



Article

Disney Reloaded: Pixar's Influence on the Evolution of Disney Animation Feature Films (1994–2018)

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Abstract: Disney animation studios created and subsequently shaped the animation genre for the last two-thirds of the 20th century, but the appearance of Pixar in the industry and their unstoppable success changed the rules of the game. (1) Apart from a new and revolutionary technology, Pixar introduced a new type of storytelling in animation based on characters and stories that we believe ended up tremendously influencing Disney's storytelling starting in 2006, when the big animation studio purchased its most threatening competitor. Our study also tries to shed some light on whether the changes happened only at the level of storytelling or also crystallized into better box office and rating data. (2) We aim to clarify this belief and turn it into a reality through the content analysis of Disney animation features before and after the purchase of Pixar. (3) Our results show that Pixar's influence on Disney is remarkable, both in the movies' narrative and in their reception by the audience and the critics. (4) This confirms not only the change in the story-telling strategies of the company, enhancing psychological construction of the protagonists of Disney animation features, but also the subsequent impact on its audiences.

Keywords: animation; films; film language; Disney; Pixar; media representation



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1. Introduction

Since its foundation in 1923 (Robb 2014), the Walt Disney company has created stories, characters, and experiences that have had an undeniable impact on several generations of spectators. Their movies led to the creation of new worlds that became real on their theme parks and Disney stores (Real 1977). As the precursors of animation as a film genre, this creation relied mainly on the quest for realism in animation techniques through the telling of fairytale narratives (Pallant 2010) based on what Campbell defined as the “nuclear unit of monomyth”, in which a hero “ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered, and a decisive victory is won” (Campbell 1993); basically, stories revolving around the strength of a single character. Moreover, Disney opted to follow a formalist approach in the animation of its movies in order to later establish the principles of animation, in which the story lost its significance over the technique and the aesthetics (Thomas and Johnston 1981). The early 90s witnessed a relevant change in such an approach. That decade, a period referred to as Disney's renaissance, led to the levels of “aesthetic and industrial growth” (Pallant 2011, p. 89) that were, in many ways, unprecedented. That same decade, though, saw the emergence of Pixar, whose release of *Toy Story* in 1995 took animation to levels of significance that had not even been considered by many up until then. “Pixar soon became the number one trusted brand for family entertainment, a title once held by Disney”, explains Haswell (2019, p. 92), recalling that by 2005 “Disney's own market research confirmed that mothers with children under the age of 12 generally rated Pixar's brand higher than Disney's”. One year later, Disney “sought to revive its animation capabilities” by announcing the acquisition of Pixar,

by then already “one of the most successful moviemakers in Hollywood” (DePamphilis 2009, p. 149).

One of the reasons for both the shift in audience’s preferences and Disney’s purchase itself could be Pixar’s decided emphasis on their storytelling, defending the story through the persistence of humanity through the story and characters. This approach constitutes an aesthetic storytelling style and a presentation of worlds with rules to be discovered by both characters and audiences (Herhuth 2017). Furthermore, for the creation of their characters and their environment, Pixar opts to dive its creators into the culture or world they want to show: for the production of the feature *Brave*, the creative team took archery classes in Scotland, and for the production of the feature *Ratatouille*, the creators were sent to a Michelin star-winning restaurant in France to learn the “art of making ratatouille” (Catmull 2014).

But probably the key to Pixar’s culture is the Braintrust: a mechanism—based on honesty and candor—created during the production of *Toy Story 2* that lets every worker speak freely about the productions going on at that moment (Wise 2014). As Ed Catmull describes it himself: “put smart, passionate people in a room together, charge them with identifying and solving problems, and encourage them to be candid with one another”. Directors feel personally attached to their movies and their characters, and consequently, they may not be able to see the reality they face. The Braintrust became a tool to solve this problem, always making clear that the director was never attacked but positively criticized to improve his film. This mechanism was adopted by Disney with the purchase of Pixar in 2006 (Catmull 2014), which starts to demonstrate certain influence. As Haswell (2019, p. 97) puts it, “during the months following the acquisition, Catmull and Lasseter established the Disney Story Trust. Based on the model of Pixar’s Braintrust, the meetings allow the opportunity to discuss, troubleshoot, and screen sequences from current projects”. Pixar’s Braintrust cross-refers to Disney’s Sweatbox (Friedman 2022), which the studio had already implemented decades before: “the origin of the term sweatbox is said to date back to when Walt Disney would view the scenes completed through rough animation with his animators and critique their work”, something “comparable to ‘rushes’ in the realm of live action production” (Winder and Dowlatabadi 2011, p. 240). This makes it an even more interesting twist: rather than importing techniques from Pixar that were unknown for Disney, it can be said that Pixar revitalized and brought a breath of fresh air that reminded the company that led animation for so many years of some of the keys to their previous success.

Pixar’s impact on Disney was visible at several levels, as Haswell (2019, p. 100) proposes discussing the so-called “princess curse”, central to the storytelling of the group, which both Disney and Pixar tried to shoo away, opting “for more gender-neutral adjectives for the titles of the fairy tale films” in titles like *Tangled* or *Brave*, following the criticisms received after the release of *The Princess and the Frog*. *Frozen*, centered around two females and their sisterly relationship, chose, accordingly, to also “featuring the film’s male counterparts, Kristoff and Hans, as well as its sidekicks, the reindeer, Sven, and Olaf the talking snowman” (Haswell 2019, p. 102) in their particular retake of the traditional princess storyline—to a large extent a full rebirth of the classical princess narrative. “Pixar”, adds Wills (2017, p. 20), “introduced more complexity in (Disney’s) stories”.

Movshovitz’s analysis of Pixar’s success mostly revolves around narratological tools, some of them coincidental with some elements previously suggested by other authors in the introduction, though the author also reflects on how the studio’s storytelling machinery takes us, inexcusably, to the deeper level of forcing “characters to go through an emotional journey. An uncomfortable character is compelled to work hard to get back to its comfort zone, just like we would in real life. This desire propels actions, decisions and emotions” (Movshovitz 2015, p. 7). Beaumont and Larson (2021, p. 76) agree on the importance of both the emotional factor and the journey, underscoring though that “in an animated story the destination is just as essential as the steps that happen along the way (...) ultimately, the full change won’t come until they reach their destination”. In one of his many reflective works on animation, Wells (2007, p. 176) brings to the debate “a formula that has stuck” with him “over the years: complex characters in simple situations work much better than

simple characters in complex situations”, and [Lupton \(2017, p. 24\)](#) adds in this respect that “complex narratives contain stories within stories and conflicts within conflicts”.

All these insights not only illuminate some of the keys of animation in general as well as success for both Disney and Pixar separately and jointly, they also hint towards a degree of film complexity that has arguably been brewing through different historical stages of animation prior to Disney’s purchase of Pixar and was taken even further after the acquisition. Thus, understanding film complexity becomes crucial to determining the axes around which an analysis of such a phenomenon can be implemented in the framework of some of the most relevant animation titles of the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st.

2. Dissecting Film Complexity

Georges [Polti \(1916\)](#) studied numerous Greek, Latin, and French stories to conclude there were only thirty-six basic stories with very clear and defined roles played by the different characters and a series of events that had to happen. These were: supplication, deliverance, vengeance of a crime, vengeance taken for kindred upon kindred, pursuit, disaster, falling prey to cruelty or misfortune, revolt, daring enterprise, abduction, enigma, obtaining, enmity of kinsmen, rivalry of kinsmen, murderous adultery, madness, fatal imprudence, involuntary crimes of love, slating a kinsman unrecognized, self-sacrificing for an ideal, self-sacrifice for kindred, all sacrificed for a passion, necessity of sacrificing loved ones, rivalry of superior and inferior, adultery, crimes of love, discovery of the dishonor of a loved one, obstacles to love, an enemy loved, ambition, conflict with a god, mistaken jealousy, erroneous judgment, remorse, recovery of a lost one, and loss of loved ones.

On a similar horizon, Christopher [Booker \(2016\)](#) based his thirty-four-year research on stories in the analytical psychology of Carl Jung. The result was a classification of stories into seven basic plots, which also had a series of stereotypical roles and series of events: overcoming the monster, rags to riches, the quest, voyage and return, comedy, tragedy, and rebirth.

While theorists like Booker or Polti based their types of plots on well-defined sequences of actions and pre-established character roles, others, such as Ronald B. Tobias or Phil Parker, believed plots should not be understood as recipes to be followed carefully but as different formulas of conflict or patterns that, either independently or combined, led to the creation of stories ([Tobias 1993](#)). We believe this type of classification is more flexible, as it leaves the writer with more space for creativity and independence and, at the same time, provides some guidance to write the story around. Parker established a total number of ten master plots: the romance, the unrecognized virtue, the fatal flaw, the debt that must be repaid, the spider and the fly, the gift taken away, the quest, the rites of passage, the wanderer, and the character who cannot be put down ([Parker 2006](#)).

2.1. Personality Traits in Human Psychology

The structure of human personality has been an object of study for psychologists ever since the beginning of the 20th century with the objective of establishing a set of traits common to every human being, either by their presence or their absence. But the conclusions each psychologist reached were diverse, resulting in different and, to a certain extent, contradictory models. It was not until 1990 that Lewis Goldberg established the Five Factor Model (FFM) as the universal model for studying the traits of human personality ([Sanjuán Suarez 2003](#)). The five factors were defined as extraversion, agreeableness, consciousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience ([Goldberg 1990](#)).

Many researchers have worked on different ways to measure and evaluate the five factors, but the proposal made by Costa and McCrae in 1992 is the most accepted and used worldwide. The NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO-PI-R; [Costa and McCrae 1992](#)) assesses six specific traits for each factor, resulting in thirty personality traits whose absence or presence define the personality of the subject.

