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Going to Far and Distant Spaces? A multimodal
analysis of gender stereotypes through songs in
Hercules and Moana

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ABSTRACT

Walt Disney Company has become a great industry with influence all over the world due to their intergenerational content. For this reason, studying the way in which their material presents gender roles is essential. In this dissertation we will look at the representation of a male and a female character in two Disney films, *Hercules* and *Moana*, through the analysis of the main song that appears in each film. This analysis will be carried out following the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis with regards to subjects, transitivity, modality and metaphors. The final purpose is to see if the two characters in the film stick or not to the roles that have been traditionally assigned to their gender.

Key words: Disney, gender stereotypes, Critical Discourse Analysis, transitivity, metaphors, multimodality.

RESUMEN

Walt Disney Company se ha convertido en una gran empresa con influencia en todo el mundo gracias a su contenido intergeneracional. Por este motivo, es esencial estudiar cómo aparecen representados los roles de género en sus producciones. En este TFG analizaremos dos personajes, uno femenino y uno masculino, en dos películas de Disney, *Hercules* y *Vaiana*, a través de la canción principal de cada película. Para llevar a cabo este estudio, seguiremos los principios del Análisis Crítico del Discurso centrándonos en los sujetos, la transitividad, la modalidad y las metáforas. El objetivo final es ver si los dos personajes están ligados o no a los roles que les han sido asignados tradicionalmente a hombres y mujeres.

Palabras Clave: Disney, estereotipos de género, Análisis Crítico del Discurso, transitividad, metáforas, multimodalidad.

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Introduction

Although adults tend to learn more from the texts that they read, children are much more influenced by audio-visual sources, (Walma van der Molder and van der Voort, 2000). Mass media, whose influence on children cannot be denied (Swindler, 1986), affects the vision that children will have of their world, and also the stereotypes they will hold with regards to gender, age and sexual orientation (Twobin *et al.*, 2004: 19-44).

With this in mind, we cannot underestimate the importance of Disney Corporation when dealing with its influence on children – it owns not only audio-visual products such as films or TV series, but it also develops books and toys. Also, the fact that movies can be shared intergenerationally turns Disney Corporation into one of the most influential companies on children's lives (Twobin *et al.*, 2004: 19-44). Nevertheless, this kind of commercial material is not only addressed to children, but it can be also entertaining for adults who, for example, watch those Disney films with their children, and therefore observe the same portrayal of gender.

Taking into account the importance of Disney films, the purpose of this dissertation is to analyze the main songs that appear in two of them, *Hercules* (1997) and *Moana* (2016), in order to evaluate how gender is portrayed in them. We will look at gender in terms of what behaviors and attitudes typically identify male and female characters. These two songs were chosen because they are sung by a male and a female character respectively, and they deal with the same topic regarding the content of the lyrics. In these songs we have two teenage characters feeling that they do not fit in, and wanting to find a place where they belong. Knowing that the characters' concerns are the same, we can analyze the differences and similarities that appear in both songs. Our hypothesis is that the differences on how these two characters express the same feeling will be based on a stereotypical conception of both men and women.

This dissertation will be divided in five different sections. In the introduction we have established the objectives of the study and the competences achieved in its research process. In the literature review section, we will look at the theoretical background, and some other studies that have been carried out on this topic. Afterwards, we will look at the method that will be followed when analyzing both songs. The results obtained will be organized and explained in the analysis section. Finally, we will end this dissertation with some conclusions on those final results.

1. Literature Review

In this section, we will look at two main topics: gender stereotypes and Critical Discourse Analysis. With regards to gender stereotypes, we will see how there are some characteristics that have been traditionally attributed to men and women. We will focus on how these characteristics have been portrayed in television and films by making reference to different studies. Then, we will look at what Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is and how it can be helpful when we are dealing with gender studies.

To begin with, we can see a summary of the different attributes that are associated to women and to men if we look at Table 1. In their study, Jayme and Sau (2004) compared the traditional characteristics that are linked to each gender. As we can see, while men are perfect leaders, except for their innate aggressivity; women are submissive, but at the same time they do not have any control over their emotions. This suggests that they need a man who can stabilize their feelings and can take the dominant role, because it seems that a woman would not know what to do if left without a man whom she can follow.

Male	Female
Active	Passive
Dominance	Submission
Emotional control	Emotional instability (neuroticism)
Aggressivity	Inhibition (fear)
Logical intelligence	Intuition

Table 1: Classic personality dimensions differentiated by genders (Jayme and Sau, 2004: 248)

As we are going to deal with the analysis of the songs that appear in two films, we have first to look at how men and women are usually portrayed in audiovisual material. Most characters that appear in television are men (Witt, 2000: 322-324). Signorelli and Bacue's research (1999: 527-544) showed that women are usually portrayed as inferior and younger to men, and not even one out of ten is slightly overweight (Fouts & Burggraf, 1999: 473-481). However, these stereotypes do not only affect negatively the image of women, but also that of men, who tend to appear as being smart and competitive, but also as very violent (Smith & Donnerstein, 1998: 167-202).

A recent study focused on Spanish fiction in cinema and television between 2014 and 2016 shows that only 38% of the characters that appear on screen are women. From this percentage, 40% of them perform secondary roles. Moreover, men represent a 76% of the main characters who are over 45 years old (Pereda, 2017).

There has been research carried out on how Disney portrays its characters with regards to gender. Wiersma (2001) analyzed sixteen Disney films in terms of job categories and domestic labor. She found out that, although men had more than twenty-six out-of-home jobs, only four women worked out-of-home. Similarly, she found only four cases in which men performed domestic tasks -two of them by the butler in *Aristocats* (1970)- while women appeared performing twenty four house-held chores.

