The Translation of Language Attitudes

A sociolinguistic study of accent use in American animated children's films and their Norwegian dubbed versions

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Abstract

I denne oppgaven undersøkes språkholdningene som finnes i animasjonsfilmer for barn produsert i USA i det 21. århundret. Formålet med oppgaven er todelt: å undersøke om det finnes systematiske korrelasjoner mellom karaktertrekk og ulike språkvarianter i animasjonsfilmer i original versjon samt i norsk dubbet versjon, og å se om det finnes korrelasjoner mellom enkelte engelske språkvarianter og norske dialekter. Ti filmer ble analysert i norsk og engelsk versjon, og alle karakterer ble kodet etter en rekke lingvistiske og ikke-lingvistiske trekk.

Oppgaven er inspirert av lignende studier med fokus på engelske språkvarianter i film og TV. Ved oppstarten av denne oppgaven var det meg bekjent ingen tidligere studier som sammenlignet norske og engelske språkholdninger i film, og denne oppgaven fyller dermed et hull i språkholdningsfeltet både i norsk og engelsk forskningsmiljø.

Det var ventet å finne systematiske korrelasjoner mellom språkvarianter og alle karaktertrekk analysert både i de originale filmene og de norske versjonene. Det var med grunnlag i dette også en forventning om at enkelte engelske språkvarianter skulle korrespondere direkte med norske dialekter, slik at karaktertrekkene korrelerte med språkvarianter med liknende konnotasjoner og stereotyper i begge språk. Funnene viste noe overraskende en ekstrem homogenitet i språkvarianter for begge språk, hvor de dominerende språkvariantene er General American i de originale filmene og Østnorsk i de dubbede versjonene. Likevel finnes enkelte systematiske korrelasjoner, både mellom karaktertrekk og språkvarianter og mellom språkene.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Aim and scope

This thesis is a sociolinguistic study of language attitudes, with a focus on accent use in animated children's films. Children's films are consumed by millions of people all over the world, and for ease of understanding they are often translated into the languages of the countries they are released in, e.g., Norwegian in Norway. The aim of the present study is to uncover the language attitudes present in animated children's films from the 21st century. In order to do this, I have analysed the correlations between accent and character traits in ten American animated films and their Norwegian dubbed counterparts.

The thesis is based on an assumption that filmmakers use different language varieties consciously to aid in characterisation. These choices are based on the filmmakers' language attitudes, which are assumed to be representative of their society as a whole, and the stereotypes connected with the various varieties. When a film is translated, it is up to the translator to choose a language variety associated with the same stereotypes, so that the characters in question retain the traits and characteristics ascribed to them by the way they speak. The target audience for these films is children, who are easily influenced by the media they consume. It is therefore important to study the stereotypes and prejudices children are faced with.

There has not been done much research on Norwegian language attitudes in comparison to English, and this thesis aims to fill that gap. A similar master's thesis was developed simultaneously to this (Hugaas 2021), however while the present thesis analyses films from a variety of production companies, Hugaas' thesis has its sole focus on DreamWorks production studio (Hugaas 2021: 1). This is the first thesis to look at American films released by several different studios dubbed into Norwegian, and thus the first that can draw conclusions about the industry as a whole, rather than individual companies.

The data consists of ten films produced by four different American production studios. The films were all released in the 21st century and were all popular films. All characters with enough speech to be analysed in terms of accent were included, totalling 156 characters. The

characters were then analysed according to the following character variables: *gender, alignment, age, character role, level of sophistication, species, and ethnicity*. The characters' spoken varieties were placed in the following categories for the original versions of the films: General American (GA), Received Pronunciation (RP), Other American accents, Other British accents, Other native English accents, and Foreign accents. In the Norwegian dubbed versions, these language categories were used: Oslo dialect, Other Eastern Norwegian, Central Norwegian, Western Norwegian, Northern Norwegian, and Foreign accents. For further explanations of the character and linguistic variables, see Chapter 3.

1.2 Research questions

The aim of the thesis is to understand how accent use in the original versions of the animated films reflects language attitudes, and how these attitudes are adapted to a Norwegian context in the corresponding dubbed versions of the films in question. To research this, the following research questions have been postulated:

1. Are there systematic correlations between language varieties and character traits in either version of the films?
2. Are there systematic correlations between English varieties and Norwegian, i.e., does one variety in English always get dubbed to the same Norwegian variety?

Based on previous research I have made the following hypotheses:

1. There will be systematic correlations between language varieties and character traits.
    a. The female characters will speak more standardised than the males in both versions of the films, meaning a higher percentage of speakers of GA or RP in the originals, and the Oslo dialect and Other Eastern Norwegian in the dubs, will be noted among the female characters.
    b. Good characters will have more standardised speech than bad characters in both versions of the films. There will be more instances of Other American and Other British accents among the bad characters in the original versions, and non-Eastern dialects in the Norwegian versions.
    c. GA will be the most prominent accent among young and adult characters, whereas RP will be more common among the elderly. In the Norwegian version, Other Eastern Norwegian will be most frequent among young and

adult characters, while the Oslo dialect will be the most frequent variety among elderly characters.

   d. Main characters will have more standardised speech, and there will be more accent diversity among minor and peripheral characters in both versions.
   e. Sophisticated characters will speak more standardised in both versions. RP in particular will not be found with unsophisticated characters in the originals.
   f. In both languages there will be more standardised speech among humans, and more accent diversity among animals and Other species.
   g. There will be more standardised speech among Caucasian characters, and more non-standard among non-Caucasians, in both versions.

2. There will be systematic correlations between English and Norwegian varieties. High-status accents in English will be translated into high-status dialects in Norwegian, and low-status accents will be translated into low-status dialects.

1.3 The structure of the thesis

The thesis consists of five separate chapters. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction, presenting the aim and scope of the thesis, as well as research questions and hypotheses. A theoretical background is given in Chapter 2, where the thesis will be placed in the context of sociolinguistics in general and language attitude research specifically. The chapter will also present previous findings in studies on attitudes towards varieties of English and Norwegian, as well as some previous research done on the attitudes present in children's film and tv. In Chapter 3, I will discuss the methodology of the thesis, present the choices I have made in terms of film selection, as well as define and explain the linguistic and non-linguistic variables the films' characters are analysed by. Chapter 4 will present and discuss the results of the study, and a summary and conclusion will be presented in Chapter 5.

