeh, 2017). Some of the most well-renowned fairytales written by the Grimm brothers include the following: (1) *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, (2) *The Frog Prince*, (3) *Rapunzel*, (4) *Little Red Riding Hood*, (4) *Cinderella* and (5) *Hansel and Gretel*. Over the decades, the Walt Disney Company managed to remain the world's leading animation industry, offering a wide range of entertainment media appropriate for all audiences in different eras (Towbin, Haddock, Zimmerman, Lund and Tanner, 2004).

Disney's Production Eras

The Disney Eras refer to the different time periods in which a total of 56 animated classics have been distributed based on their production years. The history of Disney movies began with the “Silent Era” in 1923 with its first production titled *Alice's Wonderland*. However, the first era in the Disney timeline, known as the “Golden Era”, officially started in 1937 with its first highest grossing movie and old time classic, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The “Golden Era” lasted until 1942 and other animated productions in this era include the following: *Pinocchio*, *Fantasia*, *Dumbo*, and *Bambi*.

The second era which began in 1943 and lasted till 1949 was called the “Wartime Era”. During this time period, the Walt Disney Company was struggling with bankruptcy as World War II was taking place. Therefore, the company was forced into making short films on a very tight budget. Films during this era consisted of: *Saludos Amigos*, *The Three Caballeros*, *Make*

Mine Music, Fun and Fancy Free, Melody Time, and The Adventures of Ichabod and Mr. Toad.

Recovering from bankruptcy, Walt Disney Studios began "The Silver Era" in 1950 and produced animated films with storylines from classic fairy tales and book adaptations until 1967. This era was often regarded as one of Disney's greatest and most successful eras since movies such as *Cinderella, Alice in Wonderland, Peter Pan, Lady and The Tramp, Sleeping Beauty, One Hundred and One Dalmatians, The Sword in The Stone, and The Jungle Book* attracted many audiences from across the globe.

Disney's founder and creative director, Walt E. Disney, passed away in 1966 during the production of *The Jungle Book*. The movie was released the following year, 1967, making it the last movie that Walt personally worked on. After Walt's death, the Disney team struggled for many years with animation production, lacking Walt's genuine creativity, imagination, and supervision. Therefore, films during 1970 - 1988 also known as "The Bronze Age" refrained from fairy tales and book adaptations and transitioned into dark and secular stories, with the exception of *The Many Adventures of Winnie The Pooh*. The movies produced during this era are as follows: *The Aristocrats, Robin Hood, The Rescuers, The Fox and The Hound, The Black Cauldron, The Great Mouse Detective, and Oliver and Company*.

The fifth Disney Era, known as "The Renaissance Era", began in 1989 and lasted till 1999. In this era, Disney witnessed several box office hits and received positive criticism for their integration of storytelling and Broadway musicals in their movies. Schiele, Loui, and Chen (2020) confirmed that "During its so-called Renaissance period (1989-1999), Disney produced 14 animated theatrical features that were critically lauded for their progressive portrayals of young women and increasing attention to cultural diversity (p. 663). Popular productions during this time period include: *The Little Mermaid, The Rescuers Down Under, Beauty and The Beast, Aladdin, The Lion King, Pocahontas, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Hercules, Mulan, and*

Tarzan. In the early 2000s, Disney began experimenting with new forms of storytelling while competing with strong rivals in the industry such as DreamWorks, Pixar, and Nickelodeon during what is known as “The Post Renaissance or Experimental Era”. Productions such as *Fantasia 2000*, *The Emperor's New Groove*, *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, *Lilo and Stitch*, *Treasure Planet*, *Brother Bear*, and *Bolt* were some of the animated movies produced during this era from 2000 to 2009. It has become obvious that feminism in Disney movies was projected in the latest era, the Revival Era (2010 – present). Before highlighting the Revival Era and its content, two major concepts—feminism and women representation in film—need to be considered in order to gain a better understanding of Disney's feministic transformation.

Feminism

“Feminism is defined as a social movement and systems of thought that include a ‘wide ranging set of theories, politics, and practices that ... contest the dominant gender order” (Hearn and Hein, 2015 as cited in Schiele et al., 2020, p. 660). Generally speaking, feminism sheds light on how gender stereotypes can limit certain voices from being heard and cause unequal treatment. In 1871, the term “feminism” was first used in a French medical text in reference to a medical condition of sexual organs and characteristics in male patients. Shortly after, the term was employed by the French writer, Alexander Dumas, to portray women who acted in a masculine manner. During the mid 19th century, the word became widely used in association with the first suffragette movement and the Women's Rights Convention which was held in the United States, calling for equal treatment of both genders, social order, and voting, property ownership, and political rights for women (Pande, 2018).

The notion of feminism entailed many social, cultural, and political movements which extended over time and are better known as waves. As mentioned before, the first wave of

feminism occurred during the 1850s and its main goal was to alter the prevailing beliefs regarding women; whereas, the second wave happened between the 1960s and 1980s. In the latter, women's protests revolved around gender inequality in different areas such as politics, workplace, family, domestic violence, and reproduction rights. Additionally, the second wave of feminism attacked the patriarchal-dominated practices within society. The third wave of feminism began in the early 1990s and extended till 2010. Its primary focus was bringing about gender, racial, economic, and social justice and building on the unfinished works of the second wave. Feminists of the third wave opted to redefine the stereotypical perceptions of females in the past. Women who were previously regarded as reliant, passive, weak, and virginal evolved into assertive, dominant, independent women who are confident in their actions and in control of their sexuality. Nowadays, the existence of a fourth wave of feminism post 2010 remains questionable; however, in her commentary titled: *Feminism's Fourth Wave: A Research Agenda for Marketing and Consumer Research*, Maclaran (2015) confirms its presence by stating, "This commentary considers these relationships in the light of what is now frequently being hailed as the fourth wave, a resurgence of feminism that is driven by younger women who harness the power of the Internet and social media to challenge gender inequality" (p. 1732). That stated, this so-called fourth wave of feminism which began after 2010 is characterized by a focus on empowering women in the age of technology.

Women Representation in Film

Yang, Xu, and Luo (2020) argue that women have been underrepresented on the big screen since the early beginnings of cinematography and filmmaking due to the fact that the industry was mainly dominated by men for decades. Aside from that, women did not have the power to make major decisions in the film industry in the early and mid 20th century; instead,

they were depicted according to what was then considered socially and traditionally “feminine”. Female roles were unprofessional, and women were portrayed as homemakers, wives, and even sexual gatekeepers (Yang et al., 2020). The role of women in movies has evolved and the feminist movement influenced such transformation. It is also worth mentioning that other factors such as the selection of actors and actresses, genres of movies, and even the rating of their content—Rated-G, Rated-PG, or Rated-R—determine how women are presented. Some women had simple roles in family movies which was safe for all audiences to watch; meanwhile, others were engaged in violence or inappropriate content which required adult supervision while viewing. According to Yang et al. (2020) some genres of movies namely action and adventure that receive a higher budget tend to prefer male actors over females. Nevertheless, in efforts to avoid the blistering attacks on gender inequality which resulted from the third wave of feminism, Disney put aside the stereotypical damsels in distress and fairy-tale heroines and adopted a new style of powerful female lead characters who push beyond the expected societal norms (Schiele et al., 2020).

Disney's Revival Era

The Revival Era of Disney, which first started in 2010, received significant praise from feminist advocates and movie critics for two main reasons. First, in this era, Disney employed modern approaches in storytelling techniques; and second, it placed a huge importance on the representation of leading female characters. This was evident in the productions of *The Princess and the Frog*, *Tangled*, *Brave*, *Zootopia*, *Frozen*, *Tinkerbell and the Legend of the Neverbeast*, *Moana*, and *Frozen II*. Aside from being highly received by all audiences, these films shared a common purpose; that is, the portrayal of prominent female characters who are independent, persistent, and determined to achieve their goals without being reliant or submissive to their male

counterparts. Itmeizeh and Ma'ayeh (2017) assert that "Disney introduced a transformation in gender roles and the portrayal of females" and "Walt Disney Productions have made major changes in the past 79 years in the production of movies and representation of female characteristics (p. 37). That being stated, movies produced during the current Revival Era give rise to powerful females whose dominance is reflected in their speech and actions.

Related Studies

Similar ideas about women's speech in Disney movies may be found in relevant studies carried out by different scholars. Barber (2015) reviewed eight Disney's movies with respect to stereotypes of gender and the study shed light on Disney's role in transforming societal views on gender. The production company changed the way in which female characters were depicted over the years from domestic to rebellious, ambitious, and free-spirited beings. The shift in character depiction in various Disney films lines up with the cultural aspects of feminism which occurred during the same time frame.

A study conducted by Azmi et al. (2016) on the movie, *Frozen*, discussed gender speech. The study revealed the drastic change that Disney made which was introducing female characters in a nonconventional way. They were not weak nor powerless as usual; instead, they were portrayed as unexpectedly strong heroines. Thirty-two scenes from the movie were examined in relation to the speech characteristics of the characters. They were analyzed based on Lakoff's (1975) model of female speech. According to the data analysis, most of the dialogue in the movie consisted of questions, and the character, Anna, asked most of these questions. Other features used by female characters included empty adjectives and hedges. Interestingly, the study found that the numbers of used hedges, questions, empty adjectives, and intensifiers by male characters were almost equal to those of the female characters. The researcher concluded that since females

were portrayed as independent and strong-willed protagonists rather than inferiors to the male characters, the similarity of speech characteristics between genders seemed like an attempt to break free from gender stereotyping.

Dunn (2017) asserts that gender roles could be presented in Disney movies through language. After analyzing some differences between men and women speech in specific contexts, the researcher was surprised to find that men spoke more than women in Disney movies. Additionally, Dunn found that directives are affected by gender and characteristics such as politeness and softness are more related to women than men. However, in urgent and dangerous scenes, none of these factors were taken into account; characters would abandon politeness in these situations. The researcher also found that gender had a significant effect on the use of directives in Disney movies. Generally, if a directive is issued by a woman, it is more likely to be mitigated (that is, made more polite or softened in some way) than if it is issued by a man. Of course, this is by no means the only factor that influences directive forms. Power, for example, plays a much bigger role. The urgency of the situation is also important; if someone's life is in danger, most characters abandon politeness strategies immediately. It is highly unlikely for someone to say, "Excuse me, but would you mind saving my life?" Although urgency and power have major roles in directive formation, the gender difference holds even when taking such factors into account. The aforementioned studies discussed the same themes in the present study in relation to language and women.

Itmeizeh and Ma'ayeh (2017) investigated the evolution of gender representation in two Disney movies, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Brave* (2012). The study revealed that Snow White was shown as a submissive and dependent character. She was in a desperate need of a prince to rescue her and set her free from the spell casted upon her. On the contrary, Merida

in *Brave* was steadfast and was determined to take charge of her own life away from love and romance. That stated, it is evident that Disney had come a long way in terms of gender representation and the transformation of female lead roles; thus adopting a feministic approach.