Twobin et al. (2004: 19-44) have established the characteristics related to what it means for Disney to be a man/boy or to be a woman/girl. In this case we see how being a man means being able to conceal emotions or express them through violence. For example, when Li Shang discovers that his father has died in *Mulan* (1998), his first reaction is to go to war to defeat the huns instead of crying. Moreover men are portrayed as strong and heroic without being able to control their sexuality. They cannot resist the vision of a beautiful woman: Mowgli only leaves his beloved jungle when he sees a girl, and follows her at the end of the film in *The Jungle Book* (1967). They do not have non-domestic jobs, and they are not overweight. Usually, male overweight characters are depicted as unintelligent, as for example the character of Mr. Smee in *Peter Pan* (1953).

In the case of women, they found how a woman's appearance is much more valued than her intelligence. This can be seen in the case of *Snow White* (1937), as the beauty of the princess is the key element of the film's plot. Women are always in need of protection, and they live a domestic life with the final goal of getting married, as it is the case of *Cinderella* (1950). Finally, overweight women are depicted as ugly and unable to find love and get married, as for example the Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland* (1951).

Once we have seen how men and women are portrayed on screen, we can move on now to the section in which we will deal with CDA. CDA has been very relevant in studies of gender and power relations. Since the objective of this dissertation is to unveil the gender ideology present in two Disney songs, we will adopt some principles from CDA in our analysis.

CDA studies how the different choices of words and grammar can conceal underlying ideologies (Machin & Mayr, 2012). These concealed ideologies are specially remarkable in the case of power relations. Power comes from privileged groups who try

to dominate and control subordinate groups through the use of language. CDA intends to reveal power relations that appear both explicitly and implicitly in the texts (Van Dijk, 1993). As Fairclough (2000) explains, studying language is essential since the way we talk about things influences our social values and ideas, so it is through language that society and knowledge are built. The aim of CDA is therefore to show where ideologies and power relations might be concealed in texts through the analysis of word choices and grammar (Machin & Mayr, 2012)

If we assume that the power relations between men and women can be compared to those between dominated and subordinated groups, we will understand the importance and growth of feminist CDA in the past few decades (Lazar, 2005: 1-28). The purpose of feminist CDA is to approach texts from all disciplines following a feminist perspective trying to show and overcome the implicated patriarchal ideology and oppression (Cameron, 1996: 31-55; Spender, 1981).

Feminist CDA has been mainly focused on the scope of work and politics (Lazar, 2005: 1-28). These studies suggested that gender stereotypes affect men and women in these two fields. The characteristics that are attributed to both genders in these spheres are very similar to the ones that appeared in Table 1. CDA has therefore played an important role in studies based on gender and gender stereotypes.

In 1996, Kress and van Leeuwen showed in *Reading Images* how meaning was not only created from written texts, but it was also affected by other semiotic resources such as visual features. This was one of the bases of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA), which assumes that all communicative modes reveal ideologies. Although music cannot be considered a language in itself, it has to be viewed as a communicative mode characterized by its strong affective meaning (McKerrel & Way, 2017: 1-15) and which can therefore be used to support relations of power (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2017: 553-565).

In this section we have seen how men and women have been traditionally linked to some attributes that have been applied to the representation of male and female characters on screen. Through these attributes, we can see how women are portrayed as weak and emotional, while men are violent and forced to conceal their emotions. CDA and MCDA are essential when analyzing gender and power relations in discourse. So, now we will move on to the study of gender stereotypes in two Disney songs: “How far I’ll go” from the film *Moana* (2016) and “I can go the distance” from the film *Hercules* (1997).

2. Methodology

To carry out this study, we will focus on three different categories that will be useful when looking at gender stereotypes: subjects, actions and metaphors (Fairclough, 1989). First of all, we will look at how we understand these three categories, and then we will focus on each of them separately. Each category will be dealt with first regarding the text, and then looking at the images that accompany the lyrics on the film.

When we talk about subjects, we are referring to the agents who perform the action. They can be linked to the grammatical subject of a sentence, and when dealing with them textually, it is important to bear in mind the use of pronouns. Actions refer to those processes that the subjects perform. In order to study these actions, we will pay attention to the verbs that appear in the lyrics, and then, to what the characters are doing in the film. Finally, through metaphors we identify one concept with another. Unlike the case of subjects and actions, there is not a specific grammatical category exclusive to metaphors, but we will focus on a set of semantic relations both in the lyrics and the video (Fairclough, 1989).

The study of subjects deals with the analysis of how individuals and groups are represented, both in the text and visually (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Subjects are characterized through representational strategies, which are always associated with values and ideologies (Van Dijk, 1993). Subjects are linked grammatically with the study of nouns and pronouns: first and third person pronouns can be used in order to align participants alongside or against an ideology (Fairclough, 2000). When interpreting representational strategies in the text, we can follow Van Leeuwen's inventory (1996), focusing on five elements that can be analyzed when dealing with subjects: Nomination/functionalization, objectivisation, specification/ generisation, individualization/collectivization and personalization/ impersonalization.

First of all, the characterization of the participants can be done in terms of what they are (nomination) or what they do (functionalization). There's also the possibility of participants being only represented through one of their characteristics (objectivisation). The different attributes that are applied to each participant may represent them as unique and different from other characters (specification) or as generic types (genericisation). In the same way they can appear as individuals (individualization) or as members who belong to a community (collectivization). Also, it is important to look at the actions that appear in each of the songs. Participants may appear as the doers of those actions

(personalization) or actions can appear with an impersonalized subject (impersonalization).

Subjects are also characterized in the use of images, which fulfill the information from the text (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996), reinforcing its prevalent ideology, or conveying moods and characteristics of the participants that could not be represented otherwise (Machin & Mayr, 2012). In order to study the strategies applied in images, we will use the different features proposed by Machin and Mayr (2012).