2. Theoretical background

This chapter will focus on the theoretical background of the present thesis. I will define some key concepts, such as *attitudes* and *stereotypes*, as well as introduce the animated film industry and some previous studies on language attitudes in general and in film and TV.

2.1 Language attitudes

Language attitude studies is an area within the research field of sociolinguistics. Sociolinguists focus on the connection between language and social factors, and aim to analyse patterns of, and attitudes towards, language in use (Meyerhoff 2011). Attitudes are one of the factors that can impact languages, and it is therefore largely regarded as an important research field. In the following sections I will define attitudes in general, and language attitudes specifically, as well as explain how language attitudes are studied. I will then go into detail on the findings of some previous studies.

2.1.1 What is an attitude

Attitudes are defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "the way you think and feel about someone or something" (accessed 1 February 2022). In psychology, however, definitions are varied. One definition reads "attitudes are individual mental processes which determine both the actual and potential responses of each person in the social world" (Allport 1954: 45). This is a definition containing elements describing two out of the three traditional key components of attitudes: cognition and behaviour (Banaji and Heiphetz 2010: 355). The *cognition* aspect speaks towards attitudes being a concept of the mind, a way of thinking, or a belief about something, whereas *behaviour* has to do with the fact that attitudes can affect a person's actions. The third element, *affect*, tells us they involve emotions, making a person feel a certain way towards the subject. The *affect* component has traditionally been seen as quite important by some social psychologists, even going as far as seeing attitudes and feelings as synonymous (Allport 1954: 44). In later years, a fourth key element has been identified, namely the concept of *evaluation*, implying that attitudes include a form of judgment being made (Banaji and Heiphetz 2010: 357). Another essential element to attitudes

is the fact that they are *learned*, laying the groundwork for studies examining the types of attitudes children are exposed to, and thus also learn. Attitudes can be learned in many different ways, including through the media and films, which is what I am interested in in this thesis. As attitudes are cognitive concepts, they cannot be directly observed, but must be inferred, which is what this study will do.

Language attitudes are attitudes towards language on all levels, e.g., spelling, words, grammar, accents, and even entire languages (Garrett 2010: 2). This topic is interesting to study for many reasons. For one, language attitudes can help us understand language variation and change, as they can sometimes result in a semantic shift, where a word changes meaning over time, or even be the reason for speakers adopting or rejecting a certain feature completely. When certain linguistic features are seen as being a symbol of low status, these features are often avoided, leading to them eventually disappearing (Meyerhoff 2011: 69-73). Another reason why attitudes are interesting to study is that they reflect society, and as such can tell us something about society as a whole. This again can aide us in fighting social injustice, as certain prejudices are identified. There are several methods of researching language attitudes, but three main approaches are identified (Garrett 2010: 37). These are the direct approach, the indirect approach, and the societal treatment study.

2.1.2. Approaches to the study of language attitudes

This section will present the three main approaches to the study of language attitudes. Their respective strengths and weaknesses will be further discussed in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2. When studying language attitudes, linguistic varieties are often rated on several different factors. These factors are then commonly grouped into three main evaluative dimensions: social attractiveness or solidarity, status or prestige, and linguistic qualities. Within the social attractiveness dimension one can find traits such as likeability, sense of humour, and honesty; traits typical to status and prestige are education, intelligence, and confidence; and traits related to linguistic qualities are beauty, comprehensibility, and correctness. Moving forward, I will be using these dimensions when describing both the methods themselves, and the findings from some of the studies.

The first main approach to the study of language attitudes is called the direct method. The direct method is a way of studying language attitudes that involves respondents being asked direct questions about their attitudes towards linguistic varieties (Garrett 2010: 39). The questions are typically quite straightforward, an example being “How pleasant do you think

this accent sounds?" (Coupland and Bishop 2007: 77). The questions also often include the traits mentioned above, related to the different evaluative dimensions. As such, the results can easily be summed up using these dimensions. The respondents are aware that they are evaluating varieties and are expected to articulate their attitudes explicitly. At first glance, this seems like a straightforward and efficient method, where the researcher does not have to assume or infer the respondents' attitudes. However, there are some weaknesses to the method, which will be explored in section 3.1.1.

The indirect method is a more subtle method to studying language attitudes that some might even find deceptive (Garrett 2010: 41). This method also uses respondents and is in some ways quite similar to the direct method. There are two common techniques: the matched guise technique, and the verbal guise technique. In the matched guise technique, respondents hear audio recordings of a single speaker reading the same text in different ways, e.g., using different accents if the goal is to understand attitudes towards different varieties (Garrett 2010: 41). The speaker maintains the same voice quality throughout the different recordings, so that the respondents are encouraged to notice only the differences in accent or language. The respondents are led to believe that they are listening to different speakers and will then be asked to rate the speakers on several factors, using traits related to the different evaluative dimensions mentioned above, similarly to the direct method. As the respondents do not know what it is they are truly rating, this is believed to elicit a more truthful response than the direct method. The second technique, the verbal guise technique, uses several speakers, each speaking their own native accent. This is seen as more authentic than the matched guise technique, which has a single speaker mimicking multiple accents that are not their own.

The final main approach, and the one used in this study, is the *societal treatment approach*. It differs significantly from the previously mentioned methods in that it does not use respondents. Studies using this method typically analyse the content of sources in the public domain, such as newspapers, advertisements, and – as in this thesis – films (Garrett 2010: 51). In other words, the method looks at how different languages or varieties are *treated in society.* As the method does not include respondents, it is much more reliant on the researchers' inferences. For this reason, some might see this type of research as somewhat informal and more suited as a preliminary study, but there is no congruence on this. On the contrary, it can be quite useful to conduct a societal treatment study, as it informs us on the attitudes that we can be *exposed to* through different sources, and can thus learn, as opposed to the attitudes one has already adopted. When it comes to researching children's attitudes,

this can be particularly interesting, as they often cannot express their thoughts and feelings clearly, making it challenging to gain insight into their attitudes. We can, however, research the attitudes they are *exposed to* through the media they consume, as in the present thesis, to make inferences about the attitudes they have and predictions as to the attitudes they might adopt. The societal treatment method will be further expanded on in section 3.1.2.

