Gender Specific Language in Animated Movies
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1. Introduction

This essay deals with differences in male and female speech – not in how men and women talk, but rather how male and female speech is portrayed in animated movies. I have chosen to work with the area of gender oriented linguistic behaviour and animated movies since there has been a lot of interesting research already carried out in the area of gender research and since animated movies show constructed, rather artificial speech, they might contain more male/female speech than real life because they are subject to beliefs about how men and women talk. The characters in animated movies live a myth.

1.1 Outline

The background begins with a short introduction and basic ideas in the area of gender research. Each section in the background contains information about some of the supposed differences in male and female speech. Both differences that have more or less scientific support and prevailing myths about male and female speech will be presented. Then there follows a summary of what the analysis of two animated movies, *Antz* and *Finding Nemo*, may be expected to show based on the research presented. The results part contains an analysis of the two movies based on the areas of research on male and female speech presented in the background. Then there is a discussion where the findings of the analysis are discussed in the light of research presented earlier in the essay. The conclusion part contains final conclusions that can be drawn about the analysis and research and summarises what has been discussed. Everything that was noted in the movies is enclosed in the appendix of this essay (see page 43).
1.2 Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that the portrayal of men’s and women’s speech in animated movies is influenced by beliefs about male and female speech to such an extent that there are visible differences between female and male linguistic behaviour.

2. Background

2.1 Basic vocabulary

_Covert prestige_ is the use of a less prestigious language variety for the purpose of identifying with a particular group of people. _Overt prestige_ is the opposite – using more prestigious language (Thomas and Wareing1999).

A _stereotype_ is a “fixed idea” that people have about something regardless of whether it is true or not (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary 2003:1248).

A _tag question_ is a phrase added to a sentence to emphasise or ask for clarification (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2003:1300) and a _hedge_ is an expression like *you know, like, sort of* that do not really contain any information but is added to sentences for various reasons.

_Pitch_ has to do with the frequency in which the vocal chords vibrate. A very high-pitched voice may be perceived as shrill whereas a low-pitched voice is rather dark.

_A phoneme_ is a speech sound, such as /s/ or /dZ/ (Westergren Axelsson 1994).

2.2 Gender, sex and language

The term _gender_, now frequently used in the general field of gender research, was originally a term used in linguistics. Gender, as opposed to the biologically innate sex, is socially
constructed (Cameron in Coates 1998). The term was adopted into the field of gender research during the 1960’s and 70’s when there was a need for a word that would denote the socially constructed behaviour of men and women as opposed to the biologically determined behaviour (Coates 1998:496). People construct themselves through their actions, and behaviour is often reproduced (Cameron in Coates 1998). Models of male and female behaviour are present in our culture (Goddard and Patterson 2000:93). Language as well is learnt behaviour (Goddard and Patterson 2000:86). The way in which men and women speak will therefore hereafter be referred to as linguistic behaviour. According to postmodernists dealing with language, people are the way they are because of how they speak (Cameron in Coates 1998:272) and this makes speech a very important factor in the creation and realisation of self. Masculine and feminine behaviour might be experienced as very fixed, but it is a fragile construction (Cameron in Coates 1998:272) and this is visible in the variation in what is believed to constitute male and female behaviour in different parts of the world. The social construction of gender and gender beliefs may differ from culture to culture and from group to group, so findings in the area of the English language cannot be used to generalise about other cultures and other social environments (Hellinger and Bußman 2001:17). A lot of research in the area of gender has been carried out using white, middle-class Americans as a reference group (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003), but researchers now appear to be looking into other cultures as well.

Gender is a form of social identity (Bing and Bergvall in Coates 1998:497), but there are many social factors that affect each other, such as race, class, culture and economic setting that should not be forgotten but rather taken into consideration when exploring gender research. Coates further argues that this isolation of gender among other social factors is fairly common in gender research but that it should be avoided.
There has been much focus on differences between the sexes (Hellinger and Bußman 2001:17), and this has lead to gender being seen as a dichotomy when in fact it is more of a “continuum” with a considerable amount of overlapping, to use the words of Bing and Bergvall (Coates 1998:497). Many researchers, it is argued, support this dichotomy by asking questions about which differences there are and using this polarised image of male and female linguistic behaviour as a starting point for research (1998:497). The critique against such a binary view has been heavy (Hellinger and Bußman 2001:17). Through highlighting only potential differences, a large common area of linguistic behaviour is left unexplored and becomes more or less invisible (Bing and Bergvall in Coates 1998:498). In real life this dichotomy is perhaps accepted. Men and women are expected to be a certain way and those who do not fit the profile will be categorised as deviant. After all, “[t]he minimal requirement for being a man is not being a woman” (Johnson and Aries in Coates 1998:281).

2.3 Research and stereotype

To summarise quickly, stereotypical features of women’s language are conservatism, prestige consciousness, upward mobility, insecurity, defence, nurture, emotional expressivity, connectedness, sensibility to others and solidarity. Stereotypical features of men’s language are toughness, lack of affect, competitiveness, independence, competence, hierarchy and control. (Romaine 1999:155). Some of these features, and others, will now be explored in the light of research.

2.3.1 Talkativeness

From a strictly stereotypical point of view, women are the talkative sex (Goddard and Patterson 2000:100). Romaine suggests that it is such a common belief that women talk more than men simply because men prefer for women to be silent (Romaine 1999:161) and she
draws attention to the talkative female’s counterpart - the stereotypical Western masculine man - a man of silence, not talk.

In 1990 Cutler and Scott did an experiment involving talkativeness. They had a number of people listen to recorded conversations between men and women where the speakers of both genders contributed an equal amount. The people listening were asked to decide which person spoke more during the conversation. The answer Cutler and Scott received was that the women spoke more (Weatherall and Gallois in Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003, 2005). This experiment shows the existence of stereotypical gender models when it comes to talkativeness. Situation comedy, according to Talbot (Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003:460), often displays speech by female characters as “spiralling into excess”, with it being constant and uncontrolled.

Some research has shown, however, that when men and women are given the opportunity to talk, men are the ones that talk more. In a test carried out by Swacker in 1975, men and women were asked to talk about a set of pictures they were handed. The male subjects spoke on average three times as long as the women and this was seen as evidence that men talk more than women. The reliability of this test has been questioned since it says nothing about how the men and women who were part of it would talk if they were interacting with their friends in a more natural situation (Goddard and Patterson 2000). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) claim that it might very well be the case that the amount of talk men and women produce depends on the situation. Men, it is argued, tend to talk more in formal mixed sex situations where high status people are expected to talk, while women talk more in informal mixed sex situations (2003:116). Holmes (1995:37) says that there is “abundant evidence” that men talk more than women in formal prestige situations but less in more intimate and informal situations since men find the latter uncomfortable. As was said before, gendered behaviour is often culture specific and there are examples of other cultures where women are
just as likely, or even more likely than men, to talk in formal situations, such as political and economic discourse (Buchholtz in Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003, 2005).

An experiment carried out by Eskilson and Wiley in 1975 showed that when gender is made irrelevant, it is the person with the highest status who tends to talk more. This was shown by putting together a group of people of both sexes and telling them that one of them had succeeded better on a fake test. The outcome was that the person, who was then believed to be the most successful, spoke more, regardless of gender (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003).

2.3.2 Turntaking, interruption and overlap

The difference between interruption and overlap is that an interruption is a violation of the turntaking process, whereas an overlap is a change in turn that takes place at an appropriate time (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:112), where the speaker either makes a pause or by eye contact, gesture or posture signals that s/he is done speaking (Mills 2003:46). How to signal that the floor is open for another speaker can vary very much from culture to culture. In some cultures, longer periods of silence are tolerated whereas in other cultures any silence longer than a couple of seconds is seen as embarrassing and needs to be filled with talk (Romaine 1999:159). Deciding what is an interruption and what is an overlap might thus be difficult, but the two terms are needed in order to distinguish between serious turntaking violations and more natural fluency in a discussion.

