

## BEYOND THE FRAME: UNPACKING IDENTITY CRISIS THROUGH MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS IN ANIMATED MOVIES

**Zara Mansoor**

Lecturer Islamabad Model College for Girls (P.G) G-10/4, Islamabad, MPhil English  
Air University Islamabad.

Email: [zaramansoor@hotmail.com](mailto:zaramansoor@hotmail.com)

**Dr. Ubaidullah Khan**

Lecturer Department of English, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad.

Email: [ubaid.khan81@aiou.edu.pk](mailto:ubaid.khan81@aiou.edu.pk)

**Sana Mansoor**

Assistant Professor, Govt. S. E. College Bahawalpur.

Email: [sanasaqib15@gmail.com](mailto:sanasaqib15@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*The genre of animated movies represents such rich themes through multiple modes i.e. colours, dialogues, actions and music etc. The main aim of this thesis is to study how various modes combine to represent the identity crisis of Beast and Elsa in animated movies 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'Frozen' respectively. Marcia's Identity Status Theory is employed to study the psycho-social nature of their identity crisis, in combination with Kress and Leeuwen's Multimodality Theory to analyze its representation through verbal, visual and kinetic modes. The findings reveal that Beast and Elsa keep shifting their identity statuses during identity crisis phase until they finally resolve it. Their relationships are also disturbed and stabilized along with these changes. Moreover, these animated movies have used verbal, visual and kinetic modes in a synchronized fashion to build identity crisis theme. Hence, Disney animated films use imaginary characters to portray realistic aspects of human psyche and by means of multiple modes, intricately combined.*

**Keywords:** Identity Crisis, Animated Movies, human psyche, psycho-social Multimodality.

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## INTRODUCTION

*Identity crisis is a complex psycho-social reality which is manifested through various media for example literature, films and many other genres. Animated movie is an interesting medium that uses not only words but multiple modes to convey meaning and express ideas. This research paper explores the portrayal of identity crisis in two animated movies through verbal, visual and kinetic modes.*

*Identity crisis refers to a state of confusion or indecisiveness, when a person is not sure about who he is or about his role in life (Erikson, 1968). As a sociological concept, identity refers to “people’s concept of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others” (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, p.2). Erik H. Erikson coined the term ‘Identity Crisis’. The word crisis is not used in the literal sense, rather it is defined as “a necessary turning point, a crucial moment when development must move one way or the other” (Erikson, 1968, p.16). According to Erikson, people must go through a crisis which helps them grow and develop an identity, if resolved adequately or may lead to identity confusion if left unresolved (Erikson, 1968). He has divided man’s psycho-social maturation into eight stages, each stage is characterized with a conflict between two extremes of an aspect. The fifth stage which usually occurs in adolescence is relevant to the present study, as it involves a conflict between identity and role confusion. All the preceding stages lead to it, and all the following phases are affected by it. If a person goes through the early stages successfully, he is likely to develop a clear sense of identity. If not, then he faces identity confusion. Marcia (1966) has further elaborated the stage that involves identity crisis and has divided it into four statuses, which are explained in the theoretical framework. According to the psycho-social perspective, a well-developed identity leads to creation of meaningful relationships.*

*It is no wonder that the complex phenomenon of identity crisis has been employed by authors to create complicated characters in their fictional works of art. Animated movies, especially those of Disney and its partner companies (e.g. Pixar) are known to have recurrent themes of identity crisis thus providing a rich ground for the multimodal study of identity crisis.*

*The term multimodality refers to use of multiple modes of communication i.e. verbal, visual, auditory, kinetic etc. to convey a message. This study deals*

*with animated film genre, which involves modes such as language, music, sound, visuals, movement etc. Thus the representation of identity crisis encountered by the characters Beast and Elsa (from the two selected movies i.e. Beauty and the Beast and Frozen) is studied across three mediums i.e. verbal, visual and kinetic in the respective movies.*

## **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

*In animated movies 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'Frozen', the protagonists face psychological identity crisis in the form of confused identity, which further affects their social relationships. The movies portray this phenomenon in a multimodal way by weaving various modes together in an intricate combination, which is a matter of research interest.*

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- 1.To reveal the psycho-social nature of identity crisis faced by Beast and Elsa in the movies Beauty and the Beast' and 'Frozen'.*
- 2.To explore how verbal, visual and kinetic features combine to represent identity crisis in both movies.*

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- 1.What is the psycho-social nature of identity crisis faced by Beast and Elsa in the movies Beauty and the Beast' and 'Frozen'?*
- 2.How do verbal, visual and kinetic features combine to represent identity crisis in both movies?*

