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Making Gender Visible:
Breaking down the narration in Stephanie Meyer's *Breaking Dawn*

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Abstract

This essay analyzes the difference between feminine and masculine narration in Stephanie Meyer's final novel in The Twilight Saga: *Breaking Dawn*. The methods used are Narratology, Reader-Response Criticism and Gender Theory. *Breaking Dawn* is divided into three different books and one of the main characters, Bella, is the narrator in the first and the last book, and the other main character, Jacob, is the narrator in the second book. Bella's and Jacob's narration styles are manifested in the title names and inside the text, and the analysis shows why Bella is a stereotypically female narrator and why Jacob is a stereotypically masculine narrator.

Keywords: Stephanie Meyer, narratology, gender, masculine language, feminine language.

The First Acquaintance with *Breaking Dawn*

In August 2008 the author Stephanie Meyer released her fourth and final novel in the Twilight Saga, *Breaking Dawn*. This book, like the other three that preceded it, is about a shy and quite lonely teenaged girl named Bella, and her love for the mystical vampire Edward. It is not only about her love for him, but also about the struggle between her love for Edward, and her love for her best friend Jacob Black. Other characters are also involved, but the three main characters remain throughout the novels and in *Breaking Dawn* the final solution is given and the loose threads tied neatly together.

All of the novels of The Twilight Saga are written in a way that has made them incredibly popular, and between biting one's nails and getting carried away by an amazing love story, one can see that Meyer uses some stylistic and creative writing forms that are quite interesting. To make the reader want more after having read three novels must be a challenge and what Meyer does is that she gives the readers a new perspective in *Breaking Dawn*. After having read three novels focalized through the character Bella, *Breaking Dawn* is divided into three sections; *Book One, Two and Three*, and another character takes over the narration in book two, Jacob Black.

When an author changes the focalization from one character to another, stylistic changes are bound to appear, since the author probably has an intention with that change. Why else make it? In *Breaking Dawn* the change to a different narrator is necessary since Bella becomes pregnant and the pregnancy makes her very ill and withdrawn, and she becomes a silent character. Consequently, for the story to be able to go on, someone else has to take over the narration. Meyer has chosen the character Jacob Black for this purpose, and the stylistic change is so clear that the novel becomes almost a whole new novel. This effect is created because the focalization through Jacob shows not only another side of the story, but also the difference in voice between him and Bella is enormous. It is this difference that I have chosen to work with in my essay; I will explore what it really is that makes their voices different. I will examine the difference between Bella and Jacob as narrators. I

will start out by explaining very thoroughly the theories I will be using; Narratology, Reader-Response Criticism and Gender theory.

Narratology, Reader-Response Criticism and Gender Theory

According to the *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Narratology means: “a term used since 1969 to denote the branch of literary study devoted to the analysis of narratives, and more specifically of forms of narration and varieties of narrator” (Baldick 166). What this means is that Narratology is the study of the telling of the story. It is a study devoted to the ones who tell the story, and how they do it, and what difference there can be in a story depending on who is telling it. A narrative is so to speak the point of view of that teller, where the story is focalized from, and focalization also means point of view. The person who is the teller is called the narrator, in *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms* it says: “one who tells, or is assumed to be telling, the story in a given narrative”(Baldick 166).

What is so interesting about the narration in a novel is that it can be done in so many different ways, almost any book could have been narrated by another narrator and then the story would perhaps have been a different one. In short, the narrative can be either a first-person-narrative or a third-person narrative, in *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms* it says:

Narrators vary according to their degree of participation in the story: in first-person narratives they are involved either as witnesses or as participants in the events of the story, whereas in third-person narratives they stand outside those events. (Baldick 166)

These two types of narrators are not the only ones; however, for this essay only one of them is important, and that is the first-person narrative. That is because throughout *Breaking Dawn* the narrative is always a first-person narrative, but the narrator changes. Furthermore, the two narrators in *Breaking Dawn* are not telling the story in parallel with each other, but they tell different parts of

the story.

A first-person narrative can be explained as evoking the feeling of reading another person's private journal, and in *Breaking Dawn* the two narrators, Bella and Jacob, have a very interesting story to tell. What makes them interesting is that they are so unlike one another, as if they were taken from two different novels, and still they are not. Their narratives differ because they are different ages, they are from two different cultures and they are male and female. My focus in this essay is on voice but in particular on Bella as very feminine narrator and Jacob as a very masculine narrator, and how this is manifested in their narration styles.