The most obvious feature we can analyze is stereotypification: As it happened in textual characterization, individuals may be represented as belonging to a specific group through stereotypical representations. Then, there are two of these features which have to do with how the subject appears on screen: the size of frame and the angle. The size of frame is related to the use of different shots. Close shots allow us to join the inner feelings of the participant, while medium and long shots only depict participants with no interest on their thoughts. The angle of participants refers to how we may have to look up or down at them, depending on the angle of the picture. When we have to look down at participants, they seem more vulnerable; while if we have to look up, they are given a sense of power. Moreover, participants can be depicted from the back. This strategy is used to give their point of view on the world.

Body language is also important when analyzing subjects visually. We will focus on two elements: gaze and pose. With regards to gaze, we have to take into account whether participants are looking upwards, downwards or straight into the viewer because this may convey totally different meanings. When participants look up, viewers get a positive feeling, whereas if they look down, it may mean that they are worried about something. Finally, when participants look outwards, we may think that they are dealing with their issues straight away. In the case of pose, we have to analyze if participants' poses involve activity which is associated with non-conformity and liberation (open pose), or if they involve stillness, which is associated with discipline and obedience (close pose). Representational strategies either in text or in image serve to characterize participants and include them in the social world. These semiotic choices draw attention to particular aspects of the participants' identity that serve to promote or reject ideologies or power relations (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

After dealing with the study of subjects, we will move now into the study of actions, focusing on the analysis of transitivity (Halliday, 2004). Transitivity refers to

how participants are depicted in terms of the kind of actions they perform. These different kinds of actions are called “process types”.

According to Halliday (2004), we can distinguish three different worlds: the world of abstract relations, the world of consciousness and the physical world. These three worlds are associated with six major process types. The two we are going to be dealing with first are associated with the “outer” experience and the “inner” experience. The “outer” experience ascribes those actions and events that happen, or that need an actor to make them happen. These will be referred to as “material process clauses”. In material processes, the actor is usually the one who triggers the action, which may or may not affect another participant, referred to as “the goal”.

The “inner” experience “is partly a kind of replay of the outer, recording it, reacting to it, reflecting to it, and partly a state awareness of our state of being” (Halliday, 2004: 170). These will be referred to as mental process clauses. In mental processes, we do not have an actor, but rather a human participant that is called “the senser”, who experiences the phenomena, i.e. what is felt or thought. The third process type constitutes the relational process clauses, which will be used with the purpose of classification and identification.

Apart from these three categories (material, mental and relational), we can also find other process types which could be considered to be in the boundaries between the three previous types, and which are also associated with the three different worlds previously mentioned. These are the behavioral, verbal and existential processes.

Behavioral processes represent “the acting out of processes of consciousness (...) and physical states” (Halliday, 2004: 171), for example, “laughing” and “sleeping”. The participant that intervenes in behavioral processes is typically a human being who is referred to as “behavior”. Verbal processes are those in which the participant enacts through language what he has on his consciousness, for example, in the case of “saying” and “meaning”. In verbal processes, we can have a “sayer”, who is the participant that carries out the process; a “receiver”, who is the participant to whom the saying is addressed; a “verbiage”, which is the function of what is said; and a “target”, which refers to the entity that is targeted in the saying. Finally, in existential clauses, things are recognized to exist or to happen. In these processes, the particle “there” is not a participant, but just an indicator of the feature of existence.

In Figure 1 below, we can see a summary of transitivity as presented by Halliday. In the central circle we see the three different worlds, and in the external one, the six different process types which are linked to these worlds.

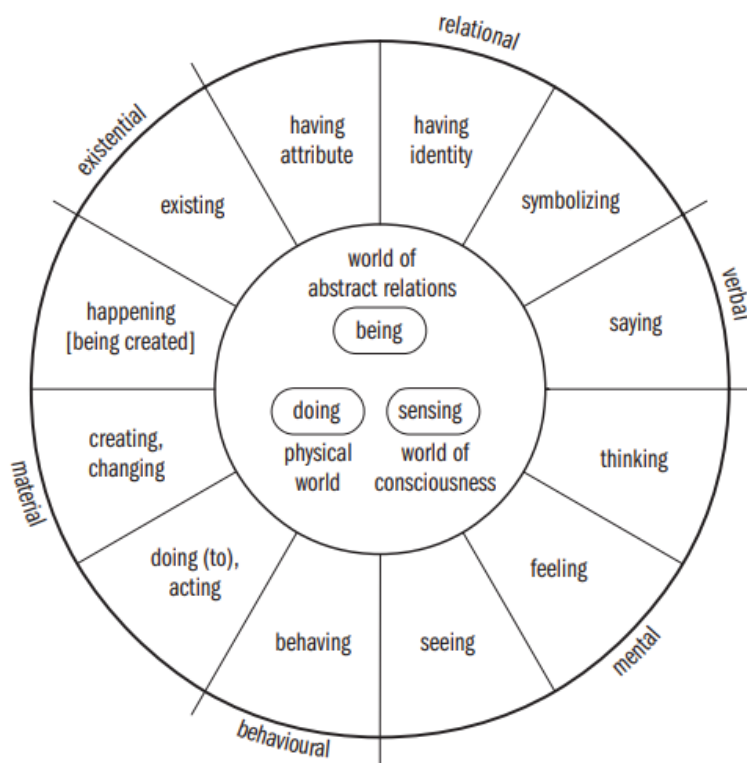


Figure 1: The grammar of experience: types of process in English (Halliday, 2004: 172)

In some schools of CDA, transitivity is used in order to analyze which participants are depicted as playing important roles, and which ones are represented as being the receivers of the actions. In order to carry out a transitivity analysis, we will have to focus on the different processes that are being performed and the participants who accomplish those actions.

When looking at material processes, we have to pay special attention to the position of the actor in the sentence, and if it does appear in the sentence at all or it has been omitted or obscured. Mental processes may be used to show how participants seem to be very busy, even if they are doing nothing in the material world (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Transitivity patterns, are therefore very useful when analyzing relations of power. Being the actor on a material process indicates that the participant has the power to make things change. If participants do not intervene in material processes as actors, they can be considered weak agents (Fairclough, 2003).