Another study conducted by Bertović (2019) examined the speech of male and female Disney characters in six Disney Princess movies: *Cinderella* (1950), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), *Pocahontas* (1995), *Tangled* (2010), *Frozen* (2013) and *Moana* (2016). These movies were produced over a period of 66 years. The researcher divided Disney princess development into three periods: the Pre-Transition, Transition, and Progression periods in order to examine gender speech transition over time. The main results of the study showed that Disney's female characters became more independent over time, their language displayed less stereotypical features and the speech of both genders in Disney movies seems to have grown more similar over time.

Moreover, Mahmoud (2021) examined three different princess movies across different periods of time—*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and *Tangled* (2010). The research focused on seven features of women's language including the following: (1) talkativeness; (2) indirect requests; (3) interrupting; (4) imperative forms; (5) shouting; (6) threats and insults; and (7) disagreeing. The study compared the speech of the female characters in the aforesaid movies against the dominant ideas and examined the prospective linguistic transition from quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The final results showed a high increase in the use of all the features of women's language except for indirect requests and threats and insults. For instance, in *Tangled*, imperatives were used 72 times; in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, they were used them 32 times, and only 17 times in *Beauty*

and the Beast. This concludes to a great transition from politeness and gentleness in female characters' conversations to strength and challenge.

Aside from Disney movies, several studies dealt with the area of language and gender in varying contexts. Tran-Hoang-Thu (2010) discussed the differences between language use of women and men in the classroom. He found a contradiction in the use of language between the sexes. The study showed major gender differentiations in the classroom such as: boys tend to speak more than girls and that they were eight times more assertive than girls. Teachers gave more attention to boys than to girls and maintained boys' interests by the materials they used. Boys contributed three times more than girls, but teachers believed that girls talked more. Not to mention, during classroom interactions, male pupils may harass female teachers sometimes.

Broadbridge (2003) conducted an investigation on gender and speech by recording a conversation involving two men and two women working at the same English school. The study presented men holding a dominant style of speech. Both men interrupted women the most, spoke the most, and used more vulgar terms. While women were interrupted the most, both women spoke the least, used more hedges which indicated tentative speech, and used the most active 19 listening devices. The researcher also analyzed that women were willing to clarify their dissatisfaction at being interrupted.

Doç et al. (2011) investigated gender differences and the relationship between language and gender. The researcher confirmed that the difference between male and female is a destiny related to biology and gender features change over time and between cultures. In addition, Arrifin et al. (2004) analyzed female speech in three different novels related to three different periods through 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. The novels are *Anne of Green Gables*, *First Term at Malory Towers*, and *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*. The examination was based on Robin

Lakoff's (1975) speech style of female characters. The findings showed that female characters speech style in the three novels were the same and nothing has changed over time. The research results showed that there were no changes related to the influence of the society and this could be the underlying reason behind the continuous superiority of men over women. Looking at the reviewed studies regarding language and gender in Disney movies and other contexts, it could be seen that most of them share the same ideas of Lakoff (1975) who came to a conclusion about the features of women's language.

Theoretical Framework

Given the review of pertinent studies regarding feminism, gender roles, and language in the context of Disney films, it is important to introduce the theoretical framework that was initiated by those studies and that will be used to analyze the language of the female characters in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon*. According to Murti (2018), Robin Lakoff conducted a study titled: *Language and Woman's Place in 1975* where she employed the phrase "women's language" to describe two concepts associated with females: (1) women in specific and (2) the language they normally use. Lakoff was criticized for her work and it was deemed biased towards feminism according to Arthur, Johnson, & Young, (2007). Furthermore, the lack of empirical research to justify her claims was a matter of concern. Nevertheless, White (2003) argues that Lakoff's study is still considered significant and influential since she laid out the foundation for the characteristics and linguistic features of female language which include the following: (1) lexical hedges or fillers, (2) tag questions, (3) rising intonation on declaratives, (4) empty adjectives, (5) precise color terms, (6) intensifiers, (7) hypercorrect grammar, (8) super polite forms, (9) avoidance of strong swear words, and (10) emphatic stress (as cited in Fassold, 1990). Considering the previous studies, the researcher will discuss in detail both the TV show

study and the Disney movie, *Raya and the Last Dragon*, since they are the selected topics for the current study which deals with the analysis of women's language in a recent movie and reality TV show.

Language and Gender in a US Reality TV Show

In 2003, the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) released a TV show that had an average of 20.7 million viewership, named *The Apprentice* (Sung, 2013). This show is based on a competition between business men and women competing against each other to get the chance to be hired in a full-time job with Donald Trump. The candidates were divided into two teams consisting of eight women and eight men. They had a task every week and they needed to choose a leader for each task. One of the losing teams should be fired at the end of the week; the one who did the worst job, according to Donald Trump.

In view of the potential effect of the TV show on the audience's perceptions, Sung (2013) conducted a study to investigate language and gender in a US debut season reality TV show, *The Apprentice*. The researcher focused on the ways in which two female and two male project managers lead in same-sex group of competitors' interactions. The data for this study was collected from six excerpts from three episodes. The results of the study revealed that the four project managers have leadership styles that are in line with the gendered expectations and norms. While the four managers' styles were not evaluated entirely positively. The male managers received both positive and negative comments for using mainly masculine speech styles. On the other hand, the female managers who used a feminine discourse style received only negative comments. It is therefore argued that the single-sex contexts on interactions can be viewed as being constructed intentionally in the TV show in order to capture the gender-stereotypical speech styles of "doing leadership".

Raya and the Last Dragon

In this part of the research, a summary of the movie is provided in order to facilitate understanding of the events. *Raya and the Last Dragon* is the 59th animated feature film produced by Walt Disney. The American computer-animated movie, released on 5 March 2021, combines the genres of fantasy, action, and adventure. It brings forth a new heroine of South East Asian roots who bears the weight of uniting the tribal people of the fantasy land, Kumandra, on her shoulders and seeks to rescue the world from the power of evil spirits.

The movie takes place in the prosperous land known as Kumandra. Five hundred years prior, Kumandra was attacked by evil spirits called the Druun that ravaged all that the fertile land had to offer. Not to mention, one of the most atrocious powers possessed by the Druun was their ability to petrify people while absorbing their souls and turning them into stone. Luckily, the magical dragons of Kumandra sacrificed their lives and used their powers to create an orb which banished the Druun and revived the people of Kumandra. With the dragons being gone, a struggle for power and protection divided the people of Kumandra into the following tribes: (1) Fang, (2) Heart, (3) Spine, (4) Talon, and (5) Tail); all of which bear names of dragon body parts. Each tribe is based in accordance with the body part it represents along a dragon-shaped river.

Chief Benja, Raya's father, invites the leaders of the nations to join him and the people of Heart for a reconciliation feast. At the feast, Raya befriends the daughter of Chief Virana, leader of the Fang tribe, Princess Namaari. Namaari and Raya discover their shared interest in dragons and as a tribute to their newly established friendship, Namaari gifts Raya a pendant with the dragon, Sisu, bearing a gem. Blinded by the new friendship and gift, Raya takes Namaari to the exact location of the orb, where to her surprise, Namaari betrays her and reveals her true

intention of helping her tribe, Fang, steal the gem. Chief Benja rushes to the site of the gem in an attempt to save Raya from the blades of Fang assassins. During the sudden scuffle, the gem falls and breaks into 5 pieces. Each tribe leader steals a piece of the broken orb, resulting in the reawakening of the evil Druun. In pain from his injury, Chief Benja gives Raya a piece of the Orb and throws her into the river after discovering the Druun's fear of water. Raya, in tears, watched the Druun turn her father into stone as the tide pushed her away.

Nearly six years have passed by while Raya voyages back and forth across the lands of Kumandra following her dragon scroll in search for the sleeping, magical dragon, Sisu, who can help her recover the missing parts of the orbs and end the life-threatening curse inflicted on the lands by the Druun. Together, Raya and Sisu embark on a new adventure to recover the remaining pieces of the stone from the leaders of other tribes.

Raya, Sisu, and their companions head to Fang to obtain the final piece of the orb which rests in the hands of Namaari and her mother. Sisu suggests allying with Namaari as opposed to stealing the last gem piece from her; yet, Raya disagrees due to trust issues. Sisu explains to Raya the importance of trust and how her dragon siblings trusted her with their powers to defeat the Druun and keep Kumandra safe. Finally convinced by Sisu's argument, Raya decides to meet Namaari and gives her the dragon pendant from their childhood as a peace offering.

Raya and Sisu meet with Namaari hoping to come up with a plan to complete their mission in destroying the Druun and uniting the five tribes. However, Namaari is torn between the promise she made to her mother to save and protect the Fang tribe and her wish to unite with Raya and Sisu. As a result, Namaari threatens to shoot Raya and her group with a crossbow after seeing the orb pieces. Raya lashes her sword to protect her group and Sisu tries to calm Namaari down; however, she gets shot down in the end. With Sisu, the last dragon, dead, the waters of the

river vanish and the land of Fang is overrun by the Druun. Filled with anger, Raya confronts Namaari and both of them fight while Raya's companions attempt to rescue the people of Fang using the pieces of the orb to repel the Druun. As Raya prepares herself to kill Namaari, she stops and realizes that she is also to blame for Sisu's death because of her inability to trust others. Raya and Namaari reconcile and head off to help rescue the people of Fang.

The Druun spirits manage to take control of the land and its people, turning everyone into stone. Raya remembers how trust enabled Sisu to save Kumandra once before and urges each of the companions to put their trust in Namaari and give her their orb pieces. As they all give Namaari their pieces, they are no longer able to protect themselves from the Druun. Namaari, being the only survivor, manages to assemble all the pieces of the orb before the Druun take over her as well. With the magical orb reassembled and trust established among the tribe members, the Druun vanished and everyone, including the dragons of Kumandra, are brought back to life. Sisu reunites with her siblings and Raya finally finds her father, Chief Benja. The dragons soar merrily into the skies, guiding all the people of Fang, Spine, Talon, and Tail to the land of Heart to celebrate and reunite into the prosperous land of Kumandra once again.

Methodology

Material

Three materials were obtained for analysis in the present study. First, Disney's 2021 animated feature film, *Raya and the Last Dragon*, the written script of the movie (See Appendix A), and the script of the reality TV show from Sung's (2013) research (See Appendix C). Since it was difficult to capture some of the ideas for analysis from the written script, playing the movie was necessary to analyze the phonological features which cannot be found in writing such as rising intonation on declaratives and emphatic stress. The written script of the movie was found on Pooh's Adventures Wiki website and the TV show script in Sung's (2013) research titled: *Language and gender in a US reality TV show: An analysis of leadership discourse in single-sex interactions*. Six excerpts from three episodes were analyzed.