2.1.3 Attitudes towards varieties of English

This section will sum up the typical findings of previous research into attitudes towards varieties of English. There are several previous direct and indirect studies on attitudes towards varieties of English, using respondents from both English and non-English speaking countries. Generally, the findings of these studies indicate a sort of hierarchy of varieties of English.

In a 2007 study, Coupland and Bishop asked British respondents to rate 34 different accents of English (74). Only the *social attractiveness* and *status* dimensions were used for evaluations. They found that, in both dimensions, Received Pronunciation (RP) is strongly favoured (Coupland and Bishop 2007: 80). The accents that score lowest in status also fall on the bottom of the social attractiveness-category: Birmingham English and Black Country English (a region which includes Birmingham). Southern Irish English, Newcastle English, and Afro-Caribbean English all score higher on social attractiveness than they do on status, whereas the opposite is true for London English and North American-accented English. Similarly, Hiraga finds that, among British students, RP and General American[1] (GA) score the highest on status (2005: 297). However, whereas expectedly RP scores very low on the social attractiveness-ratings, GA scores quite high, only beaten by the West Yorkshire accent. The Birmingham accent was rated as one of the lowest in both categories, West Yorkshire and Alabama were rated poorly on status, and New York City was rated at the bottom in social attractiveness.

In addition to studies focusing on native accents of English, there have been studies where the main focus lies on foreign accents, most notably Lindemann (2005), who uses respondents from the US. Lindemann's study includes a rating of *correctness,* where accents from countries such as France and Germany score highest, whereas accents from 'stigmatised' countries such as Mexico, Japan, China, and India score lowest (2005: 193). Most countries score similarly in the *correctness* category as they do in *friendly* and *pleasant.* Some

[1] Hiraga uses the term *Network American,* referring to the type of American English used by radio announcers.

exceptions to this include Russian and German English, which both score markedly higher in *correctness* than they do in *friendly* and *pleasant.* Generally speaking, the accents of Eastern-European countries, the Middle East, and a cluster of "less familiar Asian countries" score lowest altogether, whereas the highest scoring countries are native English-speaking countries, Western Europe, and Latin-America (Lindemann 2005: 194). Coupland and Bishop (2007) also find that Asian-accented English falls at the bottom of the spectrum both in status and social attractiveness. South African-accented and German-accented English both score higher on status than they do on social attractiveness.

Studies conducted in the Nordic countries typically show roughly the same results as the studies done on native English respondents (Ladegaard and Sachdev 2006; Rindal 2014; Kristiansen 2005). In Ladegaard and Sachdev's study, RP is rated as the highest in *status*, followed by GA, whereas Cockney falls on the opposite end of the spectre (2006: 100). In the *social attractiveness* category, the Scottish and Australian speakers score highest, with RP scoring lowest. Rindal finds that RP scores highest on all evaluative dimensions in her study with Norwegian respondents, however there is little difference between the different accents in the social attractiveness dimension (2014: 321). She also notes that the female RP speaker included in her study scores significantly higher than other groups in all categories, whereas the scores for the male RP speaker are more in line with Scottish English, and even below GA. Kristiansen (2005) does not distinguish between different varieties but finds a generally positive attitude towards English in Denmark and Sweden. In the Faroes and Iceland, the attitude towards English is somewhat more negative. In Norway, he found that his respondents generally felt there were too many English words in the Norwegian language, but they were more positive towards the use of English in national enterprises (2005: 163). One possible reason that the Nordic speech community is generally positive to English, according to Kristiansen, is The United States' dominant role in world politics and economics – in other words, globalisation (2005: 168). This dominant role is evident through media, where non-English speakers are constantly exposed to English. As stated in section 2.1.1, the media is one way through which one can be exposed to and learn attitudes. As such, the English language's massive presence in media consumed by non-native speakers can lead to attitudes being roughly the same throughout several different speech communities.

As shown in this section, these studies all support the abovementioned 'hierarchy' of varieties of English. For decades, the general findings have shown that standard varieties are the ones that score highest overall, followed by regional accents. At the other end of the

spectrum one can find non-standard urban accents, such as the Birmingham accent, New York accent, and cockney. RP typically scores highest in the status category. In the social attractiveness category, however, regional accents often score higher.

2.1.4 Attitudes towards varieties of Norwegian

Up until the 1970s, Norwegian dialects were private, a feature of personal, informal language. In public spaces, a standardised speech form was used. However, the next few decades brought along a big change, where dialects suddenly started to become more common in public spaces such as the government, tv and radio (Omdal, 1999). Dialects were at the same time an identity marker – ever since the national romanticism period in the 1800s, ideas of language being a uniting factor have existed in Norway (Røyneland 2017: 94–95). Languages and dialects alike were seen as belonging to one specific area, and one specific people. However, in modern times, there is an increase in mobility both from outside the nation's borders and within. With this increase in mobility, there is more contact between the different dialects, and the nuances and differences between them fade (Røyneland 2017: 93). Despite this, an idea still persists in society that a person does not fully belong in a place unless they speak the local dialect. The most mobile dialects are the city dialects, which tend to spread across the surrounding regions (Røyneland 2017: 98).