2.2. Character Arcs of Transformation

Apart from the psychology and personality, the arcs of transformation of the characters can also establish different levels of complexity in the plot. Many writers believe stories will have guaranteed success once the basic plot is set, but the reality is that the engagement with the audience and the development of the story in each scene relies on the characters and their own development (Jarvis 2014).

The concept of character arc refers to this development, and it can be defined as the inner journey a character undertakes over the course of a story that makes him/her “grow, learn, change, evolve or even completely transform” (Bradshaw 2018). Christopher Vogler stated that “all stories consist of common structural elements of stages found universally which compose the Hero’s Journey” (Vogler 2007). Essentially, the character arc refers to that journey the hero goes through, “a story’s core value from negative to positive or positive to negative” (McKee 2021).

There are different classifications of character arcs. On the one hand, we find a classification of character arcs into inexistent, moderate, radical, and circular (Diez 2016). On the other hand, we find a classification into inexistent, change, growth, and fall (Bradshaw 2018). The first measures the number of personality aspects that change or develop in the character throughout the story, while the latter measures the type of change, independent from the number of characteristics that change in the character.

3. Materials and Methods

The main research goal is, on the one hand, to explore, analyze, and understand the evolution of the feature films produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios in the last twenty-four years and, on the other hand, to clarify whether or not the purchase of Pixar in 2006 was significant in this evolution.

More specifically, we will focus on analyzing the protagonists, the complexity of the stories, box office data, and critical response of Disney animation features before and after the purchase of Pixar in order to determine the level and strength of the influence of Pixar on the way Disney makes its movies.

According to the aforesaid goal, we focused on two different hypotheses, which include different sub-hypotheses that add up to seven in total.

- Hypothesis 1: Pixar has enriched the narrative of Disney animation features.
 - Sub-hypothesis 1: the psychological construction of the protagonists in Disney animation features is closer to human nature and behavior since the purchase of Pixar.
 - Sub-hypothesis 2: the character arcs of the protagonists in Disney animation features are deeper since the purchase of Pixar.
 - Sub-hypothesis 3: there is more variety of gender in the protagonists of Disney animation movies since the purchase of Pixar.
 - Sub-hypothesis 4: Disney animation features include more and more varied master plots since the purchase of Pixar.
 - Sub-hypothesis 5: there are more and more varied significant relationships between characters in Disney animation features since the purchase of Pixar.
- Hypothesis 2: Disney animation features are more successful since the purchase of Pixar.
 - Sub-hypothesis 6: the box office figures of Disney animation features are higher since the purchase of Pixar.
 - Sub-hypothesis 7: the ratings of Disney animation features are higher since the purchase of Pixar.

Design of the Investigation

We propose an analysis of Disney’s animation features released in the quarter of the century, which starts with the emblematic release of *The Lion King* by Disney, to give an

answer to the presented hypotheses, which are to be considered truthful if they comply with their sub-hypotheses. The selected features were those made with animation techniques, of at least sixty-minute length, produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios, and released between 1994 and 2018. Since the analysis has a comparative nature, a division line had to be set in 2006, the year in which Disney bought Pixar as a subsidiary. Therefore, the selected features for the analysis are divided into two groups depending on their date of release, before or after 2006:

- From 1994 to 2005, Disney released fifteen animation features: *The Lion King*, *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules*, *Mulan*, *Tarzan*, *Fantasia 2000*, *Dinosaur*, *The Emperor's New Groove*, *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, *Lilo & Stitch*, *Treasure Planet*, *Brother Bear*, *Home on the Range*, and *Chicken Little*.
- From 2006 to 2018, Disney has released ten animation features: *Meet the Robinsons*, *Bolt*, *The Princess and the Frog*, *Tangled*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Frozen*, *Big Hero 6*, *Zootopia*, *Moana*, and *Wreck-it Ralph*.

The only two feature films excluded from the sample are *Fantasia 2000*, which we discarded as its episodic format can distort the results, and *Winnie the Pooh*, which can also be distorting since it reflects Alan Alexander Milne's tastes regarding personality, plots, and relationships, and that dates back to the time the story was first conceived. Furthermore, as opposed to the other movies released in this period, the discarded titles depended largely on the original Disney content where they first appeared, which dates back to a distant era that can be a discursive departure from the rest of the movies of that period. Therefore, a total of twenty-three animation features comprise this analysis: fourteen released before the purchase and nine released after.

The analysis of each animation feature triangulated between a qualitative written report, which includes different observations that go beyond mere quantitative analysis, and the quantitative analysis itself on an analysis sheet, following the postulates on using content analysis, as described by Berelson (1952) and Slater (1998). To avoid bias in the definition of the different categories, we have tried to base each category on previous works by experts in the matter. In the specific case of the establishment of the different types of significant relationships, we conducted an in-depth interview with psychologist Javier Izarra Cala.

Finally, in order to determine the veracity of the different sub-hypotheses and the consequent confirmation of the hypotheses, the analysis is divided into four different sections that cover protagonists, complexity of the plot, box office, and ratings.

- Section 1: Analysis of the protagonist. This section requires the determination of the protagonist in each feature according to the definition and operationalization of the variable. It contributes to the clarification of hypothesis 1, and it is divided into three sub-sections:
 - 1. NEO-PI-R personality traits. The qualitative analysis of the personality traits of the protagonist is intended to clarify sub-hypothesis 1 (the psychological construction of the protagonists in Disney animation features is closer to human nature and behavior since the purchase of Pixar), according to the work of psychologists Costa and McCrae. Once the qualitative analysis is done, we obtain a total number of personality traits present in the protagonist, either in their negative or positive form, that locates them further or closer to human nature and behavior. In relation to it, we obtain a percentage of presence of each psychological factor (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience) in the personality of the character. The more personality traits the protagonist shows and the more equally these are distributed among the psychological factors, the closer to human nature and behavior the psychological construction of the protagonist will be.

- 2. Arc of transformation. The qualitative analysis of the arc of transformation of the protagonist is intended to clarify sub-hypothesis 2 (the narrative evolution of the protagonists in Disney animation features is more varied since the purchase of Pixar). Once it is done, the character arc is classified into inexistent, change, growth, or fall. We will study the percentage distribution of these character arcs to explore how Disney has built their characters narratively.
- 3. Gender. The gender of the protagonist can be male and female, and it is intended to clarify sub-hypothesis 3 (there is more variety of genders in the protagonists of Disney animation movies after the purchase of Pixar). In the case of human protagonists, gender becomes obvious in their physical attributes. In the case of animals, it becomes obvious in their voice and the way other characters refer to them. We will study the percentage distribution of genders to determine the variety of them and their representation in Disney animation features.
- Section 2: Analysis of the complexity of the plot. This section analyzes the complexity of the plot, specifically the master plots and significant relationships they have. It contributes to the clarification of hypothesis 1, and it is divided into two sub-sections:
 - Section 2.1—Master plots. The qualitative analysis of the master plots that the story presents and their classification in the different types that Ronald B. Tobias established in his work is intended to clarify sub-hypothesis 4 (Disney animation features include more and more varied master plots since the purchase of Pixar).
 - Section 2.2—Significant relationships. The qualitative analysis of the significant relationships existent in the story and their classification into the different types exposed in the operationalization of the variable are intended to clarify sub-hypothesis 5 (there are more and more varied significant relationships between characters in Disney animation features since the purchase of Pixar).
- Section 3: Box office. This section includes the box office data of the features to clarify hypothesis 2 and specifically sub-hypothesis 6 (the box office figures of Disney animation features are higher since the purchase of Pixar).
- Section 4: Critics and public. This section includes the critics and audience ratings of www.rottentomatoes.com (accessed on 1 July 2023) and www.IMDb.com (accessed on 1 July 2023) in order to clarify hypothesis 2 and specifically sub-hypothesis 7 (the ratings of Disney animation features are higher since the purchase of Pixar). We obtain a total of five figures: two percental on the number of positive reviews, two scores out of 10 from the critics, and one score out of 5 from the audience.

4. Results

The results obtained have been articulated both through descriptive analysis and the visualization of the aforesaid results through graphics. For the elaboration of the graphics, we have created a series of icons that represent the different movies and their protagonists. The legend to these icons can be found in Appendix A.

The results pertaining to the psychological construction of the protagonists are represented by two different bar graphs. On the one hand, Figure 1 represents the total number of personality traits of each protagonist in every Disney animation feature included in the sample. On the other hand, Figure 2 represents the proportion in which each personality factor is present in the psychological construction of each protagonist. In both graphs, the protagonists of each movie are ordered based on the year of release, from 1994 to 2018, and divided into features before the purchase of Pixar and features released after. Moreover, the five factors of personality have one color assigned to each: red for extraversion, yellow for agreeableness, purple for conscientiousness, green for neuroticism, and blue for openness to experience. The charts with the data used to elaborate these graphs can be found in Appendices B and C.