In a study by Zimmerman and West in early gender research (1975), it was found that men interrupt far more than women and that men use interruption as a way of taking turns and changing topic (Goddard and Patterson 2000), but since then there have been many studies on interruption and different ones have come to different conclusions. One of the problems with existing research is that it does not take into account the speakers’ own interpretation of a
conversation. What may seem as an interruption to an outsider, who is merely analysing a conversation, may not be perceived as an interruption by the person who is supposedly being interrupted (Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003, 2005). Moreover, by interrupting, a speaker may signal dominance over the other speaker/s (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:112) and this is probably a reason why it is often believed that men interrupt more than women. The question of whether men really interrupt more than women, Romaine says, remains unsolved (1999:157). Eckert and McConnell-Ginnet (2003:112), however, claim that, although there has not yet been enough research into men’s use of interruption and overlap, there is evidence that suggests that men and women use these conversation strategies differently and that the strategies are features of a supportive conversation style predominantly used by women.

2.3.3 Tags and hedges

Lakoff, an early researcher in the field of gender research, saw women’s speech as inferior to men’s and believed that women’s language was subject to the power relationship between men and women (Weatherall 2002:57). Lakoff, according to Weatherall, based much of her conclusions on intuition and most of her data came from observation of her white, middle-class, female friends. Nevertheless, her thoughts about women’s use of tags and hedges appear to have been a source of inspiration for many researchers. Lakoff believes that women use tag questions and hedges because such use signals uncertainty, and women’s language needs to signal uncertainty and thereby inferiority to that of men in order not to offend the superior sex (Weatherall 2002:57). The outcome of research done in the area of tag questions is a bit ambiguous. Some researchers have found that women use more tags and some have found that men use more (Weatherall 2002). Weatherall says that there is perhaps no simple answer to the question of who uses more tag questions. Coates (1996:152) says that there is “growing evidence that women use [hedges] more than men”, but she goes on by saying that
“recognizing that women use hedges more than men does not entail recognizing that women are unassertive” (1996:172). Coates does however say that women hedge to avoid sounding too resolute, which on the other hand is what men strive for. By using hedges, a speaker can signal uncertainty about what s/he is saying and avoid difficult situations where s/he might be challenged (Coates 1996:154).

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003:185) say that quite a number of researchers have found that women use the specific hedge you know more than men. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003:168) also say that some researchers have found that women use more tags and some have found the opposite, that men use more tags. Since asking questions is commonly seen as a feature of female language, tags are very much associated with female speech (Goddard and Patterson 2000:99). Some of the difficulty in analysing data seems to lie in the interpretation of how and why tags are used by speakers. There are many different kinds of tags (Holmes 1995) and far from all have anything to do with the speaker being insecure (Goddard and Patterson 2000). Mills (2003), Eckert McConnell-Ginet (2003) and Goddard and Patterson (2000) all make the important point that hedging is very common among young people today, and Mills says that there is very little research that clearly and strongly supports the claim that there is a considerable difference in distribution of you know between the sexes.

2.3.4 Discourse and topics

It has been found in research that women and men are equally likely to raise all kinds of topics except one – personal problems or concerns and emotions (DeFrancisco in Coates 1998:179). Adult female friends supposedly talk much more often about family, personal problems, intimate relationships, doubts and fears and daily activities than adult male friends do (DeFrancisco in Coates 1998). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003:123) also list personal problems, doubts and fears, family problems and intimate relationships as being typical for
female conversation and rather unusual in male discourse. Men on the other hand, it is claimed by Johnson and Aries (1998:217), talk about sports more often. Men also tend to have a more aggressive way of talking to each other, with insults frequently being used and disagreement or even hostility common (Coates in Coates 1998:263). Men’s speech is often compared to battle or “verbal sparring” (Mills 2003:61) while women are compared to cackling hens (Romaine 1999:164).

2.3.5 Gossip

The most important function of gossip is that of affirmation of group solidarity, which is often achieved by talking down other people or groups of people that are not part of the present party (Pilkington in Coates 1998:254). Though this may seem to be a possibly universal feature of speech among friends, gossip is strongly connected with female speech. The view on gossip as belonging to the sphere of women’s talk can be found in the Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, where there are three sample sentences with personal names or personal pronouns to display possible usage of the term gossip. There are only female names and pronouns in the three sentences: “Her letter was full of gossip”, “Jane and Lynn sat in the kitchen having a good gossip about their friends”, “She’s a terrible gossip” (p 542). This view on gossip as being typical of women’s talk prevails though research suggests that men gossip just as much as women and even that men and women gossip about more or less the same things (Cameron in Coates 1998:276). In Johnson and Meinhof (1997:142) it is claimed that, while the personal and private is a common topic in female gossip, men tend to avoid such topics. In gossip among men, conversations take on more features of what is believed to belong to women’s speech, i.e. co-operative features instead of the more masculine competitive ones (Cameron in Coates 1998:279). Men may for example gossip about and talk down gay men as a way of confirming their own heterosexual masculinity and
talking about sports may very well have the function of gossip among men (Johnson and Meinhof 1997:137). Men’s talk is however rarely referred to as *gossip*. “Power”, it is stated, “is associated with male behaviour and male discourse” (Goddard and Patterson 2000:95), while female discourse is seen as something far more trivial (Romaine 1999:168) and can thus be referred to by using the rather derogatory term gossip, perhaps regardless of the status of the women it concerns.

2.3.6 Voice

The typical female voice is a soft, high-pitched one that “invokes the connection between female gender and smallness and fragility” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:61). Stereotypical female speech also has a wider pitch range (Yuasa in Benor and Rose et al. 2002:193) and it is thought to often shift in frequency (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:177).

Part of a person’s speech is biologically determined by the size and shape of their vocal chords and resonating cavities, but a person does have the possibility to adjust pitch and tone of voice, intonation and phonetic realisation of speech sounds, among other things, to suit the identity s/he wants to display (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:60). Women’s voices are generally approximately one octave above men’s, but phonology can easily be gender marked and Yuasa (Benor and Rose et al. 2002) states that there is enough research to believe that it is highly likely that both men and women adjust the pitch of their voice to correspond to the expected pitch. Weatherall (2002:51) says that research has found that when Japanese women speak Japanese, they use higher pitched voices than when they speak English, which shows that there may be different expectations of pitch in different cultures and that speakers may be consciously or subconsciously aware of them. Similarly, it is found that Polish men generally speak with a higher pitch than American men do. These conclusions have however been
questioned due to the difficulty of measuring pitch correctly (Weatherall 2002). Weatherall says that it is difficult to actually prove whether differences in voice are biologically or socially determined, but she does say that “[...] sex differences in the acoustic qualities of voice cannot be accounted for by anatomical sex differences in the vocal apparatus alone” (2002:50). There is nevertheless an awareness of what constitutes stereotypical female speech. This awareness can be observed in self help books and magazine articles from the late 20th century, in which women were encouraged to attain a more powerful language by not using a high pitched voice or a “swoopy” intonation (Cameron in Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003, 2005:454). There is some evidence that English speaking females, particularly in North American accents, have a different phonetic realisation of the phoneme /s/ than men do. Women’s /s/ is higher in pitch and is pronounced with the tip of the tongue closer to the teeth. A man doing the same thing might be considered feminine, which is probably why the more dental /s/ is also associated with homosexual men (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003).

2.3.7 Standard and non-standard language

People do not use either standard or non-standard language. Rather, there is a continuum and most people use both standard and non-standard forms (Eckert in Coates 1998:65). The use of non-standard language depends not only on gender, but also on factors such as socio-economic class and ethnicity (Cheshire in Coates 1998:29), but it is argued that women in general tend to use less non-standard language than men, regardless of social class (Weatherall 2002, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003). Women’s speech is thus often said to be more conservative than men’s (Eckert in Coates 1998:66).

One explanation for why men use the vernacular more than women might be that the use of non-standard language in school (and, perhaps, outside school as well) is considered
rebellious and uneducated. While boys are more or less expected to rebel against authority
and while their behaviour is tolerated, girls are expected to submit (Eckert and McConnell-
Ginet 2003:29). A study comparing children’s language at school has found that girls use
more non-standard language among themselves and less when they speak to a teacher, while
boys use more non-standard language when confronted with authority. The same study also
found that, although –ing reduction to the vernacular fishin’ and talkin’ is fairly common in the
English speaking world, school aged boys used it more than girls (Eckert and McConnell-
Ginet 2003:29). Non-standard language appears to be more common among adolescents, both
boys and girls, and decreases with age (Eisikovits in Coates 1998:42).

