ACCENTS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS: COMPARING THE USE OF ACCENTS IN DISNEY'S 'THE LION KING' (1994) AND 'THE LION KING' (2019)

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Linguistics, 2022

Abstract: This paper provides an analysis and comparison of the accents used by three characters (Scar, Simba, and Kamari) in the original 'The Lion King' and the live-action remake. Such an analysis was performed with the aim of identifying whether the accents used in Disney films still conform to the stereotypes found in a 2012 study by Lippi-Green. The analysis was conducted through phonetically transcribing 30 second extracts of each character's speech from both Lion King films, then identifying features of regional accents within these extracts. It was found that Scar's accent did not change, remaining as RP; Simba's accent moved from Standard American English in the original film to a Californian accent in the remake; finally, Kamari's accent changed from the regional Chicano English accent to Standard American English. These trends provided mixed conclusions for the study. For example, whilst it was the case that regionally associated accents were no longer being used only for negatively evaluated characters, it was still true that linguistic stereotypes were being perpetuated (in that the RP accent was still being adopted by an evil character). The paper concludes that Disney still have significant progress to make in removing accent stereotypes and increasing linguistic diversity in their films.

Keywords: accent analysis/perception, standard language ideology, phonetic analysis, phonetic transcription, linguistic stereotypes, linguistic diversity, sociolinguistics

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Accents speak louder than words: Comparing the use of accents in Disney's 'The Lion King' (1994) and 'The Lion King' (2019)

1. Introduction

Disney is one of the most well-known companies in the world and their films are known for playing a role in shaping millions of people's childhoods (Giroux and Pollock 2011). With the recent introduction of the online service Disney+, access to these films is becoming ever easier across the globe. It is this wide and young viewership that makes it important to study the cultural messages that Disney spread through their films; of specific interest to linguists is how Disney films represent accents and ideas associated with them. In 2012, Lippi-Green published the results of her analyses of the accents adopted by hundreds of characters across a range of Disney films; the study showed that the accents used by the characters supported various negative stereotypes and discussed the impact that these stereotypes have on children watching the films. The present study aims to investigate whether the same patterns are found in one of Disney's live-action remakes of a classic film; this is achieved through conducting an analysis and comparison of the accents used by three characters in 'The Lion King' (1994) (here on referred to as LK1) and 'The Lion King' (2019) (here on referred to as LK2).

Section 2 details the findings of the aforementioned study by Lippi-Green, alongside further research that highlights how Disney depict many of their characters in stereotypically racist ways. After this discussion, the research question and hypotheses are presented. Section 3, the Methodology, explains how the accent analysis was conducted. In Section 4, the results of the accent analysis are presented, with examples that highlight what accent each character possesses. Section 5 summarises the three accent changes found from the accent analysis: one accent remained the same; one moved away from Standard American English towards a regional accent; and one moved towards Standard American English from a regional accent. The section also discusses these findings in the context of previous research. It is concluded that Disney has made some positive progress in removing linguistic stereotypes from LK2, whilst simultaneously making negative progress in decreasing the linguistic diversity displayed in the film.

2. Background

2.1 An overview of accents in Disney films: summarising Lippi-Green (2012)

A plethora of studies have been conducted on Disney films, ranging from those looking at the visual representations of cultures (Lacroix 2004) to those studying the effect that the traditional

gender stereotypes portrayed in the films have on young children (Coyne *et al.* 2016). However, relatively few studies have approached Disney films from a linguistic angle. Lippi-Green's 1997 and 2010 analyses of accents across 38 Disney films and over 350 characters are one of these few studies (reported in Lippi-Green 2012: Ch. 7). In this study, Lippi-Green aimed to investigate whether and how children are exposed to standard language ideology (SLI) through the media. For Lippi-Green (2012: 68), SLI is the notion that there is an idealised and homogenous language variety for everyone within a country which is promoted by dominant institutions; in America, this standard language is based on the speech of an Anglo middle-class American.

To gather the accent data, Lippi-Green coded each character studied for a language variety, alongside a range of characterisation variables (e.g. sex, behaviour evaluation, role in the film, etc.). The decision for the language variety was based on each character's phonology, syntax, and vocabulary, if marked lexemes were used. This coding allowed for a quantitative analysis of accents in Disney films to be constructed.

Overall, there was a clear preference for voice actors whose accents are not regionally marked, with 43.1% of characters speaking Standard American English (SAE) and 22% speaking Standard British English (SBE). Regionally or socially marked American and British accents accounted for 13% and 11% of characters, respectively. The remaining accents fell under the categories of 'Other Englishes' (2%), including French and Italian accented English, where these were not the voice actor's native language, and 'Non-Native English' (9%) (i.e. an accent that suggested English was not the actor's first language). There was also a clear trend for the foreign-accented voice actors to be utilised in films set outside of America or England, with twice as many characters having foreign accents in such films.

When assessing these accent groups against the characters' behaviour evaluations, Lippi-Green found a concerning trend. Of those characters who spoke American English (AmEng), 78.5% had a positive behaviour evaluation, whilst 19.9% had a negative behaviour evaluation. Contrasting this, of those characters who spoke foreign-accented English, 37% had a positive behaviour evaluation, whilst 40.7% had a negative behaviour evaluation. Those characters who spoke British English (BrEng) fell between these groups, with 57.6% of these characters having a positive behaviour evaluation and 30.4% having a negative behaviour evaluation. These findings carry important implications, in that Disney portrays a largely negative representation of foreign accents, wherein they are often associated with evil characters.