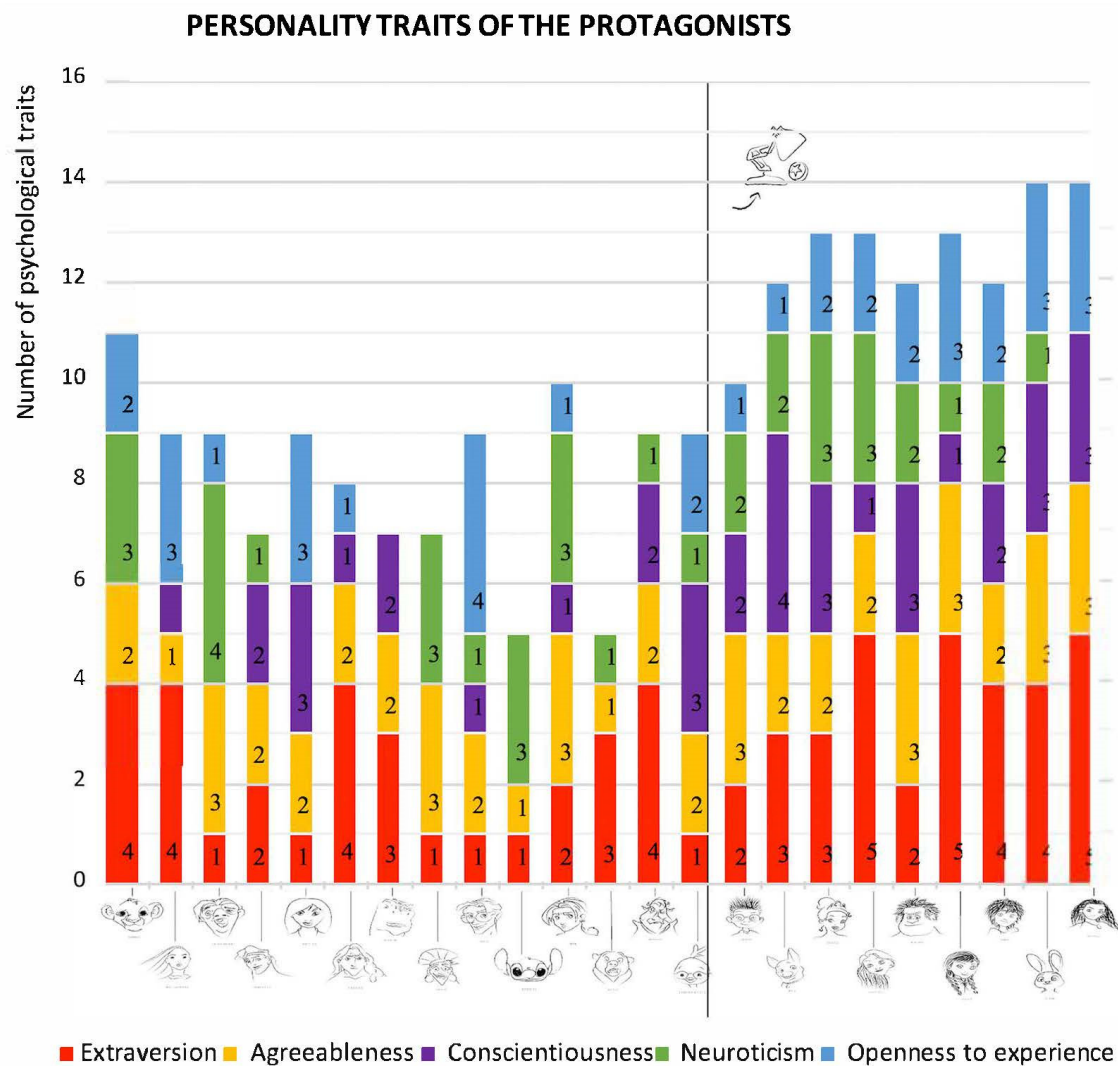


Figure 1. Number of psychological traits that each protagonist of Disney animation features has. Source: author's own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analyses.

Before the purchase of Pixar, the average number of psychological traits is 8. The protagonist with most traits is Simba with 11, followed by Jim with 10, while the protagonists with fewer traits are Stitch and Kenai with 5, followed by Hercules, Milo, Maggie, and Chicken Little with 7. On the other hand, the average number of traits in the protagonists of the features released after the purchase is higher at 12. The second maximum number of traits amongst the movies released before the purchase is equal to the lowest number of traits amongst the movies released after, 10 traits in Lewis. The protagonists with most traits are Moana and Judy with 14, followed by Anna, Rapunzel, and Tiana with 13.

In relation to the protagonists in the features released before the purchase of Pixar, only 21.4% (Milo, Jim, and Chicken Little) have all the five personality factors, while 50% (7 out of 14) have four of them. From these seven characters, 42.86% lack the factor of neuroticism (Pocahontas, Mulan, and Tarzan), 28.57% lack the factor of conscientiousness (Simba and Quasimodo), and another 28.57% lack the factor of openness to experience (Hercules and Maggie). Last but not least, 28.6% (4 out of 14) have three of the personality factors. From these four characters, 75% lack both conscientiousness and openness to experience (Kuzco, Stitch, and Kenai), while 25% lack both neuroticism and openness to experience (Aladar). On the other hand, from the protagonists in the features released after the purchase of Pixar, 88.8% (8 out of 9) have all the five factors, while only Moana, representing 11.2%, has four of them, lacking the factor of neuroticism.

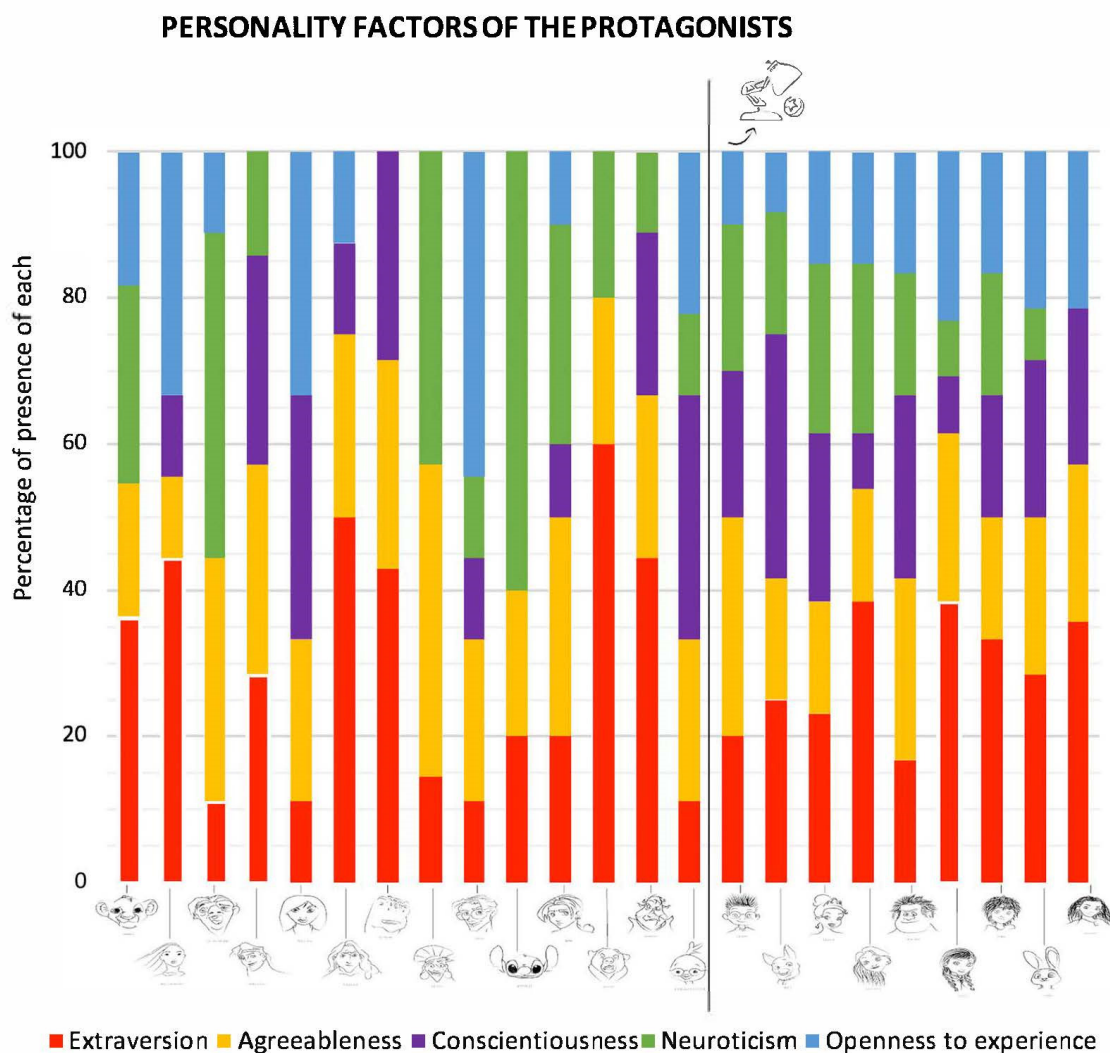


Figure 2. Percentage of presence of the personality factors in the psychological construction of each protagonist in Disney animation features. Source: author's own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analyses.

4.1. Character Arcs of the Protagonists

The results regarding the character arcs of the protagonists are represented by two different pie graphs. Figure 3 represents the data of the movies released before and after the purchase of Pixar (1994–2006 and 2006–2018, respectively). Inexistent character arcs are represented in green, change character arcs in blue, and growth character arcs in yellow. There are not any protagonists with fall character arcs either before or after the purchase. Therefore, there is no color assigned to this type. The charts with the data used to elaborate these graphs can be found in Appendix D.

As the graph shows, the predominant character arc of the protagonists before the purchase of Pixar is change with a 43% share, while the predominant one after the purchase is growth with a 67% share. Firstly, the presence of protagonists with inexistent character arcs decreases from 28% to 22%. This type of character arc depicts the protagonists as people who remain true to themselves, and rather than changing themselves, generate a change in how their social environment sees them and understands a particular issue they represent. Protagonists such as Pocahontas, Mulan, or Anna are examples of this type of arc.

Secondly, protagonists with change character arcs also decrease from 43% to 11%. Change character arcs imply the transformation of the protagonists into heroes and saviors

of civilization as they reach the truth about an aspect of their lives. Protagonists such as Simba, Quasimodo, or Bolt are examples of this type of arc. Last but not least, protagonists with growth character arcs increase from 29% to 67%. This type of character arc brings along some type of knowledge and realization about the world or the self, triggered by the events of the story. Examples of this are Hercules, Ralph, or Moana.