The vernacular in general covertly appeals to men because it is associated with the
toughness of working class masculinity (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:298). As it is said
by Eckert (Coates 1998:65), the working class is the undisputed centre and the heart of non-
standard language. This is probably also a reason why it is not as common among women.
Women might not strive to sound masculine. They, on the other hand, it has been suggested,
use more standard language for overt prestige reasons (Eisikovits in Coates 1998:47).

Although women are said to be more conservative when it comes to the vernacular, they
are also believed to be less conservative than men when it comes to phonological variables
that are in the process of changing and becoming an accepted part of the language in question
(Eckert in Coates 1998:66). Women appear to be leading the way and introducing
phonological prestige forms (Mathisen in Foulkes and Docherty 1999:113) that will eventually
become standardised (Romaine in Holmes and Meyerhof 2003, 2005). One example is the
glottal stop in the UK. When the glottal stop first began to spread, men were the ones using it
the most and it had strong connotations with male speech. As it became more and more
common, women started to adopt it and now appear to be leading the spread of the glottal stop
(Mathisen in Foulkes and Doherty 1999:113). The same connection between women and
phonological change towards new standard forms has been found outside the UK as well (Romaine in Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003, 2005).

2.3.8 Profanity

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet say that men are expected to use profanity more than women, but not to use it in the presence of women (2003:70). This is partly because men’s anger is tolerated more than women’s, just as in the case with non-standard language among rebellious schoolboys. In parts of the US there are laws that forbid swearing in the presence of women (and children), and there is even a very recent case where a man was convicted for doing so (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:182). In Western society, profanity is often connected with masculinity and power and has covert prestige (Johnson and Meinhof 1997:174). Mills (2003:192) says that this “taboo” on the use of profanity among women is now changing and women in powerful position especially use profanity to confirm their high status by sounding more masculine.

According to Johnson and Meinhof (1997), male adolescents use more expletives than females. The use of expletives, they say, can be said to have a direct connection with the boys wanting to sound more masculine, because in same sex schools, where there are no girls present, boys use a lot fewer expletives. They do not have to prove their masculinity in the same way in same sex environments.

A study carried out by Precht in 2002 showed women using more words such as gosh while men used the word shit more, but Prech found no difference in the use of damn and god (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:182).
2.3.9 Politeness

Politeness has a very important social function and its use varies from culture to culture (Holmes 1995). Different kinds of behaviour fall into the category of politeness. Holmes gives a few examples, such as greeting people, complimenting, apologising, giving encouraging feedback, hedging directives, using first names, using formal titles and using a gentle voice (1995:10). But politeness is not necessarily a positive form of behaviour, since it can be used for manipulative purposes, among other things (Mills 2003). Women, though, are more likely to use language to express a positive form of friendly politeness and they are also very sensitive to the needs of others, in that they are good at appreciating when there is need for an apology. Holmes mentions complimenting as one of the most obvious examples of positive politeness, and says that women compliment other people more and apologise more than men. Women, Holmes claims, are complimented more often than men and she says that it is perhaps due to the power relationship between the sexes where men compliment “downwards” (Holmes 1995:116). There may also be differences in what men and women choose to apologise for. Women tend to apologise for light offences whereas men save their apologies for more serious offences (Holmes 1995:185).

2.3.10 Verbal irony and figurative speech

Colston and Lee (2004) believe that there are gender differences in the use of verbal irony. They assume this position because verbal irony holds a lot of figurative language, which is perceived as a fairly aggressive, and therefore masculine, form of language. Colston and Lee cite previous studies, which have shown that males make about twice as many sarcastic remarks as do women. The explanation for this is thought to lie in the fact that men generally take more risks than women, and with sarcasm and irony easily being misinterpreted; women are expected to use less verbal irony (Colston and Lee 2004). Colston and Lee had twenty-
four university undergraduate students, half of them male and half of them female, read written scenarios with ironic and literal remarks and afterwards decide which remarks were most likely female and which were most likely male. The ironic and literal remarks were rather similar: “This is just perfect (verbal irony)” and “This is just awful (literal)” (Colston and Lee 2004:293). The results showed that participants of both sexes considered the comments containing verbal irony most likely male. Another experiment, investigating the likelihood of men and women using verbal irony, was also performed by Colston and Lee. The participants, again twenty-four new university undergraduate students, half of them male and half of them female, were chosen. They were asked to act out a scenario much like the one in the first experiment and then state the likeliness of them actually using the literal and ironic comments. The results, Colston and Lee (2004) conclude, showed that the male participants preferred verbal irony while the female participants preferred the literal comments. The general conclusion drawn by Colston and Lee is that men more often use verbal irony than women do.

Link and Kreuz claim to have found support for their belief that men and women use figurative language differently (Colston and Katz 2005). Link and Kreuz state that their research shows that men use figurative language to talk about negative emotions rather than positive emotions while women make no difference in such use. Women, on the other hand, tend to use figurative language when talking about their own emotions whereas men more frequently use non-literal language to talk about other people’s emotions.

2.3.11 What might be expected according to existing research

As seen above there are some features of male and female speech that research and general stereotypical thinking foresee, or not foresee, being present in the movies.
First, according to stereotypical views, it would be expected that the female characters in the movies talk more than the male characters (Goddard and Patterson 2000). Criticised research suggests that the male characters will talk more (Goddard and Patterson 2000) and if we rely on Holmes (1995) it is possible to predict that male characters will talk more in formal and powerful prestige situations while females will talk more in informal and intimate situations. Research cited by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) suggests that high status characters will be the more talkative ones, regardless of gender.

Second, since interrupting may signal dominance over an interrupted person it is a common belief that men interrupt more than women (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003). It has also been suggested that men interrupt more than women and that they do this as a way of taking turns, but researchers do not agree on whether men or women interrupt more (Goddard and Patterson 2000). Whether the male characters or the female characters are expected to interrupt more is thus uncertain.

Third, according to Lakoff (Weatherall 2002), tags and hedges signal uncertainty and Lakoff assumed that women in general wanted to sound less resolute than men by using more tags and hedges, and Coates (1996) agrees. If this is true then female characters will be found to use tags and hedges more than male characters. However, Weatherall (2002) states that some research has found women to use more tag questions and some have found that men use more tag questions. Mills (2003), Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) and Goddard and Patterson (2000) say that hedging is common among young people today and so it can be expected that hedging will indeed be found in the movies, though research does not agree on which gender may be expected to hedge more.

Fourth, in the area of discourse and topics, it seems as if though topics dealing with personal fears and problems and family problems are more likely to be raised by female
characters than male characters in the movies. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) list such topics as typical of female discourse.

Fifth, the belief that gossip belongs to the sphere of women’s speech is visible even in the *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (2003:542). If the movies rely on this stereotypical representation of female speech, more gossip will be found among female characters than among male ones. Research however shows that men and women not only gossip just as much, but also that they gossip about more or less the same things (Cameron in Coates 1998:276), and the male characters may very well use gossip among themselves to confirm group solidarity, which is one function of gossip (Coates in Coates 1998:254). Johnson and Meinhof (1997) however claim that it is less likely that males gossip about more personal issues.

Sixth, although researchers appear to agree that a person’s voice is not merely biologically determined in terms of pitch and softness (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003; Yuasa in Benor and Rose et al. 2002; Weatherall 2002) there is nevertheless a perception of women’s speech as being soft and high-pitched (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003) that women perhaps also consciously or subconsciously make use of (Yuasa in Benor and Rose et al. 2002). It can therefore be expected that there will be differences, to a greater or lesser extent, between female and male characters’ voices. It might in addition be possible to note a difference in the realisation of the phoneme /s/ between male and female characters of particularly North American origin (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003).

Seventh, male characters may be more likely to use non-standard language than female characters due to the appealing covert prestige of the toughness of working class masculinity (Weatherall 2002, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003), whereas female characters may be expected to choose more standard language due to overt prestige (Eckert in Coates 1998).
Eighth, profanity is, in the Western world, connected with power and masculinity (Johnson and Meinhof 1997) and for this reason, and the fact that men’s anger is tolerated more than women’s (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003), female characters may be expected to use less profanity than male characters, although Mills (2003) says that high status women may use profanity to confirm their status.

Ninth, Holmes (1995) claims that women both compliment and apologise more and that men apologise less and for more serious offences while women tend to apologise for light offences. The female characters in the movies can thus be expected to compliment more and apologise more for less serious offences.