Method

As mentioned earlier in the previous chapter, the theoretical framework adopted for analysis was Lakoff's model on the linguistic features of women's speech. Lakoff's theory was used in studies like Barber (2015) who reviewed eight Disney movies and stereotypes of gender characters; Dunn (2017) who wrote about language, gender, and Disney princesses in relation to directive speech acts and politeness; and Azmi et al. (2016) who dealt with gender and speech in a Disney princess movie.

In the present study, the researcher adopted qualitative and quantitative research methods during analysis. After looking at the methods in previous studies, it was found that using Lakoff's (1975) theory is the best method to be followed. The movie and script were analyzed by content or text analysis. The aforementioned method of analysis was employed to serve the purpose of retrieving information and interpreting contextualized utterances in audio-visual

productions; in this case, a movie. The researcher scrutinized the script while watching the movie to check if any of the ten linguistic features of women's speech as suggested by Lakoff (1975) were employed. The researcher recorded all the examples of these linguistic features within the script and referred back to the movie for accurate classification. The frequencies and percentages of the features found were calculated and numbers were presented in tables. Selected excerpts from the movie script resembling each linguistic feature were included followed by a brief explanation for better understanding.

As for the TV show, the researcher examined the exchanges among the characters and attempted to find examples of typical characteristics of male and female language. All utterances made were analyzed, grouped according to an appropriate theme based on the type of language used, and listed in a table. Then discussions were formed following the categorization of the examples to show the specific features of both female and male languages. Finally, a comparison was made between the two categories testing the theory of Lakoff on women and men's language.

Results

The results of the study include both the analysis of female characters in the movie and the analysis of the two genders in the TV show. In addition, each linguistic feature according to Lakoff's theory is discussed in light of those found in former studies and followed by excerpts which exemplify each feature. All recorded instances for each linguistic feature obtained from the movie script are provided in tables (See Appendix B).

Lexical Hedges or Fillers

Riekkinen (2009) defines lexical hedges as “expressions that carry a lexical content” (p. 9). In pragmatics, hedges are defined as sounds, words, or phrases that function as means of reducing the impact of assertive or forceful utterances between the speaker and hearer. Hedging, in this sense, is viewed to perform a similar function to that of euphemisms or mild expressions which are uttered to replace other explicitly blunt, offensive, or unpleasant ones. Examples of lexical hedges include “maybe”, “kind/sort of”, “might”, “something like that”, “more or less”, “uh”, “oh”, “you see”, “well”, and etc (Itmeizeh & Ma'ayeh, 2017; Riekkinen, 2009). Lakoff (1975) defines hedges as “words or phrases that represent uncertainty” (as cited in Itmeizeh & Ma'ayeh, 2017, p. 35).

In addition to lessening the force of a statement, hedges function as fillers. Jonsson (2016) defines fillers as “any sound we make to fill a pause” (p. 7). Furthermore, fillers can be divided into two categories—(1) lexical and (2) non-lexical. Lexical fillers are ones which can be identified as actual words or phrases such as “like” or “you know”. On the contrary, non-lexical fillers are more accurately presented as vocalizations or sounds as opposed to words (Jonsson, 2016). Examples of non-lexical fillers include the following: “um”, “erm”, “er”, and “uh”.

Table 1*Frequencies of Lexical Hedges or Fillers*

Character	Frequency of Hedges
Raya	31
Namaari	2
Sisu	20
Total	53

With respect to lexical hedges and fillers, a total of 53 instances were identified in the movie. Table 1 above shows the frequencies and percentages of all the lexical hedges and fillers uttered by the three main female characters. Several examples that were extracted from the script are shown below.

Lexical Hedges**Excerpt 1:**

Raya: **Well**, yeah! I mean, anyone hoping to steal the Dragon Gem now has to face the fury of the two baddest blades in all the lands.

Benja: I'm glad you feel prepared, dewdrop, because I have something important to tell you.

Excerpt 2:

Raya: It's jackfruit jerky. I dried it myself.

Sisu: **Well**, compliments to the chef. Wanna finish this, Skippy?

Non-Lexical Fillers**Excerpt 3:**

Raya: **Uh**, rice or stew?

[Namaari looks down at the two dishes]

Raya: I didn't think that'd stump you.

Namaari: **Uh**...This is actually one of the first times I've had rice in a while.

Excerpt 4:

Raya: What can I say? Bling is my thing.

Namaari: **Hmm**. I gotta admit, Raya, until a few months ago, I thought you were stone. But then, someone stole Fang's dragon scroll.

Excerpt 5:

Sisu: (seeing what she's talking about) **Oh!** This is my little sister Amba's magic. I got the glow!

Raya: Your little sister's magic?

Sisu: Yeah, every dragon has a unique magic.

Tag Questions

A tag question can be defined as a short phrase added at the end of a sentence. According to Eckert and Ginet (2003 as cited in Siwi, 2017), the additional phrase “contains an inverted auxiliary form determined by the auxiliary in the main clause, and a pronoun that agrees with the subject of the main clause” (p. 8). Jovanovic and Pavlovic (2014) report that “tag questions have varied formal expressions in different languages, ranging from one-word forms to phrasal structure or grammatical construction, from rising (expressive of doubt and uncertainty) to falling intonation (expressing a confirmation request)” (p. 492). In her investigation on tag questions, Lakoff (1973 as cited in Albanon, 2017) argues that such syntactic constructs are used

in two varying ways as follows: (1) legitimate and (2) illegitimate. Albanon (2017) elaborates on both types of tag questions founded by Lakoff stating the following:

The first type is used when the speaker needs confirmation from the addressee, while the second is used even when the speaker knows the answer but uses it to elicit information or to make "small talk." She argued that the second type is used more often by women: "It is my impression, though I do not have precise statistical evidence, that this sort of tag-questions is much more apt to be used by women than by men." (p. 107).

Holmes (1983) examined tag-questions and divided them according to the functions that they perform. The four functions include the following: (1) facilitative, (2) softening, (3) epistemic modal, and (4) challenging. Facilitative tag-questions function as a means to invite the interlocutors to engage in a conversation such as "Nice weather, isn't it?". On the other hand, softening tag-questions aim at weakening the force of a criticism or directive, for example, "That was stupid, wasn't it?". Epistemic modal tag-questions are used to show speaker uncertainty such as "That was Jane, wasn't she?". Lastly, challenging tag-questions showcase aggression or offense, for instance, "I told you not to smoke, didn't I?" (Albanon, 2017, p. 107).

There were only 7 instances of tag questions, as shown in Table 2 below, that showcase the usage of tag questions by Raya, the main character. Three different kinds of tag questions were all uttered by Raya and they include the following: (1) facilitative, (2) epistemic modal, and (3) challenging. There were no recorded instances of softening tag questions.

Table 2*Frequencies of Tag Questions*

Types of Tag Question	Frequency of Hedges
Facilitative	1
Epistemic Modal	3
Challenging	3
Total	7

Facilitative Tag Question

The following excerpt shows a facilitative tag question which Raya posed. Raya's tag question does not signal uncertainty on her part; yet it is used to engage Sisu in the conversation and establish common grounds.

Excerpt 1

Raya: Wait, wait, wait, you touched this gem piece and it gave you powers. You know what this means, **right**?

Sisu: I no longer need a night light?

Epistemic Modal

In the excerpts below, Raya produces two epistemic modal tag questions. She used them to express uncertainty. In Excerpt 2, Raya thinks that Namaari is perhaps joking about the existence of Sisu according to the legends of the tribe of Fang. Similarly in Excerpt 3, Raya is unsure of whether her long journeys and recurring failed attempts are a bad sign or not.

Excerpt 2:

Namaari: (laughs) Yeah. You know, Fang legend says she's still out there.

Raya: You're kidding, **right**?

Excerpt 3:

Raya: (exhales) Six years of searching and we end up at a literal shipwreck. (gets off Tuk Tuk and sighs) That's not a bad sign, **is it**?

Tuk Tuk: (grunts)

Challenging

In excerpt 4, Raya used a challenging tag question to test Tong's abilities and see if he has a plan to help them deal with their dilemma. In excerpt 5, Raya and Namaari are about to engage in a one-on-one fight and she teases her with a challenging tag to check if she brought one of the gem pieces with her for Raya to steal.

Excerpt 4:

Raya: You have no idea, **do you**?

Tong: Yes, I do. I'm formulating this gruesome plan in my head.

Excerpt 5:

Raya: You didn't happen to bring Fang's gem, **did you**?

[The fight resumes. Namaari knocks Raya down again. Sisu stops and turns to see Namaari standing over Raya, much to her shock]

Raya: No? Never mind. I'll just swing by and grab it later.

Rising Intonation on Declaratives

Rising intonation on declarative refers to the use of a high-rising tone at the end of sentences. "Uptalk" or "question intonation" is used synonymously to refer to the aforementioned concept (Siwi, 2017). According to Lakoff (2004 as cited in Siwi, 2017), when a high-rising tone

is used while uttering a declarative answer, the answer is transformed into a question. Uptalk intonation has four primary functions including the following: (1) expressing uncertainty, (2) reducing the force of an utterance, (3) indicating the lack of finality, and (4) showing positive politeness. Lakoff asserts that when women are uncertain they use rising intonation alongside declaratives as means to double-check on the accuracy of the information. For example, if speaker A asks speaker B "What time will dinner be ready?", speaker B may respond saying, "Umm...around 7 o'clock?". Despite the fact that speaker B answered in the form of a declarative, the use of a rising intonation signals that speaker B seeks confirmation from speaker A who possesses the requisite information (Lakoff, 1973, p. 55). Therefore, the declarative becomes a question once uptalk intonation is applied to it.

Furthermore, rising intonation has a function of lessening the force of an utterance or weakening an assertion. Arguably speaking, it can also serve as a device to alleviate the offensive nature of certain expressions in the same manner that hedges and tag questions do. Uptalk intonation also indicates a speaker's lack of finality or completeness on a certain subject matter and his/her willingness for further negotiation and conversational exchange. Not to mention, rising intonation is also used as a way to show positive politeness. According to Bradford (1997 as cited in Siwi, 2017), "Positive politeness is the impression of being friendly and non-authoritative expressed by the uptalkers, due to the rising nature of the tone" (p. 12). In other words, positive politeness reflects the speaker's way of supporting and/or standing in solidarity with his/her audience.