Although so far it may seem that transitivity can only be analyzed textually, we also need to take into account that transitivity can also be studied visually using Halliday's

same categories. This means that we can analyze what kind of processes the participants are performing, if they are explicit actors or their role is obscured, or even if the results obtained when analyzing visual transitivity are equal to those of the textual analysis (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

Related to the use of transitivity and how actions are represented, we will also take modality into account. Modality reflects the authors' opinions about what they are saying or representing in their works (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010: 68-98). It refers to "the true value or credibility of (linguistically realized) statements about the world" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 160). Unmodalized utterances are referred to as "categorical" and they include a higher degree of certainty than any other proposition with some modality marker. As in the case of transitivity, modality can also be studied both looking at the text, or looking at visual modality markers in images.

The prototypical carriers of modality in texts are modal verbs. However, according to several authors, modality can also be conveyed through the use of modal adjectives or adverbs which are considered to carry a modal meaning (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010: 68-98). Modality can be categorized in three different types, which are epistemic modality, deontic modality and boulomaic modality. Epistemic modality is related to the degree of certainty that we can assign to a proposition, while boulomaic and deontic modality refer to the desirability and the necessity of a proposition (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010: 68-98).

Apart from textually, modality is essential when analyzing visual communication. Visual modality is associated with the idea of the "realism" of an image, that is, the equivalence that exists between what we see in the real world and what is depicted in an image. This realism can be assessed in terms of some visual markers that have been established by Kress & van Leeuwen (1996). The first of these visual modality markers is the degree of articulation of detail, that is, the amount of detail that appears on a picture. This is also related to the articulation of the background, which goes from a lightly sketched to a very detailed background. This quest for the detail can also be represented through the use or not of perspective (if it exists and how it is represented), and through the articulation of light and shadow present in the picture.

Together with these markers that can be linked to detail, there are some more modality markers which have to do with the use of color. These are the degrees of articulation of tone, of color modulation and of color saturation. In our culture, colors can be tied to emotions. For this reason, dark colors are used when we want to conceal or

relate to the unknown, while brightness is associated with truth. Moreover, when this brightness is also represented not through matte colors but through their nuances, it suggests a higher degree of realism. The use of saturated colors gives a more emotional or intense view of what is being represented.

The final category that we are going to analyze is the study of metaphors. Metaphors consist on talking or thinking about something in terms of another thing (Semino, 2008). According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in any metaphor we can distinguish two different parts: the source domain (the concept that we use in order to create the metaphor) and the target domain (the concept that we describe through metaphorical expressions).

Metaphors are not only rhetorical devices used in language and communication, but they are also embedded in our thinking, as we think and act in terms of a conceptual system, which is metaphorical in nature. Conceptual metaphors are systematic sets of correspondances between a target and a source domain. In the last thirty years, it has been studied how these conceptual metaphors exist in our thought, and we use them in everyday language when we want to talk or think about something abstract, complex or subjective (Semino, 2008). For example, abstract concepts like life, time or even human emotions are studied through metaphors in terms of concrete phenomena (Forceville, 2009: 19-42). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) dealt with how metaphors may highlight and hide information. When we use a metaphor, we are implicitly focusing on one aspect of the concept, and this may be used to conceal other aspects of it.

However, metaphors are not only conveyed through language, but they also appear in other communicative modes such as images or sounds, although this other perspective has not been studied with such depth as in the case of linguistic metaphors (Forceville, 2009: 19-42). When we are dealing with a multimodal discourse in which we find linguistic metaphors, in most cases, metaphors associated to other communicative modes will convey the same meaning, reinforcing the message through several semiotic channels (Ning Yu, 2009: 119-143).

To summarize this section, we have seen that there are three categories that we will take into account in our analysis: subjects, actions and metaphors. When dealing with subjects, we have to pay attention to the representational strategies that appear in the lyrics, but also to how characters are depicted visually in terms of pose, gaze, or the angle of the camera. With regards to transitivity, we have to look at the different types of processes that appear both textually and visually. It is important to bear in mind what

types of processes are more common and how this affects the viewer or the reader in the perception of the characters. Finally, in the case of metaphors, it is essential to identify properly the target and the source domain and reflect upon why a specific conceptual metaphor was chosen when talking about a specific concept.

3. Analysis

We have already seen how men and women are portrayed differently in audiovisual material due to the traditional characteristics that have been attributed to each gender. After looking at different studies that have dealt with this topic in the case of Disney films and establishing the categories that we are going to take into account, we can move on to the analysis section. In here we will analyze the main songs that appear in *Hercules* (1997) and *Moana* (2016), looking first at the lyrics and then at the video that accompanies those lyrics in the film. In the appendix, we can find the lyrics of both songs with numbered lines so that it is easier to look for the examples mentioned in this section. We will analyze each category in both songs, first textually and then visually, trying to find the existing relations between text and image. This way we can clearly see the similarities and differences between *Hercules* and *Moana*.

Before starting with the analysis, it is important that we keep in mind the role of both songs in their films. It is essential that we take into account the context in which they appear in order to better understand the meaning of the lyrics. We could say that both songs have the same role: They can be considered an inner monologue in which two young people express their feelings openly. Both songs appear at the beginning of each film and they express the feeling of not belonging that will trigger the journey that both characters start. In the case of *Hercules*, his journey starts in the middle of the song and continues after it, while *Moana* starts her journey in the film quite after her song has ended.

“I can go the distance” is the main song in the film *Hercules* (1997). The song is formed by three different sections divided by parts with dialogue which will not be analyzed as part of the lyrics given that there is no dialogue in *Moana* to contrast it with. Nevertheless, we will refer sometimes to parts of the film that do not belong to the song because we cannot analyze its lyrics and video as an individual text if it is embedded in a broader instance of discourse. In the song we find a single social actor, who is represented in the text as “I”. In fact, it is remarkable how almost all the lines in the song start with

this pronoun, especially in the case of the chorus (lines 9-16). This means that almost all actions are personalized with “I”, Hercules, as the subject (25 out of 32). We can see how this idea is visually reinforced, given that we find him as the only character that appears in the video except for his horse, Pegasus, which only appears at the very end of the video (01:43).