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

*Most research on identity crisis is based on written texts focusing on its nature and representation through the plot or characterization. The significance of this study is that it views this complex reality from a multimodal lens, as depicted in animated movies which is a unique perspective. Many animated movies deal with issues of identity development and identity crisis. This genre represents identity crisis not only through plot, characterization or language, but through a combination of mediums, from which the present study deals with visual, kinetic, verbal mediums. In addition, this study also aims to explore the psycho - social nature of identity crisis and its effect on relationships of the characters. This outlook will be a step away from the previous tradition of viewing it from purely psychological or fatalistic angle which gives little control to individuals. The analysis combines methods of literary critique with those of linguistic investigation based on animation genre, therefore it also serves as a connection among*

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*these disciplines.*

### LITERATURE REVIEW

*The review of relevant literature shows that the concept of identity has been explored in animated and non-animated movies from various angles and dimensions since “identity is a self-portrait composed of many pieces” (Santrock, 2006, p 152). However, studies focusing on identity crisis from a multimodal lens are few.*

*Various researches have viewed identity in terms of physical and racial stereotyping. A research by Pimentel & Velazquez (2009) studies how the animated movie Shrek-II represents racial stereotypes. Cappiccie, Chadha, Lin & Snyder (2012) have analyzed Disney Movies from the perspective of critical race theory. The analysis of ‘The Lion King’ shows that the concept of racial hierarchy in society is depicted as something natural and normal. The contrast between light and dark is also prevalent, light being associated with virtue and dark with vice. A study by Bazzini et al (2010) investigates whether Disney movies promote the association of good characters with physical beauty. The findings show that 21 Disney movies contain characters that encourage such association. A study by Julia and Calvin (1998) investigates children’s animated cartoons for visual depiction of various characters and their speech. The findings show that negative characters have plump appearance as compared to positive female characters who are portrayed as slim and smart. Birthisel (2014) explores how Pixar and Dreamwork companies move away from Disney tradition of princesses, by representing male characters in abundance through non-human characters. The study explores visual codes along with the verbal to study the phenomenon.*

*Liang (2014) has found that Japanese animation uses certain non-verbal techniques along with language to convey messages, especially to create identities. The findings show that in order to create superior identity, the boss or the senior person is positioned in the center while the subordinates are on the boundaries.*

*A study conducted by Swan (1999) is based on the animated movie ‘Beauty and the Beast’. The researcher argues that it is the gothic element of the movie that has made it so successful i.e. the half human - half animal qualities of Beast. Beast has to “transcend his animal-human paradox” to*

*form meaningful relationships. This study gives a lot of insight for exploring the nature of identity crisis as well as its effect on relationships in the present research. Nonetheless, it does not show its depiction in the movie, through multimodal techniques. The analysis by Sorice (2014) views 'Frozen' from a psychoanalytical lens, mostly from Freudian concepts of id, ego and superego. The analysis explores how Elsa has a highly developed super ego, symbolized by the gloves she has to wear to hide her abnormal powers from society as they are not considered a social norm.*

*Therefore, previous studies show that the concept of identity is present in animated film genre in various forms. However identity crisis from psychosocial perspective has not been explored in much detail. Moreover, there is a need to study its representation in the genre, through a multimodal lens. The present study aims to fill in these gaps.*

## **METHODOLOGY**

*The study is qualitative, employing Multimodality Approach (based on Kress and Leeuwen's work) in combination with Identity Status Approach (developed by Marcia). These theoretical concepts are methodically realized through Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) and Content Analysis.*

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

*Marcia's theory (1966) is an extension of Erikson's fifth stage of personality development theory. He is of the view that identity confusion and identity achievement are not two sides of a coin, rather it is a continuum ranging from least level of commitment to greatest level. There are four statuses that may occur in the course of identity progression depending on a person's level of commitment to an identity (Marcia, 1966). Identity Diffusion Status refers to a condition in which a person neither has a clear identity, nor has explored various opportunities and choices yet. Such people are often disorganized, and carefree (S, 1993, p. 11). Identity Moratorium Status is the phase when a person is exploring different roles but hasn't yet made a commitment. "These people are vigorous, open to change but undecided" (Kroger & Marcia, 2010, p. 35). Such individuals remain anxious and disturbed, inconsistent in relationships. "They are in a stressful, in-crisis state" (Marcia, 1993, p.23). Identity Foreclosure Status is the condition when individuals have made a commitment to a certain identity without much exploration. The identity is somewhat thrust upon them by authority figures (Marcia, 1993; Kroger & Marcia, 2010). Identity*