In the movie, uptalk intonation was used to perform the following functions: (1) express uncertainty, (2) reduce the force of an utterance, (3) show lack of clarity, and (4) show positive politeness. A total of 12 instances of rising intonation on declaratives were spotted in the movie by the characters, Raya and Sisu, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3*Frequencies of Rising Intonation on Declaratives*

Character	Frequency of Rising Intonation on Declaratives
Raya	6
Sisu	6
Total	12

Express Uncertainty

As mentioned before, when women lack certainty they use uptalk intonation while producing declaratives as a means of seeking confirmation or accuracy of information. In Excerpt 1, Raya produces her utterance with a rising intonation because she is uncertain of whether the task she is about to complete is difficult or easy. In the second excerpt, Sisu's intonation rose as she answered Raya's question with an uncertain answer. The way she answered showed her uncertainty and it seemed as if she was guessing.

Excerpt 1:

Raya: **Wait a second.**

[She turns to look at the chamber door]

Raya: This feels too easy.

Excerpt 2:

Raya: What do cats and Druun have in common?

Sisu: Um...**They have no souls** [?]

Raya: And they both hate water.

Reduce Force of Utterance

In the following excerpt, the rise in Raya's intonation as she challenges her father, Chief Benja, reduces the force of her utterance. Raya was trying to prove to her father that she has all that it takes to set foot on the inner circle of the Dragon's Gem. Therefore, she tells her father indirectly to bring out his blade and give it his best shot at stopping her.

Excerpt 3:

Chief Benja: Don't mistake spirit for skill, young one. I promise you will not set foot on the Dragon Gem's inner circle. Not even a toe.

Raya: You might wanna take out that blade. **You're gonna need it.**

Show Lack of Clarity

Another function of rising intonation is to show a lack of clarity in a conversation or certain matter. In Excerpt 4, Raya asks whether Namaari wants rice or stew and is surprised at Namaari's indecisiveness, but is willing to negotiate further to find out the reason behind it.

Excerpt 4:

Raya: Uh, rice or stew?

[Namaari looks down at the two dishes]

Raya: **I didn't think that'd stump you.**

Namaari: Uh...This is actually one of the first times I've had rice in a while.

Raya: Really?

Show Positive Politeness

In the excerpt below, Sisu shows positive politeness with her rising intonation as she offers to dust Raya off after knocking her over with her tail. She attempts to alleviate the situation politely in order to save her face.

Excerpt 5:

Sisu: Who said that?

[Sisu spins around accidentally knocking everyone over with her tail]

Sisu: Hello? Hello?

Raya: (muffled groaning)

Sisu: Oh! Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't see you there. (laughs as she picks Raya up) Not too bad. Just a little dusty. **Let me get that for ya.** (laughing as she dusts Raya off)

Empty Adjectives

In her book titled, *Language and Gender*, Talbot (2010) reports that one of the ten elements that characterize women's speech as identified by Lakoff (1975) are empty adjectives (p. 36). Empty adjectives are modifiers that express affective or emotional feelings. In other words, empty adjectives are adjectives that can express the feelings of the speaker without adding or showing any significant meaning in the utterance. They are also used to show admiration and consent or approval. In addition, Lakoff (1975) argues that empty adjectives are "restricted for female use in the sense that men risk to damage their reputation if using them" (Itmeizeh & Ma'ayeh, 2017, p. 36). Examples of empty adjectives include the following: "adorable", "lovely", "charming", "wonderful", "divine", and etc... (Talbot, 2010, p. 36).

The main female characters in the movie employed empty adjectives in their speech as shown in Table 4 below. There were 13 instances of empty adjective usage.

Table 4*Frequencies of Empty Adjectives*

Character	Frequency of Empty Adjectives
Raya	6
Namaari	1
Sisu	6
Total	13

Excerpt 1:

Raya: (narrating) I know what you're thinking. A lone rider. A dystopian world. A land that's gone to waste. How did this world get so broken? Well, that all began 500 years ago. Kumandra. This is what we used to be. When our land was whole, and we lived harmoniously alongside... dragons. **Magical** creatures who brought us water and rain and peace. It was paradise. But then, the Druun came. A mindless plague that spread like wildfire, multiplying as they consumed life and turned everyone they touched into stone. The dragons fought for us the best they could, but it wasn't enough. That's when the **Mighty** Sisudatu, the last dragon, concentrated all her magic into a gem and... ..blasted the Druun away. Everyone that was turned to stone came back. Except the dragons. All that was left of Sisu was her gem. It should have been this big inspirational moment, where humanity united over her sacrifice. But instead, people being people, they all fought to possess the last remnant of dragon magic. Borders were drawn, Kumandra divided. We all became enemies, and the gem had to be hidden. But that's not how the world broke. That didn't truly happen until 500 years later, when I came into the story.

Excerpt 2:

Raya: Oh.

Namaari: Sorry. Didn't mean to bring it down. So, where were we? We both have single parents who are terrible at telling jokes. We're both warrior women who despise uncomfortable formal wear.

Raya: And we're both Sisu **superfans**.

Excerpt 3:

Sisu: Does that include babies?

Raya: Uh, well...

Sisu: She's so **cute**. I mean look at those cheeks.

Excerpt 4:

Sisu: See that **classy-looking** one over there? That's Amba. I get my glow from her. And that's Pranee. She's a shapeshifter. Jagan, fog. And Pengu. He's our big brother. He brings the rain. We were the last dragons. All the other dragons had been turned to stone. We were drowning in a sea of Druun. But my oldest brother Pengu refused to accept defeat. This is where we'd make our last stand... united. So, one by one, they combined all their magic, creating the Dragon Gem. I don't know why they chose me. It could have been any of us. All I know is I trusted them... ..and they trusted me. And so... When they put their faith in me, it empowered me beyond anything I could imagine. The same can happen with Namaari.

Raya: I really wish I could believe that. I once thought that we could be friends.

Sisu: After all this, maybe you can be.

Excerpt 5:

Raya: You all remind me of him.

Sisu: Oh, yeah? Stong? Good-looking with **impeccable** hair?

Precise Color Terms

Aside from empty adjectives, women have an array color lexicon which they employ more than men (Arthur, Johnson, & Young, 2007). Lakoff asserts that fine distinctions of colors are “trivial and beneath their [men’s] notice” (Talbot, 2010, p. 36). Whereas, women tend to use precise color discriminations, paying close attention to chroma and hue in order to increase the accuracy of their descriptions. Numerous studies relevant to objective color naming, color matching, and the memory of colors were conducted between the two genders and revealed that men were outperformed by women in the aforementioned tasks (Arthur, Johnson, & Young, 2007; Al-Harahsheh & Obeidat, 2017). Several examples belonging to the precise-color category are as follows: “ecru”, “aquamarine”, “beige”, “magenta”, and etc.

Regarding the use of precise color terms by female characters, the researcher was not able to find any features relevant to distinct color naming in the movie nor script.

Intensifiers

Sardabi and Afghari (2015) define an intensifier as a “linguistic term that makes no contribution to the propositional meaning of a clause but serves to enhance and give additional emotional context to the word it modifies” (p. 206). Intensifiers are used to increase the effect of verbs; that is usually done by adding an adverb to strengthen/increase or weaken/reduce the emotional content. That said, another function of intensifiers is to indirectly suggest how the addressees should feel about the spoken utterances. Talbot (2010) support this claim stating that women frequently incorporate intensifiers in their speech as an act of boosting the feelings and emotions of their audience. The basic intensifiers employed by women include “so” and “very”.

In their study, Sardabi and Afghari (2015) provide the following examples highlighting the increase and reduction of emotional content in sentences:

“That is very, very interesting. (repetition to increase effect)

That is extremely interesting. (suggests extreme response)

That is amazingly interesting. (suggests being amazed)

That is scarily interesting. (suggests being scared)

That is quite interesting. (reducing intensity)

That is a bit interesting. (reducing intensity)” (p. 206).

The researchers suggest that other intensifiers often share a similar meaning to the adverb “very”. A few examples of such intensifiers are as follows: “extremely”, “really”, “fantastically”, “remarkably”, and etc. Furthermore, there are interesting patterns in which intensifiers are used; for instance, adverbs with negative connotations are utilized to increase the effect of positive verbs (Sardabi & Afghari, 2015). In the following examples, “She is dreadfully beautiful!” and “What an insanely good idea!”, the adverbs “dreadfully” and “insanely”, typically reflecting negative emotions, are used in a positive context for intensity. The female character in the movie used several forms of intensifiers to increase the intensity of their utterances as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Frequencies of Intensifiers

Character	Frequency of Intensifiers
Raya	26
Namaari	2
Sisu	16
Total	44

Excerpt 1:

Raya: (narrating) I know what you're thinking. A lone rider. A dystopian world. A land that's gone to waste. How did this world get **so** broken? Well, that all began 500 years ago. Kumandra. This is what we used to be.

Excerpt 2:

Benja: (Chuckles) Well, someone's excited.

Raya: Well, yeah! I mean, anyone hoping to steal the Dragon Gem now has to face the fury of the two **baddest** blades in all the lands.

Excerpt 3:

Raya: (chuckles softly) You sound just like my ba.

Sisu: Well, he sounds like a smart man.

Raya: Yeah, hea was. I **really** wanted to believe him. I **really** wanted to believe that we could be Kumandra again.

Excerpt 4:

Raya: But which river? There's, like, hundreds.

Namaari: I don't know. But if we could find it, could you imagine? A dragon back in the world. Things could be **so** much better.

Excerpt 5:

Woman: You have no credit here. Pay us right now.

Sisu: Now? (nervously) I don't have anything, but if I could just find my girl Raya, she has a sword, dried eats, two Dragon Gem pieces. No, we don't! What? Who said that?

Also, there's this kid with a bunch of whacky people behind him and I have **literally** no idea where they came from.

Hypercorrect Grammar

Aini (2016) and Talbot (2010) explain that hypercorrect grammar refers to the consistent use of standard grammatical forms. In other words, what is meant by "hypercorrect" is that speakers use standard forms of language as means to "imply that they are more correct than they ought to be" (Talbot, 2010, p. 38). In linguistics, hypercorrection refers to a usage of non-standard forms which results from the over application of a grammatical rule or prescriptive form. This feature of language is specific to women and they employ it more than men do. Holmes (1990 as cited in Aini, 2016) states that the logic behind women's frequent usage of hypercorrect grammar is to mirror their identity and present themselves as educated members of a society. Hypercorrect grammar can be spotted in women's use of appropriate degrees of comparison (e.g. irregular adjectives), parallel structures of parts of speech (e.g. verbs joined by conjunctions), and subject/object pronoun distinction (e.g. I vs. me). The example on hypercorrect grammar that Lakoff (2004 as cited in Aini, 2016) elaborated on was women's pronunciation of the phoneme /g/ in gerund forms such as "swimming". Men tend to drop the g's; whereas, women pronounce the g's to adopt the more prestigious standard variety of English.