Meanwhile, associations between AmEng (and to some extent BrEng) and good characters are created.

Particularly pertinent to the present study, Lippi-Green made specific remarks regarding the representation of African Americans (AA) in LK1. Although this film has an increased presence of AA voice actors, only one of the main characters has a voice actor of this ethnicity – Mufasa. Mufasa's speech, voiced by James Earl Jones, has a clear lack of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) features; meanwhile, one of the main hyena antagonists, Shenzi, voiced by Whoopi Goldberg, codeswitches from SAE to AAVE. Lippi-Green argues that this fact teaches children that AAVE speakers are frightening, yet AA people who speak SAE are accepted in mainstream society.

Lippi-Green also argues that the choice for certain characters to be voiced by Anglos is noticeable. One such choice that received much critique at the film's release is Simba being voiced by white voice actors as both a cub and an adult lion (Martin-Rodriguez 2000), despite both of the character's parents being voiced by AAs. Walker (1994: 13, cited in Martin-Rodriguez 2000: 51) argues that this choice shows Disney's aversion to having a young black man with power in the main role of a film. Finally, Lippi-Green states that Scar being voiced by the white English actor Jeremy Irons upholds the stereotype of 'evil geniuses' being portrayed by British people.

The findings from Lippi-Green's analyses highlight that Disney are perpetuating racist stereotypes through their films. Studies have shown that children learn new information from what they watch on television (Rice and Woodsmall 1988), and that this information can be translated into prejudiced attitudes (see Persson and Musher-Einzemann 2000; Aboud 2003; Katz 2003). Therefore, the findings from Lippi-Green's study have important implications when applied to the socialisation of children; it could be the case that children are learning racist attitudes as a result of the associations they establish with accents and characters in Disney films.

2.2 Disney's racist depictions of non-white characters

Although other studies on Disney films do not focus on the linguistic aspect of race and ethnicity in the films, they largely still reach the conclusion that Disney upholds racist stereotypes in their depictions of characters. In Towbin *et al.*'s (2004: 19) examination of 26 animated Disney films, stereotypical portrayals of gender, age, sexual orientation, and race

were upheld in films released as late as 2000. In terms of race, this took the form of marginalised groups having a negative representation or not being represented at all; for example, the crows in 'Dumbo' (1941) and the hyenas in LK1 (voiced by members of ethnic minority groups) are shown to be poor, unintelligent, and sinister (Towbin *et al.* 2004: 32-33). Further evidence for Disney's negative portrayal of ethnic minority groups is found in Lacroix's (2004) study of women in Disney films. Lacroix found that women of colour were often represented as exotic and sexual, whilst white women were depicted as demure and delicate. The fact that the negative representation of marginalised groups is seen not just in the accents of the characters, but also in their characteristics and visual representations raises yet more concerns. Not only does it reinforce the racist idea that non-white people are lesser than white people, it also encourages children from these minority groups to think about themselves in these negative ways (Lacroix 2004: 227).

It should be noted that Towbin *et al.* conclude their study by arguing that some positive portrayals of marginalised cultures have appeared in Disney's newer releases[1]. For example, Towbin *et al.* remark that 'Pocahontas' (1995) and 'Mulan' (1998) display largely accurate representations of Native American and Asian culture, respectively. Despite this, they do also highlight that stereotypical attributes are given to the evil characters in 'Mulan'. This shows that Disney is making an attempt to improve their representations of non-Western cultures and characters, but they still have progress to make in removing all negative stereotypes from their films.

2.3 Research Question and Hypotheses

The review of these studies highlights two main gaps within the field of research on Disney films: first, it is clear that there is a lack of research into the role of accents in Disney films; second, little work has been conducted on Disney films released post-2010, particularly the company's live-action remakes of various classic stories. As such, the present study aims to compare the use of accents in LK1 and LK2 and investigate whether the accents used in LK2 still expose viewers to SLI. Based on the research outlined above, I hypothesise that:

1) Disney will have adapted the cast of LK2 so that regionally or socially associated accents are no longer used just for negatively evaluated characters.

[1] For context, the latest released film that Towbin *et al.* analysed was 'Emperor's New Groove' (2000).

2) Some linguistic stereotypes will still be present in the voice acting of LK2. Namely, SAE and SBE will preside as the most common accents used for the characters.

3. Methodology

The present study focusses on the accents used by three characters in LK1 and LK2. The 'Lion King' franchise was chosen as the object of study as a result of LK2 being the highest worldwide grossing film at box office of the Disney live-action remakes to date (BOM 2019). This means the film reached more viewers than the rest of the live-action remakes, causing the implications of the study (discussed in Section 5) to apply to a wider population. The two films, LK1 and LK2, were accessed through the online streaming service Disney+.

The three characters whose accents are analysed in the study are: Simba (cub), Scar, and Kamari[2]. The fact that Simba is the main protagonist and Scar and Kamari are two of the main antagonists in the franchise acted as the motivation for studying these characters. In order to compare the accents of these characters across the films, I phonetically transcribed a 30 second extract[3] of each character's speech in LK1 and LK2. To ensure objectivity of the study, the extract was each character's first instance of speaking. By using this method, a fair comparison of the extracts across the films was also allowed; this is because the scripts of LK1 and LK2 are broadly similar. A recording of each of the transcribed extracts is available from the following link, https://tinyurl.com/krn87xuk, whilst the transcriptions are viewable in the Appendix.