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*Achievement Status: It is the status when a person has explored options, been through identity crisis and has finally achieved an identity. Although this status may not be rigidly permanent, yet people in this status have some level of durability regarding selfhood (Marcia, 1993).*

*Multimodality Theory is an inter-disciplinary term that draws basically on Halliday's Social Semiotic Theory. The main concept of multimodality is that along with language, other elements like images, sounds, gestures etc. are also involved in the meaning making process. Halliday's theory focuses mainly on speech, but real life interaction is beyond speech. Various theorists have developed the concept further, working on several communicative modes. Gunther Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) have worked on visual communication, earning the theory academic acknowledgement. They have developed a visual grammar, which they call the 'Grammar of Visual Design'. Kress and van Leeuwen define multimodal text as "any text whose meanings are realized through more than one semiotic mode" (1996, p.183). The visual grammar is comprised of three main functions (a) representational, (b) interactive and (c) compositional corresponding to Hallidian metafunctions ideational, interpersonal and textual respectively (Kress and Leeuwen, 1996/2006).*

### SAMPLE

*This research is based on two selected scenes each from 'Beauty and the Beast' (1991) and 'Frozen' (2013). Both are Disney fairy tales portraying dynamic characters and rich themes. Although having a gap of twenty-two years in release date, they are related to each other.*

### CATEGORIES AND TABULATION METHOD

*Each scene is analyzed under three headings (a) identity status through ideational metafunction, (b) identity status through interpersonal metafunction and (c) identity status through textual metafunction. This analysis explains how the dominant identity status of Beast or Elsa in a particular scene is expressed through verbal, visual and kinetic modes. The detailed analysis is followed by two tables, the first one showing the dominant identity status of the analyzed character i.e. Beast or Elsa in the particular scene. The second one shows multimodal analysis based on the approaches of Halliday (for verbal mode) and Kress & Leeuwen (for visual and kinetic modes).*

## **DATA ANALYSIS:MULTIMODAL REPRESENTATION OF IDENTITY CRISIS**

*This chapter is an analysis of the characters Beast (Beauty and the Beast) and Elsa (Frozen) in terms of the:*

*(a) Phases they encounter in their identity based challenges*

*(b) Semiotic modes (verbal, visual and kinetic) that convey this dimension*

### **BEAST'S IDENTITY CRISIS AND ITS MULTIMODAL REPRESENTATION**

*Beast – a tormented and complicated animated character - is the hero and one of the protagonists of Disney classic 'Beauty and the Beast'. He is characterized as a prince cursed by an enchantress (disguised as a beggar) and hence doomed to live in the form of a hideous monster.*

#### **THE ROSE SCENE**

*In this scene, Belle enters West Wing i.e. the forbidden part of the castle. She notices a picture of the prince, his face half covered. Beast finds out and gets furious.*

### **IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH IDEATIONAL / REPRESENTATIONAL METAFUNCTION**

*When Belle enters the West Wing, she invades the mysterious inner life of Beast. His identity, as a Prince plus Beast is present in the rose room, and Belle encounters his Prince Identity for the first time, as represented through the reactional process. The verbal process shows that Beast (sayer) forbade Belle to enter the room. Hence when she enters, he jumps and covers the rose (table 4.2). Beast comes out of his Identity Foreclosure status and arrives at Identity Moratorium status (table 4.1). His identity has become dynamic, as he now has to choose from among the options i.e. between his charming identity as Prince or his wild, ferocious role as a Beast. Hence his identity is questioned and he faces a mental turmoil which is evident from the action process of throwing away the furniture. The mental processes show sensor Belle and processes 'realize' and 'mean' as she is starting to understand the complex character of Beast. The visual presence of red rose is symbolic of both Beast's identity crisis and his intimacy issues, covered by a glass bell jar (figure 4.1). This shows that Belle invades his crisis but cannot reach it as Beast is unable to share it yet. The grey rags of the torn portrait hide his face, denoting murky side of his character (figure 4.2).*

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**IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH INTERPERSONAL /  
INTERACTIVE METAFUNCTION**

*The verbal mode shows Beast making demands by questioning Belle, while Belle makes only one demand ‘stop’ as a reaction. Beast also uses 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun ‘you’ as he is directly confronting Belle, which is also evident through his direct gaze. Modality feature includes ‘could have’ in Beast’s words ‘Do you realize what you could have done?’ indicating that the possibility of Belle finding out his secret is upsetting him. This shows Beast’s annoyance and his resistance to self-exposure. The kinetic mode intensifies the same as Beast is shouting with his arms spread outwards. Belle hesitates and runs away when Beast storms at her. Thus due to his mental commotion, Beast scares away the only relationship prospect he possesses.*

**IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH TEXTUAL / COMPOSITIONAL  
METAFUNCTION**

*The textual function analysis shows reiteration of the words ‘get out’ and ‘come here’ once as question (why did you come here?) and once as negative (not to come here). This emphasizes Beast’s desire to be left alone. The eyes of Prince are prominently visible in the portrait while the lower part is hidden (figure 4.2). His eyes remain unchanged, regardless of his appearance as Beast or Prince, therefore Belle encounters only the eyes in the portrait which is her encounter with his inner soul. The shiny sparkles falling from the rose are salient against the darkness of the room (figure 4.1) because the rose indicates Beast’s psychological and social limitations.*



**Fig. 4.1 Belle in Rose Room**



**Fig. 4.2 Prince Portrait**

**Table 4.1** showing identity status of Beast in Rose Scene

<i>Dominant Status</i>	<i>Identity Moratorium</i>
<i>Behavioural Traits</i>	<i>Anxiety, Desire to be alone</i>

Table 4.2 showing multimodal analysis of Rose Scene

<i>Meta- Functions</i>	<i>Sub- Functions</i>	<i>Semiotic Modes</i>		
		<i>Verbal</i>	<i>Visual</i>	<i>Kinetic</i>
<i>Ideational</i>	<i>Narrative</i>	<b><i>Mental:</i></b> <i>Belle: I didn't mean any harm.</i> <i>Beast to Belle: Do you realize what you could have done?</i> <b><i>Verbal:</i></b> <i>Beast: I told you never to come here!</i>	<b><i>Reactional:</i></b> <i>Reactor:</i> <i>Belle</i> <i>Phenomenon:</i> <i>Eyes of prince in portrait</i>	<b><i>Action:</i></b> <i>1.(transactional)</i> <i>Actor: Beast</i> <i>Goal: Rose</i> <i>Action: Jumps and covers it</i> <i>2.(transactional)</i> <i>Actor:</i> <i>Beast</i> <i>Goal:</i> <i>Furniture</i> <i>Action:</i> <i>Throws</i>
	<i>Conceptual</i>	---	<b><i>Analytical:</i></b> <i>Colour: Red, Grey</i> <i>Shape: Bell</i> <b><i>Symbolic:</i></b> <i>Carrier: Red</i> <i>Rose</i>	---

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<i>Interpersonal</i>	<i>Mood and Person</i>	<p><b>Demand:</b> Beast: Why did you come here?</p> <p>Beast: Do you realize what you could have done? Belle: Stop!</p> <p>Beast: Get out! Get out!</p> <p><b>Offer:</b> Belle: I'm sorry</p> <p><b>Pronoun:</b> You</p>	<p><b>Gaze:</b> Prince's direct gaze shows involvement</p> <p><b>Posture:</b> Leaning towards the rose</p>	<p><b>Demand:</b> Beast shouts at Belle and spreads arms outwards</p>
	<i>Modality</i>	<p>Use of 'could have'</p>	---	<p>Belle shows hesitation before removing the glass cover</p>
<i>Textual</i>	<i>Theme /</i>	---	<p><b>Information value :</b> Upper part of portrait is visible, lower is hidden.</p>	---
	<i>Composition</i>	<p><b>Reiteration:</b> 'come here' 'get out'</p>	<p><b>Salience:</b> Eyes of prince are prominent as lower part of face is torn.</p>	<p><b>Salience:</b> Glittery falling sparkles of rose are prominent amidst the dark room.</p>

**BEAST'S TRANSFORMATION SCENE**

*This scene portrays the final transformation of Beast to Prince as the spell is broken. Earlier, Beast had let Belle go, he had developed feelings for her but was unable to express them. In this scene, Belle returns and confesses her love. Thus the curse is lifted and Beast turns back to Prince, though a very different one. Therefore his identity crisis is finally resolved.*

## **IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH IDEATIONAL / REPRESENTATIONAL METAFUNCTION**

*The actor 'you' referring to Belle with material process 'came back' shows that Belle's return to the castle is an influential event for Beast. Her love fulfills the condition of the curse as she is able to relate with the Beast on the basis of his true inner qualities which are a proper reflection of his identity. She confesses her love, as the mental process shows (table 4.4), which is an indicator that Beast has succeeded in forming a relationship with her. As the spell is broken after this, we are assured that Beast has finally achieved an identity that is relatively permanent. This is visually portrayed as well, as the action process shows Beast and his servants converting back to human being (figure 4.3). The analytical process shows a change in Beast's skin complexion, hair colour, and the castle's colour shifts from dark to light. "In the lives of all human beings light and dark are fundamental experiences" (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006, p. 233). Hence, the light colour symbolizes his identity achievement as a Prince. Belle is unable to recognize the Prince as Beast at first, however his blue eyes retain their appearance throughout his transformation. As the reactional process shows, Belle looks deeply in them and recognizes him; they reflect his soul. He is thus the same person who, after exploration, is now able to see new aspects of his identity. Beast reassures her in the relational process "it's me" which depicts his self-awareness and identity achievement which is a result of conscious self-realization. He sees beauty in Belle's love and gains splendor himself in return, in terms of psycho-social maturation.*