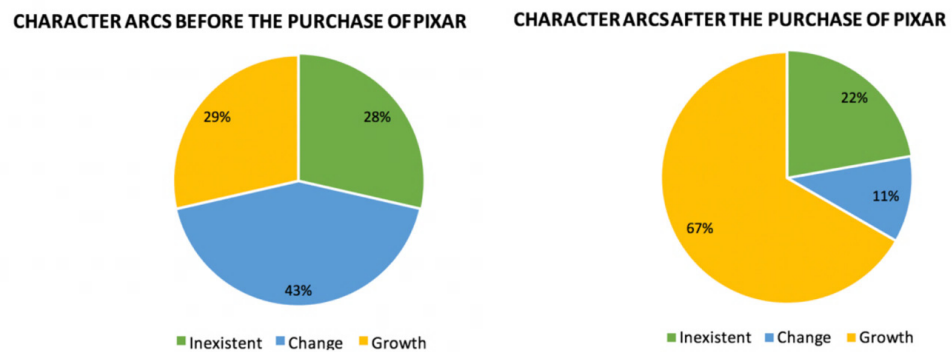


Figure 3. Proportion of the character arcs of the protagonists of Disney animation movies before and after the purchase of Pixar. Source: author's own elaboration from the results obtained in the analysis.

4.2. Gender of the Protagonists

The results of the gender of the protagonists are also represented by two different pie graphs. Figure 4 represents the data of the movies released before and after the purchase of Pixar. In both graphs, males are represented in blue and females in orange.

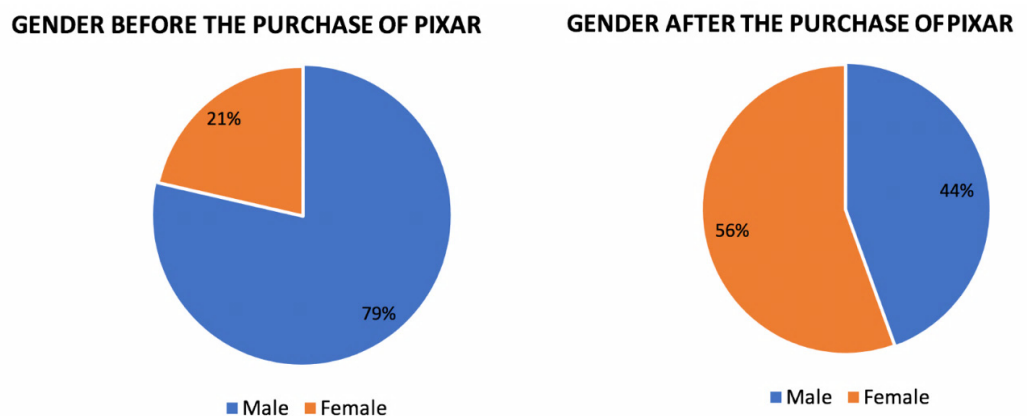


Figure 4. Proportion of the gender of the protagonists of Disney animation movies before and after the purchase of Pixar. Source: author's own elaboration.

As the graph shows, the predominant gender of the protagonists of Disney movies was male (79%) before the acquisition of Pixar, whereas female took the majority of leading roles in the eight movies released by Disney after the acquisition of Pixar. Although there are fewer movies in the second studied period (after the purchase of Pixar by Disney), there are still more titles, both in total and relative terms, with women occupying leading roles: five females (Tiana, Rapunzel, Elsa, Judy Hopps, and Moana) were the protagonists of Disney movies after the acquisition of Pixar (56%), whereas only three (Mulan, Lilo, and Maggie from *Home on the Range*) were protagonists in the period 1994–2005 before Disney bought Pixar (see Table 1).

Table 1. Detail of the gender of the protagonists of Disney animation movies before and after the purchase of Pixar. Source: author's own elaboration.

1994–2005		2006–2018	
Film	Protagonist (M/F)	Film	Protagonist (M/F)
<i>The Lion King</i>	Simba (M)	<i>Meet the Robinsons</i>	Wilbur Robinson (M)
<i>Pocahontas</i>	Pocahontas (F)	<i>Bolt</i>	Bolt (M)
<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	Quasimodo (M)	<i>The Princess and the Frog</i>	Tiana (F)
<i>Hercules</i>	Hercules (M)	<i>Tangled</i>	Rapunzel (F)
<i>Mulan</i>	Mulan: Mulan (F)	<i>Frozen</i>	Anna (F)
<i>Tarzan</i>	Tarzan: Tarzan (M)	<i>Big Hero 6</i>	Hiro (M)
<i>Dinosaur</i>	Dinosaur: Aladar (M)	<i>Zootopia</i>	Judy Hopps (F)
<i>The Emperor's New Groove</i>	Kuzco (M)	<i>Moana</i>	Moana (F)
<i>Atlantis: The Lost Empire</i>	Milo (M)	<i>Wreck-it Ralph</i>	Wreck-it Ralph (M)
<i>Lilo & Stitch</i>	Lilo (F)		
<i>Treasure Planet</i>	Jim Hawkins (M)		
<i>Brother Bear</i>	Kenai (M)		
<i>Home on the Range</i>	Maggie (F)		
<i>Chicken Little</i>	Chicken Little (M)		

4.3. Master Plo

The numbers and variety of master plots in each Disney animation feature included in the sample are represented using a bar graph (Figure 5). The movies are ordered based on their year of release, from 1994 to 2018, and divided into features before the purchase of Pixar and features released after. Each type of master plot is represented by a different color: red for quest, yellow for adventure, purple for pursuit, green for revenge, pink for riddle, brown for rivalry, dark grey for underdog, dark blue for metamorphosis, light blue for maturation, orange for love, light grey for forbidden love, black for sacrifice, and maroon for ascension. The chart with the data used to elaborate this graph can be found in Appendix E.

Before the purchase of Pixar, 50% of the features have one master plot, and the other 50% has two master plots. On the other hand, 55.5% of the features released after the purchase have one master plot, and the other 44.5% has two of them.

The most common master plots in the features released before the purchase are maturation, pursuit, underdog, and adventure, present in a total of twelve features (three each), followed by rivalry and metamorphosis, which are present in a total of four features (two each). Finally, master plots quest, revenge, love, forbidden love, and ascension are present in five features.

On the other hand, the most common master plot in the features released after the purchase is quest, present in four different features, followed by master plots pursuit and revenge, which are present in a total of four features (two each). Finally, present in a total of five features, we find master plots riddle, metamorphosis, love, sacrifice, and ascension. Master plots rivalry, underdog, maturation, and forbidden love are not present in any feature after the purchase of Pixar, while riddle and sacrifice appear for the first time.

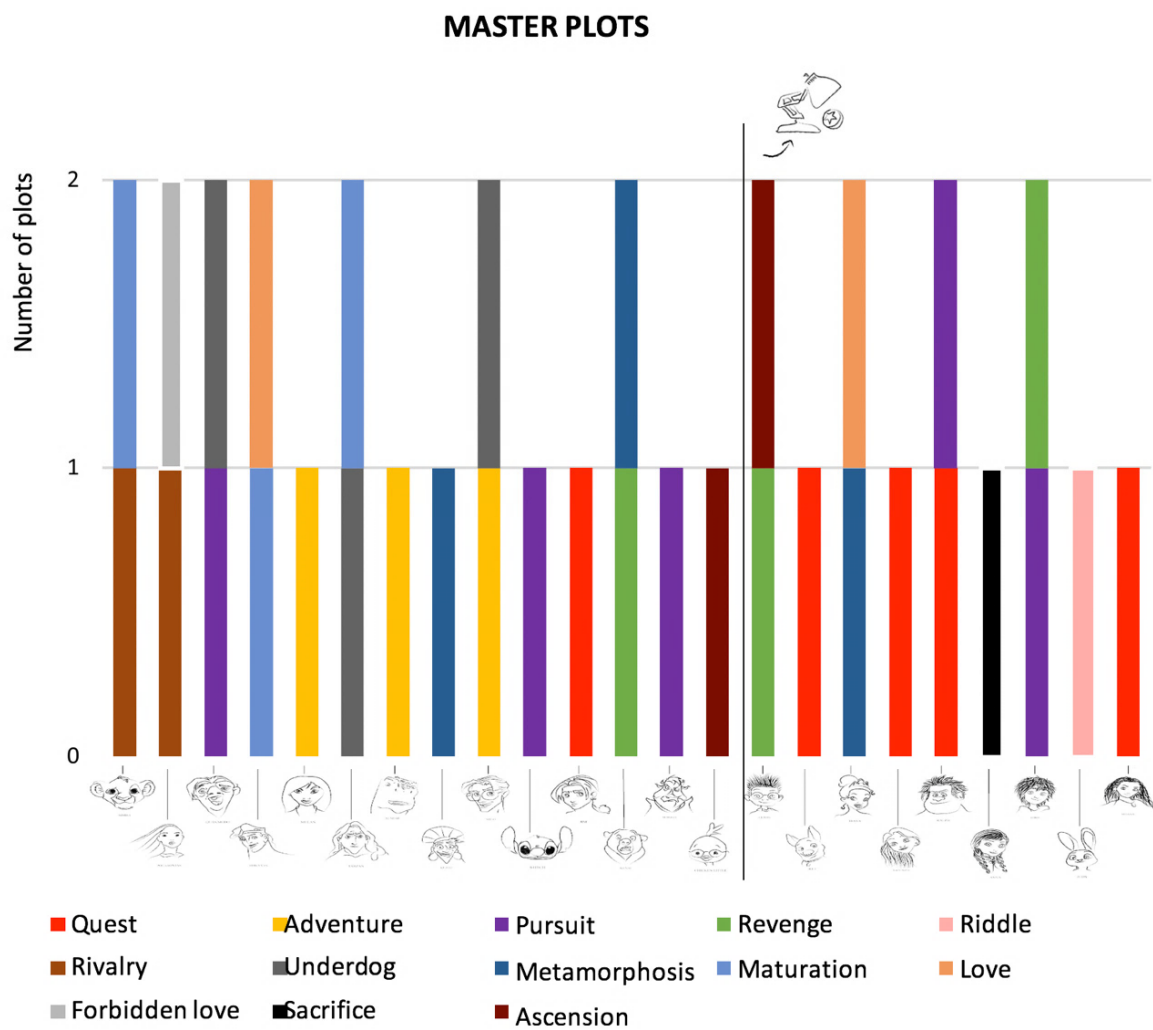


Figure 5. Number and type of master plots of Disney animation movies. Source: author’s own elaboration from the results obtained in the analyses.