When breaking down the narration in a novel it is impossible not to stumble on another literary theory called Reader-Response Criticism. Because even if the reader notices a difference from one narrator to another, that observation might not be the same for every reader. Someone might read the text narrated by Jacob in *Breaking Dawn* and wonder who is speaking and if it is a boy or a girl, whereas someone might sense directly that it is probably a boy speaking and according to the context of what he is talking about, it is probably Jacob. This difference in perception is something that must be taken into consideration when doing a study of different narratives. In *Texts and Contexts: Writing about literature with Critical Theory*, Stephen Lynn says:

(...)Our responses depend on what we know: if we understand the genre of a particular work, if we have experience with other similar works, then our responses will be more informed, quite possibly richer. Even those teachers who insist that there are no wrong responses(...) still must acknowledge that we become in some sense better at reading and responding with practice. (Lynn 84)

Why Reader-Response Criticism is important is because this essay will be quite subjective, even though it is an academic, argumentative essay. This is because my response to *Breaking Dawn* is *only* my response, and even if many pieces of evidence will be shown to support my arguments, the thesis comes from the fact that every reader has a life history that has taught them to make certain

assumptions, and my own assumptions are the basis for what has become the main thesis in this essay; that Bella is a very feminine and Jacob a very masculine narrator. If this is really true is actually very hard to state, one can only make claims with good textual evidence, but it cannot be proven to be the absolute truth. Stephen Lynn says:

For people who want there to be one right answer, and for everyone to see and experience the same way, reader-response criticism is bound to be pretty frustrating.(...)For people who rejoice in the diversity of experiences and responses and opinions, reader-response criticism will be especially interesting, not only because of our different orientations and abilities, but also because of the different ways that we partition and perceive our experiences. (Lynn 82-83)

Gender in literature, however, is not to be confused with gender as a marker of the two different sexes. The sex has to do with the reproductive organs in your body, if you have a female organ or a male organ, but gender is something else. When a child is born the convention is generally to wrap the baby girl in a pink blanket and the baby boy in a blue blanket, and that is also figuratively speaking. The baby girl and the baby boy will probably be brought up in different ways, the boy might learn to withhold his feelings and to be a tough boy, whereas the girl might hear that it is alright to cry and show emotions. When the children becomes teenagers, the conventions become even clearer, the girls try to become more feminine and the boys more masculine. This is a reductive generalization, but it is in many ways how our society is constructed, and how society constructs what we call gender differences and gender stereotypes. In the book *Literature and Gender: Thinking Critically through Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* Robyn Wiegman and Elena Glasberg, they explain what these stereotypes look like in today's United States:

If you have a male genitalia, you will be **masculine**, which means that you will be naturally inclined toward physical activity, math, political leadership, and power tools. If, on the other hand,

you have female genitalia, you will be **feminine**, which means you will have natural instincts for nurturance, housecleaning, sentimentality, and the color pink. According to this most common way of thinking about gender, “normal” girls will always be feminine and “normal” boys will always be masculine. (Wiegman, Glasberg 3)

As the frame is now set about how gender works in our society, it is my task to apply these thoughts about stereotypes to the characters Bella and Jacob. To be able to see how their gender differences are constructed within the narrative throughout *Breaking Dawn* I will show where and how the masculinity of Jacob and femininity of Bella is manifested. But what is it that separates female language from male language? In the book *A Beginner's guide to Language and Gender* by Allyson Jule are some basic assumptions about the language of women, made by Robin Lakoff. Some of these claims are that women use unhelpful adjectives, they do not speak in public settings as often as men do, and they have a special lexicon, for example names of colors like mauve or fuchsia(Jule 21-22).

In the section about Bella's narration and her chapter headings I will show how she is constructed as a stereotypically feminine character, how the headings for Bella are structured in a feminine way, and illustrate the use of emotions and unhelpful, romanticizing adjectives in her narration. This use of unhelpful adjectives, is as can be seen in the quote above, one of the characteristic, stereotypical ways of how a woman uses her language. I will also point out that Bella is a very shy girl, and explain why this also adds to her femininity.

When it comes to male language there are also some stereotypical ways of constructing a masculine narrator. The things that I will bring up in the section about Jacob are prejudices in the male stereotype and how Jacob is constructed according to this model. How he structures his chapter headings in a masculine way, and how his language is typically masculine; that is, he describes things more plainly than Bella does, without romanticizing adjectives, and he worries about language prestige within his social group. I will go through this more thoroughly in “Jacob's

Chapter Headings and Their Narrative Structure” and “Jacob as a Narrator”.

Bella's Chapter Headings and Gender

The character Isabella Swan is a teenage girl who falls in love with a vampire, and the story in all four novels in the Twilight Saga is mostly about how this impossible love, is made possible. It is almost a modern version of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, but the twist to the story is that even though the lovers die, they will live on and love each other forever, since they are immortal. Furthermore, instead of belonging to two rival families, Bella and Edward belong to two rival kinds of beings; the living humans, and the dead vampires. So in reading *Breaking Dawn* one inevitably draws the conclusion that the story belongs to the Gothic Romance genre, with inspiration from a Renaissance English play or a medieval fairytale containing a prince and princess. How then will the main character work in such a story, how will she tell her story to the readers?