Attitudes towards varieties of Norwegian have not been as extensively researched as attitudes towards English, but there are still some findings in the field. In a nationwide study conducted by InFact for PurDialekt in 2010, close to 20% of the respondents rated speakers of the Bergen dialect as being the most annoying to listen to, followed by Northern Norwegian, Stavanger dialect, and Central Norwegian (Greiner 2010). Southern Norwegian was judged the most positive. Southern Norwegian was also at the top of the ranking done by Strømsodd (1979, cited in Omdal 1982), together with Central Norwegian and the Telemark dialect. Strømsodd's respondents, all residents of Oslo, placed the Østfold and Northern Norwegian dialects at the bottom. In Omdal (1978, cited in Omdal 1982), the results were found to vary based on where in the country the respondents were from, but one general tendency was found: the Eastern lowland dialects were generally rated negatively, while the neighbouring highland dialects were rated positively. Omdal sees this as a result of the Oslo dialect – one of

the Eastern lowland dialects – generally being seen as a low status dialect[2], and the Telemark dialect – one of the highland dialects – being generally seen as a pleasing dialect. The Norwegian city dialects, sometimes referred to as 'higher speech', are often seen as higher in status than the regional dialects (Sandøy 1989). They are also referred to by some as standardised speech, although this is a controversial topic in Norwegian linguistics, cf. section 2.1.4.1.

To sum up, even though Norwegians in general are quite tolerant towards dialect use, there are varying attitudes towards the specific dialects. We see a general trend that Eastern highland dialects are rated quite positively, as is Southern Norwegian. There are mixed attitudes towards Central Norwegian, and the most frequently negatively rated dialects are those of the big cities Bergen and Stavanger, as well as Northern Norwegian and the Eastern lowland dialects.

2.1.4.1 A brief note on standard speech in Norway

The term *standard speech*[3] has been heavily debated among Norwegian linguists since the 1970s (Jahr & Mehlum 2009: 3). Many claim that Norwegian does not have a universal spoken standard, and that dialects are the only form of spoken language, whereas some claim that there is a variety seen as superior to the dialects, a form of speech corresponding to spoken *bokmål*[4] with Eastern Norwegian pronunciation (Jahr & Mehlum 2009: 6). This debate is also reflected in society: the varieties spoken in and around Oslo are regarded as dialects by some speakers, and as non-dialect by others (Oppsahl & Røyneland 2009: 98).

It is not my wish through this thesis to take a stand in this debate, however as one of the main aims of this thesis is to compare Norwegian language attitudes to English, I have elected to use the terms *standard* and *standardised* in some contexts to refer to Eastern Norwegian dialects. This allows for easier comparison to the English standard varieties of GA and RP. The dialect spoken in Western Oslo, which is closest to what Jahr and Mehlum refer to as *standard speech,* is comparable in status to RP, while Other Eastern Norwegian dialects are similar to GA in terms of predominance in society in general.

[2] Omdal refers to dialects and standardised speech as separate constructs. It should therefore be assumed that, when talking about 'the Oslo dialect', he refers to the Eastern Oslo dialect, and that he sees the Western Oslo dialect simply as a standard speech form.
[3] "Standardtalemål" in Norwegian, my translation.
[4] One of two official written standards of Norwegian, and the most common.

2.2 Stereotypes

Key to this thesis is the concept of stereotypes. Stereotypes can be described as "a shared set of beliefs (and disbeliefs) about a cognitive group", where said beliefs are exaggerated and simplified (Kristiansen 2001: 138). In this lies the assumption that stereotyping is connected to cognition: categorisations of people, objects, and other concepts are made in the subject's mind. However, groups of people often share the same stereotypes towards a certain other group. This is because stereotypes are socially constructed. They are also socially relative, meaning that one social group can have different stereotypes than another to the same target (Kristiansen 2001: 138). Stereotypes are also often repeated by the media, in which case they can become entrenched in society, simply due to exposure. Well-established stereotypes are heavily resistant to change and will for the most part stay the same over time.

Due to their social nature, stereotypes are closely linked to attitudes. Language can be used as a marker of social categories, but it can also *define* them (Kristiansen 2001: 140). This, in turn, can lead to certain linguistic varieties being the basis of stereotyping: if a person speaks a certain way, one might interpret them as having traits often related to said variety, thus impacting one's perception of and behaviour towards that person. In animated films, this leads to accents often being used as a quick way to build character, which I will expand upon in section 2.3.2 (Lippi-Green 2011: 111).

2.3 Films and dubbing

This section will briefly introduce the film industry, how it impacts children, and how films are translated, or dubbed, into different languages.

2.3.1 The film industry

Mainstream media has often been criticised for its portrayal and reinforcing of various stereotypes. Taking this into consideration, along with the fact that attitudes can be learned through media, and it shows why this is an important field to research. In North America alone, more than 150 million cinema tickets were sold for children's films every year between 2015 and 2019 (Navarro 2021). In addition to this, many big films are released all around the world in cinemas and on streaming services, meaning children can watch them several times. This makes the potential impact of each individual film even greater. For children to watch

these films, however, they need to understand them, and one way to ensure this is through the practice of dubbing.

2.3.2 Dubbing

Dubbing is a term describing a way of translating a film or tv show by replacing the original source language dialogue with recordings of a translated version (Chaume 2012: 1). Dubbing has been a wide-spread practice in many countries for several decades, with some countries (such as Norway) dubbing mostly content aimed at children, and other countries (such as Spain) historically dubbing most, if not all, foreign films and tv shows (Chaume 2012: 6). Dubbing differs from other revoicing translations in that the original dialogue is completely removed. Another type of translation, called voice-over, keeps the original voice track, but also adds a new voice track in the target language such that they overlap (Chaume 2012: 4). This is most common in documentaries, interviews, and infomercials, but it is also sometimes used for the revoicing of films and tv series, especially in Eastern Europe. In Poland this is especially prominent, and is known as *single-voice translation*, as one reader typically voices all characters.

Norway is typically seen as a *subtitling country*, and dubbing has not traditionally been the most widespread way to translate a film. However, children's media has a strong dubbing tradition even here. Children who have not yet learned how to read will not be able to understand subtitles, and dubbing has in these cases opened them up for a whole new world of media. Even after having learned to read, subtitles can often move too quickly for a child to be able to comprehend them. In recent years, there has also been an increase in dubbed media aimed at teens, "because it has become easier and cheaper to get it good enough" (Bjørkeng 2012, my translation). While there are some obvious advantages to dubbing, there are also some downsides, which I will now present.