“How far I’ll go” is the main song of the film *Moana* (2016). As Hercules, Moana is the only social actor that appears in the song, and she is also presented through the use of the pronoun “I” (lines 1-7). Nevertheless, we can find other subjects in this song (lines 7-10). Moreover, even if in Hercules’s song we found that almost every action was personalised with Hercules as the subject, in here we see how there are almost the same impersonalised actions (26) than personalised ones (25). This implies that the relevance of Moana as the only social actor is diminished.

Visually, we also see Moana as the main actor in the song. Her actions are usually walking (00:29) and running (01:41), although we find some other actions which indicate movement like sailing (02:03). Nevertheless, in contrast to what we saw in *Hercules*, here we also find other actors, like a man who throws a fruit to her (01:05), or a group of women who clean a carpet (01:08). Gender roles are also clearly seen in these two separate images: The man uses his physical strength to climb up a tree and get the food while the women are in charge of domestic tasks.

The use of pronouns is thus relevant in both songs. In “I can go the distance” we see the use of two pronouns: “I” (lines 9-15) and “they” (line 6). “I” refers to Hercules, the main character, while “they” refers to the people that conform the society in which Hercules lives. However, we could not really establish a contrast between these two pronouns because Hercules is not against the crowds, but he wants to be part of them (lines 3-7). He does not want to be an outcast, but to be famous. He wants to be loved and praised by his deeds: He wants to become a leader. We see in here the association between Hercules and his dominant role as a male character. In fact, we could say that his final desire in life is to find a place where he can feel superior to others, as we can see throughout all the lyrics, and especially in the last chorus (lines 25-32), which ends “I can go the distance till I find my hero’s welcome right where I belong!”

In “How far I’ll go” we can also see the use of the pronoun “I” (lines 1-7) to refer to Moana, and the use of “they” expressed through the term “everybody” (lines 12 and 14) to refer to the inhabitants of the island. We can observe in here the same feeling of not belonging that appears in *Hercules*. However, although she expresses the possibility

of becoming the ruler of the island, this is shown more like an obligation: accepting the role she was meant to play in her society (lines 15-16). In fact, we can see this submission when she says, “I’ll be satisfied if I play along” (line 17). It seems that for Moana it is not important if she is becoming a queen, a hunter or a housewife, as long as she obeys the desires of her family and her society. As we can see, the traditional submissive stereotype associated to women appears in this song in the same way as leadership appears in *Hercules*. Moreover, there is an important difference between both songs, and it is the use of the pronoun “us” in “How far I’ll go” (line 16) to refer to Moana’s society. Although Hercules has clear ideas about his identity, Moana still does not know if she wants to be part of the community where she has always lived in or not. By using “us”, we see how she is not different from those whom she wants to get away from. Hercules is presented as a totally independent character who does not have a home to return to if he is not successful in his journey, while Moana has a family and a society which would still accept her.

It is true that in this case we may think that Moana’s feelings are so mixed because she is a woman, and therefore she is meant to be emotionally unstable. Nevertheless, Moana seems to overcome this instability at the end of her song and finally decides to embark on a journey. She starts her journey after the song has ended, and we see here a difference with Hercules who travels while he sings. The male protagonist travels alone to his final destination, but Moana (who sings alone while she is safe and sound on her island) is accompanied in the dangerous part of the journey by Maui, a male demigod without whom Moana’s mission would have failed. Again, we see in here how men can travel on their own while women need their community or at least a male figure who can guide and help them. However, we could also say that Hercules, as a man, has to be strong and brave enough to go on his journey alone and to leave everything behind: his home, his adoptive parents, all the people he knew in the past... He is not allowed to miss them even once because men are supposed not to express their feelings unless they are violent.

In terms of how Hercules is characterized through the lyrics, we find that there are both examples of nomination, i.e. he is described in terms of what he is (“If I can be strong/ fearless, proud, and strong”), and functionalization, i.e. in terms of what he does (“I will find my way/ I can go the distance/ I will beat the odds”). Apart from this, we can see that he is represented through specification, which means that he is presented as a character who does not belong to his community and wishes to find out where he fits in

("I would go almost anywhere/ to feel like I belong"). This can only be achieved through some special attributes: strength, bravery and pride (line 28).

Moana is also represented as belonging to a community she does not really belong to (lines 3-4), and so we have again this sense of discomformity that also appeared in *Hercules*. However, the adjectives describing how Moana thinks or behaves do not appear, but we find the use of functionalization, which means that we only get what she can or will do ("I can lead with pride, I can make us strong/ one day I'll know, how far I'll go"). We can associate this with the use of objectivisation, because her main characteristic is that she will carry on all those actions because she wants to go away, and that is almost exclusively the only notion that the audience gets about her in the song (lines 16-19).

Once we have analyzed the subjects textually, we will look at the video that accompanies the song in the film. At first sight we could consider that Hercules is visually stereotyped as a member of the Greek community. This is done through his clothes and his factions, which very much resemble those images we could find on a Greek vase. Although in the video that accompanies the song he appears as a pretty thin and average guy, later in the film, Hercules turns into a strong demigod who represents the prototype of masculine beauty. In *Moana* we can see that again we are facing a stereotyped character which, through her clothes and physical appearance, represents the stereotype of a Hawaiian girl. We could also say that she is a beautiful girl with no imperfections and with a thin silhouette. We can say therefore that both characters fit the prototype of women and men in films and TV in terms of their psychological and physical portrayal. With regards to how Hercules appears on screen, we see that we mostly find long shots that keep the audience away from the inner feelings of the character (01:08-01:20). He is usually looking upwards (00:49) implying a positive feeling, possibly related to the expectations about his journey, which could be associated with his expectations about life. Looking at pose, we see a change in Hercules as the song continues. At the beginning we see mainly close poses (01:20-01:30) that represent conformity, and although he continues walking throughout the video, it is only at the end that we find an open pose (01:46-01:52) when Hercules rides Pegasus and he extends his arms. In spite of this, the movement is mainly in the animal and not so much in the character.