Unfortunately, there were no traces of hypercorrection regarding pronunciation, word choice, or grammar in the utterances of the female characters in the movie. The female characters, especially Raya and Sisu, spoke using an informal variety of language; in other words, slang.

Super Polite Forms

Aini (2016) asserts that women are supposed to maintain “lady-like” behavior unlike men and are generally considered more polite than their male counterparts in speech. To show politeness, women make use of euphemisms or indirect expressions which are used in the place of ones that are regarded as harsh, blunt, offensive, or embarrassing. Some examples of euphemisms include saying “passed away” instead of “died” and “put to sleep” instead of “euthanize”. Alongside euphemisms, women employ modals such as “should”, “could”, “would”, and “might” when making requests and giving orders to sound less direct and more polite.

The female characters integrated modals in their requests and orders or used euphemism as opposed to dysphemisms for the sake of showing politeness. Table 6 below shows

Table 6

Frequencies of Super Polite Forms

Character	Frequency of Super Polite Forms
Raya	10
Namaari	2
Sisu	4
Total	16

Excerpt 1:

Benjad: (grunting)

Raya: Ba, get up! Come on! **Please**, we have to keep moving.

Tribes: (screaming)

Excerpt 2:

Raya: **May** I?

[She pours palm sugar into the stew and Boun takes a sip]

Boun: Whoa! That's good.

Raya: It's just a little something my ba showed me.

Excerpt 3:

Raya: Dragons can do that?

Sisu: This was my sister Pranee's thing! Look at my people arms and my people face.

Look how close my **butt** is to my head. Now that you don't have to hide me, getting the rest of the gems is gonna be a breeze!

Excerpt 4:

Chief Virana: And how do you propose we handle the Druun, General Atitāya? Without proper protection, it would be a death sentence for our people.

Namaari: I **might** have a solution for that, Mother.

Excerpt 5:

Virana: My little morning mist...Oh, it's good to see you home.

Namaari: I located Raya. She's out stealing gem pieces. And she's got a bunch of whacky people with her.

Virana: What?

Namaari: I'd like to take the royal army and intercept them in Spine.

Avoidance of Strong Swear Words

Profane or vulgar language is a form of language that includes swear, coarse, or blasphemous words such as “hell”, “shit”, “damn”, “bloody”, and etc. Profanity is generally frowned upon within societies and is considered offensive in most cases. However, men use expletives and swear words as a form of expressing disappointment or disapproval. On the contrary, women are expected to refrain from using such language since it triggers unlady-like behavior and violates societal norms. Lakoff (1975) contrasts between the following two hypothetical examples: (1) “Shit, you’ve put the peanut butter in the fridge again” and (2) “Oh dear, you’ve put the peanut butter in the fridge again. She argues that an audience would be able to identify the gender of the speaker upon hearing the aforementioned sentences since the first sentence is expected to be produced by a male speaker; whereas, the second is by a female (Talbot, 2010, p. 36-37).

Throughout the movie, there were only 6 instances where the main female character, Raya, avoided expletives or used less aggressive alternatives to express anger and dissatisfaction. The frequency and percentage of refraining from profane language are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Frequency of Avoidance of Strong Swear Words

Character	Frequency of Avoidance of Strong Swear Words
Raya	6
Total	6

Excerpt 1:

Raya: Hmm. Huh. Looks like someone's **trying to be clever**.

[She brings out her pet which is part-pill bug, part-armadillo, and part pug and taps its shell, causing to uncurl]

Raya: All right, Tuk Tuk, **let's show 'em what clever really looks like.**

Excerpt 2:

Raya: (turns around and aims her sword) Who are you? Which tribe sent you? **Cause if they sent you after my gem piece...**

Excerpt 3:

Sisu: That doesn't mean you shouldn't try.

Raya: And I did. And you know what happened? I got **kicked in the back** by someone who gave me a gift.

Excerpt 4:

Raya: You know that **bull**?

Excerpt 5:

Raya: Did you need that, dep la?

[They fight some more. Namaari knocks Raya to the ground and grabs her sword but throws it away]

Namaari: Nah.

Raya: **Looks like somebody's been taking classes.**

Emphatic Stress

The final characteristic of women's speech is emphatic stress. Emphatic stress refers to situations where a speaker stresses certain words or certain parts of an expression or utterance for

emphasis on particular elements. Safitri (2017) reports that “women generally have a tendency to emphasize certain part[s] of their utterances to help them convey the specific meaning of their utterances” (p. 5). In linguistics, sentence stress is crucial when giving sentences their rhythm or beat. English sentences consist of two basic forms of words—(1) content words and (2) function words. It is widely accepted that the former receives primary stress; whereas, the latter receives secondary stress. Content words (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs etc...) are the key words of sentences since they carry meaning; without them, the sentence would be nonsensical. Function words (e.g. articles, prepositions, auxiliaries, etc...) are not as important as content words; they are simply syntactical particles that give a sentence its correct form. Nevertheless, when women use emphatic stress, they are free to select whichever word in the sentence they wish to stress and that is usually done via an increase in pitch range.

Emphatic stress was overused by the primary female characters, especially Raya, to emphasize the important elements of their speech. Raya used emphatic stress the most since she was the main narrator of the movie. Whereas, Sisu used the aforementioned feature to vividly narrate tales from her past. Table 8 below showcases the frequencies and percentages of emphatic stress usage.

Table 8

Frequencies of Emphatic Stress

Character	Frequency of Emphatic Stress
Raya	25
Namaari	8
Sisu	15
Total	48

Excerpt 1:

Raya: (narrating) I know what you're thinking. A lone rider. A dystopian world. A land that's gone to waste. How did this world get so broken? Well, that all began 500 years ago. **KUMANDRA. THIS** is **WHAT** we used to be. When our land was whole, and we lived harmoniously alongside...**DRAGONS**. Magical creatures who brought us **WATER** and **RAIN** and **PEACE**. It was **PARADISE**. But then, **THE DRUUN** came. A **MINDLESS PLAGUE** that **SPREAD** like **WILDFIRE**, multiplying as they consumed life and turned everyone they touched into **STONE**. The dragons fought for us **THE BEST** they could, but it wasn't enough. That's when the **MIGHTY SISUDATU, THE LAST DRAGON**, concentrated all her magic into a gem and... ..**BLASTED** the Druun away. Everyone that was turned to stone came back. Except the dragons. All that was left of Sisu was her gem. It should have been this big inspirational moment, where humanity united over her sacrifice. But instead, people being people, they all fought to possess the last remnant of dragon magic. Borders were drawn, Kumandra divided. We all became enemies, and **THE GEM** had to be **HIDDEN. BUT** that's not how the world broke. **THAT** didn't truly happen until 500 years later, when **I** came into the story.

Excerpt 2:

Namaari: (scoffs) No. According to this, **AFTER** the **MIGHTY SISU BLASTED AWAY ALL THE DRUUN**, she fell into the water and floated downstream. Legends say she's now sleeping at the river's end.

Excerpt 3:

Sisu: **A PLAGUE**. Born from human discord. They've **ALWAYS** been here. **WAITING** for a moment of **WITNESS TO ATTACK**. They're, like, the **OPPOSITE** of dragons. Instead of **BRINGING WATER** and **LIFE** to the world, they're like a **RELENTLESS FIRE** that consumes everything in its wake until there's **NOTHING** left except **ASH** and **STONE**.

Analysis of Reality TV Show

Female discourse compared to male discourse can be seen in the following analysis of the US reality TV show, *The Apprentice*, as reported in Sung's (2013) article titled: *Language and gender in a US reality TV show: An analysis of leadership discourse in single-sex interactions*. The reality show presents a discourse among two group discussing a project— the first group consists solely of men and the other of women only. The analysis focused to uncover if women interact in the same style or different style of women in Disney language. Also, there is a look at men's language addressing other men in a team to examine the manner of speaking in the absence of women.

Relevance of the TV Show to the Movie

Both the movie and TV show deal with women's language. The results of the TV show analysis suggest that in fact men's language is close to the language of women in the movie. Of course there are two different situations where men in the TV show often attempt to market things, while in the movie, they made several attempts to unify the different tribes and restore peace and prosperity to the land. Table 10 below shows the examples of the type of language employed by female and male speakers in *The Apprentice*.

Table 9*Discourse Analysis of Female and Male Speakers in the US Reality TV Show, The Apprentice*

Female speaker	Type of language	Male speakers	Type of language
Katrina (leader)	Shut it down	Jason (talking to group)	What we should do
Jess (under Kat)	You tell me (addressing leader)	Jason (talking to Nick and Bell)	Need to do creative ... work, come up with your print ads
Kat	I'm not getting mad at you, been told it's a bad idea	Troy	Can I just interject
Jess (addressing kat)	You are spazzing out	Troy (talking about clients)	We should find out what they have done
Kat	I'm upset because you're upset	Jason (reply to Troy)	Honestly do I think we need to meet them?
Jess	You're just trying to find out fault to blame it on someone	Kwa (team member)	I disagree with that
Amy (addressing Omarosa / team member)	You should stay here, would be good for all of us	Kwa (commenting)	I think you should know what your customer wants
Oma	Ineffective decision that Amy could have made	Nick (commenting)	What questions would you ask them
Kri (addressing team)	we better get to the airport with a camera crew	Jasson (commenting)	I think it's a waste of time
		Nick (commenting)	I thought he performed well, I

	thought his decisions were real sharp and well thought out
Sam (replying to Nick)	Please don't give him the phone number
Nick (replying to Sam)	the coach is telling me not to give you the phone number
Bow (commenting on Nick)	they could quite possibly kill Sam
Nick (commenting)	wanted to see if he could actually put them into action
Sam (replying to Kwa)	I don't want you to make any suggestions right now get the hell out of there

Female to Female Speakers

Searching for the speech of women in this TV show, Table 10 presents some examples of the language of women in the show. The following speech characteristics used by women were observed.

Using Commands

Commands are used without any politeness mitigations to soften the language spoken to the addressees as in the following examples:

- (1) Shut it down (Katrina, leader)
- (2) You tell me (Jess, addressing leader)
- (3) You should stay here (Amy addressing Omarosa - team member)

These commands which were used while addressing subordinates or equals in the job show that they lacked expressions of politeness. This can only happen between a boss and subordinate in giving instructions to be obeyed. It could be offensive language from the powerful side to the powerless side.

Using Modals

Modals are used to express the views of the speakers and their intentions in addressing the other side. It has been known that women use more modal than men, because of their tendency to show weakness and hesitancy in their attitudes, here are some examples:

- (1) It would be good for all of us (Amy addressing Omarosa - team member)
- (2) Amy could have made ... (Omarosa commenting)
- (3) We better get to the airport (Kristen addressing team)

In the first example, instead of assertion of the action like saying "it is good for all of us" it is said "it would be good for all of us" making the idea very tentative. Similarly, in the second example, there is a guess on what was not done in the utterance "Amy could have made ..." instead of saying "it was possible for Amy to ...". In the third example, "we better get to the airport" is seen as an advice rather than an obligation as in "we must go".