Tenth, according to Colston and Lee (2004), females are both perceived as using less verbal irony than men and according to their research also prefer using less verbal irony than men do. The male characters can thus be expected to use more verbal irony than the female. According to Colston and Katz (2005) there is also some evidence that men and women use figurative language differently, and perhaps such differences will also be noted.

The results section below looks at the above ten areas of gender specific language in the two movies.

3. Results

The two analysed movies Finding Nemo and Antz were both obtained on DVD since the format allows easier access than a VCR tape does. When deciding on what was of importance for the analysis, the different research areas presented in the background section in this essay were considered. Speech that supported the hypothesis was notes as well as speech that contradicted the hypothesis. Both the entire movies were played twice and paused whenever notes were taken. Various parts of the movies that seemed of importance to the study were then played repeated times and speech that was considered of interest to the analysis was
transcribed and/or described (see pages 43-57). The movies were then played once again in
their full length in case more interesting data could be distinguished, and the notes were
completed.

3.1 Finding Nemo

_Finding Nemo_ is an animated movie about a very insecure male fish, Marlin, whose son is
taken by human divers and put in an aquarium at a dentist’s practice. The father then sets off
to retrieve his son. There are 15 male characters and 6 female characters in _Finding Nemo_.
The two main characters are the clownfish Marlin and his young son Nemo. Dory is an
important female character who is present for most of the movie. The fact that there is a much
larger number of male characters may affect the analysis of the film when it comes to number
of apologies, interruptions and instances of profanity, for example, made by characters of
each sex.

3.1.1 Talkativeness

Talkativeness is difficult to measure properly and overall there are no characters in this movie
who clearly distinguished themselves though talkativeness.

3.1.2 Interruptions

There are only nine clear instances of one character interrupting another in _Finding Nemo_ (see
page 44 in appendix). Most of the interrupting is done by one of the main male characters,
Marlin. Out of the nine interruptions he stands for six. He interrupts the female character Dory
four times and his child, Nemo, twice. There are two instances where female characters
interrupt male characters, one of which is when Dory interrupts Marlin, and one instance of a
male child character interrupting another male character. Out of the total of nine interruptions,
four were by a male character of another male, three were by male characters of female, and two were by female characters of male.

3.1.3 Tags and hedges

There are nine easily recognisable sentences that contain tags or hedges (see page 46). Out of six sentences with tag questions attached to them, three were uttered by Marlin during the first ten minutes of the movie:  

*You didn’t think we were gonna get the whole ocean, did you? So, you like it, don’t you? You can’t hold on to them forever, can you?*  

One sentence with a tag question was uttered by a male parent fish:  

*You’re funny, right?*, one by a male shark:  

*A little chum for Chum, ey?*, and one by a male aquarium fish:  

*You miss your dad, don’t you?.* A lot of the hedging in the movie is done by a male turtle, Crush. Crush hedges using  

*like: First you were all like whoa, and then we were all like whoa and you were like whoa*,  

and he also uses  

*you know: Well, you never really know, but when they know, you know, you know.*  

A male aquarium fish is the only other character who hedges a sentence. He uses both  

*you know* and  

*like: Yeah, you know, like, I’m from Bob’s Fish Mart.* None of the female characters uses any tags or hedges.
3.1.4 Discourse and topics

Eight discourse topics that fit into the categories personal fears, emotions and family problems were found in the movie (see page 43). Seven of them were introduced by male characters and only one by a female character. Three of the seven male topics were introduced by Marlin. Two minutes into the movie Marlin talks about his personal fear that his children might not like him once they hatch. Twice later during the movie he shares family problems with two different characters. Ten minutes into the movie another male parent fish expresses emotions consisting of fear that are related to his children. Another topic that might fit into the category of sharing family problems is when a tough male shark breaks down in tears saying: *I never knew my father!*. The only topic belonging to this section which is introduced by a female character fits into both emotions and personal fears. This is when Dory expresses fear of what will happen to her if the male character Marlin leaves her.

3.1.5 Gossip

Only two instances of gossip were found in the movie (see page 44). One example is when a group of sharks collectively talk down dolphins as a group for thinking that they are so cute and special. The dialogue between the sharks follows below:

Bruce: - Fish are friends, not food.
Anchor: - Except stinkin’ dolphins!
Chum: - Dolphins! Yeah, they think they’re so cute. Look, I’m a flippin’ little dolphin. Let me flip for you. Ain’t I something.
Anchor - *laughter*

The other example is when a female aquarium fish, Deb, talks down an imaginative aquarium fish: *Kid, if there’s anything you need, just ask your Auntie Deb. That’s me. Or if I’m not*
around you can always talk to my sister, Flo. Hi, how are you? Don’t listen to anything my sister says. She’s nuts! It is perhaps difficult for female characters in this movie to get a chance to gossip since there are in fact no scenes that focus on a conversation between two female characters.

3.1.6 Voice

There are five occasions where different characters use a soft voice which must be considered a marked voice quality when it is out of character. Three of these instances are when female characters, Marlin’s wife Coral and his friend Dory, both talk in a soft voice with the intent to comfort an adult male character – Marlin. There are also two instances where the male character Marlin uses a soft voice and both are when he talks to his son Nemo in a comforting manner.

As for pitch, there are audible differences between characters. The rough and tough male shark Bruce has an extremely low-pitched voice, as has the mysterious and heroic male aquarium fish Gill. A somewhat crazy female aquarium fish speaks with an extremely high-pitched voice, but another female aquarium fish speaks with such a neutral pitch that determining her sex from the pitch of her voice alone might be difficult. As for the main male characters Marlin and Nemo, there is nothing marked about their voices. The same can be said for the female character Dory. No instances of variation of /s/ were noted.

3.1.7 Standard and non-standard language

All characters use both standard and non-standard language (see page 47). Most characters are not consistent and mix forms. The two most common non-standard features are –ing reduction in words such as swimmin’ and havin’, and contracted forms such as gonna, gotta and wanna. The sentence which is the most marked when it comes to non-standard language is uttered by
one of the male sharks: *Look at me, I’m a flippin’ little dolphin. Ain’t I something!* The most formal language is perhaps that by Dory when she uses the quite formal form *shall*: *I shall call him Squishy and he shall be my Squishy*. There are two instances of non-standard grammar in omitting of subject by two male characters, *Name’s Bruce* and *Name’s Crush*. There is also non-standardness in agreement in a sentence by a female fish: *There’s over 400 eggs*.

3.1.8 Profanity

There were no examples of profanity in the speech of the characters.

3.1.9 Politeness

There are nineteen instances of apologising and eight instances where politeness or impoliteness can be observed in the use of titles (see page 47). Out of the total nineteen apologies, six are uttered by female characters and thirteen by male. Of the female apologies, six out of six go to males and out of the male apologies five out of thirteen go to females. Five of the six apologies by female characters to male characters are instances where Dory apologises to Marlin. One is when a female aquarium fish apologises to a male aquarium fish. Meanwhile, six out of the thirteen male apologies are uttered by Marlin, of which two go to Dory. The rest of the male apologies are from male characters to other male characters. The female characters as a group apologise for five mild offences and no serious offences. The male characters on the other hand apologise for six mild offences and seven serious offences (see page 47). The female character Dory repeatedly apologises for mild offences such as singing when Marlin wants her to be quiet and not agreeing with Marlin’s decisions.
Quite a few of the male apologies come in situations such as when the male shark Bruce’s friends apologise to Marlin and Dory for Bruce’s trying to eat them and when Marlin apologises to Dory for almost having her killed – apologies belonging to rather serious offences.

Politeness can also be noted in the use of address. In the movie there are ten instances, which require attention due to their markedness in this area. The first mark of politeness is when the young school fish on the reef greet their teacher by saying Mr. Ray. A number of examples of politeness and impoliteness can be seen when Marlin and Dory run into an all male shoal of fish. The male fish address Dory using words such as ma’am (once) and lady (twice) but address Marlin by buddy (once), pal (once) and (hey) you (once). The all male shoal of fish refer to themselves as gentlemen. In addition, 50 minutes into the movie, Marlin addresses a sea turtle who has taken care of him Mr. Turtle and one hour and ten minutes into the movie he says Thank you sir to a whale who has helped him and Dory. Dory shows politeness through terms of address once. This is when she and Marlin bump into each other the first time they meet while swimming quickly and Dory says Sorry, I didn’t see you sir.
Overall, Dory apologises to Marlin more often than he apologises to her and she also tends to apologise for rather banal things (see page 47), whereas Marlin’s apologies are sparse and concern more serious offences. It is also noted that Dory receives more polite address from male characters than does Marlin.