4.4. Significant Relationships between Characters

The numbers and variety of significant relationships between characters in each Disney animation feature included in the sample are represented using a bar graph (Figure 6). The movies are ordered based on their year of release, from 1994 to 2018, and divided into features before the purchase of Pixar and features released after. Each type of relationship is represented by a different color: orange for guidance, grey for mentoring, emerald for rivalry, yellow for friendship, blue for love, green for tyranny, and pink for protection. The chart with the data used to elaborate this graph can be found in Appendix F.

As the graphs show, the average number of significant relationships is two in the features released before the purchase and three in those released after. Every feature has significant relationships between the different characters except for *Dinosaur*, which does not have any. There are three features released before the purchase that have guidance relationships. The guidance goes from one character to the protagonist, who needs help to find the right path, with the exception of *Chicken Little*. In this feature, we find the first and only guidance relationship in which the guidance goes from the protagonist to another character. After the purchase, there is only one feature with a guidance relationship: *Moana*, and in this feature, she is the one to receive the guidance from her grandmother.

Mentoring relationships are present in four features before the purchase. These also go from one character to the protagonist, who needs help to realize certain aspects of life or the self. After the purchase, we find two features with mentoring relationships: *Bolt* and

Moana. In the case of *Bolt*, it is the protagonist who receives the mentoring from another character but not in the case of *Moana*. In this feature, it is the protagonist who mentors another character about existential matters.

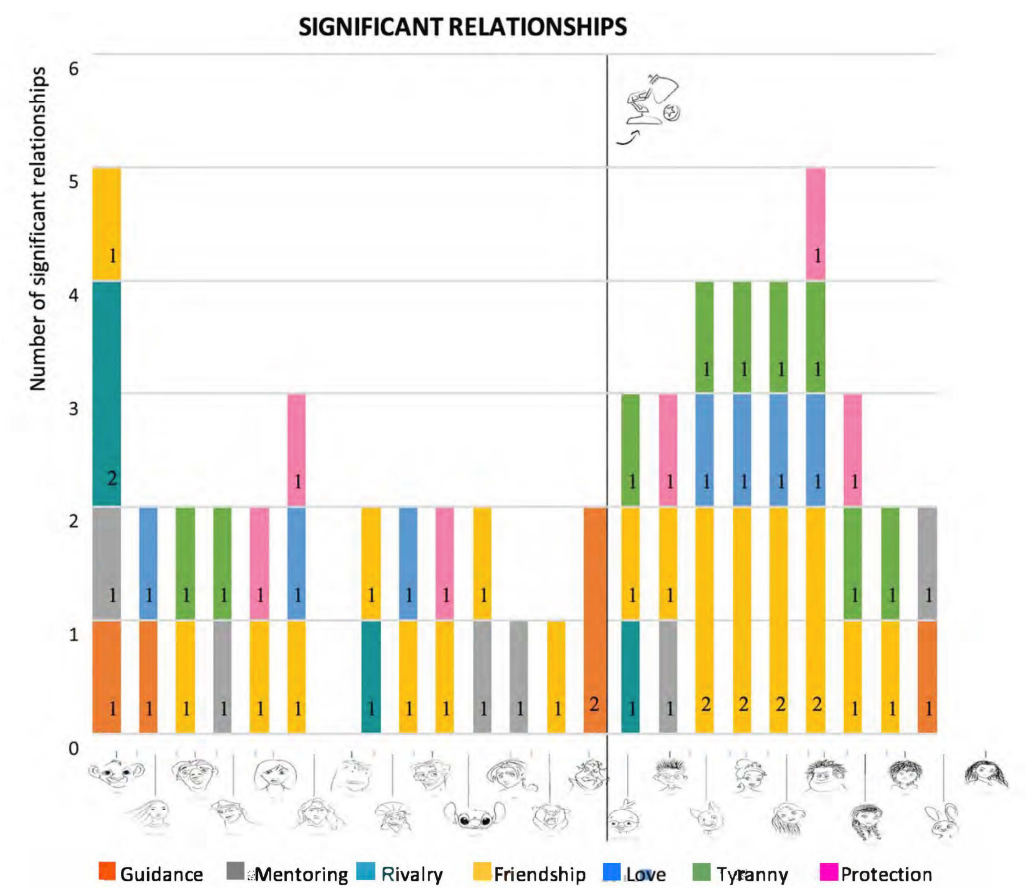


Figure 6. Number and type of significant relationships between the characters of Disney animation features. Source: author’s own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analyses.

There are three features with rivalry relationships, two of them from before the purchase and one from after. The rivalry relationships between the characters of animation features released before the purchase are based on the yearning for power, while the one in *Meet the Robinsons* (released after the purchase) has a backstory that helps the audience understand the nature of the relationship and the origin of the rivalry.

Friendship relationships are the most common ones in the features released both before and after the purchase. The friendships between the characters of the features released before the purchase are based on helping each other truthfully and loyally whenever it is needed. On the other hand, the friendships between the protagonists and other characters of the features released after the purchase go through some kind of conflict that separates them, breaking the relationship for a short period of time. Anyway, the character ends up assisting the protagonist at the highest dramatic point.

There are seven features with love relationships: three from before the purchase and four after it. All of them bring the two involved characters some type of openness to new experiences, ideologies, or knowledge. Both characters stimulate each other and fall in love progressively and against the odds.

Relationships of tyranny appear in nine features; two of them were released before the purchase, and the other seven were released after. All the relationships before the release and the ones in *Meet the Robinsons*, *The Princess and the Frog*, and *Tangled* show their tyrants from the beginning, making it clear for the audience who is the “bad guy”. On the other hand, in the relationships in the last features (*Wreck-it Ralph*, *Frozen*, *Big Hero 6*, and

Zootopia), the tyrants are masked as good and trustworthy people that help the protagonist in their task. The discoveries of the protagonist are what reveal the tyrants as who they really are.

Last but not least, we find six protection relationships between the characters of the features: three from the ones released before and three from the ones released after. These relationships are based on the protection from one to the other and in which the protagonists save the other characters from death or capture. The only exception is the relationship in *Big Hero 6* between Hiro and Baymax, in which it is the protagonist who is to be saved by the other character; Hiro also reciprocally protects Baymax since the robot only knows the human world from a scientific perspective, which in itself endangers its survival.

4.5. Box Office and Reviews from Critics

The results of the box office data are represented by two different line graphs. On the one hand, Figure 7 represents the number of weeks each Disney animation feature included in the sample has been in release in the United States. On the other hand, Figure 8 represents the worldwide total gross income of each Disney animation feature included in the sample. In both graphs, the movies are ordered based on their year of release, from 1994 to 2018, and divided into features before the purchase of Pixar and features released after. The charts with the data used to elaborate these graphs can be found in Appendix G.

The weeks in release before the purchase start at their highest peak of 36 with *The Lion King* but decrease immediately to 12, 7, and 9 with *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules*, and *Mulan*, respectively. From this point, they increase again, maintaining it around 20 until the purchase, with the exception of *Treasure Planet*, which decreases to 11. Right after the purchase of Pixar, the weeks in release drops to 14 with *Bolt*, but then starts increasing again, overcoming the average of the previously released movies, maintaining it around 30 weeks, and overcoming it with *Frozen*, but never reaching the highest peak of *The Lion King*. After 34 weeks of *Frozen*, the time decreased again to 29 and 22 weeks with *Big Hero 6* and *Zootopia*, respectively.

The features with the highest number of weeks in release are *The Lion King* (36), *Frozen* (34) and *Big Hero 6* (29). The first one belongs to the movies released before the purchase, while the two last ones belong to the ones after the purchase. The features with the lowest ones are *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (7), *Hercules*, and *Mulan* (both 9). All of them belong to the movies released before the purchase.

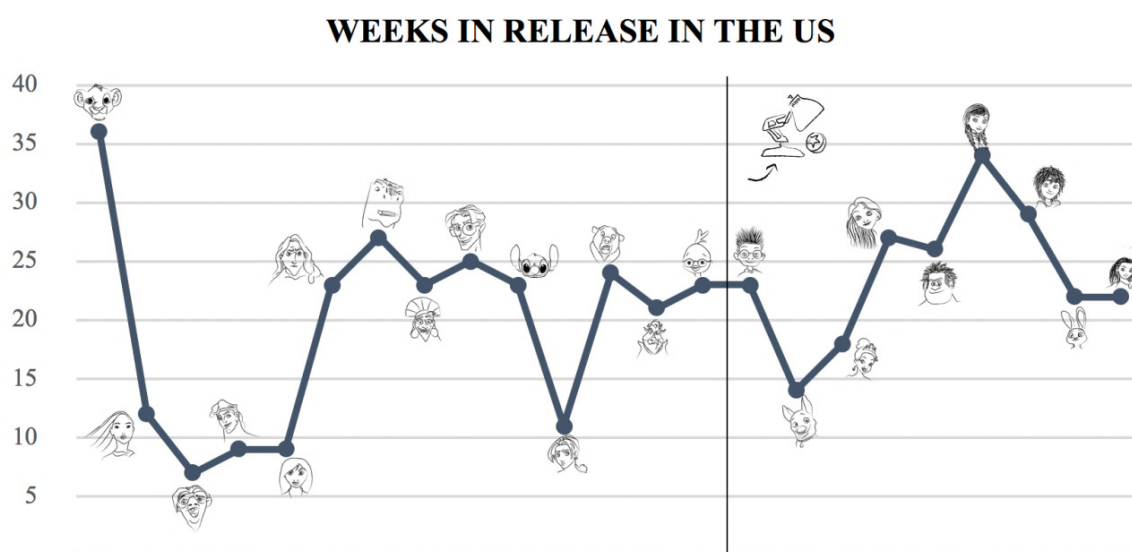


Figure 7. Weeks in release in the United States of Disney animation features. Source: author's own elaboration based on the data obtained from www.boxofficemojo.com (accessed on 1 July 2023).