To analyse the accents used by the characters, I deferred to the voice actors' location of birth and the markers of a regional accent in these locations. Although this is not an infallible method of accent identification, it was a necessary course of action due to the researcher not being a native American (who can locate heard accents) or indeed a trained phonologist. In cases where the extracts lacked or exhibited only minimal instances of the regional markers of an accent, it was concluded that the character had a SAE (or SBE) accent. It should be noted that only phonological features were examined in this study, due to the scripted nature of the extracts; this means that the morphology, syntax, and lexicons displayed in the extracts are unlikely to

[2] It should be noted that this is the character's name is LK2, where it is Banzai in LK1. Despite the different names, it is clear that they are the same character in the films. It is thought the name was changed in an effort from Disney to increase Swahili (a language spoken in the area where the films are set) representation in the film, with Kamari meaning 'moonlight' in Swahili (Visram 2019). For ease of reading, I refer to the character as Kamari when discussing both LK1 and LK2.

[3] In instances where the characters of study were in a conversation with another character, the extract spans a longer time to ensure that 30 seconds of speech from the studied character was transcribed.

be indicators of a regional dialect. A qualitative analysis of the results produced is presented in Section 4.

4. Results

4.1 Scar in LK1

In LK1, Scar is voiced by the white British actor Jeremy Irons. Irons was born on the Isle of Wight and attended a private boarding school in Devon (Britannica ND; Sherborne ND). However, Irons' accent of Received Pronunciation (RP) is not regionally based and is instead socially associated with the middle and upper classes in the UK (Roach 2004: 239). Although many English speakers associate an RP accent with royalty or the elite, it is actually the case that the label applies to a wide range of speakers due to the accent having undergone several changes (Upton 2004: 218). According to Upton (2004: 219), these changes have resulted in a 'diluted' RP that is more mainstream. In fact, many of the changes in the consonant inventory of the accent are features that were typically associated with the London-based accent of Estuary English (Alterndorf 2017: 173). The features of this 'modern RP' accent are displayed in Tables 1 and 2.

Vowel	RP	shared RP/trad-RP	trad-RP
KIT		ɪ	
DRESS	ɛ		e
TRAP	a		æ
LOT		ɒ	
STRUT		ʌ	
FOOT		ʊ	
BATH	ɑː ~ a		ɑː
CLOTH	ɒ		ɒ ~ ɔː
NURSE	əː		ɜː
FLEECE		Iː	
FACE		eɪ	
PALM		ɑː	
THOUGHT		ɔː	
GOAT	əʊ		əʊ ~ oʊ
GOOSE		uː	
PRICE	ʌɪ		aɪ
CHOICE		ɔɪ	
MOUTH		aʊ	
NEAR		ɪə	
SQUARE	ɛː		ɛə
START		ɑː	
NORTH		ɔː	
FORCE		ɔː	
CURE	ʊə ~ ɔː		ʊə
happY		i	
lettER		ə	
commA		ə	

Table 1 Vowels of Modern RP and Traditional RP (source: Upton 2004: 221)

Glottalisation	In traditional RP, the glottal stop was very rarely present. In modern RP, the glottal stop can occur at intervocalic syllable boundaries or in a syllable-final position preceding a non-syllabic consonant.
Yod Coalescence	Traditional RP utilised the consonant clusters /tj/ and /dj/ in the pronunciation of words like *education* and *Tuesday*. Modern RP often adopts the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ instead.
Syllabic Consonants	In traditional RP, /n/ and /l/ often acted as syllabic in words like *button* and *little*. In modern RP, the schwa is often inserted into these words as the syllable nucleus.
-ING	In traditional RP, the /ŋ/ in *-ing* was retained due to the stigmatised nature of the [ɪn] variant. In modern RP, the [ɪn] variant is becoming more frequent. However, it is still viewed as 'incorrect' by everyday speakers – even if they adopt this pronunciation themselves.
WH	In traditional RP, the /w/ phoneme, represented by the spelling <wh>, was pronounced either as [w] or [hw]. In modern RP, this alternation has been lost.

Table 2 Consonantal Variation in Modern RP (source: adapted from Upton 2004: 228-229; Lindsey 2019: 55-76)

One particularly strong marker that Irons has a modern RP accent, as opposed to a traditional RP accent, is shown in his TRAP vowel. Irons exhibits the lower of the two variants displayed in Table 1, as shown by his pronunciation of *and* as [and]. If Irons had a traditional RP accent, this word would be observed to be closer in pronunciation to *end*. Another feature indicative of this accent is Irons' use of the monophthongised SQUARE vowel, in contrast to the

diphthong in the traditional RP accent. This can be observed in his pronunciation of *fair* as [fɛ:]. With these vowel features being two of the clearest markers of a modern RP accent (Upton 2004: 222, 226), alongside many of Irons' vowels patterning with this accent, it was concluded that Irons is a modern RP speaker. Reinforcing this conclusion, is Irons' lack of consonant cluster reduction throughout the extract, a feature synonymous with the formal style of an RP accent.