In the beginning of *Book One*, there is a content page. In this content page are all the chapters that Bella will narrate and they are numbered and they are all one- or two-word-titles. It begins with chapter one; “Engaged”, and it continues with six other chapters with one- or two-word names that foreshadow each chapter. In *Book Three* the chapters continue to be capitalized like this, but they begin at chapter 19, because Jacob has his own chapters in *Book Two*.

Bella's titles have names that are very appealing to the reader. The one- or two-word titles are well chosen, since they are evocative, emotional and quite intense, and are word choices that match Bella's femininity perfectly. In *Book One* there are titles such as; “Big Day” which evokes the feeling that a special day has come, and that is not just any other day for the engaged girl Bella, since she has been waiting for her wedding day for a long time. So this short title does not actually just evoke the feeling of a special day, but it is also emotional since the “happily ever after” with Edward is about to come true. Another example of Bella's title names is “Distractions”, a word that

evokes the feeling that something has come up, perhaps some kind of obstacle, because the word has a negative sound to it. Another title like this is “Unexpected”, this too evokes the feeling that something has come up, but it does not sound as negative as “Distractions”. Both words have multiple meanings and could be interpreted in different ways, but in this case they foreshadow what happens in Bella's chapters, and are almost riddles that will not become solved until the last word of that particular chapter has been read.

In *Book Three*, more two-word-titles are included than in *Book One* and my first example is: “First Hunt” two words that in this case evokes the feeling that this is not just any other hunt. This is actually Bella's first hunt as a vampire, thus it is a very good title since it really foreshadows what the chapter will be about, with just two intense words. Another example of this type of title is: “Travel Plans”, two other powerful words that evoke the feeling that a special journey is about to be planned and started, but it is also very riddle-like, since the reader cannot know what kind of journey it is before having read the chapter.

My third example of these two word titles is “The Future”, a very strong and emotional word choice. It is strong since it sounds as if the chapter will be about what will happen in the future for Bella, and does that mean that we are getting closer to the final solution of the entire *Twilight Saga*? The word choice is also emotional since the reader has followed Bella for a long time, but still, as they hold the book in their hand, it is clear that it is not the last chapter. Nevertheless, this title foreshadows what will happen in the end, and thus evokes the feeling that a very exciting chapter is about to start. These last three titles, “First Hunt”, “Travel Plans” and “The Future”, are especially interesting since they seem to show that Bella is making preparations, another thing, that usually is a female characteristic.

It is hard to know if it is the author or the narrator Bella who has named the chapters. According to Reader-Response Criticism there is no right answer, but my interpretation is that it is Bella who names her chapters because her narrative style in the chapters feels like the narrative

style of a diary, and I think she names her chapters instead of writing “Dear Diary”. An argument against this could be that it is actually the real author, Meyer, who names the chapters for Bella, and Bella is only responsible for the content within the chapters, but for me that does not match with the style of the narration, which is the style of a teenage girl.

Bella uses mostly one-word-titles and a few two-word-titles but the final chapter in the novel is named “The Happily Ever After”, a four word title. All the other chapters in the novel have led to this ending, this conclusion of the *Twilight Saga*, and here Bella changes her style completely. My interpretation of this is that she does this because the last chapter is where the final solution is given, so it has to be emphasized more than the other chapters. Furthermore, her choice of these words, in particular since they are not just any words but the words that one has heard in an endless number of fairytales, makes Bella a very stereotypical feminine character, since she ends her story like many princess-love-stories have ended before. So by only reading Bella's titles of her chapters, especially the last one, it can be foreseen that Bella will take the part of a fairytale princess seriously; a character filled with stereotypical characterizations of a feminine narrator. More about this in Bella as the Narrator.

Jacob's Chapter Headings and Gender

The character Jacob is a teenage boy who belongs to a tribe of Indians who live on a reservation just outside of Forks. He is not just any other boy, because in the second novel of The Twilight Saga, *New Moon*, he inherits a special ability from his ancestors. That ability is that he can turn into a werewolf whenever it is needed, and this transformation has become necessary since the young men of the tribe must protect their fellow tribesmen and women from vampires. Jacob lives close to his pack; the group of young werewolves that can hear each other's thoughts when they are in the bodies of the werewolves. They are, however, together even when they are not transformed into werewolves. The younger ones, like Jacob, must learn from the older ones, and the hierarchy within

the group is of great importance.

The hard and cool way of trying to be a tough boy, that Jacob conforms to, is also noticeable in the way that he names his chapters. In contrast to Bella's one-word-titles, Jacob's titles are whole sentences. The first chapter is very unexpected and the title does shake me as a reader to the core, it is called: "Waiting for the Damn Fight to Start Already". This title foreshadows what the chapter will be about but it is also very long, explicit and very boyish because of the slang usage of "Already" and the swear word "Damn". To me it feels as though the narrator is very angry and upset, because of the use of swear words and the anxiety to get into a fight as soon as possible. This angry, colloquial and boyish way of naming the titles continues throughout Jacob's *Book Two* with other titles. My second example of this is: "Sure as Hell didn't See that One Coming" where the word choice "sure as hell" seems very boyish since this phrase would in a more proper language be replaced with just the word "I" as in "I saw...". This is an example that makes it obvious that the author wants to emphasize that the one telling the story is someone who does not care about whether his language is proper or not.