Strong Language in Confrontation

Such language does not include either modals for tentativeness or polite requesting, here are some examples:

- (1) I'm not getting mad at you (Kat, addressing Jess)
- (2) been told it's a bad idea (Kat, addressing Jess)
- (3) You are spazzing out (Jess addressing Kat)
- (4) I'm upset because you are upset (Kat, addressing Jess)

(5) You're just trying to find out fault to blame it on someone (Kat, addressing Jess)

(6) Ineffective decision that Amy could have made (Omarosa commenting)

In saying "I'm not getting mad at you" the speaker is denying the accusation of the other speaker in a very blunt way showing no mitigation. In saying "you are spazzing out" said in a defensive way to protect the speaker from attack. In saying "You're just trying to find out fault to blame it on someone" is also a defensive strategy to deny responsibility for some actions. More language of accusation and defense is seen in the example "Ineffective decision that Amy could have made".

The analysis given before shows the language features of females in the TV reality show. To have a comparison between females and males in same TV show it is worth looking at the features of males talking to males. This research has the objective of gender and language use. Therefore it seems relevant to take the two genders interactions into consideration to find out similarities and differences between genders in almost the same context.

Male to Male Speakers

The analysis of men's speech in the TV show reflect the usage of the following characteristics.

Giving Advice

(1) I think you should know what your customer wants. (Kwa commenting)

(2) I think it's a waste of time. (Jasson commenting)

(3) Honestly do I think we need to meet them? (Jason reply to Troy)

(4) They could quite possibly kill Sam. (Bow commenting on Nick)

(5) Wanted to see if he could actually put them into action. (Nick commenting)

It is obvious that such utterances are used by the team leader and a colleague in a position of giving advice and recommendation for the job they were doing. Using “think” shows the politeness attitude of the speaker even though he is in a higher position or equal position to the group members. In saying “honestly do I think” the speaker wants to show sincerity in his intentions of giving the advice. Additionally, the speakers in these selections do not seem to be forcing themselves on others by way of giving orders, rather they demonstrate family spirit in dealing with each other. Therefore, nobody seems to be offended by the utterances of the speakers. One wonders if this is the type of language that is usually used in cases of friends talking to each other because there is an absence of leadership language. To conclusion around these is that such males may change the way they speak if the context becomes different in a way to show force or command.

“I thought he performed well, I thought his decisions were real sharp and well thought out.” This type of utterance seems to be a compliment not advice for the addressee which also fits into the language of a team like a family pointing to positive things rather than negative things. Despite that fact that we have seen nice language in previous examples which do not show clear expression of politeness, the aforementioned examples show politeness expressions in a very obvious way.

Politeness

- (1) Can I just interject? (Troy addressing the manger)
- (2) Please don't give him the phone number (Sam replying to Nick)
- (3) What questions would you ask them (Nick commenting)

Using “can” in the above examples shows politeness in a asking for permission from a higher position to a lower one; but at the same time, it does not seem to be super polite because speakers

may use “could” or “ might” instead of “can”. Yet “can” still seems as polite. In the second example above, there is an obvious use of “please” which is a very common expression for politeness in questions and commands.

There is a change in the tone of speaking from being colleagues and team members giving advice by using politeness expressions into issuing orders and instructions for work as will be seen in the following examples:

Obeying Orders

- (1) The coach is telling me not to give you the phone number (Nick replying to Sam)
- (2) I don't want you to make any suggestions right now get the hell out of there (Sam replying to Kwa)

The first example shows the idea of “telling” not to do something as a command. In example two, the tone of the speaker gets tougher by speaking with rough language as “get the hell out of there” which is usually issued by a speaker of power to an addressee with little to no power at all. Unlike tough language as seen before, there is a kind of language that is viewed as tentative and suggestive, but without being forceful as in the following examples:

- (1) I disagree with that (Kwa commenting)
- (2) Need to do creative ... work, come up with your print ads (Jason talking to Nick and Bill)

It can be noticed from the above analyses that the language of males tends to vary according to context or situation from being tentative and polite into being forceful and blunt. The group in the TV show is representative of a sample of males in almost the same situations none of which are romantic or family business-related.

Discussion

In this chapter, the results of the study will be discussed in light of the research questions and proposed hypotheses.

Discussion of the Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question (1) What are the most common linguistic features of the females characters in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon*?

To answer this question, the researcher added all the frequencies of women's linguistic features found in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon*, and distributed them in Table 10 below. It is evident from the table that there is a total count of 199 linguistic features.

Table 10

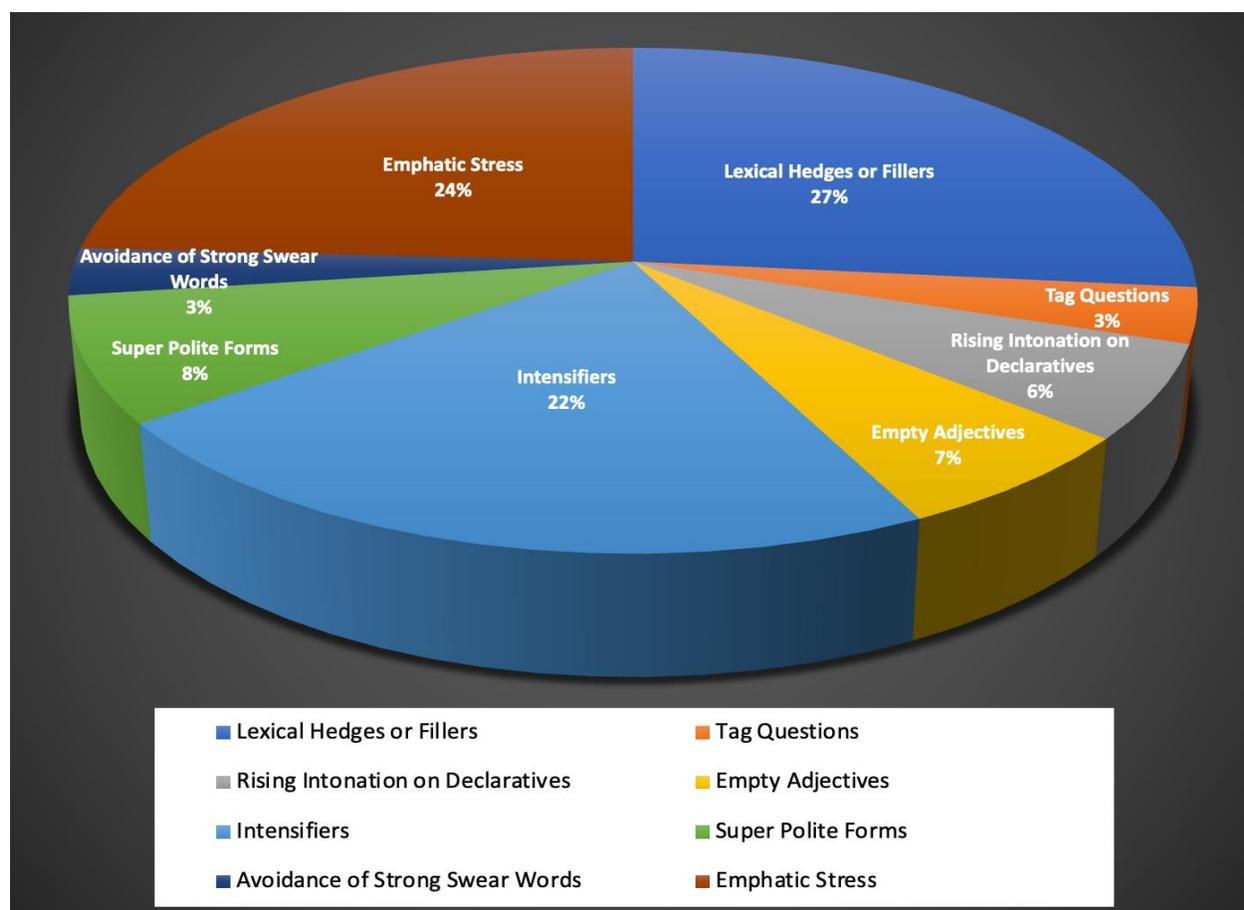
*Frequencies and Percentages of Women's Linguistic Features in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon**

Women's Linguistic Features	Frequency of Feature	Percentage
Lexical Hedges or Fillers	53	27%
Tag Questions	7	3%
Rising Intonation on Declaratives	12	6%
Empty Adjectives	13	7%
Intensifiers	44	22%
Super Polite Forms	16	8%
Avoidance of Strong Swear Words	6	3%
Emphatic Stress	48	24%
Total	199	100%

It can be seen from Table 10 above that the most prominent linguistic features of the female characters in the movie include the following: (1) lexical hedges or fillers, (2) emphatic stress, (3) intensifiers, and (4) super polite forms. There were 53 counts of lexical hedges or fillers, 48 for emphatic stress, 44 for intensifiers, and 16 for super polite forms. Altogether they comprised 161 of the total number of utterances produced by the three primary female characters in the movie. The percentages of women's linguistic features in the movie are presented in Chart 1 below.

Chart 1

Percentages of Women's Linguistic Features in Disney's Raya and the Last Dragon



It is evident from Chart 1 that the most prominent features of female language in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon* are (1) lexical hedges or fillers, (2) emphatic stress, (3)

intensifiers, and (4) super polite forms are represented by the following percentages: 27%, 24%, 22%, and 8% respectively. The aforementioned percentages add up to a total of 81%.

Percentages representing other linguistic features such as rising intonation on declaratives, avoidance of strong swear words, empty adjectives, and tag questions amounted to the remaining 19%. It is worth noting that there were no instances that signal the use of precise color terms nor hypercorrection on part of the female characters throughout the film. The results are in line with those of Itmeizeh and Ma'ayeh (2017) who report that women tend to use lexical hedges or fillers more than men. Furthermore, the findings are in agreement with Hedenmalm (2016) who asserts that female characters, in most Disney movies, use more polite language and intensifiers than males. As for emphatic stress, being the second most prominent linguistic feature used by women in *Raya and the Last Dragon*, Safitri's (2017) analysis of Disney's *Tangled*, confirms that women tend to stress certain parts of their utterances to mark the importance of the information they are bringing forth. Having stated that many scenes in *Raya and the Last Dragon* required narration, emphatic stress was used to signal emphasis.

Hypothesis (1) The most common linguistic features of the female characters in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon* fall under the list of features proposed by Robin Lakoff in her classification of women's language.