4.2 Scar in LK2

The accent situation for Scar in LK2 is largely similar to that outlined above, in that the new version of the character also has an RP accent. In the live-action remake, Scar is voiced by Chiwetel Ejiofor, a London-born black actor (Hattenstone 2004). Although being from London suggests that Eijofor would speak a regional accent like Cockney or Multicultural London English (Altendorf 2017), his reported middle-class background (Clarke 2016) appears to have prevented Ejiofor from developing these accents, which are associated with the working class. Instead, the transcribed extract suggests that Ejiofor has a modern RP accent.

Again, using the TRAP vowel as a point of reference, it can be seen that Ejiofor adopts the lower variant; this means he produces [skɹaps] for *scraps*, rather than a word closer in pronunciation to *screps*. Ejiofor also exhibits a clear consonantal marker of the modern RP accent – that of removing a syllabic consonant. As shown in Table 2, it is common for modern RP speakers to insert a schwa into words which in traditional RP had a syllabic consonant; this can be seen in Ejiofor's pronunciation of *little* as [litəl] as opposed to [litl]. In fact, Ejiofor often reduces vowels to schwa in positions where Irons does not; demonstrating this, Ejiofor's *and* is articulated with a schwa, whilst Irons exhibits a TRAP vowel. Although this could be a suggestion of a weaker RP accent for Ejiofor, it is difficult to draw solid conclusions from one example; this is because the vowel in *and* can often be reduced to a schwa, dependent on the intonation pattern of the sentence. Due to the examples outlined above, it was concluded that Ejiofor has a modern RP accent.

4.3 Simba (Cub) in LK1

In LK1 Simba is voiced by Jonathan Taylor Thomas, a white American actor. Taylor Thomas was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (IMDb NDa); due to only being 13 when starring in the film, it was assumed that accents characteristic of this area were his main input. Although Bethlehem has not been the focus of linguistic studies, the accent in the city of Philadelphia – just over an hour south of Bethlehem – has been of interest to linguists like Labov (Gordon

2004a: 289). The variation in the pronunciation of vowels is of particular interest to researchers, as a result of being volatile (Gordon 2004a: 289); Table 3, below, displays the typical vowel variation found in Philadelphia. Additionally, marked features within the consonant inventory of Philadelphian speech can been seen in Table 4.

KIT	ɪ ~ ɪ̣	PALM	ɑ	FORCE	o ~ ʊ
DRESS	ɛ ~ ɛ̨	THOUGHT	ɔ ~ ɔ̨ə ~ oə	CURE	ʊ
TRAP	æ ~ æə ~ ɛə~ ɪə	GOAT	oʊ ~ ɜʊ	happY	i
LOT	ɑ	GOAL	oʊ	lettER	ə
STRUT	ʌ ~ ʌ̣	GOOSE	uː ~ ʉu	horsES	ɪ ~ i̇ ~ ʎ
FOOT	ʊ ~ ʊ̈	PRICE	aɪ ~ ʌe	commA	ə
BATH	æə ~ ɛə ~ ɪə	CHOICE	oɪ ~ ʊɪ	TOMORROW	ɑ
CLOTH	ɔ ~ɔ̨ə ~ oə	MOUTH	aʊ ~ æɔ ~ ɛɔ	ORANGE	ɑ
NURSE	ɜ	NEAR	iə	MARRY	æ
DANCE	æə ~ eə ~ ɪə	SQUARE	ɛə	MERRY	ɛ ~ʌ
FLEECE	iː	START	ɑ ~ ɒ ~ ɔ	MARY	e ~ ɛ
FACE	e ~ eɪ ~ i̭ɪ	NORTH	o ~ ʊ		

Table 3 Variation in Pronunciation of Vowels in Philadelphia (source: Gordon 2004a: 289)

R	Philadelphia is located within a traditionally rhotic area.
STR-	The /s/ in the word-initial consonant cluster /stɹ/ can be realised as the sibilant [ʃ].
TH	The interdental fricatives /θ, ð/ can be realised as stops, [t, d] or affricates [tθ, dð]. This feature is not unique to Philadelphia and is indicative of working class speakers.
-ING	In *-ing* forms, both [ɪŋ] and [ɪn] can surface. This feature is not unique to Philadelphia.
L	/l/ is often vocalised, realised as [o], [w], or [ɯ].

Table 4 Consonantal Variation in Philadelphia (source: adapted from Gordon 2004a: 293)

From the pronunciation exhibited in Simba's extract, it is clear that Taylor Thomas lacks the markers of a distinct Philadelphian accent. The only suggestion of this accent is the presence of a raised TRAP vowel (e.g. in [dæ̝d], *dad*). However, this vowel is not so highly raised as to

be realised as [ɛ] – a possible variation shown in the diphthongised pronunciation of this vowel in Table 3. Due to this being the only distinct feature of a Philadelphian accent found in Taylor Thomas' speech, his accent was categorised as SAE. Having said this, it should be noted that Simba's extract features many repeated words, not allowing for a range of vowels to be displayed in this section of speech. Alongside this, the extract did not provide tokens for any of the characteristic variations in the consonant inventory either.