Tveit highlights some of the challenges of dubbing, the most important being the cost (2009: 93). In fact, he states that dubbing can in some cases be five to ten times more expensive than subtitling. Tveit explains this by saying that voice-actors are in short supply in Norway, and that the cost is therefore higher. The major dubbing studios in Norway have, however, been criticised for under-paying their actors, and the wages stood at a stand-still from the 1990's up until 2014 (Vollan: 2014). Voice-acting is not lucrative for the actors but is either way in many cases one of their main sources of income.

In addition to this, dubbing is very time consuming (Tveit 2009: 95). The dialogue first has to be translated, the actors have to be cast and given time to rehearse, then even the recording session takes time. There are several constraints limiting the production of a dub. The translation itself takes place first, and the target language text has to be synchronised to the speaking character's mouth movements and body language, as well as time constraints within the scene. Sociocultural context also has to be considered, as some cultural references might get lost in translation (Chaume 2020: 110). The dialogue must also feel natural to the consumer. After the translation comes the casting and production. Voice-actors need to be hired and instructed according to the script before the recording can begin. The quality of the recording needs to be good, with appropriate volume and no background noise (Chaume 2020: 111). Subtitling, by contrast, can be done much quicker, and needs a significantly smaller amount of people.

Another downside of dubbing in Norway is the accessibility of dubbing studios. While there are several smaller dubbing studios spread out across the country, these mostly dub advertisements and children's television. The larger film companies often opt for the same studios, which are located in the larger cities. The biggest dubbing studio in Norway is Iyuno-SDI, a subsidiary of the international company with the same name. The studio has existed under various names since the 1990s and has dubbed films for major production companies such as Disney and DreamWorks. The studio branch that does the dubbing is located in Oslo, which means that the voice-actors it has most easy access to, will be those that live in Oslo.

As has been presented here, dubbing is more expensive and time-consuming than subtitling, which has led to Norway traditionally being a subtitling country. However, as subtitles are not particularly suitable for young children, media aimed at children is usually dubbed. The prevalence of subtitles, in addition to the constraints explained above, has led to the dubbing industry in Norway being quite small, with few large studios, and little access to voice-actors.

2.4 Previous research

This section will present some previous societal treatment studies on accent use in children's media. I will be looking at two important contributions to the field made by researchers Lippi-Green (section 2.4.1) and Dobrow and Gidney (section 2.4.2), before looking at four previous master's theses on accent use in animated films in sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4.

2.4.1 Lippi-Green

In 1997, Rosina Lippi-Green conducted a study on accent use in Disney films, now arguably the most important study in this field. In the study, 24 animation films produced by the Disney Corporation were analysed. The study was then republished in 2011 with another 14 films. Lippi-Green focuses exclusively on Disney as they are the largest producer of films in this genre. The researcher wanted to look at films targeted at children, as the belief is that they are unknowingly influenced and manipulated by the media, and the attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices that are underlying the choice of accents are learned by the children watching these films (Lippi-Green 2011: 104). As the study contains such a large set of data, one can clearly see the trends at play.

While the main focus of the study is on race and ethnicity, a brief analysis of gender is also included. Lippi-Green finds that only just over 30 percent of the characters included in the original study are females (2011: 114). For the most part, the female characters conform to traditional gender roles, and as such we rarely see them at work outside the home or family. The working female characters also have jobs traditionally occupied by women, such as nurses, waitresses, nannies, and housekeepers. This trend also continues in the newer films, according to the researcher (Lippi-Green 2011: 114). This already shows a major difference in the way men and women are portrayed, which Lippi-Green then compares to the language used. The researcher also notes that female characters are "more likely to show positive motivations and actions", and that while male characters can be more dynamic, all evil female characters are static in their motivations. In terms of language, Lippi-Green finds that there is a greater diversity of accents in men than in women, with the latter typically using standard accents.

Lippi-Green finds a general trend that foreign accents can be used to represent a foreign setting (2011: 115). As it relates to race and ethnicity, Lippi-Green makes one interesting find: all African American Vernacular English (AAVE) speaking characters in the original 1997 study appear in animal form – none as humans (2011: 123). The same also applies to speakers of Southern US accents. However, the overall number of AAVE speakers is quite low. Also interesting, however, is the portrayal of African American and non-Caucasian characters in general. Lippi-Green compiles a list of characters who are either Black themselves, voiced by African American actors or speak any degree of AAVE (2011: 119). The results are varied. In *The Lion King*, which is set in Africa, many of the voice-actors are African American. The hero of the story, however, is voiced by a white actor speaking GA.

Also white is the main villain's voice-actor, who speaks in an RP accent. Of the remaining characters, the commanding and respected king, Mufasa – while voiced by an African American voice-actor – has no traces of AAVE in his speech; the villain's minions, Shenzi and Banzai, speak AAVE and Latino-accented English, respectively; and Rafiki, a peripheral but important character, is notably the only character in the film with a Swahili accent, even though many of the characters' names stem from the language. This shows a general tendency of AAVE speakers only occupying the "dark and frightening places", as opposed to the sunny savannah of Simba and Mufasa (Lippi-Green 2011: 122). Similar patterns can also be found in films such as *The Jungle Book* and *Dumbo.*

2.4.2 Dobrow and Gidney

A similar study to Lippi-Green's was later conducted by Dobrow and Gidney, where they looked at American children's animated tv programmes (1998). A total of twelve tv shows were analysed, with a selection of two episodes from each, with the researchers taking note of several character traits and features and comparing these to linguistic markers. Their results show that nearly 69 percent of the characters are male (Dobrow and Gidney 1998: 112). These male characters are overall portrayed as stronger and smarter than the female characters.