As mentioned above, the researcher hypothesized that the most common linguistic features of the female characters in Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon* fall under the features proposed by Robin Lakoff's (1975) classification of women's language. The results of the script analysis showed that the most prominent features in the movie are lexical hedges or fillers, intensifiers, emphatic stress, and super polite forms which were all relevant features highlighted by Lakoff. Since lexical hedges or fillers were the most prominent linguistic features employed

by the primary female characters in the movie by 27%, it is worth mentioning that they can potentially signal lack of confidence or indecisiveness and are frequently found in women's speech when they express uncertainty in their exchanges. In addition, during debates or arguments, women use hedges more since they are hesitant to give a direct answer or are still thinking of their responses while conversing. Another possible implication as to why hedges are used excessively by females is the fact that they function as mitigators to soften ideas or opinions that may come forth as blunt or forceful during situations where the female speaker lacks power or dominance; hedging can be done in such contexts to show politeness. Given that the findings of the present study are in harmony with the initially-formulated hypothesis, it is safe to say that H1 is accepted.

Research Question (2): What are the evident changes in the representation of female roles in the new era of Disney movies?

The analysis of the movie revealed that several changes in terms of gender representation in the new era of Disney movies were made. There was an evident transformation in the roles that were played by the three primary female characters –Raya, Sisu, and Naamari—and the way in which they were depicted. The three lead females in the movie were portrayed as strong, independent, determined leaders; yet uniquely different from one another. This shift contrasts with previous Disney productions where female characters were reliant and submissive to their male counterparts and this finding is in harmony with the results of Heritage (2015), Barber (2015) Itmeizeh and Ma'ayeh (2017) who concluded that over the years Disney took into account the aftermath of the feminist movement and assigned female characters dominant roles similar to that of males away from the stereotypical societal norms.

Hypothesis (2) The representation of female roles in the new era of Disney movies is moving towards a more feministic approach.

The researcher conjectured that the changes in the representation of female roles in the new era of Disney movies are evident and the new era of Disney animated movies is moving towards a feministic approach. The feministic approach is obvious in most of Disney's recent productions due to the emergence of female leads and co-leads who push beyond patriarchal expectations. Disney females are no longer waiting on princes to save them; they rely on their hard work and persistence to achieve their goals. That stated, H2 is accepted.

Research Question (3) What characteristics of language do female speakers and male speakers use in same-sex interaction groups?

After analyzing the script of the TV show, *The Apprentice*, the researcher found that during female to female interactions, women used commands, modals, and strong language in confrontation. On the other hand, during male to male interactions, men gave advice, showed politeness, and obeyed orders. It is evident that the language of both genders varied in accordance with factors such as topic, addressee, context, and function as Holmes (2013) stated, "In any situation, linguistic choices generally indicate people's awareness of the influence of one or more of the following components: (1) the participants, (a) who is speaking and (b) who are they speaking to; (2) the setting or social context of the interaction: where they are speaking; (3) the topic: what is being talked about; [and] (4) function: why are they speaking?" (p. 9).

Hypothesis (3) Female and male speakers employ different sets of language characteristics in same-sex interaction groups.

The researcher hypothesized that female and male speaker employ different sets of language characteristic in same-sex interaction groups. The analysis of the TV show revealed

how women used different characteristics than men did in their same-sex groups. It can be argued that certain characteristics of language cannot be strictly associated with a specific gender, for instance the use of profane or vulgar language by males only. Females can curse and be extremely and inappropriate explicit in their utterances just like men depending on who they are addressing and the situation they are in. Similarly, it should not be assumed that men are rude all the time. There are instances where males use polite expressions and obey orders depending on their social status and this was observed in the script of the TV show. In the entertainment industry, men can be polite, and women can be aggressive and vice versa; situations in the script are what dictate their roles and linguistic behaviors. Therefore, H3 is accepted.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier in the present study, men and women use language in ways that differ from one another. Clear cut differences in vocabulary usage, grammatical patterns, and prosodies mirror either male or female speaking styles. Each gender exercises a distinct speech style in accordance with society and other relevant social factors (status, age, etc...). Depending on these social factors, men's language can be aggressive and reflect a state of dominance and women's speech strategies can be less forceful or polite and exaggerated or the other way round. The present study was an attempt to analyze the most common linguistic features employed by the three lead female characters in Disney's 59th animated production, *Raya and the Last Dragon* and to investigate whether there has been a transformation in gender roles based on the language of women. The researcher adopted Lakoff's (1975) approach to the characteristics of women's speech which suggests that women employ the following linguistic features in their speech: (1) lexical hedges or fillers, (2) tag questions, (3) rising intonation on declaratives, (4) empty adjectives, (5) precise color terms, (6) intensifiers, (7) hypercorrect grammar, (8) super polite forms, (9) avoidance of strong swear words, and (10) emphatic stress. In addition, the study analyzed leadership discourse in single-sex interactions in the US reality TV show, *The Apprentice*, to examine the ways in which male and female managers demonstrate leadership in their conversations.

Having analyzed the language of the female characters in the movie, the results showed that the most prominent linguistic feature was lexical hedges which reflects lack of confidence or indecisiveness among the characters. Women use hedges when they are reluctant in giving a straightforward answer or need time to think things through. Not to mention, women also use

hedges and fillers to reduce the force of utterances which may be perceived as rude or explicit by the addressee.

Other features such emphatic stress, empty adjectives, super polite forms, intensifiers, and rising intonation on declaratives were employed in the movie as well. The findings of the study revealed that women are presented as polite in their speeches and such a claim is supported by their excessive usage of modals when making requests or giving orders. Not to mention, women avoid strong swear words and or dysphemisms as they express anger or dissatisfaction during sensitive situations where they lack power, but at the same time, nothing can stop them from being blunt whenever they see fit. The results also suggested the presence of a transformation in gender roles and representation of female characters in Disney of the Revival Era which was influenced by the waves of feminism. Raya, Sisu, and Naamari are all shown as an independent females who consider themselves equal and powerful in the presence of male figures and are determined to lead and achieve their goals. This can be further supported by Disney's efforts in bringing about empowering female characters and breaking cultural norms that bound women to their fragile and delicate nature. That stated, it would be interesting to see what Disney has in store for their audiences in future animated film productions and their characterization of female princesses.

As for the analysis of the US reality TV show, the researcher found that both male and female managers employed different language characteristics during single-sex interactions. During female to female speech, women gave commands, used modals, and employed strong confrontational language while addressing females. Whereas, males gave advice, showed politeness, and obeyed orders during their conversations among other males. This proves that gender plays a pivotal role in the shaping our linguistic choices in addition to other social factors

such as topic, addressee, context, status, etc. Not to mention, the study suggested that certain language characteristics should not be overgeneralized to a specific gender, since both genders can use language in any way they please and in accordance with the context they are in.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends further studies to be conducted on why women use lexical hedges, fillers, or other prominent linguistic features in other animated movies similar to the ones produced by Disney. In addition, research can be carried out to compare and contrast the speech of both female and male characters in such movies to raise awareness on movie content and language before watching. Since the LGBTQ+ community has become a controversial topic in recent times, it would be interesting to conduct research on the language used by LGBTQ characters which were depicted in Disney movies.

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Appendix A

Raya and the Last Dragon Movie Script

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Appendix B

Examples of Female Linguistic Features

1. Lexical hedges or fillers (um, erm, er, uh...)**a. Lexical (actual words or phrases)**

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Well", that all began 500 years ago. 2. "Well", yeah! 3. "Okay", no, we can do this. 4. "Well," alright. 5. "Well", I'm sorry, Sisu. 6. "Well" 7. Yeah, "well", the world's broken. 8. "Well" 9. There's, "like", hundreds.
Sisu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Well," compliments to the chef. 2. "Well", we still have a big chunk of it! 3. "Well," you gotta admire her commitment. 4. "Well," I'm Sisu and... 5. "Well," he sounds like a smart man.

b. Non-lexical (vocalizations or sounds)

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Hmm". 2. "Huh". 3. "Uh"... 4. and... "Ooh"! 5. "um," yeah 6. "Uh", rice or stew? 7. "Hmm." 8. "Hmm," I don't know. 9. "Uh"...Sisu, there are a few things we need to catch you up on. 10. "Uh"... you're glowing. 11. "um", we need to keep going. 12. "Oh", is that why you're chasing me? 13. "Ah," no, no, I don't think so. 14. "Uh"... 15. Hey, "uh", whose baby... 16. "Uh," 17. "Uh"...Hey, guys? 18. "Uh," why does he do that? 19. "Uh", no. 20. "Uh"...what's with the...? 21. "Uh", what did you just call her? 22. "Uh"... I tried.
Naamari	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Uh"... 2. "Hmm".

Sisu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Oh," and other creatures. 2. "Oh", yeah? 3. "Oh", yeah? 4. "Oh," thank you. 5. "Oh," we're doing a jumpy thing! 6. "Oh". 7. "Um"...they have no soul? 8. "Oh", do you mean...? 9. "Uh," what are you doing? 10. "Uh," what's credit? 11. "Uh," yeah, I'll be using credit, yes. 12. That's, "uh".... 13. But, "uh", who's hungry? 14. "Oh". I love mango. 15. "Oh", toi!
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2. Tag questions

a. Facilitative (invited interlocutors to engage in conversation)

Raya	1. You know what this means, "right"?
------	---------------------------------------

b. Softening (reduce the force of an utterance) *none

c. Epistemic Modal (show speaker uncertainty)

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "They are?" 2. You're kidding, "right"? 3. That's not a bad sign, "is it"?
------	---

d. Challenging (showcase aggression or offense)

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Did I"? 2. You have no idea, "do you"? 3. You didn't happen to bring Fang's gem, "did you"?
------	---

3. Rising intonation on declaratives (uptalk or question intonation while uttering declarative answer = answer transformed into a question)

a. Express uncertainty

Raya	1. "Wait a second." 2. "You are Sisu [?]"
Sisu	1. "They have no souls [?]"

b. Reduce force of utterance

Raya	1. "You're gonna need it." 2. "We'll poison them?"
Sisu	1. Wow, you really got some trust issues.

c. Lack of clarity

Raya	1. "I didn't think that'd stump you."
Sisu	1. "and none of my brothers and sisters came back"

d. Positive politeness

Raya	1. "Please don't."
Sisu	1. "Let me get that for ya." 2. "Here you go!" 3. "Best friends forever!"