My third example from Jacob's titles is: "Why didn't I just Walk away? Oh Right, Because I'm an Idiot", what is most significant about this title is that it is very talkative, thus very colloquial, and not the way that a proper, grown up man who watches his language would name a title. It also seems like an angry title because of the way that Jacob is judging himself, one can sense that something has happened that Jacob is not too happy about. He is blaming himself for being "an Idiot", a very strong word of self-loathing, perhaps not very appropriate for a title name, but it represents some kind of anger that also foreshadows what the chapter will be about. Because the title makes the reader curious about what it is that has made Jacob so angry with himself, the chapter becomes exciting even before it begins. My fourth example from Jacob's titles is: "What Do I Look Like? The Wizard of Oz? You Need a Brain? You Need a Heart? Go Ahead. Take Mine. Take everything I have". The first thing that is outstanding about this title name is that it is very long. It

is very colloquial because this is the way that someone talks, rather than a very proper name for a chapter in a book. It feels angry because he refers to the fairytale “The Wizard of Oz” in a sarcastic tone and it is a story where the main characters are in search of those particular things which Jacob seems to be willing to give away. However, this generosity of Jacob's sounds, in this sense, very sad, because it feels like he has given up on something. Maybe he actually wants to find some kind of comfort, because this title name seems like a cry for help, in a very colloquial, angry and boyish way.

The author also uses a prejudice about teenage boys in relation to how she has constructed the way that Jacob names his chapters. There is a lack of structure. This is a prejudice because not all teenage boys use language this. This lack of structure can be noticed in the way that Bella has her chapters neatly divided with numbers and with a content page in the beginning of *Book One* and *Book Three*, while in Jacob's book(*Book Two*), there are numbers of the chapters, but no content page. It feels like Meyer has done this with a purpose, maybe because she wants the reader to notice the mayor difference that she is working to create between the two characters.

Something that is particularly interesting though, is the fact mentioned earlier, that men or boys are suppose to be the ones who only write about the most relevant things whereas women write more romantic descriptions and uses more unhelpful adjectives. Why then has Meyer chosen to construct Bella as naming her chapters with one- or two-words and Jacob with sentences? My interpretation is that she tries to awaken the readers even before they start to read the novel from Jacob's focalization point. She wants the reader to be shocked and wonder what is going on; she foreshadows the change that will come. The last chapter of Bella's *Book One* is named “Unexpected”, and perhaps that too is a foreshadowing of the change in narration that will come.

Jacob's titles are very different from Bella's and they show that for Jacob it is important to sound cool in his way of expressing himself. It is as though he is afraid that perhaps someone in his pack would find this book of his, and laugh at him if he does not sound tough enough, and

perhaps that is why he exaggerates his angry, boyish and colloquial language, because that is the language that is prestigious in his social group; the pack. More about this in Jacob as the Narrator.

Bella as the Narrator

Isabella, who refers to herself as Bella, is a character that is trapped within her genre, she is bound to be both a modern girl that fits into the 21st century, but she must also have some characteristics from a girl that could be found in a romantic Renaissance play or fairytale. How can these two be combined? What the author, Meyer, does is that she gives Bella the role of the shy, clumsy and cute girl who falls in love with the impossible-to-love boy, and to be with him she is willing to give her own life. Bella must act like a normal teenager, she must think like a normal teenager, but she must also accept the ways of her lover, who is a boy brought up in the early 19th century. So while Bella is thinking about her engagement, and looking at the ring on her finger, it must also be shown that she is a modern girl. I have concentrated on the things that make Bella a very feminine narrator; the construction of her shy character, her feminine way of letting her emotions shine through her narrative and her use of many unhelpful adjectives.

Bella's first chapter in *Breaking Dawn*, is called "Engaged", so the reader will understand that this is mainly what this chapter will be about. Bella has a ring on her finger, but she is only nineteen. She seems too young to be engaged from a modern viewpoint, but perhaps it is also a dream come true for many nineteen year old girls, the beginning of an old-fashioned fairytale ending. So what happens in the narration is that while Bella starts to tell the readers about her engagement she is also driving a modern car and draws our attention to it. That is something that is not quite medieval, a girl driving a brand new car, and the people in her hometown, Forks, are jealous. To bring back Bella to the stereotypical picture of a girl, she is not such a good driver, and the brand new car is actually a gift from her vampire-boyfriend Edward, and the stereotypical characteristics added by Meyer continue to pop up throughout the novel. One way to spot these

stereotypical ways is to see how Bella tells her story, which shows that she tells the story of a girl, not a boy, because throughout the novel she shows very much of her romantic, girlish characteristics. For example when Bella is on her way to the gas station in Forks, thinking about her engagement, driving her new car, which she has not quite learned how to manage yet, this is what happens:

As I sat waiting for one of the three traffic lights in town to turn green, I peeked to the right – In her minivan, Mrs Weber had turned her whole torso in my direction. Her eyes bored into mine, and I flinched back, wondering why she didn't drop her gaze or look ashamed. It was still considered rude to stare at people, wasn't it? (...) I tried to take some comfort in the fact that she wasn't staring at me, just the car.