## **IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH INTERPERSONAL / INTERACTIVE METAFUNCTION**

*Beast had previously admitted to Cogsworth that he loved Belle and had fallen into despair when she left, but her return raises his spirits again. He is happy to see her return and Belle offers him her hand which shows the strength of their relationship. She confesses her love right before the spell is*

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*broken. As opposed to Erikson who places identity achievement prior to intimacy, Marcia is of the view that “though identity may positively correlate with intimacy, it does not appear to be a prerequisite” (Marcia, 1993, p.85). Beast’s intimacy and identity resolution occurs simultaneously, complimenting each other. Beast had gradually started realizing his identity earlier as he began accepting and demonstrating his positive aspects in the previous scenes. Both confess their love directly or indirectly at different points before the spell is broken i.e. before the identity crisis is resolved, however the connection deepens further after Beast’s transformation into Prince. The relaxed movements of Prince and his direct, confident gaze shows his stability. Belle shows some hesitation in recognizing him at first, however the Prince is open, cheerful and outgoing in his approach (table 4.4). The multi-coloured lights also give an effect of jubilation and liveliness.*

**IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH TEXTUAL / COMPOSITIONAL  
METAFUNCTION**

*The still image at the end of the scene frames Belle on the left and Prince on the right side i.e. in the new information zone. Hence the change or transformation has occurred in Prince as he now sees himself in a new light. The red rose is right above them in the center, which is an indicator of their flourishing bond. The royal coloured dresses are the same that they wore in ‘Tale as Old as Time’ scene, where Beast achieved temporary identity. Hence the royal colours are repeated in pattern to reflect the identity status. The transformation of Beast’s hands, feet and face are made salient and shown separately to visually connote his transformation. In this scene, Beast identity crisis finally comes to an end.*



**Fig. 4.3** Transformation of Beast

**Table 4.3** showing identity status of Beast in Transformation Scene

<i>Dominant Status</i>	<i>Identity Achievement</i>
<i>Behavioural Traits</i>	<i>Self-assured, Balanced, Pleasant</i>

Table 4.4 showing multimodal analysis of transformation scene

<i>Meta-Function</i>	<i>Sub-</i>	<i>Semiotic Modes</i>		
		<i>Verbal</i>	<i>Visual</i>	<i>Kinetic</i>
<i>Ideational</i>	<i>Narrative</i>	<b><i>Material:</i></b> <i>Beast: You came back!</i>  <b><i>Mental:</i></b> <i>I love you</i>	<b><i>Reactional:</i></b> <i>(bi-transactional)</i>  <i>Interactors:</i> <i>Prince and Belle</i>	<b><i>Action:</i></b> <i>(event)</i> <i>1. Goal:</i> <i>Beast</i> <i>Action:</i> <i>Transformed</i>  <i>2.Goal:</i> <i>Servants</i> <i>Action:</i> <i>transformed</i>  <b><i>Circumstances:</i></b> <i>Rain, Light beams</i>
	<i>Conceptual</i>	<b><i>Relational:</i></b> <i>Beast: It's me</i> <i>Belle: It's you, it really is you!</i>	<b><i>Analytical:</i></b> <i>Colour: Blue eyes, skin, hair colour</i>	<b><i>Analytical:</i></b> <i>Colour:</i> <i>Palace shade becomes light</i>  <b><i>Symbolic:</i></b> <i>Falling of last petal</i>

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<i>Interpersonal</i>	<i>Mood and Person</i>	---	<p><b>Gaze:</b>    <i>Direct gaze</i></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> <i>Multicoloured lights give effect of vitality</i></p> <p><b>Posture:</b> <i>Relaxed</i></p>	<p><b>Offer:</b></p> <p><i>Belle offers her hand to Beast</i></p>
	<i>Modality</i>	---	---	<p><i>Belle raises eyebrows</i></p> <p><i>Beast does not hesitate in hugging his servants</i></p>
<i>Textual</i>	<i>Theme</i>	---	<p><b>Information value :</b></p> <p><i>Prince: Right</i></p> <p><i>Belle: Left</i></p> <p><i>Rose: Top, Center</i></p>	---
	<i>Composition</i>	<p><b>Reiteration:</b> <i>'It's you'</i></p>	<p><b>Repetition:</b> <i>Dresses of Belle and Beast</i></p>	<p><b>Salience:</b> <i>Transformation of hands, feet and face</i></p> <p><i>The emitting light is prominent</i></p>