4.4 Simba (Cub) in LK2

Simba is voiced by JD McCrary, a Californian-born black American voice actor (IMDb NDb), in LK2. Similarly young to Taylor Thomas when starring in the film, it is likely that McCrary's speech patterns were formed under the influence of Los Angeles based Californian accents, where McCrary lives. The Californian accent shares much of its vowel variation with states across the American West and Midwest (Gordon 2004b); for an overview of this variation, see Table 5. However, Gordon (2004b: 342, 347) remarks that there are further features that distinguish the Californian accent from other Western states. For example, the lax front vowels in KIT, DRESS, and TRAP are often lowered, meaning there are realised as [ɛ], [æ], and [a], respectively. Additionally, the low back vowels /ɑ/ and /ɔ/ have undergone a merger in the area; this means that both vowels manifest themselves as [ɑ]. Despite such variability in vowels, little consonantal variation is found in this area of America, as can be seen in Table 6.

KIT	ɪ	FLEECE	iɪ ~ iː	NEAR	i
DRESS	ɛ	FACE	eɪ > eː	SQUARE	ɛ
TRAP	æ	PALM	ɑ ~ ɑ̱ > ɒ	START	ɑ
LOT	ɑ ~ ɑ̱ > ɒ	THOUGHT	ɑ ~ ɑ̱ ~ ɒ > ɔ	NORTH	o > ɔ > ɒ
STRUT	ɜ	GOAT	oʊ ~ ɵʊ > oː	FORCE	o > ɔ
FOOT	ʊ ~ ü	GOAL	oʊ > oː	CURE	ju > jə
BATH	æ	GOOSE	uʊ ~ uː ~ ʉ	*happ*Y	i
CLOTH	ɑ ~ ɑ̱ ~ ɒ > ɔ	PRICE	aɪ > əɪ	*lett*ER	ɜ
NURSE	ə	CHOICE	ɔɪ > oɪ	*hors*ES	ɪ ~ i̱ > ə
DANCE	æ̱	MOUTH	aʊ > æʊ > əʊ	*comm*A	ə

Table 5 Variation in Pronunciation of Vowels in the American West and Midwest (source: Gordon 2004b: 340)

R	/ɹ/ is realised in post-vocalic environments. This feature is more common among rural and older speakers.
NG	In *-ing* forms, both [ɪŋ] and [ɪn] can surface. This feature is not unique to California.
L	/l/ is either vocalised as [o] or [w], or deleted.

Table 6 Consonantal Variation in the American West and Midwest (source: adapted from Gordon 2004b: 341-42)

In LK2, Simba's speech exhibits two features of a Californian accent. The first of these is that McCrary produces a lowered TRAP vowel, observable in his pronunciation of *dad* as [dad]. The second is that McCrary's speech exhibits evidence of the low back vowel merger, discussed above. This is seen in his pronunciation of *on* as [ɑn], a word which is commonly known to be pronounced as [ɔn] in areas that maintain the distinction (toPhonetics). Due to these features being present in his speech, it was concluded that McCrary has a weak Californian accent.

Although not a marker of a Californian accent, an additional consonantal feature was also observed in this extract; McCrary pronounces the word *let's* as [lɛs], demonstrating a consonant cluster reduction. This feature is common to many speakers' informal variants, so is unlikely to be a regional marker of any accent.

4.5 Kamari in LK1

Cheech Marin is the voice of Kamari in LK1. According to the popular press, Marin is known for his distinctive accent in his films (Poisuo 2021). Marin himself is strongly connected to his ethnic identity of Chicano and how this makes his accent stand out (Marin 2012). The Chicano English (ChcE) accent has distinctive features in the pronunciation of vowels, consonants, and the prosody of sentences, many of which are influenced by Spanish (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 2006: 198). An overview of these features is presented in Tables 7-9.

Vowel Reduction	ChcE speakers are less likely to reduce unstressed syllables to a schwa, and instead produce a vowel closer to [i] or [u].
Monophthongs and Diphthongs	ChcE features more monophthongs than standard AmE accents. This is particularly the case in the final syllable of vowel-final words.
Vowel Space Overlap	ChcE exhibits more vowel space overlap in the production of front vowels than standard AmE accents. For example, /i/ and /ɪ/ have undergone a merger, resulting in a pronunciation in the space between the two vowels.

Table 7 Variation in Pronunciation of Vowels in Chicano English (source: adapted from Santa Ana and Bayley 2004: 418-20; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 2006: 198)

Alveolar Stops	ChcE speakers often produce the alveolar stops /t/ and /d/ with an apico-dental point of articulation. This is a clear influence from Spanish.
TH	The interdental fricatives /θ, ð/ can be realised as apico-dental stops [t, d]. This feature is not unique to ChcE.
Consonant Cluster Reduction	The alveolar stops /t, d/ are frequently deleted in consonant clusters. This feature is not unique to ChcE, but studies suggest deletion occurs more frequently in ChcE than other AmE accents.

Table 8 Consonantal Variation in Chicano English (source: adapted from Santa Ana and Bayley 2004: 424-25)

Rising Glide	ChcE speakers utilise a rising glide to emphasise certain words in an utterance. The use of a glide also lengthens the syllable affected by the glide.
Starting Pitch of a Declarative Utterance	ChcE utterances can begin on a high pitch, regardless of whether the speaker is marking focus or not.
Ending Pitch of a Declarative Utterance	ChcE speakers often end utterances on a middle pitch. This contrasts with the standard AmE tendency to end utterances with a step down to a low pitch.
Glide-Final Contour	At the end of utterances, ChcE speakers will use a glide to raise then lower pitch. This contrasts with the standard AmE tendency to use a step-like contour.
Yes/No Question Contour	ChcE speakers utilise a glide to mark yes/no questions. This glide raises, then ends in a middle pitch. This contrasts with the standard AmE tendency to use a step-contour that ends in a high pitch.