(...)

The light turned green and, in my hurry to escape, I stomped on the gas pedal without thinking – the normal way I would have punched it to get my ancient Chevy truck moving.

Engine snarling like a hunting panther, the car jolted forward so fast that my body slammed into the black leather seat and my stomach flattened against my spine.

(...)

It wasn't bright out – a typical drizzly day in Forks, Washington – but I still felt like a spotlight was trained on me, drawing attention to the delicate ring on my left hand. At times like this, sensing the eyes on my back, it felt as if the ring were pulsing like a neon sign: *Look at me, look at me.* (Meyer 2-4)

As seen in this scene, Bella is constructed as stereotypical girl character, and she seems to be telling a story in a typically feminine way, but why is that? Is it because she is not much of a car driver? Because that is something that we relate to the masculine; the power tools, mentioned by Wiegman and Glasberg on page four. With the term power tools, I believe that they mean big machines, that in this case is represented by Bella's car. In part two of this quote Bella handles this power tool, the

car, and she does not tell the readers about her smooth driving, but the opposite, since the engine is “snarling” and her body slams into the leather seat. So, what Bella does is that she tells us that she is a bad driver, what traditional man or boy character would do that? I would suppose not very many.

As she is comparing her new car with her old car, she is also using a very female way of describing them. Where the easiest way to describe her old car would be to use that exact word, “old”, Bella uses “ancient”, which is somewhat more specific than just old, and that is a word that almost has a silver lining to it, since that specific word both explains that the car is old, but also she adds a feeling to the description. Why it adds a feeling is because “ancient” is a word that describes something that is not just old but something that has a life history behind it, and that story is in this case that it was Bella's first car. When she describes the sound of her new car, she says that it was “snarling like a hunting panther”, a very beautiful way of describing an accelerating car engine. I would say that it is a female way of describing an accelerating car engine. This is because she is not just saying that the engine is snarling, but also that it can be compared to the sound of a beautiful and fast predator.

As seen in part 3 of this quote she has a ring on her finger that is delicate, and that makes her feel like she has a spotlight trained on her, but with the words she is using, she not only tells the reader that she has a ring on her finger, but she explains her feeling about this ring and what it makes her feel like. The reader understands that she is not very comfortable being in the spotlight. This is also visible in part one of this quote where Bella is ashamed that Mrs. Weber is looking at her, staring almost, and this shame is a part of Bella's shyness. Being shy is something that is common, for both men and women, but here I claim that it is connected to Bella's femininity. As I mentioned earlier, Robin Lankoff claimed that women speak less frequently than men in public settings, and that is something that applies well to Bella; at least when it comes to being the center of attention. In the above scene, Bella does not talk in a public setting, but it is evident that she does

not feel very comfortable being in a situation where she is being watched my Mrs. Weber. My interpretation of that scene, and of Lankoff's quote, is that Bella would not feel comfortable speaking in a public setting either. This is evident throughout the whole Twilight Saga, because Bella hates whenever she is the center of attention, and she always tries to avoid it.

In another scene Jacob is being sarcastic about Bella's wedding day, where she has to be the center of attention, and Jacob knows that she is actually not comfortable with that:

“(…) But enough about me. You're the star today.” He chuckled. “I bet you're just *loving* that. Center of attention.”

“Yeah. Can't get enough attention.”

He laughed and then stared over my head. (Meyer 57)

The feminine way in which she narrates, and her shyness, are all things that add up to her femininity. This interpretation, does not just have to do with what is actually written on the pages, but also with my prejudices and the prejudices of the society. In *Literature and Gender* Robyn Wiegman and Elena Glasberg says:

All genres carry general rules or conventions about how a text will look on the page, how it will move from one idea or point in time to the next, and under what circumstances audiences will encounter it. Most importantly for our purposes, genre conventions often have distinct gender associations, with the western being the quintessential masculine form and the romance the feminine. (Wiegman, Glasberg 2)

According to this, my interpretation is that Bella very much carries the role of the feminine narrator. She talks about her feelings in a very romanticizing way, her narration is filled with unhelpful adjectives and she is very personal and emotional in her description, which will be particularly clear

in the following quote. In this quote she shows her emotions very clearly and she uses a very romantic description, which is, as seen above, a typical female narrative characteristic.