3.1.10 Verbal irony and figurative speech

There is only one clear example of verbal irony in *Finding Nemo* and it is displayed by a minor character, a gull (sex unknown, possibly male), who only appears in one short scene. The gull says the word *nice*, but the meaning is quite clearly the opposite (see page 49). No figurative speech was noted.

3.2 Antz

The movie *Antz* is about an ant community with a clear hierarchy and military discipline. The community is lead by the ant queen and a general of the ant army. The general conspires against the queen and the working-class ants, and the male character Z breaks away from the hierarchical society, taking the princess with him. There are about eight female characters and thirteen male characters in the movie, if only the characters who speak are counted. The main male character is the very insecure working class ant Z who leaves the community and the
main female character is princess Bala who leaves with him. The male character Mandible, the general, is an important male character as is Weaver, a soldier who is a friend of Z. The working class female ant Azteca is also an important female character.

3.2.1 Talkativeness

As previously mentioned, talkativeness is difficult to measure. There is however a character in Antz who does appear to be more talkative than the other characters – Z. The main female character Bala once in the movie even says to Z: You talk too much.

3.2.2 Interruptions

There are few clear instances of interruption in Antz. Only five were noted (see page 49). Three of these interruptions are by a male character, in this case Z, interrupting a female, Bala. Twice in the movie a female character interrupts a male character. One time is when Bala interrupts Z, and the other is when Bala interrupts a male fly (see page 49).
3.2.3 Tags and hedges

Hedges are numerous in the movie *Antz*. There are 31 sentences that contain hedges and five that contain tag questions (see page 50). The main male character Z stands for as many as 28 of the 31 hedged sentences. The by far most common hedge is *you know*, which appears in 21 of Z’s 28 hedged sentences. *I mean* is present in five of Z’s 28 sentences that contain hedges and *sort of* appears once. As for the remaining three hedged sentences, one sentence belongs to a female ant (*I mean*), one to the male character Weaver (*you know*) and one to a male mosquito: *What if, like, we’re just tiny little things and we’re just like part of this whole universe that’s like, so big.*

Of the five sentences that contain tags, one belongs to the male character Weaver (*right*?), one to a female ant (*right*?), one to the male character Z (*right*?), one to a male worker ant (*right*?) and one belongs to the female character Bala (*don’t you*?). Male and female characters use tags equally as much, but the male character Z is without doubt the one who hedges the most.

3.2.4 Discourse and topics

There are two instances in *Antz* where characters can be said to choose more sensitive discourse topics (see page 52). At the very beginning of the movie the male character Z is at a psychiatrist’s reception talking about his fear of enclosed spaces, his anxious childhood, abandonment issues, his absent father and his feelings of being physically inadequate. These are discourse topics that easily fit into the categories of personal fears, family problems, feelings and personal problems. The second instance of sharing feelings is when the same male character Z, talks to the main female character, Bala, about the difficult experience of having a friend die in his arms and the life that that friend had had: *And you know, he just died in my arms just like that. You now, I don’t think he even once in his life made his own choice.*
3.2.5 Gossip

Five worker ants are shown gossiping about something that the male character Z has supposedly done. The gossip contains clearly exaggerated stories of what has actually taken place. Of these five gossiping ants, four are male characters and one is female (see page 52). The female character is not however responsible for passing on the gossip. She merely reflects on what a male character says to her by saying: *He said that to General Mandible?*. There are no other clear instances of gossip in *Antz*.

3.2.6 Voice

No female character has a notably high-pitched voice and no male character has a notably low-pitched voice. The female characters do generally have a more soft tone in their voice, although it is not without exception. The male character Z displays the same kind of softness when speaking to a dying friend. Differences in the realisation of the phoneme /s/ were noted. The female characters Bala, Azteca and the Queen appear to be producing /s/ differently than the males, creating a more whistling sound.

3.2.7 Standard and non-standard language

There are no characters in *Antz* who do not use any non-standard language. Again, the characters mix standard and non-standard language (see page 53). The speech in *Antz* contains the same kind of contracted forms that were present in *Finding Nemo*, namely forms such as, *gonna, gotta* and *wanna*. These forms appear to be used equally as much by male and female characters. *-Ing* reduction is a very prominent feature in the speech of the different characters. 17 particular instances of a striking use of non-standard forms were noted. Some of these instances are when the pronoun *ya* appears. It is a non-standard form of *you* used quite extensively by both male and female characters. Of the 17 noted instances of non-standard
speech the male character Mandible stands for one consisting of non-standard verb agreement: *There’s some fine officers here*. The female character Bala shows deletion of the auxiliary *do* in the following sentence: *Anything interesting happen?*. The male character Weaver does the same thing when he deletes *have* and in addition he deletes the article: *We got royal inspection comin’ up*. The female character Azteca also at one point deletes the auxiliary, as does the male character Barbatus. A male character appears to be using a contracted form of *have* together with another auxiliary: *I shoulda never left*. One of the most non-standard sentences comes from a male character of no great importance to the movie: *If Z don’t dig I don’t dig*. The character who uses the most non-standard language is the male character Weaver who uses double negation and non-standard *ain’t*: *I ain’t tellin’ you nothin’* and his speech approximates African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in the following sentence: *You da ant!* In this sentence Weaver deletes the verb *be* and reduces the voiced fricative /ð/ to a voiced stop - /d/, and these are features that are prominent in AAVE (Rickford 1999).

### 3.2.8 Profanity

Six instances of profanity were noted in *Antz* (see page 54). Five of these were uttered by male characters and one by a female character. The main male character Z stands for four expressions, the male character Mandible stands for one and the female character Bala is responsible for one. The expressions used are *damn, damn it, gosh, gee, jeez* and *who the hell*. The only female contribution is the expression *damn it*.

### 3.2.9 Politeness

Since the ants in this movie are under military rule and the organisation of their society is a strict hierarchy, there are quite a number of examples of politeness being shown through terms of address. Of a total of 48 noted instances of politeness through speech, 36 are due to
the way the characters address each other (see page 54). The word *sir* stands for 19 of these instances, *general* is used 9 times, *Princess (Bala)* 5 times, *Your Highness* is used twice and *Your Majesty* is used once.

The remaining 12 examples of politeness are apologies. The male characters in *Antz* stand for 10 of the noted apologies. The male characters apologise more and they mostly apologise to each other or to both men and women. Five of the 12 apologies are from a man to another man, four are from a man to both men and women, one is from a man to a woman, one is from a woman to both men and women and one is from a woman to another woman. The only serious offence apologised for is when a male character apologises to a female character for getting her in trouble.
3.2.10 Verbal irony and figurative speech

There is one clear instance of verbal irony in *Antz* (see page 57). This is when the male character Z says *This day just keeps getting better and better* after running into yet another problem after a long, difficult day. No figurative speech was noted.

4. Discussion

Being completely objective when analysing speech is difficult. Deciding on talkativeness and which offences apologised for are serious and which are mild requires interpretation and it is fully possible that another person would interpret the data differently. I have however tried to remain as objective as possible in my analysis.

The stereotypical belief is that women are the talkative sex (Goddard and Patterson 2000), but that view may be in conflict with reality since it is believed that the status of the speakers (Holmes 1995) and the situation in which speech is produced (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003) is of more importance. Because this analysis deals with movies it can be assumed that more important characters will always be given more attention and might thus talk more than other characters. Although talkativeness is not easily measured, the female characters in *Finding Nemo* and *Antz* do not in general appear to talk more than the male characters, nor do the high status characters talk more than other characters. The main male character in *Antz*, Z, who is not a high status character, is the only one in the two analysed movies who comes across as very talkative. In the case of the two analysed animated movies, talkativeness appears to be determined by personality, or perhaps by level of importance to the plot, rather than status or gender.
And again, because this analysis deals with animated movies where speech is scripted and acted out, there are differences compared to real life. Overlaps in speech are a part of the natural fluency of everyday conversation (Romaine 1999), but overlaps are difficult to find in the two animated movies. Interruptions do exist though. In both movies it is more common that male characters interrupt female characters than that female characters interrupt male ones. There are four male-female interruptions and two female-male interruptions in both Finding Nemo and Antz, but these differences are not great enough to say that male characters interrupting female characters more than female interrupting male is a feature of gender directed linguistic behaviour in animated movies. The fact that there are more male characters than female in both movies must also be taken into consideration. Since the female characters are fewer, they do perhaps not have as many opportunities to interrupt. I must agree with Romaine (1999) who says that the question of which gender interrupts more remains unsolved.