Table 9 Intonation Patterns in Chicano English (source: adapted from Santa Ana and Bayley 2004: 427-30)

Extract 5 shows frequent indicators of Marin's status as a ChcE speaker. The first of these is Marin's consistent deletion of /t, d/ in consonant clusters; for example, his pronunciation of *don't*, *just*, and *and* are [dʌn], [jʌs], and [æn], respectively. It was also observed that this consonant cluster reduction extended to apply to the velar stop /g/, particularly in the ending *-ing*. Demonstrating this, Marin was recorded as pronouncing *thinking* as [θɪnkɪn] and *calling* as [kɔlɪn].

It was also found that some of Marin's intonation patterns share features with those outlined in Table 9. In the first line of Kamari's transcribed dialogue, Marin starts on a high pitch, with the utterance progressing to end in a glide final contour. Additionally, in the question asked near the end of the dialogue, Marin adopts the glide contour, rather than a step-like pattern.

These intonation patterns are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. Due to these prosodic features being a strong marker of the ChcE accent (Santa Ana and Bayley 2004: 426), it was concluded that Marin has a ChcE accent.

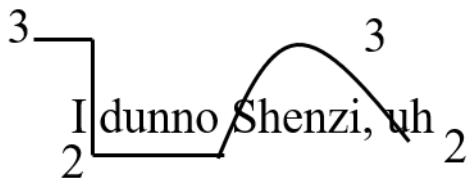

Figure 1 Initial High Pitch to Glide-Final Contour in Declarative Utterance

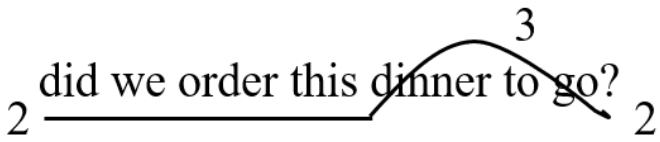

Figure 2 Yes/No Question Glide Contour

4.6 Kamari in LK2

The final character analysed was Kamari in LK2, played by Keegan-Michael Key. Key was born in Southfield, Michigan and lived around this area during his childhood, due to being adopted by a couple from Detroit (IMDb NDc). Detroit is participating in the Northern Cities Shift (NCS), with Gordon (2004a: 297) claiming that the most advanced forms of the vowel shift are heard here. Table 10 illustrates the changes characteristic of the NCS. There are relatively few consonantal features that distinguish the Detroit accent, and those that are thought to be indicative of the accent are shared by many other AmE accents; these features are displayed in Table 11.

KIT	/ɪ/ is backed and lowered.
DRESS	/ɛ/ is backed and lowered.
STRUT	/ʌ/ is backed and rounded, resulting in [ɔ].
TRAP/BATH/DANCE	/æ/ is fronted and raised to a mid or high position. The vowel is often produced with an inglide, resulting in [ɛə] or [ɪə].
LOT/PALM	/ɑ/ is fronted, resulting in [a].
CLOTH/THOUGHT	/ɔ/ is lowered, fronted, and unrounded, resulting in [ɑ].

Table 10 Features of the Northern Cities Shift (source: adapted from Gordon 2004a: 296)

TH	The interdental fricatives /θ, ð/ can be realised as stops [t, d]. This feature is not unique to Detroit and is characteristic of 'urban' speakers.
ING	In *-ing* forms, both [ɪŋ] and [ɪn] can surface. This feature is not unique to Detroit.

Table 11 Consonantal Variation in Detroit (source: adapted from Gordon 2004a: 298)

Considering Key's location of birth, one would expect him to have a strong and clearly marked accent indicative of the Detroit area. In fact, quite the opposite was found. Demonstrating this, Key's TRAP vowel is not raised, shown by his pronunciation of *at* as [æt], as opposed to [ɛət]; additionally, Key's STRUT vowel is not vocalised in a back position, as observed in his pronunciation of *cubs* – [kʌ:bz]. Not only do these examples demonstrate that Key's vowels are not affected by the NCS, they also demonstrate that his pronunciation is consistent with that of a SAE accent, outlined by Kretzschmar (2004: 263-64). This may be a result of Key's upbringing in a relatively middle-class background (Boboltz 2017).

Further evidence for Key's status as a SAE speaker stems from his use of the flapped allophone of intervocalic /t/. For example, in the utterance 'can you just give me a little bit of space', Key utilises the flap twice: [ə liɾəl biɾ ə speɪs]. This feature is prominent in SAE (Kretzschmar 2004: 267), leading to the conclusion that Key has a SAE accent.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The conclusions reached throughout Section 4 highlight varied directions and amounts of accent change for the analysed characters between LK1 and LK2. To summarise, three directions of change were observed as a result of the accent analysis: Scar's accent remained consistent, with the RP accent from LK1 being retained in LK2; Simba's accent moved away from SAE in LK1 towards a regional AmEng accent (Californian) in LK2; finally, Kamari's accent moved away from the regional ChcE accent in LK1 towards a SAE accent in LK2.