In the case of Moana, there are both long (01:26-01:30) and close shots (00:07-00:20), so it seems that the audience has to be interested both in the inner feelings of the character, but also in her actions. However, those long shots that appeared in Hercules

were very far from the character in the sense that the audience had to pay special attention to find him in the background. On the other hand, long shots in “How far I’ll go” always have Moana in the center of the screen and do not get very far from the character. If we analyse gaze, we see how she usually looks in a straight line (00:33-00:38), but not at the viewer. We could think that this means that Moana has very clear ideas, but in fact she is looking beyond: to the distance that is referred to in the text. Her pose, on the other hand, suggests stillness and therefore conformity when she is on the island (01:27-01:34), but movement appears when she gets closer to the sea (01:55-02:15). Even when she is sailing on her boat, her pose still suggests more activity than when she stays on the island. We can conclude that there is a similarity in both songs if we look at pose: both characters seem to be more conformist at the beginning, but suggest movement at the end of the song, when they are getting closer to their final objective.

With regards to the analysis of transitivity, we can see how in “I can go the distance” most utterances belong to material (13) and relational (13) processes. We can see in here that the interest in Hercules is not only set on what he does, but also on who he is. We can relate both types of processes and even say that Hercules can only discover his own identity if he performs several material actions. This idea is reinforced with the order in which processes appear in the song. The first process that appears is “dreamed” (“I have often dreamed of a far off place”), which has connotations related to the future. In the following parts of the song (lines 9-24), we can see how material and mental processes appear combined until we get to the last part of the song (lines 25-32) where we see a list of material processes. In the middle of this list we find an implicit relational process (“fearless, proud, and strong”) that links with the final action (“right where I belong”) which is also relational. As we have said before, this order suggests that the final objective of Hercules (finding where he belongs) must be achieved through physical actions that will make him strong and brave. These two characteristics are meant to be essential if he wants to know his true identity. This can be linked again to how strength seems to be a mandatory attribute for male characters. This song might be suggesting that if a man is not strong, he will not be able to perform physical processes, and if he cannot do that, he will never be able to find out who he truly is. Therefore, we could say that a man who has no muscles will be lacking male identity.

Most of these processes are affected by the use of modality. We can see that almost every action is preceded by a modal verb, generally “will” and “can” (lines 9-11). These two are associated with epistemic modality and express a medium and a high degree of

certainty. These modals show confidence and prove that Hercules can achieve anything he wants if he is strong enough.

Once we have dealt with the analysis of Hercules, we will look now at transitivity in “How far I’ll go”. If we analyze the different processes that appear in the lyrics, we find that most actions are material (25). We can see an example of these processes in the verse “every turn I take, every trail I track/ every path I make”. However, unlike in the previous example, these material processes appear usually impersonalised, i.e, Moana is not the subject performing them as in “see the line where the sky meets the sea?/ how far it goes/ if the wind in my sail on the sea stays behind me”. In fact, out of those twenty-five instances in which we can find a material process, only thirteen of them have Moana as the subject performing the action. Moreover, in these cases in which Moana appears as the subject, we find that material actions appear subordinated to modality markers or mental processes as in “and let me know, (...) will I cross that line?” or in “One day I’ll know, how far I’ll go”.

Since Moana also wants to find out where she really belongs, relational processes should have played the same role as in “I can go the distance” in which they are given the same importance as material processes. However, in “How far I’ll go” we see that there are only ten instances of relational processes, and most of them do not even have Moana as their subject (lines 12-14). Furthermore, the only instances in which Moana is the subject, the actions refer to her past and to what she cannot or does not want to be, as in “I wish I could be the perfect daughter”. This can be related to the first actions that appear in the song, “staring” and “remember” (lines 1-2), which are associated to the past, unlike Hercules’s song, which was headed to the future.

Modality markers in this song are mainly epistemic, as it happens with “I can go the distance”. The most frequent ones are also “can” (line 16) and “will” (line 11). These two modal verbs are meant to indicate confidence and a medium or high degree of certainty as it happened in the case of Hercules. However, in the case of Moana, almost every action she performs is subordinated to a modality marker, and this somehow lowers their certainty in contrast to unmodalized or categorical sentences. The contrast lies on the fact that categorical utterances appear mostly when Moana is not the subject of the sentence, so it looks as if her actions were less probable (lines 12-19).

With the analysis of transitivity we can conclude that Moana is subordinated to her mental world. Although we may think that she is performing all those material actions, they are all in her mind and, therefore, they are presented as something unreal that is not

happening or will not happen in the near future. Moreover, unlike in the case of *Hercules*, the actions she performs lead her nowhere. The final line “One day I’ll know, how far I’ll go” is just a repetition of what she has been singing all along the song: she does not move forward, as it happened with Hercules. It is true that the male character has to get strong in order to find out his true identity, but at least, he has a chance. The female character is constraint in her inner self and her thoughts, unable to get out from there. Her chance of achieving her objectives lies on the remote possibility that someone else will come (hopefully a man) to pull her out from her mental world and bring her to reality.

After analyzing both transitivity and modality in the lyrics, we will look now at these two categories visually. As Hercules is the only character on screen, we can only analyze transitivity visually on him. Nevertheless, the main process he performs is walking, usually at the same speed. This means that, although the role of the actor is not obscured, transitivity is represented more strongly through the lyrics than in the video. In the lyrics we can see all kinds of actions that he is going to perform, but in the video we only see him moving. However, we find an instance in which Hercules decides to climb a tree for no apparent reason, so this may represent again the importance of physical strength. If this is so, the video might have been used in order to reinforce the male stereotype that appears constantly in the lyrics.