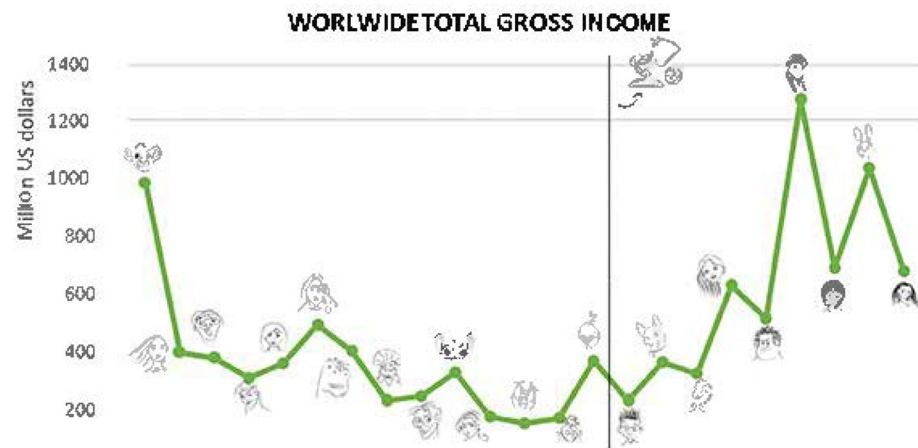


Figure 8. Worldwide total gross income in US dollars of Disney animation features. Source: author's own elaboration based on the data obtained from www.boxofficemojo.com (accessed on 1 July 2023).

The worldwide total gross income of the movies before the purchase (*The Lion King* to *Chicken Little*) follows a decreasing tendency, with its highest peak with *The Lion King* and its lowest with *Brother Bear*. After the purchase, the total gross income increases, never overcoming 500 million dollars, with *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Tarzan*, *Lilo & Stitch*, and *Chicken Little*, but later decreases even more with *Hercules*, *The Emperor's New Groove*, *Treasure Planet*, and *Home on the Range*.

Once Disney buys Pixar in 2006, the total gross income falls down with the first movie, *Meet the Robinsons*, reaching the lowest value since the purchase. It increases with *Bolt* and decreases again with *The Princess and the Frog*. Since then, the total gross income starts to follow an increasing tendency, reaching its highest peak in 2013 with *Frozen*. It also has some decreasing and low points with *Wreck-it Ralph* and *Big Hero 6*, but these are never lower than the second highest gross income from before the purchase, which is *Tarzan* with 448 million dollars.

The features with the highest worldwide total gross incomes are *Frozen* (\$1,276,480,335), *Zootopia* (\$1,023,784,195), and *The Lion King* (\$968,483,777). The first two belong to the movies released after the purchase, while the latter belongs to the ones released before. The features with the lowest worldwide total gross incomes are *Brother Bear* (\$85,336,277), *Home on the Range* (\$103,951,461), and *Treasure Planet* (\$109,578,115). All of them belong to the movies released before the purchase.

The ratings are also represented by three different line graphs. On the one hand, Figure 9 represents the average audience score out of 5, given by the users of rottentomatoes.com to each Disney animation feature included in the sample. On the other hand, Figure 10 represents the average critics score out of 10, given by the users of rottentomatoes.com and IMDB.com to each Disney animation feature included in the sample. Last but not least, Figure 11 represents the percentage of audience and critics positive reviews each Disney animation feature has received by the users of rottentomatoes.com. In all the graphs, the movies are ordered based on their year of release, from 1994 to 2018, and divided into features before the purchase of Pixar and features released after.

The average score given by the audience to the features released before the purchase has a decreasing tendency, from its highest peak with *The Lion King* to its lowest with *Home on the Range*. It has some high increasing points in between with *Mulan*, *The Emperor's New Groove*, *Lilo & Stitch*, and *Brother Bear*. Still, no feature apart from *The Lion King* receives an average score higher than 3.4. After the purchase, the average score starts to follow an increasing tendency, reaching its highest peak with *Zootopia*. These features do not receive a score lower than 3.5, which constitutes the lowest peak after the purchase with *Meet the Robinsons*.

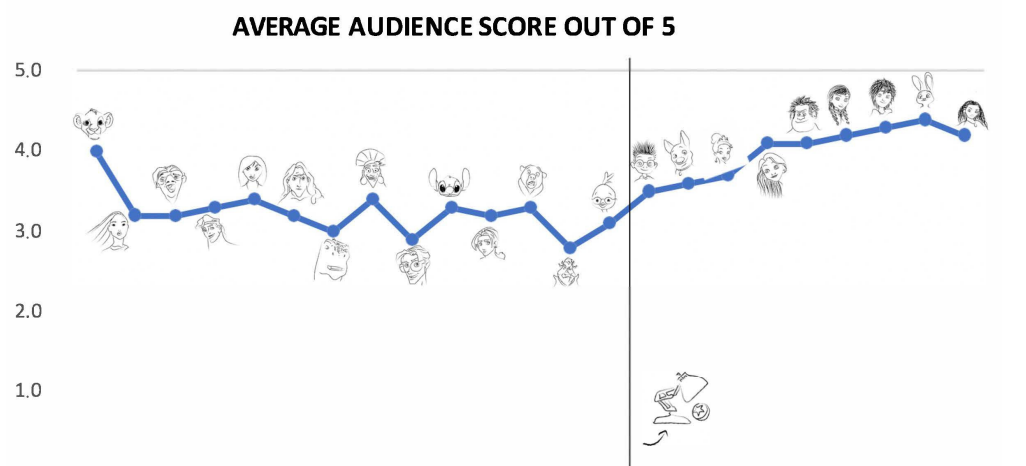


Figure 9. Average audience score out of 5 given to Disney animation features by the users of www.rottentomatoes.com. Source: author’s own elaboration based on the data obtained from www.rottentomatoes.com (accessed on 1 July 2023).

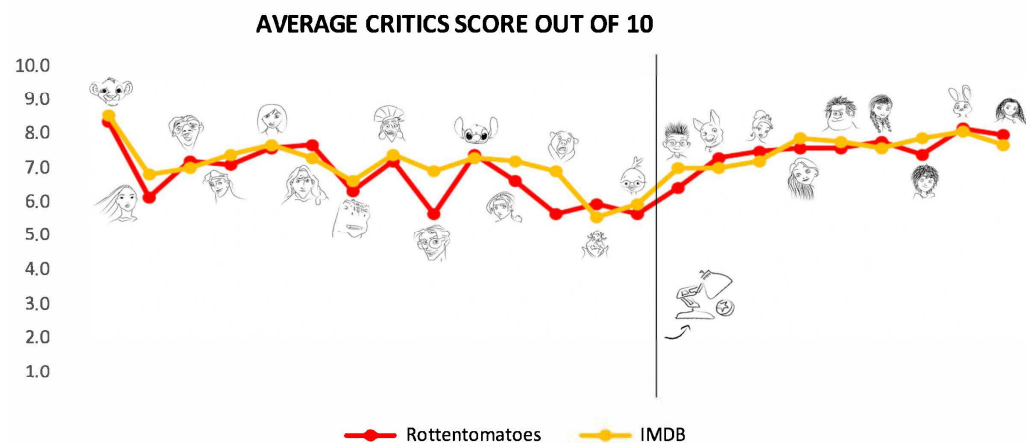


Figure 10. Average critics scores out of 10 given to Disney animation features by the users of www.rottentomatoes.com and www.IMDB.com. Source: author’s own elaboration based on the data obtained from www.rottentomatoes.com and www.IMDB.com (accessed on 1 July 2023).

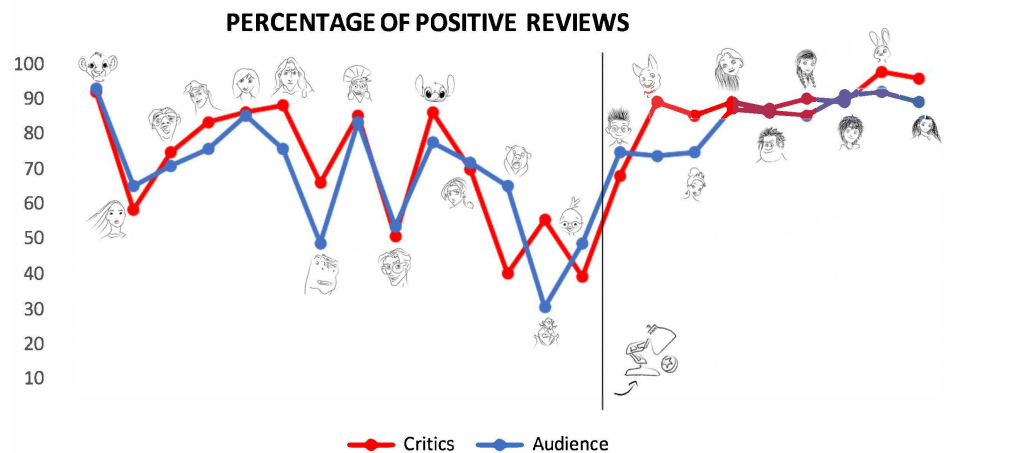


Figure 11. Percentage of positive reviews given to Disney animation features by the users of www.rottentomatoes.com. Source: author’s own elaboration based on the data obtained from www.rottentomatoes.com (accessed on 1 July 2023).

The features with the highest average audience scores are *Zootopia* (4.4), *Big Hero 6* (4.3), and *The Lion King* (4). The first two belong to the movies released after the purchase, while the latter belongs to the ones released before. On the other hand, the features with the lowest average audience scores are *Home on the Range* (2.8), *Atlantis* (2.9), and *Dinosaur* (3). All of them belong to the movies released before the purchase.