When it comes to tags and hedges it has been stated above that such speech strategies have been believed to sometimes be used to signal uncertainty (Weatherall 2002; Coates 1996). Because of the presumed unequal power relationship between men and women, Lakoff, a pioneer in gender research, assumed that women would be more prone to using tags and hedges to avoid sounding resolute (Weatherall 2002). It is important to note that there are many different kinds of tags and hedges (Holmes 1995) and that far from all are connected with the use of this strategy (Goddard and Patterson 2000). It is nevertheless interesting to note that in both movies male characters use more tags and hedges than female characters. In fact, in Finding Nemo, not a single sentence produced by a female character appears to contain a tag question or a hedge. In Antz, only three instances of females using tags and hedges were found while there were 33 instances of males using tags and hedges. The use of tags and hedges, it seems, is not gender specific, but perhaps more related to personality. In
general, the characters in the two movies who use tags and/or hedges the most, are the rather insecure characters, and so perhaps these speech strategies can indeed be used as signals of uncertainty. I cannot on the basis of my research say that tags and hedges are features of male and female linguistic behaviour in animated movies, but it is interesting that the female characters use these strategies so very little compared to the male ones.

On the basis of research, it was expected that the analysis would show female characters raising more topics dealing with sensitive issues such as personal problems and fears and family problems (DeFrancisco in Coates 1998; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003). However, in both movies male characters are the ones raising these topics. The only two topics of this kind in Antz were both raised by the male character Z and seven out of eight in Finding Nemo were raised by male characters, three by the main male character Marlin. The idea that such topics belong to the sphere of female talk is thereby challenged. Challenging such general beliefs may be a conscious choice, and when it comes to certain points, I strongly believe it is. One example is when the tough male shark Bruce breaks down in tears saying I *never knew my father*. The emotional reaction appears so out of character and different from expectations that the general audience might have on a very masculine looking, and sounding, shark, that it actually becomes funny. Note also that the characters raising these topics are often the main male characters. Perhaps the creators of the movies have chosen to make the characters easy to identify with by giving them fears and problems that the audience can relate to. Either way, the expected male-female differences in this area are quite the opposite of what was expected.

Despite the common belief that gossip is only part of female talk, the analysis of the two movies shows that both male and female characters gossip and that they may very well gossip about the same things (Cameron in Coates 1998). There is an excellent example of males using gossip to confirm group solidarity (Coates in Coates 1998) by talking down another group, thereby enhancing their own masculinity, in the scene where the male sharks gossip
about the dolphins that think they are so “cute”. Stereotypical views on gossip as being a feminine trait do not appear to be present in the two movies, but then there are very few female characters compared to male characters and the scenes where more than one female character is present are not that numerous compared to the scenes where there are more than one male character present. In fact, in *Finding Nemo*, there is not one single scene that focuses on two female characters talking, which is interesting in itself.

Some characters in *Finding Nemo* are clearly gender marked when it comes to pitch. A female character, Deb, has the stereotypical high pitch (Eckert and McConell-Ginet 2003) and a male character, the shark Bruce, has an extremely low-pitched voice. There is also however a female character who has a very neutral pitch. In Antz, differences are not as clear in terms of pitch but the female characters do in general speak with a softer voice that the male characters only use at times where the situation is more emotionally charged. It is also noteworthy that the female characters in Antz appear to produce the phoneme /s/ differently than the males, just as expected by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003). In an animated movie, the voices of the characters are of course not separable from the voices of the actors behind the characters, which means that the voices are not completely constructed, but since it is possible to change voice quality according to cultural expectations (Yuasa in Benor and Rose et al. 2002; Weatherall 2002) it is likely that actors change their voices so suit the characters in the movies.

It was expected that the analysis would find male characters using more non-standard language than female characters because researchers have found women aiming at overt prestige and men at covert prestige (Weatherall 2002, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003). However, there seems to be more difference in the use of standard and non-standard language between the characters of the two different movies than between the two genders. *Finding Nemo* contains very little non-standard language compared to *Antz*. This may show that other
factors mentioned by Cheshire (Coates 1998), such as class, also influence the use of non-standard language and that gender should not be looked at in isolation. Many of the characters in the ant community in Antz are working-class ants or soldiers – groups of people very different from the nuclear families swimming around on a pastel coloured reef in Finding Nemo. The characters using the most non-standard language in Finding Nemo are perhaps the sharks who are not really part of life on the reef. But it is nonetheless male characters who stand for the most non-standard language in both movies and female characters who stand for the most standard language and so the speech in this area must be said to meet the expectation, although it is not possible to make generalisations.

The area of standard and non-standard language I feel is linked to the area of profanity. Here as well, there are perhaps greater differences in use of profanity between the movies than between the genders. There are no instances of profanity in Finding Nemo, whereas there are several in Antz. Note however that five out of six instances of profanity in Antz were found in the speech of males and only one in the speech of a female. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) do indeed say that men are expected to use more profanity, and perhaps the creators of Antz consciously or subconsciously wanted to meet these expectations. The analysis shows rather clear differences in the use of profanity between the genders in the movie Antz, although the data is not sufficient to make generalisations about linguistic behaviour.

In terms of politeness the analysis came to centre on apologising and using titles since there were many clear examples of both in the two movies. Holmes (1995) says that women apologise more than men and that they tend to apologise for mild offences while men save their apologies for more serious offences. The analysis shows that the male characters in both movies apologise more than the female characters and that the most common form of apology is of a male character apologising to another male character. Again, this may be due to the
fact that there are more male characters than female characters in both movies. As for which
gender apologises for which offence, the analyses of the two movies point in different
directions. In Finding Nemo, female characters are found to apologise for mild offences and
male for more serious offences, just a predicted, but in Antz there is only one apology
belonging to a serious offence. Since Antz is a movie about a hierarchical military community,
there are a lot of instances of the use of titles, most of which are from one male character to
another male character, presumably because there are almost exclusively males in the military
hierarchy. In Finding Nemo it is also most common that titles are used as polite address
between males, although the female character Dory is addressed more politely than Marlin
when the two of them encounter strangers.

As for verbal irony, which is by researchers said to be more common in male speech
(Colston and Lee 2004), there is only one instance of verbal irony in each movie. Both are
uttered by male characters but this is not reason enough to generalise about the use of verbal
irony.

5. Conclusions

Ten different areas have been looked at in the analysis of the two movies: talkativeness,
interruptions, tags and hedges, topics, gossip, voice quality, standard and non-standard
language, profanity, apologies and title use, and verbal irony and figurative speech. In quite a
few of these areas, the linguistic behaviour of male and female characters in Antz and Finding
Nemo is marked in that there is a difference in use between male and female characters.
Though there are differences between the movies as well, it can be concluded that male
characters in general in the two analysed movies interrupt more than female characters (and
interrupt female characters more than female characters interrupt male ones), raise more
sensitive topics and use more non-standard language and profanity, and that there in some
characters are stereotypical and research supported gender differences in pitch and realisation of the phoneme /s/. Some areas are found to depend more on personality or other factors than gender, namely talkativeness and gossip whereas no clear conclusions can be drawn about apologies and title use because of the uneven representation of male and female characters, nor about verbal irony and figurative speech due to lack of data. Finally, there are visible gender differences in the speech of male and female characters in the two animated movies analysed, but differences are not as extensive, or necessarily found to belong to the gender, that stereotypical beliefs would predict. Note though that the data is not sufficient to make generalisations beyond the two analysed movies.