Dealing now with modality, we can see that there is not a high degree of articulation of detail, especially in the background, which is sometimes not very different from a blur. Perspective is not used either, as we can only find two dimensions without any articulation of light and shadow. In terms of color, we see how there is no color saturation and almost no variation in tone. This shows how the focus is exclusively on the character and his importance: Hercules goes alone in his journey and he does not need anyone to help him. As a male character, he is portrayed as totally independent (he does not even interact with any other human being in the path), and a character who can rely on his physical strength and attributes to know that he will succeed. These characteristics can be linked again to the traditional portrayal of men.

Moving on to the study of transitivity in “How far I’ll go”, we find a clear difference between the video in *Hercules* and in *Moana*. Although Moana also spends much time walking and running, there is correlation between what is being said in the lyrics and the images that appear in the video. For example, when she is talking about the sea (00:39-00:50), we can truly see the line she is talking about, or when she is talking

about the people who live in the island, we can see the roles that they have: men take care of the community, women perform domestic tasks, and children play (01:03-01:16).

We might think that the correlation between the meaning of the lyrics and the visual images gives the impression that what is being said is totally certain. However, this idea is contraposed to how visual modality appears in the images that accompany the song. We can see how the idilic paradise that appears in the background has such a high degree of saturation that we may think of it almost as unrealistic. This is also emphasized through the use of bright colors and tones, the use of perspective, and the articulation of light and shadow. Moana lives in an idealized paradise as if she were not real. This is very different from what happened in *Hercules*, where even if the background was blurred, we could still deem it realistic. We can see in here the association of women to an imaginary world. Since Moana appears in such a delightful place that we could deem as unrealistic, everything that happens to her remains an impossibility. It does not matter if she succeeds or fails, because everything will still just be a fantasy. The plausible scenario in “I can go the distance” makes us think that what Hercules is doing is possible in real life: men are given the ability of acting in their lives, while women are secluded to a kind of mental paradise from where they cannot get out.

Finally, we will look at the use of metaphors in both songs. In “I can go the distance” we can see how there is a major conceptual metaphor: LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Kövecses, 2002). This can be seen in several examples in which the source domain Life is associated to travelling (“I will find my way/ I can go the distance/ I know every mile will be worth my while”). Apart from this, we can find another example of conceptual metaphor in the song: LIFE IS WAR (Kövecses, 2002), in which OBSTACLES ARE ENEMIES. This can be seen for example in “I will beat the odds” (line 25). In the case of *Moana*, the most relevant conceptual metaphor we can find in the lyrics is also LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Kövecses, 2002) as we can see in “every path I make, every road leads back/ to the place I know, where I cannot go” (lines 6-7).

The conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY that appears in the lyrics is also expressed visually through the movement of characters in both songs (Ning Yu, 2009, 119-143). However, there are also some other metaphors that can only be found visually in each of the songs. In *Hercules* we find for example GOOD IS UP (Kövecses, 2002) which can be observed when Hercules climbs up in order to reach his objectives, or SEEING IS KNOWING (Kövecses, 2002) which can be associated to the moments in which Hercules closes his eyes, maybe conveying that he does not know where he is headed. Moreover,

we find the metaphor TIME IS MOTION, which can be seen when there are changes in the background as the character is moving. These changes are used in order to show the passing of time.

In *Moana*, we see one of the most common visual conceptual metaphors EMOTIONS ARE NATURE (Kövecses, 2000), which somehow contradicts again what is being said in the lyrics. Although she is constantly saying that she does not conform to her current life and she has mixed feelings, the nature she is surrounded by is tranquil, especially in the case of the sea, which is totally calm. We can also see the visual metaphor TIME IS MOTION (Kövecses, 2002), which is again represented through the change in the background as the character moves along.

LIFE IS A JOURNEY and TIME IS MOTION are two conceptual systems that appear in both songs, which can serve to determine their similarity: monotony and desire of knowing new places to find one's identity. However, we find two other metaphors that appear in the lyrics or visually: LIFE IS WAR in the case of *Hercules*, and EMOTIONS ARE NATURE in the case of *Moana*. This is relevant because nature also appears visually in the case of *Hercules*, but in a completely different way. The lyrics or the emotions presented in *Hercules* do not change no matter if it is night or day, or if it is sunny or raining. In fact, there is a moment in the song in which it is stormy, and he actually smiles. Nature does not affect his emotions, but it is only seen as another obstacle that he has to beat, i.e. as an enemy. Here again the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS WAR can be found.

In the case of *Moana*, we cannot underestimate the power of nature. In fact, the whole movie is set around a natural element: the sea. However, the sea, as all the nature that is set on the island, contradicts what is being said in the lyrics. This may show the lack of realism in Moana's thoughts. Linked to the analysis of modality and transitivity, Moana is presented as a young girl who is full of exalted feelings and thoughts, but in the end, what we get from other semiotic channels is that all these emotions are only inside her imagination and cannot exist in the real world. We can see through these conceptual metaphors how Hercules, a man, is associated to war; while Moana, a woman, is linked to feelings and emotions expressed through nature. War is therefore made for men, as they are strong and fearless (or in any case they can control their emotions), while women are trapped in their inner feelings which they do not only show by themselves, but also through their environment.

Once we have analyzed both songs, we can summarize the results we have obtained in a table form, as we can see in Table 2 below.