These results partially support Hypotheses 1 and 2. Hypothesis 1 predicted that socially or regionally associated accents would not only be utilised for characters that have a negative behaviour evaluation; this was observed due to Simba, a positively evaluated character, having a weak Californian accent in LK2. However, the results do not show full support for this hypothesis due to the lack of change in Scar's accent across the two films. This means that the socially associated RP accent is still being linked with evil characters, a key finding in Lippi-Green's 1997 and 2010 analyses. Although Disney is still perpetuating this negative stereotype about BrEng speakers, one could argue that this portrayal of the RP accent has not been damaging to its use. As established in Section 4.1, the RP accent is spoken by a wide range of people - although it is typically still associated with prestige and the middle class - causing it to have undergone language change. This suggests that neither the actual usage nor the perception of the RP accent has been negatively affected, despite the 'evil' stereotype still being adopted in LK2.

The above discussion also highlights how Hypothesis 2 is supported by the results, in that Scar's RP accent is still being used as a linguistic stereotype. However, it should be noted that the secondary prediction of Hypothesis 2, that SAE and SBE would be the most common accent for the characters, is not supported. This is clearly shown by the fact that only one of the characters analysed had a SAE accent. Despite this, it is difficult to argue that this is evidence of Disney increasing the diversity of accents represented in their films. Both of the non-standard accents represented in LK2 are widely spoken and are not stigmatised like the non-standard accents that were utilised in LK1 (i.e. ChcE, AAVE) (Santa Ana and Bayley 2004: 417). This means that the accents chosen for the characters analysed in the present study are not making any strong statements about linguistic representation in Disney films; instead, it was likely coincidental that the voice actor for Simba had a weak Californian accent, rather than a conscious choice. An insight into the casting process for the voice actors in LK2 would

certainly shed light on this issue; in fact, research into whether accents play a role in the casting process would accentuate the impact of the results found in the present study.

Moving to a change in accent that appears more intentional, Kamari's accent sees a stark change from a strong ChcE accent in LK1 to a SAE accent in LK2. This appears to be a clear response to criticism that the hyenas' voices received after the release of LK1 (see Martin-Rodriguez 2000; Towbin *et al.* 2004; Visram 2019). By changing this accent, Disney are breaking the pattern identified by Lippi-Green, that side-kick or evil characters often have a 'street' accent - a common descriptor for ChcE (Roth 1996). With ChcE often being stigmatised as an accent spoken by the uneducated (Santa Ana and Bayley 2004: 417), it was particularly damaging for Disney to cause further negative associations to be made with the accent. The fact that Disney made this accent change may suggest that the company is now aware and conscious of the impact that their linguistic casting choices have for the representations of accents. Further to this, Keegan-Michael Key, the voice actor for Kamari in LK2, made it clear that he was conscious of his linguistic choices when voicing the character. In an interview on 'The Tonight Show' (2019), Key stated 'I'm a black man […], I'm trying to uplift'. From this statement, it is clear that Key was trying to better represent black people through his work on LK2, as he was aware of the stereotypes that were portrayed in LK1.

Another intentional decision from Disney was to cast black voice actors for the characters analysed, where they were voiced by white actors in LK1. This decision certainly appears to be an intentional move to increase diversity and representation in LK2, with Visram (2019) commenting that white voice actors were only employed for characters that provide comedic relief in the live-action remake. Whilst this decision appeased critics of LK1 who argued that Disney were afraid to have a black man in the main role of the film (Walker 1994: 13, cited in Martin-Rodriguez 2000: 51), it is easy to question why this increased ethnic diversity of voice actors did not extend to representing a range of accents in the film. As discussed in Section 2, Disney cast an AAVE speaker for the role of an antagonist in LK1, but the dialect was not used by any positively evaluated characters. In LK2, it again appears that Disney are choosing not to have AAVE positively represented by a main character, instead selecting a more positively viewed accent of Californian English (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 2006: 124). As such, the film is again teaching children that AAs who are well-spoken deserve a place in mainstream society, whilst those who speak AAVE should not be represented here. Having said this, it

should be acknowledged that the dialect was no longer used for negatively evaluated characters, potentially making this implication less clear to the average viewer.

Overall, it is concluded that Disney has made minimal progressing in removing stereotypes about accents and increasing linguistic diversity in LK2, thereby still exposing young viewers to SLI. It is also concluded that the accent changes seen in LK2 are complex, and do not completely represent positive or negative decisions by Disney. As shown from the above discussion, the choice of a SAE accent for Kamari works against the linguistic stereotype; meanwhile, the lack of change from an RP accent for Scar still perpetuates a linguistic stereotype; further, Simba's positively viewed and weak Californian accent still supports the idea that mainstream varieties are the preference for a main character. This final choice is evidence that Disney is still not confident to cast voice actors with a stigmatised or minority accent in a leading role. Additionally, although Kamari's new accent acts against the stereotype, the choice to replace a regional accent with SAE decreases linguistic diversity. As such, it is clear that Disney still has progress to make in their casting decisions when it comes to fairly representing a range of accents. The natural progression for further research would be to study the accents in the remaining live-action remakes that Disney has produced, alongside the 'new era' of Disney films (e.g. Luca (2021), Encanto (2021)) and identify whether similar patterns and conclusions are found.

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Appendix

The transcriptions for each extract of speech for each character analysed are presented here. Accompanied with each transcription is an orthographic version of the speech and the time stamps for the extract. The recordings of the extracts are available from: https://tinyurl.com/krn87xuk.