Dobrow and Gidney divide their sample into three groups: shows where there is no attempt to correlate language with character, shows where language is used to illustrate a character trait, and shows with no linguistic diversity (1998: 114). Most shows fall into the second category, and the first category had only one show; *C-Bear and Jamal* is set in an African American community in Los Angeles, and most characters speak AAVE. There is also one instance of a Hispanic character with a Spanish accent. There is no stereotyping by language in the show. In the third category the researchers placed the show *Arthur*, which has 18 characters, all of which speak in a standard dialect. In the majority of shows, however, stereotypes connected to language varieties are used to indicate character traits and roles. Villains often speak in foreign accents[5] or in non-standard American – no villains use a standard American accent. Good characters, by contrast, rarely use foreign accents. Comic characters are included as a category, and Dobrow and Gidney find that, much like villains, they use non-standard dialects and foreign accents. The one big difference is that none of the comic characters

[5] Dobrow and Gidney include British English (primarily RP) in their *foreign accents* category and go on to say that this is the accent most used by villains.

speak with a British English accent. American accents used by both villains and comic characters are characterised by them being "regionally marked and commonly associated with lower socioeconomic status" (Dobrow and Gidney, 1998: 116).

2.4.3 Master's theses on accent use in Disney films

This section will discuss three previous master's theses on the topic of accent use in Disney films[6]: Sønnesyn (2011), Søraa (2019) and Urke (2019). Their research focuses on whether accent use corresponds with character traits and the setting of the films. Søraa is especially interested in whether accent use reflects the locations that the various films are set in. The three studies analyse a total of 38 films, eight of which are live action films and the rest animated. There are also slightly different aims between the three. While Sønnesyn's research is a more direct response to Lippi-Green, comparing 18 newer films (released between 1995 and 2009) to the latter's finds, Urke and Søraa have different approaches. Søraa looks only at four films, and is most interested in the setting, as mentioned above, while Urke compares eight Disney animated films released between 1950 and 1991 to their corresponding live action *remakes* released 2010–2018.

Both Sønnesyn and Urke state that they expect to see more authenticity in the accent use in the newer films, compared to films released before the 1990s (Sønnesyn 2011: 5; Urke 2019: 2–3). They both find that GA is the dominating accent in the films released between 1950 and 2009, whereas for the remakes, Urke finds that RP is most frequent. This aligns with Lippi-Green's finds. Søraa, however, finds a predominance of foreign accents (2019: 33). This might be a misrepresentation as her research is based on quite a low number of characters, and additionally 48 out of all 55 characters being from one film, but it can also be seen as an indication that accents are used to portray a setting. In Søraa's case, all films are set in real-world settings, and three of the four are set in countries where one would not logically expect English to be spoken.

When it comes to gender, all three sets of data have a majority of male characters (Sønnesyn 2011: 57; Søraa 2019: 36; Urke 2019: 46). Urke finds that every accent category in her study is represented among the male speakers, whereas the same is true of females only in

[6] Søraa also includes two films produced by Pixar Animation Studios, a subsidiary of Disney. Both films are branded as "Disney Pixar". They are therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, included in the umbrella term *Disney*.

the originals. In the remakes, Regional American and Regional British[7] is not represented. In Sønnesyn's research, GA is the dominating accent for both genders, but the percentage of GA or RP speakers among female characters is higher than among males, indicating more standardised speech in females. Regional American and *English with other accent*[8] are represented more in male characters, while Regional British is more present among female characters. In Søraa, no female characters are recorded as speaking RP, and there are significantly fewer female characters speaking Commonwealth Englishes than there are males.

Level of sophistication is a variable studied by both Urke and Sønnesyn (2011: 72; 2019: 51). Their findings suggest a tendency to portray high-sophistication characters with more standardised speech, with a majority speaking either GA or RP. However, while GA is heavily represented among unsophisticated characters as well as sophisticated, RP is significantly less used in unsophisticated characters – with the exception of Urke's set of remakes. In the unsophisticated characters in this set of data, RP is the most used accent, with 47.8 percent of the characters (Urke 2019: 54). However, there is a general trend all throughout the study that GA and RP switch places between the originals and the remakes for most variables (Urke 2019: 75).

Another find from these theses has to do with a character's intentions and sympathies. While Urke and Søraa distinguish between good and bad characters, Sønnesyn has a slightly different approach, and only categorises her characters based on what she calls character roles, separating hero/heroine, aide to hero/heroine, villain, and aide to villain, among others[9] (Sønnesyn 2011: 77; Søraa 2019: 38; Urke 2019: 56). The two former also include character role as variables, Søraa using mainly the same categories as Sønnesyn[10], and Urke dividing her characters into main characters, supporting characters, and peripheral characters. Results in this field varied somewhat. Urke finds more accent diversity in supporting and peripheral characters, as well as for good characters (2019, p. 59; p. 65). Søraa's study similarly shows that the peripheral characters have more varied speech, but also notes that unsympathetic characters in the films included in her study tend to speak a different accent from the other major characters, regardless of what their accent might be (2019, pp. 43-44). Sønnesyn's

[7] Urke operates with Cockney as its own category, which was used by female characters in the remakes.
[8] This includes foreign accented English, as well as native English accents from outside of the U.S. and the British Isles.
[9] Other categories are unsympathetic character, authority figure, and peripheral role.
[10] Søraa does not include aide to villain as its own category, as there were no characters fitting the description in any of the films.

results on peripheral characters are in line with the other two, but she also finds *Aide to hero* to be the category with the most accent diversity (2011: 82). *Aide to villain,* on the other hand, has little diversity, with GA and RP the only accents represented. Contrastingly to Urke, Sønnesyn finds that unsympathetic characters have very diverse accents (2011: 84). This might, however, be seen in connection with the sophistication factor, as most of the characters in the *Unsympathetic* category also fit the description of *Low sophistication,* a category mentioned previously as having greater diversity, and a low use of GA.

2.4.4 Hugaas

Hugaas' 2021 thesis, developed in part simultaneously with my own, is a more recent master's theses on the topic of language attitudes in animated film. The aim of Hugaas' study is not unlike that of the present thesis, as she also focuses on dubbing. Hugaas makes a selection of 12 films produced by the American company DreamWorks, analysing and comparing character traits as they relate to the accents used in the original film and the dubbed Norwegian version. The study aims to find whether language variation is used "as a way of building characters", while also looking for systematic correlations between accent use and character traits in both versions of the films (Hugaas 2021: 2). She also investigates how the geographical settings of the films are reflected in the varieties spoken and looks at differences in the treatment of language varieties in the two versions of each film. The thesis builds on some of the studies mentioned above, such as Lippi-Green (2011), Sønnesyn (2011) and Dobrow and Gidney (1998).