As a general rule, the users of IMDB and rottentomatoes give the features a similar score with a difference of less than 0.5 points, except for *Pocahontas*, *Atlantis*, *Treasure Planet*, and *Brother Bear*, in which the IMDB users rate higher than rottentomatoes'. Before the purchase, the average critics score of both webpages follows a decreasing tendency, with its highest peak with *The Lion King* and its lowest with *Atlantis* in the case of rottentomatoes and *Home on the Range* in IMDB. In between, there are also high points with *Tarzan*, *The Emperor's New Groove*, and *Lilo & Stitch*, but also some other low ones with *Pocahontas*, *Dinosaur*, and *Chicken Little*. After the purchase, the average critics score follows an increasing trend from its lowest peak with *Meet the Robinsons* and its highest with *Zootopia*, which still does not overcome the score of *The Lion King*.

IMDB users give their higher scores to *The Lion King* (8.5), *Zootopia* (8), *Tangled*, and *Big Hero 6* (both 7.8). The first feature belongs to the ones released before the purchase, while the three latter belong to the ones released after. The lower scores from IDMB are for *Home on the Range* (5.4), *Chicken Little* (5.8), and *Dinosaur* (6.5). All of them belong to the movies released before the purchase.

On the other hand, rottentomatoes users give their higher scores to *The Lion King* (8.3), *Zootopia* (8.1), and *Moana* (7.9). Again, the first feature belongs to the ones released before the purchase, while the two latter belong to the ones released after. The lower scores are for *Chicken Little*, *Atlantis* (both 5.5), *Home on the Range* (5.8), and *Pocahontas* (6). Again, all of them belong to the movies released before the purchase.

The percentage of positive reviews given by the critics of rottentomatoes before the purchase follows a decreasing trend from its highest peak with *The Lion King* to its lowest with *Chicken Little*, but it has, in between, many high points with *Tarzan*, *The Emperor's New Groove*, and *Lilo & Stitch* and low ones with *Pocahontas*, *Atlantis*, and *Brother Bear*. After the purchase, the trend grows from its lowest peak with *Meet the Robinsons* to its highest with *Zootopia*.

On the other hand, the percentage of positive reviews given by the audience follows a similar decreasing tendency, with *The Lion King* as the highest peak and *Home on the Range* as its lowest one. It also has high points with *The Emperor's New Groove* and *Lilo & Stitch*, but instead of *Tarzan*, the third highest point is for *Mulan*. The low points are the same as the critics'. After the purchase, the tendency also grows, but more subtly than the critics'.

The features with the highest percentages of positive reviews from the critics are *Zootopia* (98%), *Moana* (96%), and *The Lion King* (92%), while the ones with the lower percentages are *Chicken Little* (37%), *Brother Bear* (38%), and *Home on the Range* (54%). For the audience, the features with the highest percentage of positive reviews are *The Lion King* (93%), *Zootopia* (92%), and *Big Hero 6* (91%), while the lowest ones are *Chicken Little*, *Dinosaur* (both 47%), *Home on the Range* (28%), and *Atlantis* (52%).

5. Conclusions

The present research is aimed at shedding light on the narratological evolution of Disney storytelling in a quarter of a century, divided by the acquisition of Pixar in January 2006. All the results should be interpreted, first, in the framework of an evolution of society itself, to which artists are naturally responsive. Disney's renaissance in the 1990s was a result, amongst other phenomena, of the studio's understanding of new audiences. Their creations after the purchase of Pixar were obviously influenced by Pixar's innovations, but also by many other social changes that were occurring simultaneously. Our investigation has attempted to make a contribution to the exciting debate on the relationship between these two brands and its effect on their creativity. This has led to some ultimate reflections connected to the hypotheses that we formulated at the beginning of this research.

A close analysis of our results confirms that hypothesis 1 can be assumed to be verified: three of its sub-hypotheses are confirmed, another is partly confirmed, and only one (sub-hypothesis 4) is completely rejected. Hence, the Pixar effect changed the narrative and discourse of Disney's features, enriching it through a more complete construction of protagonists and the relationships between the characters. The fact that these changes began to be noticeable in the features released after 2006 drives us to the conclusion that Pixar played a significant role in them.

The psychological construction of the protagonists of Disney animation features after the purchase of Pixar is more balanced and closer to human nature and behavior than those in features released before the purchase. The psychological profiles of the protagonists in the last nine features have a greater number of personality traits, which, at the same time, are distributed in a more balanced way across the different factors. This makes the protagonists more complete, reliable, and easy to feel identified with; less fantastic and more human. On the other hand, the protagonists in the features released before the purchase are more easily typecast in one of the factors. For example, Tarzan is extremely extrovert, Kuzco extremely non agreeable, Quasimodo extremely neurotic, Mulan or Chicken Little extremely conscientious and Milo extremely open. Therefore, sub-hypothesis 1 can be confirmed.

Moreover, the fact that Disney gives their protagonists more growth character arcs, apart from change, after the purchase of Disney drives us to the conclusion that the narrative construction of the protagonists changes in such a way that it represents life more accurately and encouragingly, creating fewer heroes and more people with the ability to learn and generate change in others. The protagonists in features before the purchase, or at least in the majority of them, have to become heroes in order to be recognized and accepted, as if the inner process of realization and learning did not matter as much as becoming a hero recognized by the community. So, have the character arcs deepened since the purchase? They have in their reflection on how to face and process self-development.

Next, we can also confirm sub-hypothesis 3 related to the variety of gender in the protagonists of the features. The data speak for itself; the proportion of female protagonists is higher after the purchase than before. We are aware that the representation of women in Disney animation features has been an object of study and debate for the last years. Based on the accomplished analysis of the character arcs of the female protagonists, we consider that their happiness in Disney progressively starts to depend more on their self-realization and the accomplishment of their goals in detriment of finding true love.

In relation to the amount and variety of master plots each Disney animation feature has, sub-hypothesis 4 is denied. On the one hand, the amount of master plots in each movie remains constant at either one or two throughout all the features. These plots are always represented by the protagonist in those with only one master plot and by the protagonist and the antagonist in those with two plots. On the other hand, it is true that after the purchase, two new master plots are included (riddle and sacrifice), but these only represent 15% of the total number of master plots in the features after the purchase. Therefore, it cannot be concluded that there is a greater variety of master plots.

Following up with the complexity of the plots, there are more significant relationships between the characters of the features released after the purchase than between the characters of the ones released before. When it comes to variety, the types of relationships remain the same, but what does change is the construction of friendship and tyranny. Firstly, as previously shown in the results, friendships after the purchase go through some kind of conflict that leads to the separation of the characters involved, who, at the end, put their friendship above the conflict and help each other. We believe this depiction of friendship is closer to reality and that it even reinforces the real meaning of friendship. Secondly, the tyranny relationships in the features released after the purchase have a backstory that explains where the tyrant comes from. This justifies and depicts the existence of evil and cruelty as possible consequences of life events and not as gratuitous. Therefore, sub-hypothesis 5 can be partially confirmed.

Sub-hypotheses 6 and 7 also lead to a mostly verified hypothesis 2. Even if there are some differences in the percentage of positive reviews given by critics and the audience, generally speaking, it can be said that Disney feature films released after the purchase of Pixar were more accepted and successful for the public than the ones released before.

Our investigation has attempted, ultimately, to contribute to the relevant debate of empowered storytelling in animation as one of the most noticeable traits of the genre between the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. There are, however, shortfalls that should be noted and that, hopefully, could inspire future investigations in a field that we consider particularly important. This is due to the large reach animation has proven to have in different stages of the history of filmmaking and its indisputable effect on generations of particularly vulnerable sectors of the audience. Our paper's periodization has attempted to present a significantly lengthy period (a quarter of a century), yet future investigations could expand the time frame used to date back to the start of Disney's renaissance period or update more recent titles created by Pixar after its acquisition by Disney. In a similar vein, the analysis of gender diversity can also benefit from addressing how Disney and Pixar have dealt with gender representation, both when working jointly and separately. The qualitative side of our study has tried to also triangulate with disciplines to transcend the mere film analysis, including disciplines such as psychology that would enrich further analyses of characters and plots. Further studies may, however, expand the qualitative side of our analysis from a film perspective as well.

All things considered, and with the confirmation of both hypotheses, the influence that the purchase of Pixar had on Disney and the changes it brought along have been proven. Pixar replicated, in many ways, Disney's tireless spirit of evolving and adapting to the times that had been seen in the different stages of the studio's long history and did it using and expanding what Disney had done in the past, from the technological improvements to ways of telling animated stories. At a narratological level, which has been the center of our study, Pixar's contribution has empowered changes in gender representation of their protagonists, as well as the arcs of transformation, thus reviving, through storytelling, the leadership of the company at a time when it was starting to be questioned. Adjustment and reactivity to social changes are also at the core of this shift and quite possibly deserve further studies to apprehend their impact on the relationship between Disney and Pixar in the wake of a new century.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: Ethical review and approval were waived for this study due to the sole use of an expert in Psychology (who was duly informed of the purpose of the in-depth interview within the scheme of our investigation and gave us his consent to use his insights) as a supplementary mechanism to further support, along with relevant literature informing our methodology, the analysis of films—which we believe is the key focus of our investigation.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Icon	Movie and protagonist	Icon	Movie and protagonist
	<i>The Lion King</i> Simba		<i>Home on the Range</i> Maggie
	<i>Pocahontas</i> Pocahontas		<i>Chicken Little</i> Chicken Little
	<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i> Quasimodo		<i>Meet the Robinsons</i> Lewis
	<i>Hercules</i> Hercules		<i>Bolt</i> Bolt
	<i>Mulan</i> Mulan		<i>The Princess and the Frog</i> Tiana
	<i>Tarzan</i> Tarzan		<i>Tangled</i> Rapunzel
	<i>Dinosaur</i> Aladar		<i>Wreck-it Ralph</i> Ralph
	<i>The Emperor's New Groove</i> Kuzco		<i>Frozen</i> Anna
	<i>Atlantis: The Lost Empire</i> Milo		<i>Big Hero 6</i> Hiro
	<i>Lilo & Stitch</i> Stitch		<i>Zootopia</i> Judy
	<i>Treasure Planet</i> Jim		<i>Moana</i> Moana
	<i>Brother Bear</i> Kenai		Purchase of Pixar

Figure A1. Legend to the icons that represent each animation feature and its protagonist.