It was quiet for a moment, just the thud of my heart hammering, the broken rhythm of our ragged breathing, and the whisper of our lips moving in synchronization...Our gazes locked for a moment; his golden eyes were so deep that I imagined I could see all the way into his soul. It seemed silly that this fact – the existence of his soul – had ever been in question, even if he *was* a vampire. He had the most beautiful soul, more beautiful than his brilliant mind or his incomparable face or his glorious body. (Meyer 21-22)

In this quote, where Bella is describing a moment of closeness with Edward, she is referring back to a conversation that they have had about Edward's doubts as to whether he has a soul or not. Here again Bella uses very beautiful and poetic language. She does not only talk about Edward's soul, mind, face and body, but she talks about his “beautiful soul”, “brilliant mind” and “incomparable face” and “his glorious body”; what this says is that her text is very rich in beautiful but unhelpful adjectives. According to Wiegman and Glasberg this is particularly feminine, and stands in contrast to how a male writer would describe a situation like that. What they mean with *quintessential masculine form* in contrast to a romantic feminine language is that a male writer is supposed to describe the situation using only soul, mind, face and body, and not filling the sentence with romanticizing adjectives.

To sum up the narration style used with Bella; her romanticizing, adjectival descriptions proceed throughout the novel, and when *Book Three* begins she has become a mother of a baby girl, Renesmee, and also she has been turned into a vampire. This new Bella, is a girl that has gone through many changes, but still she remains the same romantic, emotional girl who tries to stay with one foot in the modern world of the 21st century. Nevertheless, as she becomes a vampire, she becomes even more clearly the kind of character and narrator that one could find in a fairy tale, and

that is actually something that she notices herself, even though she projects that specific thought onto Edward when they arrive to their new house:

It was a place where anyone could believe that magic existed. A place where you just expected Snow White to walk right in with her apple in her hand, or a unicorn to stop and nibble at the rosebushes.

Edward had always thought that he belonged to the world of horror stories. Of course, I'd known he was dead wrong. It was obvious that he belonged *here*. In a fairytale. (Meyer 444)

Jacob as the Narrator

In contrast to this feminine narration of Bella, there is Jacob Black's. When Jacob speaks, the message is clear, he says what needs to be said and nothing more. My first example of this is when Jacob is thinking about his long months as a werewolf: "Living in the moment, eating when hungry, sleeping when tired, drinking when thirsty and running – running just to run"(Meyer 149). Here Jacob says what he means, and he does not describe what his thinking with anything more than the verbs that says exactly what he means, it is not romanticizing in any way.

My second example of his masculine tendency is seen in this quote where Jacob watches as Edward smiles towards a very sick, near-to-death Bella, "He shook his head, smiling a little. The smile was painful to look at." My third quote and example takes place when Rosalie, Edward's sister, is taking Edward outside so that Bella and Jacob can be alone: "The blonde glared at Edward and then gestured for him to go first. He disappeared out the door. She gave me a long warning glower, and then she disappeared, too"(Meyer 171-172). Both these quotes show that Jacob is careful not to use too many adjectives. He watches what is happening and he describes it, and in many cases that is enough for him, but that does not say whether he is a romantic character or not, he is simple just following the gender conventions of male writing. According to Jennifer Coates, men tend to be more plain and specific in their descriptions than women, and they leave out information about their personal feelings (Coates 138). This is something that Meyer applies very

clearly to the character Jacob and it can be seen in both the names of his chapters and in his narration.

In contrast to Bella's narration which is very feminine; here is yet another passage from Jacob, from when he is angry about not getting into a fight with his friend Paul and also he is frustrated about the fast pace of the werewolf imprinting; their own way of getting romantically involved for life with another person;

I stood there for a second, and then I stalked off to my room, muttering about alien abductions.

Back in the day, you could count on Paul for a fight pretty much whenever. You didn't have to hit him then – any mild insult would do. It didn't take a lot to flip him out of control. Now, of course, when I really *wanted* a good snarling, ripping, break-the-trees-down match, he had to be all mellow.

Wasn't it bad enough that yet another member of the pack had imprinted – because, really, that made four of ten now! When would it stop? Stupid myth was supposed to be *rare*, for crying out loud! All this mandatory love-at-first-sight was completely sickening. (Meyer 135)

As one can see here, there is a lot that is different from the narration style that characterizes Bella. Jacob uses much more slang than Bella and his language is much more colloquial, which can be seen in phrases like: “stalked off” instead of just “went”, “pretty much whenever” instead of just “whenever”, “flip him out of control” instead of just “making him lose control” and “good snarling, ripping, break-the-trees-down match” instead of just “fight” or “match”. Jacob's language is also much rougher than Bella's, and that can be seen in phrases like: “Stupid myth” when he describes the myth of the imprinting and “for crying out loud” when he wants to emphasize that he is frustrated about the imprinting. The author thus has constructed the character Jacob as a stereotypical boy, in his use of language, what he says and how he tells his story. But before the essay goes to deep into the narration of Jacob, a presentation of this young, teenage/werewolf boy is

most essential, and that will be brought to you in “Jacob as the Narrator”.