The results of Hugaas' research show that GA speakers make up more than 45 percent of the characters in the original versions of the films. The second most spoken accent is a social or regional British accent, followed by RP and foreign accented English. This suggests a preference for standard over socially or regionally marked (soc./reg.) accents in American English, but the opposite when it comes to British accents. Hugaas also notes that the percentage of foreign accents is higher than in previous studies (2021: 53). In the dubbed versions, the Oslo dialect was the most commonly spoken, with more than 51 percent of the characters using that particular variety (Hugaas 2021: 54). Other eastern dialects make up more than 31 percent of the characters. Western dialects[11], by comparison, make up just under

[11] It should be noted that Hugaas operates with the accent categories "Bergen" and "Other Western accents". For simplicity, these are combined in my summary unless otherwise specified.

nine percent, while foreign accents are spoken by just over five percent of the characters analysed.

Like other researchers before her, Hugaas finds an overweight of male characters compared to female, as 201 out of 272 characters analysed are men (2021: 56). In addition to this, she also finds that there is more accent variation among male characters. For both genders, GA is the most commonly spoken accent, but the percentage of GA speakers among the female characters is much lower than in males. A larger percentage of men than women speak Soc./Reg. British accents, while the reverse is true for Soc./Reg. American. The percentage of foreign accents is roughly the same in male and female characters. In the Norwegian versions, Hugaas notes that the biggest difference between male and female characters lie in the Oslo and Eastern dialects. A higher percentage of female characters speak the more prestigious Oslo dialect than the males. The Eastern dialect, however, is more used by the male speakers than the female speakers (Hugaas 2021: 60).

An interesting find is also made in the age category, where Hugaas notes that the most frequent accent within the age group elderly is RP (2021: 62). For both other age groups, young and adult, GA is most frequent, although the percentage of GA speakers is higher in the young category than in adults. She also notes that the frequency of foreign speakers is lower in young characters, and that the frequency of Soc./Reg. British is higher among adult characters. In the Norwegian dubs, the less prestigious Eastern category is slightly more frequent among young characters than among adults, whereas the Oslo category is similarly more frequent among elderly than among young and adult characters. The Oslo and Eastern accents are the dominating varieties used in all three categories. Both the American and Norwegian films can thus be said to favour prestigious varieties in elderly characters.

When it comes to alignment, Hugaas has four distinct categories: neutral, mixed, good, and bad (2021: 65). For most of the accent categories, neutral characters make up 45–60 percent of the total amount. RP, however, stands out, with only 28.9% of speakers classified as neutral. RP is also the only category with more bad characters than good or neutral. 19.4% of foreign accented characters are bad, making it the category with the second highest percentage of bad characters. In Norwegian, Other Eastern Norwegian has the highest percentage of bad characters, with Oslo and foreign following closely behind. Interestingly, Eastern also has the highest percentage of good characters. No bad characters were found in the accent categories Other and Western. These findings contrast with the hypothesis that the good characters would speak standard accents, and the bad characters more regionally marked

varieties, as RP is considered a standard accent. Hugaas argues that this is most likely due to the production company, being American, viewing GA as 'the' standard accent. Among the bad characters, there is less accent variation in the dubbed versions.

Other important finds made by Hugaas include her results showing that almost all main characters speak GA in the originals, and Eastern or Oslo accents in the dubs (Hugaas 2021: 72). There is also more accent diversity among peripheral characters in both versions. She also analyses the nature of the characters, separating them into three categories: human, animal, and fantasy. While GA is most used for humans and fantasy creatures, Soc./Reg. British English is most used for animals. Fantasy characters rarely speak Soc./Reg. British *or* American accents. In the dubbed versions, the Oslo dialect is the most used accent both for humans and fantasy characters, and the Eastern accent is most used in animals. There are no foreign speaking fantasy creatures in any version of the films.

3. Data and method

This chapter will focus on the societal treatment study, as well as present my own research method for the present thesis. I will first present the strengths and weaknesses of the direct and indirect methods of language attitude research, before going into detail on the societal treatment study. In section 3.2 I will explain my data selection process, before going into detail on the different varieties of English and Norwegian found in the dataset in sections 3.3 and 3.4. Finally, section 3.5 presents the non-linguistic character traits that the films' characters will be categorised by.

3.1 Method

Attitudes, being a concept of the mind – "individual mental processes which determine both the actual and potential responses of each person in the social world" (Allport 1954: 45) – are not easily studied in a straightforward manner. The methods usually used for language attitude research are designed with this in mind. As attitudes cannot be seen or observed directly, one must use different research methods than in other areas of linguistics. There are three main methods to the study of language attitudes, and they will be explained in the following sections, as well as their strengths and weaknesses.

3.1.1 The direct and indirect methods

The indirect and direct methods are somewhat similar, with both involving informants reacting to different languages or language varieties. In the direct method, the informant is asked direct questions about their attitudes towards certain varieties, whereas in the indirect method, the respondents are asked to rate different speakers on a number of factors (Garrett, 2010, see section 2.1.2 for more detail on the two methods). In the latter case, the respondents do not know that it is their language attitudes that are being studied.

These two methods each have their own strengths and weaknesses. The direct method is straightforward and efficient but has quite a few weaknesses. The respondents might have several biases in the study, one being social desirability bias, in which political correctness and social expectations influence the answers given. This bias stems from the desire to not

appear bigoted in front of the researcher or other respondents and is more prevalent when using interviews than questionnaires (Garrett 2010: 45). If using a Likert scale, where respondents evaluate statements on a scale most often ranging from *strongly/completely agree* to *strongly/completely disagree*, one might also come across an acquiescence bias, wherein some respondents are inclined to always agree, no matter the statement. The presence of an interviewer might also affect the research. In the direct method, the varieties studied must be identified with a label for the respondents to evaluate them. This might produce unreliable results, as the respondents respond to the label itself without hearing the variety or, in some cases, even knowing what it sounds like. In addition to this, the labels are also quite broad in some studies, even as broad as just "British English". In spite of these weaknesses, the direct method is especially suited for collecting large amounts of data in a short amount of time and is therefore a preferred method in many circumstances.