4. Empty adjectives (adorable, lovely, charming, wonderful)

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Magical" creatures who brought us water and rain and peace. 2. It should have been this "big, inspirational" moment where humanity united over her sacrifice. 3. That's when the "mighty" Sisudatu, the last dragon, concentrated all her magic into a gem... 4. guarded by "exceptionally large" warriors. 5. "Awkward". 6. And we're both Sisu "superfans"
Sisu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. with a bunch of "whacky" people 2. She's so "cute". 3. That's so "sweet". 4. See that "classy-looking" one 5. "Good-looking"... 6. with "impeccable" hair?
Namaari	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "whacky" people

5. Precise color terms (ecru, aquamarine, magenta) *none**6. Intensifiers (superlatives, comparatives, adverbs = absolutely, extremely, so, very)****a. To increase the effect**

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did this world get “so” broken? 2. When our land was whole, and we lived “harmoniously” alongside...dragons. 3. This feels “too” easy. 4. Don’t beat yourself up “too” much. 5. I mean, anyone hoping to steal the Dragon Gem now has to face the fury of the two “baddest” blades in all the lands. 6. A floating market famous for fast deals and fighters with even “faster” hands. 7. Fourth, Fang. Our “fiercest” enemy. 8. A nation protected by angry assassins, and their even “angrier” cats. 9. “Seriously”? 10. Your mom “actually” said that? 11. What are you doing, you “big” fur bug? 12. You’re “so” easily distracted. 13. You’re getting a little “too” big for this, bud. 14. Eventually, we ended up fighting over the gem “so” much that we ended up breaking it... 15. I’ve searched “my whole life” to find Sisu... 16. Our friend’s a “really” strong swimmer. 17. Look, my father “blindly” trusted people... 18. It’s “really” late. 19. I “really” wanted to believe him. 20. I “really” wanted to believe that we could be Kumandra again. 21. “Literally” thousands of people turned into stone... 22. So, I am “sincerely” asking you... 23. It’s “too” dangerous. 24. The “most heavily” guarded of the five lands 25. I “really” wish I could believe that.
Naamari	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Things could be “so” much better. 2. That’s not a “very” nice way to describe an old friend.

Sisu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. She “definitely” chose the right hats for that. 2. I’m, like, “really” good at swimming, through rhyme. 3. That I’m “really” good at swim... 4. Wow, those cats are “really” fast 5. It’s “really” hot! 6. I have “literally” no idea where they came from. 7. That old lady was “really” gonna hurt me. 8. She’s “so” cute. 9. That’s “so” sweet. 10. That’s “too” much sweet... 11. “Too” much sweetness 12. It’s “too” much! 13. The “real mighty” ones
------	---

b. To indirectly suggest how the addressee should feel about the spoken utterances

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That didn’t “truly” happen until 500 years later, when I came into the story.
------	--

c. Using words with negative connotations to increase the effect of positive verbs

Sisu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I’m “wicked” when I hit that liquid. 2. I got water skills that “kill”. 3. I “slaughter” when I hit the water.
------	---

7. Hypercorrect grammar (ing, standard English to imply that they are more correct than they ought to be) *none

8. Super polite forms (euphemisms and modals)

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. But instead, “people being people”, they all fought to possess the last remnant of dragon magic. 2. “Please” don’t. 3. “Please”, we have to keep moving. 4. “Please” let this be it. 5. “I’m sorry”, Sisu. 6. Sisu, come back! “Please”. 7. “Keep it down”. 8. “I’m sorry”, I can’t let you do that. 9. “May” I? 10. But we have to come together. “Please”.
Sisu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You have to admit though, these bug “booties”... 2. Look how close my “butt” is to my head. 3. Yes, “please”! 4. “Will you help us, please”?
Namaari	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I “might” have a solution for that, Mother. 2. “I’d” like to take the royal army...

9. Avoidance of strong swear words (shit, damn, hell)

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Looks like someone’s trying to be “clever”. 2. Tuk Tuk, let’s show ‘em what “clever” really looks like. 3. Cause if they sent you after my gem piece... 4. I got “kicked in the back” 5. You know that “bull”? 6. “Looks like somebody’s been taking classes.”
------	--

10. Emphatic stress (words that speaker thinks are important)

Raya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That all began 500 years ago. KUMANDRA. 2. THIS is WHAT we used to be. 3. We lived harmoniously alongside DRAGONS. 4. Magical creatures who brought us WATER and RAIN and PEACE. 5. It was PARADISE. 6. But then, THE DRUUN came. 7. A MINDLESS PLAGUE that SPREAD like WILDFIRE. 8. And turned everyone they touched into STONE. 9. The dragons fought for us THE BEST they could. 10. That's when the MIGHTY SISUDATU, THE LAST DRAGON... 11. Concentrated all her magic into a gem and...BLASTED the Druun away. 12. We all became enemies, and THE GEM had to be HIDDEN. 13. BUT that's not how the world broke. 14. THAT didn't truly happen until 500 years later, when "I" came into the story. 15. FIRST...TAIL. 16. A SWELTERING desert with SNEAKY mercenaries who fight DIRTY. 17. SECOND, TALON. 18. A floating market famous FOR FAST DEALS and FIGHTERS with even FASTER HANDS. 19. THIRD, SPINE. 20. A FRIGID BAMBOO FOREST guarded by exceptionally LARGE WARRIORS, and their GIANTS AXES. 21. FOURTH, FANG. 22. OUR FIERCEST ENEMY. 23. A nation PROTECTED by ANGRY ASSASSINS, and THEIR EVEN ANGRIER CATS. 24. The only way IN or OUT is by WATER. 25. Luckily, for us, we have a MAGIC WATER DRAGON.
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Namaari	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AFTER the MIGHTY SISU BLASTED AWAY ALL THE DRUUN, she fell into the water and floated downstream. 2. A DRAGON BACK IN THE WORLD. 3. Things could be SO MUCH BETTER. 4. The SPIRIT of SISU. 5. She's out stealing GEM pieces. 6. We HAVE TO stop them. 7. We need to EXPAND. 8. It's the ONLY decision.
Sisu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I got the GLOW! 2. A PLAGUE. 3. They've ALWAYS been here. 4. WAITING for a moment of WITNESS TO ATTACK. 5. They're, like, the OPPOSITE of dragons. 6. Instead of BRINGING WATER and LIFE to the world, they're like a RELENTLESS FIRE that consumes everything in its wake... 7. Until there's NOTHING left except ASH and STONE. 8. We infiltrate Fang, CONFRONT Naamari. 9. We were the LAST DRAGONS. 10. We were DROWNING in a sea of DRUUN. 11. But my oldest brother, Pengu, REFUSED to ACCEPT DEFEAT. 12. This is where we'd make our last stand...UNITED. 13. So, one by one, they combined all their magic, creating the DRAGON GEM. 14. All I know is I TRUSTED THEM...and they TRUSTED ME. 15. It EMPOWERED us BEYOND ANYTHING I could imagine.

Appendix C

TV Show Script

1. Male leadership style in single-sex interaction**EXCERPT 1**

(Episode 2)

1 JAS: so you know what?
2 what we should do is this
3 I'll- I'll have to be the floater
4 I'll go from back and forth okay +
5 I think Nick +
6 I think Bill + need to do creative okay
7 I think you guys should come up with okay
8 here's how we're gonna do it
9 that's it
10 come up with your print ads
11 talk to who you need to talk to
12 you're thinking corporate
13 you're thinking young and sleek
14 come in the //middle\
15 TROY: /can\\ I just interject real quick?

EXCERPT 2

(Episode 2)

1 DT: go ahead Nick
2 NICK: I think Jason performed well
3 especially the way we started off
4 midway through
5 he took the reins
6 he took charge
7 made quick decisions

8 cos we had to get things in under certain timelines +
 9 and I thought he performed well
 10 his choices were well thought out=
 11 DT: =are you saying that
 12 because you don't want Jason to pick you as one of the /two?
 13 NICK: /not one bit\ not one bit
 14 I thought his decisions were real sharp and well thought out

EXCERPT 3

(Episode 3)

1 NICK: [talking to Bill on the phone] Bill it's Nick
 2 do you have a pen handy? +
 3 you're gonna go to 75 + + West 47th Street
 4 it's called All Rare Coins and the //number\
 5 SAM: /oh oh oh\\ oh oh- just get him the address
 6 NICK: I'm gonna give him the phone //number\
 7 SAM: /I do not\\want you to give him the phone number
 8 please don't give him the phone number
 9 NICK: [talking to Bill on the phone] the coach is telling me not to give you the
 phone number
 10 BILL: I have no idea why
 11 he is impossible
 12 BOW: they could quite possibly kill Sam
 13 SAM: [talking to Bill on the phone] Bill + the reason you don't need
 the phone number
 14 is because there's no reason to call
 15 I'm gonna get you the location
 16 NICK: just in case they get lost and the cab driver doesn't know Sam
 17 SAM: no
 18 NICK: we elected Sam to be the project manager
 19 because we wanted him to put up or shut up

20 he had had all these grandiose visions of things
 21 and we wanted to see if he could actually put them into action
 22 and get us a victory
 23 KWA: personally I'd describe his leadership style as just downright
 unproductive
 24 KWA: Sam
 25 SAM: I'm listening
 26 KWA: gold isn't negotiable
 27 basically it's based on the spot price
 28 that's gonna be in the market at that time
 29 but it fluctuates throughout the day
 30 however I don't think it was necessarily imperative
 31 for us to drop that for 15 minutes to get there
 32 I mean it's not gonna fluctuate that much=
 33 SAM: =I don't- I don't want you to make any suggestions right now
 34 get the hell out of there

2. Female leadership style in single-sex interaction

EXCERPT 4

(Episode 4)

1 JES: [taken from the individual interview] but I could tell Katrina
 was irritated that
 2 maybe I went ahead and did something
 3 and didn't consult the group
 4 KAT: [taken from the individual interview] the tables downstairs
 weren't being effective +
 5 I approached Jessie and said +
 6 shut it down
 7 she took great offence to that
 8 JES: well if you wanna change it + you're the leader

9 so you tell me
 10 you're obviously getting mad that I'm thinking on my own
 11 KAT: no I'm not getting mad at you for thinking on your own
 12 all I'm saying is that
 13 I've been told four times that this is a bad idea
 14 JES: why are you spazzing out?
 15 are you upset because +
 16 KAT: I'm upset because you're upset=
 17 JES: =I'm not upset at anything
 18 I think you're getting frustrated
 19 because + because something isn't working right
 20 and then you're just trying to find fault
 21 so you have somebody to blame it on
 22 KAT: [from the individual interview] I think Jessie's upset because
 she wasn't leading +
 23 and + that saddens me
 24 because I was more supportive when she was the leader
 25 KAT: when all of us are trying to work as a team
 26 and I feel like one person doesn't agree with what we're doing
 27 that's what frustrated me from the beginning
 28 JES: but I think all the ideas (we came up with) were all the same
 29 JES: [from the individual interview] with the last three tasks, I knew
 from the very beginning
 30 we were going to win +
 31 but this one + +
 32 I don't know I don't know

EXCERPT 5

(Episode 4)

1 TAM: [taken from the individual interview] it was confusing to me
 2 cos no one knew what was going on really