**ELSA'S IDENTITY CRISIS AND ITS MULTIMODAL REPRESENTATION**

*Elsa - the protagonist of the Disney movie 'Frozen' is a complex*

*character who experiences and overcomes intense psychological trials and deep emotive anguish. She is born with special ice powers, hence carrying an ability to create, mould and transform snow and ice. Her inability to exercise control over her power makes it dangerous for others. Her story begins with her childhood years, which are essential in her identity formation later in adolescence and early adulthood. The movie portrays her inner conflict and its behavioural effects as she crosses the mental and social milestones of her life with her growing age.*

**ELSA’S ESCAPE SCENE**

*After the coronation ceremony, Elsa has an argument with Anna and loses control. Her powers are revealed and she flees her kingdom, unknowingly casting a winter spell over it.*

**IDENTITY                      STATUS                      THROUGH                      IDEATIONAL/  
REPRESENTATIONAL METAFUNCTION**

*Elsa starts ignoring Anna as she is not in a position to renew her relationship. The material processes ‘close’, ‘leave’ and ‘enough’ indicate this (table 4.6). She declares the party ‘over’ which infuriates Anna who therefore questions Elsa. The material process ‘shut’ and mental process ‘afraid’ she uses shows those aspects of Elsa that are creating a gap in their relationship. Elsa tries to walk away but the action process shows that Anna pulls off her glove thus revealing her powers (figure 4.4). Societal labels appear at once, e.g. ‘monster’ and ‘sorcery’. It can also be observed through the action process in which the actor (mother) turns away hiding the goal (her baby), as she considers Elsa dangerous. This makes Elsa even more upset and she loses control of her freezing powers. Hence her previously built identity which was given by her parents breaks down and “if the initial commitments are challenged, an identity crisis is the probable result” (Marcia, 1993, p. 48). At this point, Elsa enters identity moratorium status which is the extreme form of identity crisis (table 4.5). Her foreclosed identity is shattered and her other expressive self is revealed. As she lacks control over it, she tries to deny it and looks for escape, as the visual circumstances show a back door and stairs which she uses to run away. The kinetic circumstances show ice creeping up the sea (figure 4.5). Hence the winter spell she causes on the whole town unconsciously is a metaphorical depiction of her distressful identity crisis which affects not only herself but also the people around her. The analytical process reveals a blue shimmer*

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*in the ice colour, same as the stone in Elsa’s crown. This is also an indication that Elsa has come out of her previous dark identity and into her new brighter side, however she is too afraid to accept it.*

**IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH INTERPERSONAL / INTERACTIVE  
METAFUNCTION**

*Elsa demands her glove back from Anna and orders her to ‘stay away’. Elsa uses first person pronouns me and my which shows the possessiveness she feels towards her foreclosed identity and her fear of losing it. When her magic is exposed, Elsa folds her arms, becomes stiff and her hesitant gestures show her looking around. She looks at her hands cautiously, afraid of hurting someone (figure 4.6). This shows nervousness caused by her identity moratorium status. Her social behaviour is also disturbed, as she is neither sure of herself nor of her connection with others.*

**IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH TEXTUAL / COMPOSITIONAL  
METAFUNCTION**

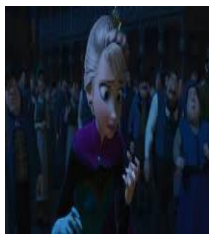
*In her words ‘why do you shut me out, why do you shut the world out?’ Anna reiterates her question replacing ‘me’ with ‘the world’. Thus Elsa’s attitude with her sister is a reflection of her relationship forming behavior in general. Elsa’s hand with pointed sleeve is made prominent which emphasizes the danger people associate with her ice powers, moreover the information value shows icicles appearing in a semicircle around Elsa as she feels trapped in her crisis. Thus in this scene, Elsa’s identity moratorium status is evident. She encounters both her identities; restricted and expressive and the confusion plays havoc in her mind.*



**Fig. 4.4**



**Fig 4.5**



**Fig. 4.6**

**Table 4.5** showing identity status of Elsa in Escape Scene

Dominant Status	Identity Moratorium
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Behavioural Traits	Anxiety, Nervousness
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Table 4.6 showing multimodal analysis of ‘Escape’ Scene