It would be interesting to look at several more movies and do a more in-depth analysis of not only male and female speech in the way that has been done here, but also if there is uneven distribution of male and female characters in many animated movies and why this is, and to get a broader picture of exactly what more or less hidden messages are being sent out to children through the medium of animated movies.
References


Discourse Topics

Time    Character
02.16    Marlin

Coral - Just think, in a couple of days, we’re gonna be parents!
Marlin - Yeah… what if they don’t like me?
Coral - Marlin…
Marlin - No, really!
Coral - There’s over 400 eggs. Odds are one of them’s bound to like you.

10.14    Male parent fish

Fish - Hey, you’re doin’ pretty well for a first timer.
Marlin - Well, you can’t hold on to them forever, can you?
Fish - Yeah, I had a tough time when my oldest went out on the drop-off.

21.50    Bruce

- I never knew my father!

53.50    Marlin

Marlin - Well, you see, my son was taken. My son was taken from me.
Dory - No way!
Turtle kid - What happened?
Marlin - No, no, no, no, kids. I don’t wanna talk about it.
Turtle kids - Oh, please!
Marlin - Well, okay. I live on this reef a long, long way from here. And my son, Nemo…
see… He was mad at me… and maybe he wouldn’t have done it if I hadn’t been so tough on
him. Anyway…

1.07.38   Marlin

Dory - There, there. It’s all right. It’ll be okay.
Marlin - No, no it won’t.
Dory- Sure it will. You’ll see.
Marlin - No. I promised him I’d never let anything happen to him.
Gossip

Time Characters
19.48 Anchor and Chum
- Fish are friends, not food.
- Except stinkin’ dolphins!
- Dolphins! Yeah, they think they’re so cute. Look, I’m a flippin’ little dolphin. Let me flip for you. Ain’t I something.
- *laughter*

26.06 Deb and Nemo
- Kid, if there’s anything you need just ask your Auntie Deb. That’s me *giggle* Or if I’m not around you can always ask my sister, Flo. Hi, how are you? Don’t listed to anything my sister says. She’s nuts!

Interruptions

Time Interrupting Interrupted
06.35 Nemo Marlin
- And sometimes, if you wanna do it four times…
- Dad…
- All right, come on boy!

12.23 Marlin Nemo
- You were about to swim into open water!
- No! I wasn’t gonna -
- It’s just a good thing I was here…
- But dad, I wasn’t -
- ... because if I hadn’t shown up

12.40 Marlin Nemo
- No dad, just because you’re scared of the ocean-
- Clearly, you’re not ready yet and you’re not coming back until you are!

31.12 Marlin Dory
- Swim, swim-
- Dory, no singing
- hahahahaha ho-ho I love to-
- Dory!
- swim-
- Dory!
- when you want to swim you-
- See, I’m gonna get stuck now with that song in my head!

49.49 Crush Marlin

- So, Mr Turtle-
- Whoa, dude. Mr. Turtle’s my father. Name’s Crush.

1.01.49 Dory Marlin

-… that means that we’re not going straight, we-
- Hey!
- gotta get to the surface-
- Hey!
- come on, we’ll figure it out up there-
- Hey!
- follow me!

1.10.10 Marlin Dory

- We need to-
- Dory…
- find his son-
- What are you doing?
- can you give us dir-
- Dory, heaven knows what you’re saying!
- ections?

1.04.49 Peach Grgule

- Don’t you people realise we’re swimming in our own-
- Sch! Here he comes!

1.18.56 Marlin Dory

- Hey-
- Dory, if it wasn’t for you I… I never would’ve made it here.
**Tags and hedges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00.48</td>
<td>Tag</td>
<td>Marlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- You didn’t think you were gonna get the whole ocean, did you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01.19</td>
<td>Tag</td>
<td>Marlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- So, you like it, don’t you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.39</td>
<td>Tag</td>
<td>Male parent fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- You’re funny, right?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.11</td>
<td>Tag</td>
<td>Marlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- You can’t hold on to them forever, can you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.11</td>
<td>Tag</td>
<td>Chum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- A little chum for Chum, ey?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.36</td>
<td>Hedge</td>
<td>Bloat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Yeah, you know, like, I’m from Bob’s Fish Mart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>Tag</td>
<td>Gill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- You miss your dad, don’t you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ 00.50</td>
<td>Hedge</td>
<td>Crush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Oh, saw the whole thing, dude! First you were all like whoa, and then we were all like whoa and you were like whoa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ 00.50</td>
<td>Hedge</td>
<td>Crush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- How do you know when they’re ready?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Well, you never really know, but when they know you know, you know.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Standard and non-standard language**
Overall. –*ing* reduction, contracted forms: gonna, gotta, wanna

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Type/Sentence</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02.18</td>
<td>“There’s over 400 eggs”</td>
<td>Coral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>“Name’s Bruce”</td>
<td>Bruce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.48</td>
<td>“Look at me, I’m a flippin’ little Dolphin. Let me flip for you. Ain’t I Somethin’”</td>
<td>Chum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.07</td>
<td>“You shall be my Squishy and I shall call you Squishy”</td>
<td>Dory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Politeness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Situation/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.00</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>using title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mr. Ray!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.47</td>
<td>Dory to Marlin</td>
<td>title, apologising, mild offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sorry, I didn’t see you, sir.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.22</td>
<td>Dory to Marlin</td>
<td>apologising, mild offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I’m so sorry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.04</td>
<td>Marlin to Dory</td>
<td>apologising, serious offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I’m so sorry, are you okay? I’m so sorry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.35</td>
<td>Male sharks to Dory, Marlin</td>
<td>apologising, serious offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sorry about Bruce, mate. He’s really a nice guy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.20</td>
<td>Dory to Marlin</td>
<td>apologising, mild offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sorry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.53</td>
<td>Dory to Marlin</td>
<td>apologising, mild offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I’m sorry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.34</td>
<td>female aquarium fish to male aquarium fish</td>
<td>Apologising, mild offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sorry, but they just… they never work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.14</td>
<td>Male aquarium fish to Nemo</td>
<td>apologising, mild offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No offence, kid, but you’re not the best swimmer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.52</td>
<td>Shoal to Marlin</td>
<td>not polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Hey you!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
39.53 Shoal to Dory - Lady!
40.01 Shoal to Marlin - Look, pal. We’re talkin’ to the lady, not you.
40.09 Shoal among themselves - Gentlemen
42.35 Dory to Marlin - I’m sorry
49.46 Marlin to Crush - Mr, Turtle
51.13 Marlin to Dory - I’m so sorry
55.52 Nemo to Gill - I’m sorry I couldn’t stop it
55.54 Gill to Nemo - No, I’m the one who should be sorry
56.08 Gill to Nemo - I’m sorry I couldn’t get you back to your father, kid.
1.04.33 Mane dentist to female receptionist - Sorry
1.10.33 Marlin to whale - Thank you, sir
1.18.34 Male pelican to Marlin - I’m so sorry
1.20.04 Marlin to Dory - I’m sorry
1.22.35 Marlin to male fish - Sorry
1.26.09 Marlin to Nemo - I’m so sorry, Nemo. For everything.
1.28.06 Marlin to Nemo - Sorry
### Verbal irony

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Sentence/Description</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.09</td>
<td>Nice</td>
<td>Gull</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Antz – Appendix

**Interruptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Interrupting</th>
<th>Interrupted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34.30</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Bala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Hey, you guys!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Stop it, stop it, what are you trying to do?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Get off me you little-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wait a minute, what are you going to do…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- twerp! Hey-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- throw away everything we have?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 53.36  | Z             | Bala        |
|        | - Z, you know, you really shouldn’t be so hard on- |             |
|        | - That’s it! I’m taking you back to the colony. |             |

| 53.51  | Bala          | Z           |
|        | - But you know, I can admit it when I’m wrong- |             |
|        | - Z!          |             |
|        | - and this time I gotta tell ya, I was absolutely… |             |

| 54.06  | Z             | Bala        |
|        | - Its insect- |             |
|        | - Shh! Don’t jinx it! |             |

| 59.18  | Bala          | fly         |
|        | - Z, he’s… he’s uh- |             |
|        | - Dead!       |             |
Tags and hedges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01.00</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- You know, I always tell myself there’s gotta be a better place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01.18</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- You know, when you’re a middle child…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01.30</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- You know, the guy flew away when I was just a larva.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01.53</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- Handling dirt is, you know, urgh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.08</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- I mean, you know, I’m supposed to do everything for the colony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.15</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- I mean I gotta believe…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>Tag Weaver</td>
<td>- I’ve known you for a long time, right?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.04</td>
<td>Tag female ant</td>
<td>- Ten minutes and we’re out of here, right?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.05</td>
<td>Hedge female ant</td>
<td>- I mean, this place is off limits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.16</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- They’re all a little, you know, from inbreeding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.38</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- I’m sort of makin’ it up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.44</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- You know, why does everybody have to dance the same way? You know, that’s completely boring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.40</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- Switch jobs with me. Just, you know, for a day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.39</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- Oh me? Oh, you know, I wear many hats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.28</td>
<td>Hedge Z</td>
<td>- Yes, yes, but you know, I’m getting out soon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You know, I think there’s been a terrible mistake. You know, the truth is…

- These guys aren’t gonna put up much of a fight, right? I mean, we’re talking about pushovers, right?