Another aspect about gender and language is the social belonging. Jacob lives in a sub-culture of young men, who have a lot of things in common, not just the werewolf-curse, but also their culture and their heritage. Belonging to this sub-culture Jacob does what any young adolescent man would do, he looks for a language that matches his identity. Jennifer Coates says: “Speakers, however, are not isolated individuals; they are members of social groups, and it is one of language's function to act as a symbol of group identity”(83). Meyer has applied this well to the character Jacob, because he is not only another character in her book, but the way he narrates is constructed so that the reader will be able to sense that it is a boy talking and that he belongs to a very different group than Bella, the Wolf pack.

When studies have been done, men are more likely to look for hidden language prestige than women are, that is, the language prestige within their specific social group, which means that they tend to talk more like the other men and use a similar vernacular, another word for social language or dialect. Jennifer Coates says:

(..)Women are more likely to be influenced by the publicly legitimized standard norms, and that men are more likely to be influenced by vernacular norms which are not publicly recognized. (Coates 83)

A good example of the social group that Jacob belongs to is the difference that can be seen in how he speaks when he speaks to Bella, in contrast to how he speaks to a member of his pack. Here is an example of when he speaks to Paul, he who is also a young a werewolf:

'Jeez, Paul, don't you freaking have a home of your *own*?'

Paul, lounging across *my* whole couch, watching some stupid baseball game on *my* crappy TV, just grinned at me and then – real slow – he lifted one Dorito from the bag in his lip and wedged it into his mouth in one piece.

(...)

He laughed and relaxed into the sofa, dropping his hands. 'I'm not going to go tattle to a girl. If you got in a lucky hit, that would be just between the two of us. And vice versa, right?'

Nice of him to give me an invitation. I made my body slump like I'd given up. 'Right.'

(Meyer 133).

Here, the author wants to emphasize that Jacob and Paul belong to the same group and that is visible in part two of this quote where they almost get into a fight, but end it before it actually begins. This group belonging is especially clear in the last three lines, where the two boys are both agreeing that an eventual fight would be just between the two of them.

In this scene the boyish pack-vernacular is also represented with Paul trying to sound cool when he speaks to Jacob about not “tattle to a girl”, a phrase that could just as well have been used by Jacob. Jacob's way of talking talks to his friend Paul, and one can see that his language is rough. This is apparent in phrases such as “freaking home of your own” where he adds “freaking” to emphasize his cool attitude, “stupid baseball” when he describes the popular American national sport, and “*my* crappy TV” when he is describing his TV, that he does not seem to be too happy about or the fact that Paul has taken the liberty to watch without Jacob's permission. Some of Jacob's word choices in the quote, such as the rough phrase “freaking home”, also shows that Meyer is using a prejudicial view of the swearing of men to emphasize the masculinity of Jacob's narration. According to Jennifer Coates, it is a common belief that men swear more than women. She says this about a study on the subject:

The students commented explicitly on the way in which swearing distinguished male speech from female speech.

(...)

Both these studies confirm the existence of a cultural stereotype but provide no evidence as to

whether or not men actually do swear more than women. (Coates 127)

Jacob's language is not the only thing that is rough, but also the mood in his narration is rough. This mood can be seen in the preceding quote from page 133 too, and is created by the way that Jacob is trying to attack Paul, only because he is eating Jacob's Doritos. Taken together the roughness of the language and the mood indicate that Jacob is trying hard to be cool. Moreover, Paul also expresses this social belonging, as he says that if they were to get into a fight, it would be just between the two of them, and Jacob agrees.

When Jacob talks to Bella, and thinks of Bella, he is a whole other person than when he talks to a member of his pack and the way he thinks when he is around them changes as well. His narration style develops from his first to his last chapter in *Book Two* as he leaves some of his cool attitude behind. Furthermore, his and Bella's relationship allows for more personal talk, and even his inner feelings are something that it is alright for Jacob to share with Bella. Here is what Jacob is like when he talks to Bella:

If she hadn't looked so fragile I would've been screaming.

As it was, I *did* growl at her.

'If you think that imprinting could ever make sense of this *insanity*...' I struggled for words. 'Do you really think that just because I might someday imprint on some stranger it would make this right?' I jabbed a finger toward her swollen body. 'Tell me what the point was then, Bella! What was the point of me loving you? What was the point of *you* loving *him*? When you die' – the words were a snarl – 'how is that ever right again? What's the point to all the pain? Mine, yours, his! You'll kill him, too, not that I care about about that.' She flinched, but I kept going. 'So what was the point of your twisted love story, in the end? If there is *any* sense, please show me, Bella, because I don't see it. (Meyer 174)

In this quote, it is evident that Jacob actually can speak about his feelings, but this is quite a rare occasion, and in most of his narration, he is very careful with the use of too much emotions. Nevertheless, the further he gets into his narration, the more emotional he becomes and in the end of his narration he lets go of some of his darker speech patterns and his rough ways of describing his thoughts. Though he remains a very masculine narrator he thus shows that he is a round character, even when it comes to changes in narration. There are two passages, one from the beginning of his book, and one from the end, where the difference in mood and narration is shown quite clearly. In this first passage, Jacob says:

Either of those would be tricky – for me, that is. It would be hard to find them if they didn't want to be found. Of course, I had forever to look. If you had forever, you could check out every single piece of straw in the haystack, one by one, to see if it was the needle.