Meta- Functions	Sub- Functions	Semiotic Modes		
		Verbal	Visual	Kinetic
Ideational	Narrative	<b>Material:</b> Elsa: Close the gates! Anna: Why do you shut me out? Elsa: Then leave  <b>Mental / Behavioural:</b> Anna: What are you so afraid of?	<b>Circumstances:</b> Back door with stairs	<b>Action:</b> 1.(transactional) Actor: Anna Goal: Elsa’s glove Action: Snatches off  2.(transactional) Actor: Mother Goal: Baby Action: Turns away  <b>Circumstances:</b> The sea freezes
	Conceptual	<b>Relational:</b> Elsa: Party’s over Duke: Sorcery! Duke: Monster!	<b>Analytical:</b> Colour: Bluish white shine in ice	---

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<i>Interpersonal</i>	<i>Mood and Person</i>	<p><b><i>Demands :</i></b>  <i>Elsa:</i>  <i>Give me my glove!</i>  <i>Elsa: Stay away!</i></p> <p><b><i>Pronouns:</i></b>  <i>Me, My</i></p>	---	<p><b><i>Gestures:</i></b>  <i>Elsa folds her arms</i>  <i>Looks at her hands anxiously</i></p> <p><b><i>Posture:</i></b>  <i>Elsa is stiff</i></p>
	<i>Modality</i>	---	---	<p><i>Elsa hesitates and keeps turning away from people</i></p>
<i>Textual</i>	<i>The me / Rheme</i>	---	---	<p><b><i>Information value :</i></b>  <i>Icicles appear in a semicircle</i></p>
	<i>Composition</i>	<p><b><i>Reiteration:</i></b>  <i>Anna:</i>  <i>Why do you shut me out, why do you shut the world out?</i></p>	---	<p><b><i>Salience:</i></b>  <i>Focus on Elsa's hand with pointed sleeve</i></p>

**SPELL LIFTING SCENE**

*The ending of the movie shows how Anna (by performing an act of true love and risking her life for her sister) makes Elsa realize that love is the remedy. Thus she is able to lift the spell while the people rejoice.*

**IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH IDEATIONAL/  
REPRESENTATIONAL METAFUNCTION**

*In this scene Elsa finally enters identity achievement status (table 4.7). When Anna apparently dies, the snowflakes also hang still in the air. However Anna’s sacrifice heals her heart and she comes back to life. Olaf*

repeats the troll's advice i.e. 'an act of true love (actor) will thaw (material process) the frozen heart' (goal). The mental process 'love' uttered by Anna and her action process of coming in front of Elsa as a shield, (figure 4.7) thus saving her life makes Elsa realize that by showing expe, she can create balance and resolve her identity crisis. The material process 'sacrificed' (table 4.8) shows that Elsa must learn to give in order to take i.e. she must share a part of herself with the world in order to maintain a relationship with her surroundings. The moment Elsa realizes the existence of 'love', she is able to lift the spell as shown in the action process (figure 4.8). As the weather shifts, yellow and bright purple flowers can be seen blooming and heart shaped windows are also visible, reflecting happiness, warmth and satisfaction. The balanced identity improves her relationships as well. Elsa creates a permanent cloud that stays over Olaf's head, preventing him from melting, hence the sisters' relationship will last forever.

### **IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH INTERPERSONAL / INTERACTIVE METAFUNCTION**

Anna bends in front of Elsa to shield her. The use of modal verb could in Anna's utterance 'I knew you could do it' shows her ever existing trust in her sister. Hence the belief of a 'significant other' (i.e. Anna) in her abilities helps Elsa to finally discover her identity. The use of second person pronouns 'you' and 'your' also show that instead of hiding herself, Elsa is trying to fulfill the needs of others around her, especially her sister's need for love. Marcia (1993) unlike Erikson states that "some women deal successfully with intimacy issues prior to identity issues" (p. 84). In case of Elsa, intimacy comes before identity achievement; she starts believing in love and showing it through her behaviour. She gives a warm gesture when she hugs Anna before she confidently lifts the spell (figure 4.8). However her enriched relationship with Anna fully develops afterwards and the people also accept her as their queen.