N.B. Line breaks are used to signal where the analysed character's speech is interrupted by another character.

Extract 1, Scar in LK1

Time Stamp: 00:04:54-00:05:52

Life's not fair, is it? You see, I… Well I, shall never be king. And you shall never see the light of another day. Adieu.

What do you want?

Oh now look Zazu, you made my lose my lunch.

Oo, I quiver with fear.

Why, if it isn't my big brother

[laɪfs nɒt fɛ: ɪz ɪt (1) ju si aɪ: (.) wɛl aɪ: ʃɑl nɛvə bi kɪŋ (2) and ju: (.) ʃal nɛvɜ si ðə laɪt əv ənʌðə daɪ (.) adju:

wɒt də ju: wɒnt

əʊ naʊ lʊk zɑzu ju meɪd mi lu:z maɪ lʌnʧ

u: aɪ kwɪvɜ: wɪð fɪə

waɪ: ɪf ɪt ɪznt maɪ bɪg bɹʌðɜ]

Extract 2, Scar in LK2

Time Stamp: 00:06:00-00:06:40

Life's not fair… Is it my little friend? While some are born to feast, others spend their lives in the dark, begging for scraps. The way I see it, you and I are exactly the same. We both want to find a way out.

Zazu, you've made me lose my lunch.

[laɪfs nɒt fɛ: (1) ɪz ɪt maɪ lɪtəl frɛnd (1) waɪl sʌm ɑ: bɔɹn tə fist (1) ʌðəz spɛnd ðɛ: laɪvz ɪn ðə dɑɹk (1) bɛgɪŋ fə skɹaps (2) ðə weɪ aɪ si ɪt (1) ju ənd aɪ ɑ: əgzaktli ðə saɪm (4) wi bəʊθ wɒnt tə faɪnd ə weɪ aʊt

zɑzu (2) juːv meɪd mi luːz maɪ lʌnʧ]

Extract 3, Simba (Cub) in LK1

Time Stamp: 00:08:14-00:08:41

Dad! Dad! Come on dad, we gotta go! Wake up! Sorry! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Dad! Come on, dad!

Woah! You promised. Yeah!

[dad̪ d̪ad̪ (.) kəm ɑn d̪ad̪ wi gɑtə goʊ weɪk ʌp (5) sɑːɹi (.) d̪ad̪ː (1) dæːd (1) d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ d̪ad̪ː dad̪ː kəm ɔːn dæːd.

woʊ (2) ju pʰɹɑmɪst

jeə]

Extract 4, Simba (Cub) in LK2

Time Stamp: 00:11:01-00:11:40

Dad, you awake? Dad, wake up. Dad! Dad, Dad, Dad, Dad, Dad, Dad.

Come on Dad, let's go. You said I could patrol with you today. And today has started. You promised! You up? Let's do this!

[dad (1) ju əweɪk (2) daːd weɪk ʌp̄ (1) daːd (1) dad dad dad dad dad dad

kʌm ɑn dad (.) lɛs goʊ (.) ju sɛd aɪ cʊd pətoʊl wɪð ju tədeɪ (.) an tədeɪ həz stɑɹɪd (.) ju pɹɑmɪst (.) ju ʌp̄ (7) lɛs du ðɪs]

Extract 5, Kamari in LK1

Time Stamp: 00:19:26-00:20:32

Hmm, I don't know Shenzi. Uh, What do you think Ed?

Just what I was thinking. A trio of trespassers.

And that would make you…

Who are you calling upid-stay?

Yeah, we could have whatever's lion around

Hey, did we order this dinner to go?

‘Cause there it goes!

[hm‿æɪ doʊn noʊ ʃɛnzi ʌ wærə ju θɪŋk ɛd.

ʤʌs wʌt æɪ wəs θɪnkɪn (1) ə tɹioʊ ʌv tɹɛspæsə˞z.

æn ðæt̄ woʊd̄ meɪk ju:

hu ɑɹ‿ju kəlɪn upɪd steɪ

jeə: wi: kʊd hæv wʌɾɛvɛɹz (.) laɪən əɹaʊnd [laughing]

eɪ dɪd wi ɔɹdə˞ ðɪs dɪnə˞ tə goʊ

kʌz ðɛɪ ɪt̄ goʊ:z]

Extract 6, Kamari in LK2

Time Stamp: 00:26:18-00:26:47

Well, look at this. We weren’t expecting guests today. Would you two cubs like to stay for dinner?

Can you just give me a little bit of space? We have talked about this before. I come in alone. I’m the lead distraction, so everyone can circle.

Don’t be sorry! Just do it.

[wɛl lʊk æt ðɪs (2) wi wɜ˞n ɪkspɛktɪŋ gɛsts (.) tədeɪ: (1) wʊd ju tu kʌ:bz laɪk tu (2) steɪ fɚ dɪnəɹ kən ju ʤəs gɪv mi ə liɾəl biɾ ə speɪs (1) wi həv tʰɔkt əbaʊt ðɪs bəfɔ˞ (.) aɪ kʌm ɪn əloʊn aɪm ðə lid dɪstrækʃən soʊ ɛvɾɪwʌn kən sɜ˞kəl.

dʰoʊn bi sɑri: (.) ʤʌs du ɪt]