Right now, I wouldn't mind dismantling a haystack. At least that would be something to *do*. I hated knowing that I could be losing my chance. Giving the bloodsuckers the time to escape, if that was their plan.

We could go tonight. We could kill ever one of them that we could find.(Meyer 137)

In this passage the mood is hard and it is noticeable that Jacob feels angry, because of the way he is describing how to hunt down the vampires and kill as many of them as possible, and the word choice “bloodsucker” instead of “vampire” shows his hatred of the them. He gives a very good description of his feelings, but they are not romanticized, as Bella's mostly are. Nevertheless, he uses a simile, about the needle in the haystack, and that is not very quintessentially male of him, so he does not follow his masculine stereotype in every sentence in his narration. Why I interpret a simile to be connected to feminine language, rather than male, is because men are suppose to use a straight forward language, without talking around the subject, and a simile is very much to describe something in a more complicated way than it really is. Furthermore, what happens to Jacob's

narration style in the end of his narration is that he does actually become more romanticizing, and he loses some of his masculinity in the narration.

Finally, here is the second passage, from the end of Jacob's book, where it is clear that his style is becoming more feminine.

Everything inside me came undone as I stared at the tiny porcelain face of the half-vampire, half-human baby. All the lines that held me to my life were sliced apart in swift cuts, like clipping the strings to a bunch of balloons. Everything that made me who I was – my love for the dead girl upstairs, my love for my father, my loyalty to my new pack, the love for my other brothers, my hatred for my enemies, my home. My name, my *self* – disconnected from me in that second – *snip, snip, snip* – and floated up into space.

I was not left drifting. A new string held me where I was.

Not one string, but a million. Not strings, but steel cables. A million steel cables all tying me to one thing – to the very center of the universe.

I could see that now – how the universe swirled around this one point. I'd never seen the symmetry of the universe before, but now it was plain.

The gravity of the earth no longer tied me to the place where I stood.

It was the baby girl in the blond vampire's arms that held me here now:

Renesmee. (Meyer 330-331)

The use of words in this passage is very different from the use of words earlier in Jacob's book. Suddenly, there are romanticizing sentences such as: “Everything inside me came undone”, “I was not left drifting” and “how the universe swirled around this one point”. This shows that Jacob now uses a romantic language very much like Bella's and he is drawn to a more feminine style of the narration. Nevertheless, as Jacob reaches this peak of female narration style, it is again time for Bella to take over the narration.

Conclusion on Making Gender Visible

As stated in the beginning of this essay gender is something that is created by society, consequently it is the reader that creates what is masculine and feminine, so my thesis is not an absolute truth. I cannot establish my arguments as facts, but what I have done is that I have shown many pieces of textual evidence to support my thesis.

My thesis in this essay was that the narrating style in *Breaking Dawn* is very different depending on who is the narrator. While Bella is doing most of the narration, her friend Jacob takes over when she is unable to narrate. This change in narrators is significant because not only does it change the focalization point in the chapters but also the style and structure of the chapter headings and according to my study, this visible difference has to do with the difference in the constructed gender between the two narrators. Bella is constructed as a very feminine character and narrator, and Jacob is constructed as a very masculine character and narrator.

The gender differences that can be seen in *Breaking Dawn* are shown in the names of the chapters, where Jacob chooses names with many swear words and Bella does not for example. It is shown in the way the different narrators talk and think, it is shown in the structure, where I noted that Bella has a content page, whereas Jacob does not. Something interesting that I observed about this gender division is that Jacob is a very masculine narrator, but as the story evolves he becomes more and more feminine in his narration style. One can wonder if this is done consciously by the author or not, but that question could be the thesis of a whole other essay. My concentration was on the visible gender-differences that Meyer has constructed and how Meyer has manifested this difference in the narrative. She has constructed both Bella and Jacob according to the linguistic gender differences that have been noticed by many different linguists, but she has also constructed them according to the prejudices that people in the real world have about the differences between the language of men and women. These are prejudices since they have not yet been established as facts, but still the ideas are commonly held. Among others there is the opinion that men swear more

than women. This is not an established fact, but still it is what people believe is the truth.

Something really interesting that I found in the end of Jacob's narration is that his narration style becomes more and more feminine as that narration comes closer to its end. It would be exciting to do further studies on this changed narration style, because maybe Meyer does this unconsciously, or perhaps it is a way for her to show her readers that everyone has a masculine and feminine side, and that we should embrace both of them.

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