### **IDENTITY STATUS THROUGH TEXTUAL / COMPOSITIONAL METAFUNCTION**

Han's sword pointing at Elsa is made salient, highlighting the destructive forces acting on her. The word 'love' is reiterated which gives it emphasis, as both love and trust in herself and others help Elsa in finding her identity. She moves the snowflakes upward in center as she lifts the spell. Hence, she combines the seemingly contradictory aspects of her existence

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*into one coherent whole and the upward position (representative of hope or promise) in the frame shows that this is the identity she hoped to achieve all along. Marcia (1966) explains that “the individual is required to synthesize childhood identifications in such a way that he can both establish a reciprocal relationship with his society and maintain a feeling of continuity within himself” (p. 551). By gaining control over her ice powers, she maintains self-control but is also able to practice and manifest her magical ice powers. This allows her to maintain her parental values along with her own individuality, hence creating a balance and enabling her access to identity achievement status.*



**Fig.4.7** Anna shielding Elsa



**Fig.4.8** Elsa lifting spell

**Table 4.7** showing identity status of Elsa in ‘Spell Lifting’ Scene

<i>Dominant Status</i>	<i>Identity Achievement</i>
<i>Behavioural Traits</i>	<i>Stable, Confident, Agreeable</i>

**Table 4.8** showing multimodal analysis of ‘Spell Lifting’ Scene from ‘Frozen’

<i>Meta- Function</i>		<i>Sub- Function</i>	<i>Semiotic Modes</i>		
			<i>Verbal</i>	<i>Visual</i>	<i>Kinetic</i>

<i>Ideational</i>		<i>Narrative</i>	<p><b>Material:</b>  <i>Elsa: You sacrificed yourself for me!</i>  <i>Olaf: An act of true love will thwart the frozen heart!</i></p> <p><b>Mental :</b>  <i>Anna: I love you!</i>  <i>Anna: I knew you could do it!</i></p>	<p><b>Circumstances:</b>  <i>Still snowflakes hanging in air</i>  <i>Cloud over Olaf's head</i></p>	<p><b>Action:</b>  <i>1.(transactional)</i>  <i>Actor: Anna</i>  <i>Goal: Elsa</i>  <i>Action: Shields</i></p> <p><i>2.(transactional)</i>  <i>Actor: Elsa</i>  <i>Goal: Spell</i>  <i>Action: Lifts</i></p>
		<i>Conceptual</i>	<p><b>Existential:</b>  <i>(It is) love, of course!</i></p>	<p><b>Analytical:</b>  <i>Colour: Yellow and purple flowers</i>  <i>Shape: Heart shaped window doors</i></p>	---
<i>Interpersonal</i>		<i>Mood and Person</i>	<p><b>Pronouns:</b>  <i>You, Your</i></p>	---	<p><b>Gestures:</b>  <i>Elsa hugs Anna</i>  <i>Elsa spreads her arms and moves them upwards</i></p> <p><b>Posture:</b>  <i>Anna bends in front of Elsa, shielding her</i></p>

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		<i>Modality</i>	<i>Modal Verb:</i> <i>Could</i>	---	---
<i>Textual</i>		<i>Theme / Rheme</i>	---	---	<b>Information value:</b> <i>Elsa moves snowflakes upward, center and they disappear</i>
		<i>Composition</i>	<b>Reiteration:</b> <i>Love</i>	---	<b>Salience:</b> <i>Han's sword pointing at Elsa is salient</i>

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

**DISCUSSION**

*The first research question of the study was to explore the psycho-social nature of identity crisis confronted by the characters ‘Beast’ and ‘Elsa’. The analysis reveals that the characters swing between various identity crisis statuses as Marcia’s theory proposes, until they reach a relatively stable Identity Achievement Status. In both the movies, a change takes place that triggers identity moratorium status in the characters. Beast meets Belle and his dormant soft nature starts comes in clash with his active rough persona. On the other hand, Elsa comes in contact with her sister Anna after a long time and her inner soft and free self comes in conflict with her constrained identity.*

*The second aim was to study the multimodal depiction of identity statuses in both the movies. The analysis shows the harmonized working of the verbal, visual and kinetic modes to convey the identity statuses and relationships of the protagonists. The processes, demands / offers and parallel structures in the verbal mode are used along with colours, textures and action processes of the visual and kinetic modes to convey the identity*

crisis subject. It may be added here that the aim of the analysis is not purely objective, subjective and affective exploration is also part of it. Kress and Leeuwen have not denied rather owned the subjectivity of their visual grammar and are of the view that objective and subjective can co-exist. They assert that, “the cognitive and the affective are not antithetical but inevitably always co-present” (p.268, 1996; 2006). However, an effort has been made to reveal how all three of the modes under study play their part in presenting the identity statuses and relevant behavioural traits demonstrated by the characters Beast and Elsa.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up, this research has the following general conclusions:

- Real life psycho-social struggles like identity crisis are depicted in animated movies through fictional characters with certain creative and imaginative twists.

Animators narrate stories and communicate themes and messages through the language of words, images and gestures etc. (i.e. verbal, visual and kinetic modes) which are intricately and meaningfully harmonized together..



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