	<i>I can go the Distance</i>	<i>How Far I'll go</i>
Social Actors	Hercules is the only social actor Physical and some mental attributes	Moana is the main but not only social actor No physical or mental attributes.
Transitivity	Material and relational processes Future Song ending in Hercules's objective	Material processes subordinated to mental processes. Past No final objective established in the song
Modality	High and medium degree of epistemic modality Visual modality focused only on Hercules	High and medium degree of epistemic modality Visual modality associated to an impossible reality
Metaphors	LIFE IS A JOURNEY LIFE IS WAR TIME IS MOTION	LIFE IS A JOURNEY NATURE ARE EMOTIONS TIME IS MOTION

Table 2: Summary of the results in both songs

If we compare the results obtained in this analysis to the personality dimensions that appeared in Table 1, we see how the characteristics attributed to men and women mostly coincide. Hercules is an active character who decides to start a journey on his own. He is able to control his emotions and he does not show fear or love towards what he will find ahead or what he has left behind. His strength allows him to be the center of the action. On the other hand, Moana is a passive character who is still constrained by her community. She is not the only focus of attention of the camera, as she is usually accompanied by other people or animals. Her emotions are confused between what she wants or does not want to do, and nature places her in an unreal setting.

These stereotypical associations may have some social consequences. Since Disney Corporation is such a huge organization, many people have watched these two films, not only at the moment of their release, but also many years after it. People got to know the songs that appear in these films, and then started to sing them. Even more than

that, with the technological possibilities we have nowadays, they can even reproduce the video that accompanies the song as many times as they want.

The constant repetition of these representations of men and women may end up creating a kind of normalization about these gender portrayals (Hillard, 2018: 36-56). Unless the songs and the videos are exposed to a critical analysis, the audience will see as normal that Moana stays in that beautiful island, while Hercules travels through the woods as it rains. Nevertheless, it would be impossible for us to imagine Hercules in Moana's island, which happens because all those associations of women as being unreal and men as being capable of doing anything that conveys physical effort are already in our minds.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of the two songs "I can go the distance" from the film *Hercules* (1997) and "How far I'll go" from the film *Moana* (2016) shows a stereotypical representation of gender through the combination of the linguistic and visual modes. By applying the tools suggested by Machin and Mayr (2012) in order to study the different categories established by Fairclough (1989) we have seen how both visual and linguistic elements create a picture of male and female characters which follows the traditional characteristics that have been associated to both genders.

Physical attributes are essential to be a man, leaving aside the necessity of having mental attributes. Hercules is thus also depicted as a lonely character who cannot freely express emotions like fear, or mourning, in the same way that he cannot doubt about his decisions. He must be capable of assuming the consequences of his acts without an opportunity of redemption. Moana, on the other hand, is not portrayed through her physical attributes, paying more attention to some of her ideals, which do not appear physically represented on screen. She does not know what she wants to do, and therefore she is presented as an unstable character who is incapable of starting a journey on her own due to her constantly changing emotions.

In this dissertation, we have seen how two young people with the same dreams and worries are represented in a totally different way just because one of them is a man and the other one is a woman. And these associations affect both of them. Moana is for sure an intelligent woman, and of course she has mixed feelings about leaving her family and going on an adventure. But Hercules does not seem to have the same right. He cannot

show the same feelings of missing his family if he goes away because that would not be “man-like”: Once he has said goodbye, there is no way back. And if we look at it from the other perspective, Moana is as capable as Hercules to start a journey, but all her actions are subordinated to what she thinks or what she knows, so in the end she does not seem to do anything.

In the end, Moana goes into a journey to save her community, while Hercules leaves his home to become popular and famous. But it seems that even though Moana’s objective is much more laudable than Hercules’s, the fact that a young woman can leave her home to become a heroine seems to be so improbable that even the video seems to be telling the audience that what they are watching will never happen in our world, but it is only possible in cartoons. The real problem starts when the audience is so used to these representations that they do not ask themselves why Moana’s emotions are a rollercoaster or why Hercules does not miss at any moment his adoptive family. For this reason, it is necessary to analyze these songs from all perspectives and make the audience understand what they are watching and listening for them to be critical about it.

Identifying this type of gender stereotypical characterization can be useful for raising awareness of what the audience is watching or listening to. They might not be aware of what stereotypical conventions are present in a fictional work. For this reason, they still apply those traditional characteristics to men and women without even noticing. This study might be useful in order to give a piece of information about what is really going on in some cartoon films in which heroes and heroines are still limited due to the stereotypes associated to their sex. Although we may think that this is something that only happened in the past, we still find this picture in *Moana*, the latest Disney princess film, released in 2016.

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6. Appendix

I can go the distance – *Hercules*

- I have often dreamed
Of a far-off place
Where a great warm welcome
Will be waiting for me
5 Where the crowds will cheer
When they see my face
And a voice keeps saying
This is where I'm meant to be
- I will find my way
10 I can go the distance
I'll be there someday
If I can be strong
I know every mile
Will be worth my while
15 I would go almost anywhere
To feel like I belong
- I am on my way
I can go the distance
I don't care how far
20 Somehow I'll be strong
I know every mile
Will be worth my while
I will go most anywhere
To find where I belong
- 25 I will beat the odds
I can go the distance
I will face the world
Fearless, proud and strong

I will please the gods
30 I can go the distance
Till I find my hero's welcome
Right where I belong!

How far I'll go – *Moana*

I've been staring at the edge of the water
Long as I can remember, never really knowing why
I wish I could be the perfect daughter
But I come back to the water, no matter how hard I try
5 Every turn I take, every trail I track
Every path I make, every road leads back
To the place I know, where I cannot go, where I long to be

See the line where the sky meets the sea? It calls me
And no one knows, how far it goes
10 If the wind in my sail on the sea stays behind me
One day I'll know, if I go there's just no telling how far I'll go

I know everybody on this island, seems so happy on this island
Everything is by design
I know everybody on this island has a role on this island
15 So maybe I can roll with mine

I can lead with pride, I can make us strong
I'll be satisfied if I play along
But the voice inside sings a different song
What is wrong with me?

20 See the light as it shines on the sea? It's blinding
But no one knows, how deep it goes
And it seems like it's calling out to me, so come find me
And let me know, what's beyond that line, will I cross that line?

The line where the sky meets the sea? It calls me
25 And no one knows, how far it goes
If the wind in my sail on the sea stays behind me
One day I'll know, how far I'll go