- I mean, you know, are we gonna be serving beverages?

- Nobody told me diggin’ was so much fun, you know, you pick the dirt up…

- The trick is not to panic. You know, the one who panics is lost.

- What if, like, we’re just tiny little things and we’re just like part of this whole universe that’s like, so big.

- Runs off with the princess, right?

- Insectopia. You know, I must have been mad.

- And you know, he just died in my arms like that.

- I… you know… I don’t think he ever…

- You’re pretty strange. You know that, don’t you?

- I mean, it’s, you know, kind of a bizarre quality.

- But it’s, uh, you know…

- Me? Oh, I was just, you know…

- I should get going then, you know…

- I, you know, I have strong feelings for you.
1.14.07 Hedge Z
- It’s even better than before, ‘cos now, you know, we’ve got….

1.14.12 Hedge Z
- … you know, just a few kids…

1.14.18 Hedge Z
- I’m working with a new therapist, you know, terrific.

1.14.25 Hedge Z
- And you know, I finally feel like I’ve found my place.

**Discourse Topics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~00.10</td>
<td>Sharing fears, feelings</td>
<td>Z to psychiatrist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- All my life I’ve lived and worked in the big city, which, now that I come to think of it, is kind of a problem, since I always feel uncomfortable around crowds. I mean it. I have this fear of enclosed spaces. Everything makes me feel trapped all the time. You know, I always tell myself there’s gotta be something better out there. But maybe I think too much. I think everything must go back to the fact that I had a very anxious childhood. My mother never had time for me. You know, when you’re the middle child in a family of five million, you don’t get much attention. I mean, how is it possible? And I’ve always had these abandonment issues, which plague me. My father was basically a drone like I’ve said. You know, the guy flew away when I was just a larva. And my job, don’t get me started on, because it really annoys me. I was not cut out to be a worker, I’ll tell you right now. I feel physically inadequate. My whole life I’ve never been able to lift more than ten times my own body weight… What about my needs, what about me?

56.33 Sharing feelings | Z to Bala |
- And you know, he just died in my arms just like that. You know, I don’t think he ever once in his life made his own choice.

**Gossip**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39.10-</td>
<td>workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(male) - So he kills himself a hundred termites, gets a few medals and bada-bing, bada-bip, bags himself the Princess.

(male) - He looks him dead in the eye-
(male) - and says bite me!

(female) – He said that to general Mandible?
(male) – Buddy! Hey, hey, buddy. You heard about that war hero named Z? Runs off with the Princess, right? When they sent the guards after him, he just looks at ’em and boom! They burst into flames.

**Standard and non-standard language**

Overall: gotta, gonna,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04.19</td>
<td>Azteca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I didn’t see ya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.33</td>
<td>General Manible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- There’s some fine officers here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.15</td>
<td>Bala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Anything interesting happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.13</td>
<td>Weaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- We got royal inspection comin’ up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>Drunk male ant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I shoulda never left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>Bala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No one’s gonna recognise us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>Bala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Let’s get outta here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>Male bartender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Yeah, I don’t blame ya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.26</td>
<td>Barbatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- You new, kid?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.09</td>
<td>Barbatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I hear ya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.41</td>
<td>Barbatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I’ll watch out for ya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.11</td>
<td>Azteca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ey, you got a problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>male worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- It’s not like we got a choice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
40.11 Male worker
- If Z don’t dig, I don’t dig.

51.35 Weaver
- I ain’t tellin’ you nothin’

53.48 Z
- I gotta tell ya.

1.13.54 Weaver
- You da ant!

**Profanity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Situation/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.04</td>
<td>General Mandible</td>
<td>- Damn!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.30</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>- Gee!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.12</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>- Who the hell is that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.29</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>- Jeez, what was I thinkin’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>Azteca</td>
<td>- Don’t tell that tight-ass anything!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.03.10</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>- Gosh…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01.03.21</td>
<td>Bala</td>
<td>- Damn it!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Politeness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Situation/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06.17</td>
<td>male construction ant</td>
<td>Using title. Mandible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- General. I know there’s been a glitch or two…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06.58</td>
<td>Cutter</td>
<td>Using title. Mandible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- A strong colony, sir.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
07.21 Cutter Using title, Mandible.
- Sir.
07.21 Cutter Using title, Mandible
- Yes, general.

07.45 Queen Using title, Mandible
- General, we’ve been at peace with that colony for years

08.16 Queen Using title, Mandible
- Yes, general, I know what they can do to us.

08.29 Bala Using title, Mandible
- Hello, General

08.32 Mandible Using title, Bala
- Princess Bala.

09.00 Mandible Using title, Bala
- Princess.

09.23 Cutter Using title, Mandible
- Sir, I hate to interrupt, but time stands still for no ant.

16.15 Lady-in-waiting Using title, Bala
- Princess Bala! Princess Bala!

20.00 Z Using title, Mandible
- When pushing through a crowd

26.32 Weaver Using title, apologising to foreman.
- Sorry, sir. I was just havin’ a little chat with my friend, sir.

27.00 Weaver Apologising, Azteca
- Sorry I got you in trouble.

29.32 Cutter Using title, Mandible
- Work is completed on “A” section, sir.

29.41 Cutter Using title, Mandible
- Chrystal, sir.

29.48 Cutter Using title, apologising, Mandible
- Excuse me, sir. It’s about the termite battle, sir.

30.02 Soldier Using title, Mandible
- There’s a bit of good news, sir.

31. Z Using title, Mandible
- Sir, I don’t actually think I’m a war hero.
- General Mandible.

32.38 Manible Using title. Queen
- As you can see, Your Highness…

32.47 Z Using title. Mandible
- Oh, please, general.

38.53 Queen Using title. Mandible
- No more excuses, general.

39.01 Mandible Using title, Queen
- Believe me Your Highness, we will spare no effort to bring her back.

43.50 Cutter Using title, apologising. Mandible.
- Sorry, sir. I came as soon as I heard.

44.14 Cutter Using title. Mandible.
- It appears he’s holding hands, sir.

44.24 Cutter Using title. Mandible.
- Yes, sir.

47.40 Z Polite to two wasps
- Excuse me! Excuse me! How do you get in?

52.43 Cutter Using title. Mandible.
- Sir?

54.35 Ladybug Apologising for her kids
- Pardon us.

58.35 Cutter Apologising to people
- Sorry for interrupting.

1.00.36 Cutter Using title. Bala
- Ah, princess.

1.00.48 Soldier Using title. Mandible
- Yes, sir.

1.01.07 Mandible Using title. Bala
- You’re right, Princess.

1.02.47 Z To guards
- Excuse me, please.

1.05.01 Queen Using title. Mandible
- A stirring speech, General.
1.05.14 Mandible Using title. Queen.
- I will, Your Highness.

1.05.37 Cutter Using title. Mandible
- Sir, I’ve been thinking.

1.06.00 Cutter Using title, apologising for disagreeing. Mandible
- Sir, uh, I apologise.

1.06.03 Cutter Using title. Mandible.
- Yes, sir.

1.07.00 Z Apologises for tramping on people.
- Excuse me. Sorry. Excuse me.

1.09.52 Bala To queen when lifting her to save her
- Excuse me, Your Majesty.

1.11.27 Cutter Using title. Mandible
- I think that’s the weak element, sir.

1.11.51 Cutter Using title. Mandible
- This is for the good of the colony, sir.

**Verbal irony**

Z:
- This day just keeps getting better and better.