Appendix B

Table A1. Psychological traits of the protagonists (Source: author’s own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analysis).

	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness to Experience	Total
Simba	4	2	0	3	2	11
Pocahontas	4	1	1	0	3	9
Quasimodo	1	3	0	4	1	9
Hercules	2	2	2	1	0	7
Mulan	1	2	3	0	3	9
Tarzan	4	2	1	0	1	8
Aladar	3	2	2	0	0	7
Kuzco	1	3	0	3	0	7
Milo	1	2	1	1	4	9
Stitch	1	1	0	3	0	5
Jim	2	3	1	3	1	10
Kenai	3	1	0	1	0	5
Maggie	4	2	2	1	0	9
Chicken Little	1	2	3	1	2	9
Lewis	2	3	2	2	1	10
Bolt	3	2	4	2	1	12
Tiana	3	2	3	3	2	13
Rapunzel	5	2	1	3	2	13
Ralph	2	3	3	2	2	12
Anna	5	3	1	1	3	13
Hiro	4	2	2	2	2	12
Judy	4	3	3	1	3	14
Moana	5	3	3	0	3	14

Appendix C

Table A2. Psychological factors of the protagonists (Source: author’s own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analysis).

	E	A	C	N	O
Simba	36.36	18.18	0	27.27	18.18
Pocahontas	44.44	11.11	11.11	0	33.33
Quasimodo	11.11	33.33	0	44.44	11.11
Hercules	28.57	28.57	28.57	14.29	0
Mulan	11.11	22.22	33.33	0	33.33
Tarzan	50	25	12.5	0	12.5
Aladar	42.86	28.57	2857	0	0
Kuzco	14.29	42.86	0	42.86	0
Milo	11.11	22.22	11.11	11.11	44.44
Stitch	20	20	0	60	0
Jim	20	30	10	30	10
Kenai	60	20	0	20	0

Table A2. *Cont.*

	E	A	C	N	O
Maggie	44.44	22.22	22.22	11.11	0
Chicken Little	11.11	22.22	33.33	11.11	22.22
Lewis	20	30	20	20	10
Bolt	25	16.66	33.33	16.66	8.33
Tiana	23.08	15.38	23.08	23.08	15.38
Rapunzel	38.46	15.38	7.69	23.08	15.38
Ralph	16.66	25	25	16.66	16.66
Anna	38.46	23.08	7.69	7.69	23.08
Hiro	33.33	16.66	16.66	16.66	16.66
Judy	28.57	21.43	21.43	7.14	21.43
Moana	35.71	21.43	21.43	0	21.43

Appendix D

Table A3. Character arcs of the protagonists (Source: author's own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analysis).

	Inexistent	Change	Growth	Fall
Features before the purchase	4	6	4	0
Features after the purchase	2	1	6	0

Features before the purchase: *The Lion King*, *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules*, *Mulan*, *Tarzan*, *Dinosaur*, *The Emperor's New Groove*, *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, *Lilo & Stitch*, *Treasure Planet*, *Brother Bear*, *Home on the Range*, and *Chicken Little*. Features after the purchase: Disney has released ten animation features: *Meet the Robinsons*, *Bolt*, *The Princess and the Frog*, *Tangled*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Frozen*, *Big Hero 6*, *Zootopia*, *Moana*, and *Wreck-it Ralph*.

Appendix E

Table A4. Master plots (Source: author's own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analysis).

	Number	Type	Type
<i>The Lion King</i>	2	Maturation	Rivalry
<i>Pocahontas</i>	2	Forbidden love	Rivalry
<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	2	Underdog	Pursuit
<i>Hercules</i>	2	Maturation	Love
<i>Mulan</i>	1	Adventure	
<i>Tarzan</i>	2	Maturation	Underdog
<i>Dinosaur</i>	1	Adventure	
<i>The Emperor's New Groove</i>	1	Metamorphosis	
<i>Atlantis</i>	2	Adventure	Underdog
<i>Lilo & Stitch</i>	1	Pursuit	
<i>Treasure Planet</i>	1	Quest	
<i>Brother Bear</i>	2	Metamorphosis	Revenge
<i>Home on the Range</i>	1	Pursuit	
<i>Chicken Little</i>	1	Ascension	

Table A4. *Cont.*

	Number	Type	Type
<i>Meet the Robinsons</i>	2	Ascension	Revenge
<i>Bolt</i>	1		Quest
<i>The Princess and the Frog</i>	2	Metamorphosis	Love
<i>Tangled</i>	1		Quest
<i>Wreck-it Ralph</i>	2	Quest	Pursuit
<i>Frozen</i>	1		Sacrifice
<i>Big Hero 6</i>	2	Pursuit	Revenge
<i>Zootopia</i>	1		Riddle
<i>Moana</i>	1		Quest

Appendix F

Table A5. Significant relationships between characters (Source: author's own elaboration based on the results obtained in the analysis).

	Guidance	Mentoring	Rivalry	Friendship	Love	Tyranny	Protection
<i>The Lion King</i>	1	1	2	1	0	0	0
<i>Pocahontas</i>	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
<i>Hercules</i>	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
<i>Mulan</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<i>Tarzan</i>	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
<i>Dinosaur</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>The Emperor's New Groove</i>	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<i>Atlantis</i>	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
<i>Lilo & Stitch</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<i>Treasure Planet</i>	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Brother Bear</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Home on the Range</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Chicken Little</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Meet the Robinsons</i>	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
<i>Bolt</i>	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
<i>The Princess and the Frog</i>	0	0	0	2	1	1	0
<i>Tangled</i>	0	0	0	2	1	1	0
<i>Wreck-it Ralph</i>	0	0	0	2	1	1	0
<i>Frozen</i>	0	0	0	2	1	1	1
<i>Big Hero 6</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
<i>Zootopia</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
<i>Moana</i>	1	1	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix G

Table A6. Box office data (Source: author's own elaboration based on data obtained from www.boxofficemojo.com, accessed on 1 July 2023).

	Weeks in Release in the US	Worldwide Total Gross
<i>The Lion King</i>	36	\$968,483,777
<i>Pocahontas</i>	12	\$346,079,773
<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	7	\$325,338,851
<i>Hercules</i>	9	\$252,712,101
<i>Mulan</i>	9	\$304,320,254
<i>Tarzan</i>	23	\$448,191,819
<i>Dinosaur</i>	27	\$349,822,765
<i>The Emperor's New Groove</i>	23	\$169,327,687
<i>Atlantis</i>	25	\$186,053,725
<i>Lilo & Stitch</i>	23	\$273,144,151
<i>Treasure Planet</i>	11	\$109,578,115
<i>Brother Bear</i>	24	\$85,336,277
<i>Home on the Range</i>	21	\$103,95,461
<i>Chicken Little</i>	23	\$314,432,837
<i>Meet the Robinsons</i>	23	\$169,333,034
<i>Bolt</i>	14	\$309,979,994
<i>The Princess and the Frog</i>	18	\$267,045,765
<i>Tangled</i>	27	\$591,794,936
<i>Wreck-it Ralph</i>	26	\$471,222,889
<i>Frozen</i>	34	\$1,276,480,335
<i>Big Hero 6</i>	29	\$657,818,612
<i>Zootopia</i>	22	\$1,023,784,195
<i>Moana</i>	22	\$643,331,111

Appendix H

Table A7. Critics and audience reception (Source: author's own elaboration based on data obtained from www.IMDB.com and www.rottentomatoes.com, accessed on 1 July 2023).

	Critics Out of 10		Audience Out of 5	% Positive Reviews	
	IMDB	Rotten Tomatoes		Critic	Audience
<i>The Lion King</i>	8.5	8.3	4.0	92	93
<i>Pocahontas</i>	6.7	6.0	3.2	57	64
<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	6.9	7.1	3.2	74	70
<i>Hercules</i>	7.3	7.0	3.3	83	75
<i>Mulan</i>	7.6	7.5	3.4	86	85
<i>Tarzan</i>	7.2	7.6	3.2	88	75
<i>Dinosaur</i>	6.5	6.2	3.0	65	47
<i>The Emperor's New Groove</i>	7.3	7.1	3.4	85	83

Table A7. Cont.

	Critics Out of 10		Audience Out of 5	% Positive Reviews	
	IMDB	Rotten Tomatoes		Critic	Audience
<i>Atlantis</i>	6.8	5.5	2.9	49	52
<i>Lilo & Stitch</i>	7.2	7.3	3.3	86	77
<i>Treasure Planet</i>	7.1	6.5	3.2	69	71
<i>Brother Bear</i>	6.8	5.5	3.3	38	64
<i>Home on the Range</i>	5.4	5.8	2.8	54	28
<i>Chicken Little</i>	5.8	5.5	3.1	37	47
<i>Meet the Robinsons</i>	6.9	6.3	3.5	67	74
<i>Bolt</i>	6.9	7.2	3.6	89	73
<i>The Princess and the Frog</i>	7.1	7.4	3.7	85	74
<i>Tangled</i>	7.8	7.5	4.1	89	87
<i>Wreck-it Ralph</i>	7.7	7.5	4.1	87	86
<i>Frozen</i>	7.5	7.7	4.2	90	85
<i>Big Hero 6</i>	7.8	7.3	4.3	89	91
<i>Zootopia</i>	8.0	8.1	4.4	98	92
<i>Moana</i>	7.6	7.9	4.2	96	89

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