The indirect method rectifies some of the weaknesses of the direct method (Garrett, 2010: 42–46). For one, as there are no explicit questions about accent attitudes, the respondents are less vulnerable to social desirability bias, and are more likely to express their 'real' attitudes. In addition to this, there are no variety labels, meaning the respondents are guaranteed to respond to the specific variety in question. Some weaknesses of this approach include concerns about authenticity: it is hard to find a speaker who is able to produce several varieties authentically. By trying to keep the focus on the accent features, other factors of speech, such as intonation, rhythm, and tempo, must be consistent, which also creates inauthenticity. The accent authenticity issue can be solved by using the verbal guise technique, where the different varieties are produced by different speakers. This can however also produce false results, if the respondents evaluate different aspects of the speaker than their accent. Another weakness lies in the lack of accent labels, which may lead to some varieties being perceived as bad grammar, or as different varieties altogether, depending on the respondents' perception. For both the direct and indirect methods, there is also an issue of different understandings of the terms used to rate the varieties. A term such as "correctness" can be judged as both a positive and a negative descriptor, which may skew the results.

3.1.2 Societal treatment studies

The third and final method to studying language attitudes is the societal treatment approach. A societal treatment study, as mentioned in section 2.1.2., typically analyses sources in the public domain, to look at how different languages and language varieties are "treated" by and

in society. Societal treatment studies can look at content from several different types of sources, such as street signs, newspapers, books, and historical records. In most cases, the language attitudes these sources portray are inferred, not stated explicitly, so the method inherently demands some level of interpretation by the researcher. Due to this, the results will invariably be somewhat subjective. It is therefore important for the researcher to be aware of their own bias, and state the reasons behind their categorisation of varieties, as well as the other variables included in the study. These variables should also be as universal as possible, so that the results will mostly correspond to what a different researcher could find with the same dataset. The societal treatment method is not discussed as much within contemporary language attitude research, and is seen by some as quite informal, only suitable for a preliminary study. However, it does provide insight into stereotypes associated with languages and varieties, as it studies how these are treated in the public domain. The previous two methods, using respondents, would only unearth the attitudes of single persons, while a societal treatment study is more interested in the attitudes that we are all subjected to through the media and other sources we see every day.

Some examples of previous societal treatment studies are studies on language use in consumer advertisements, as conducted by Haarmann (1989) and Cheshire and Mosher (1994). Haarmann looks at Japanese television commercials, noting that foreign languages are used to convey stereotypical associations – even though the consumers are not expected to understand the languages. He finds that French is often used to advertise products associated with high elegance and refined taste, such as fashion, coffee, and make-up, whereas English is used to convey high quality, confidence, and practicality in advertisements for cars, alcohol, and electronics (Haarmann 1989: 108–114). Cheshire and Mosher investigate the use of language in printed ads in Switzerland and find that English is used in advertisements for credit cards, cigarettes, and hi-fi equipment (1994: 459). By contrast, it is hardly ever used in advertisements for soft drinks, medicine, and banks. Somewhat surprisingly, roughly one third of the English ads were advertising Swiss products, including Swiss watches. This can be seen as a manifestation of negative attitudes towards one's own language and cultural identity.

Animated films have been studied in numerous societal treatment studies and are in fact well suited for the method. This is in part due to the films' often non-realistic settings. In an animated film, there is no need for anything – neither the appearance of the characters, the language or varieties used, or the setting – to be based in real life. As such, we can have

fantastical settings with talking flowers, unicorns, or aliens. The characters are also often exaggerated, so that one feature particularly stands out. In cases where the setting is unrealistic, there is no "correct" or realistic accent. One important underlying assumption is that in animated films, the producers make a conscious choice to provide each character with their given accent, and we can therefore see this as an expression of their – and by extension, society's – language attitudes. If the talking flower speaks in a particular accent, that accent is associated with the flower's main characteristics, leading the viewers to adopt a certain attitude towards the accent and its real-life speakers. For examples of previous societal treatment studies looking at animated films, see sections 2.4.1, 2.4.3, and 2.4.4.

3.1.3 Methodology of the present thesis

For the present thesis, I was interested in investigating the language attitudes underlying the choice of accents in animated films. The primary audience for a lot of animated films are children, and as children are still in the process of learning and acquiring attitudes, it is interesting to see which types of attitudes they might be exposed to when watching films. Studies suggest that children start to display prejudice as early as ages 3-6 (Persson and Musher-Eizenman 2003: 531). Children are for the most part shielded by our society, and are protected from unhealthy and unsafe toys, food, and clothing (Lippi-Green 2011: 102). They are, however, subjected to the media, meaning that they can quite easily acquire the attitudes they see portrayed.

In addition to looking at originally American films, I was also interested in looking at the dubbed versions of the films, to see if there were any trends in the translation of accents, i.e., if any Norwegian dialects correspond to a certain English variety in terms of attitudes. The study was conducted by watching ten different films in both their original version and the Norwegian dub, while taking copious notes on the various characters. Several different character traits were taken note of, at the same time as I noted the variety used by the characters displaying the traits. The categories of character traits that I operate with are *gender*, *alignment*, *age*, *character role*, *level of sophistication*, *species*, and *ethnicity*. The results were then analysed to see if any character traits systematically correlate with a given variety. This was repeated for both sets of films, meaning both languages were analysed. The results were also quantified so that a sense of the distribution of the different varieties was achieved. The next section will go into detail on how the films and characters were selected,

and sections 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 will discuss the various variables I took note of while analysing the films. For all variables, some possible challenges are brought up and discussed.

3.2 Data selection

3.2.1 Films

To conduct this research a selection of films was necessary. To avoid any overlap with previous studies, a list was first compiled of the films analysed by the researchers Lippi-Green, Sønnesyn, Urke, Søraa and Hugaas (see sections 2.4.1, 2.4.3, and 2.4.4). Following that, a list of the 50 highest-grossing animated films of all time was used, where the previously studied films were then excluded. By choosing high-grossing films, I ensured that the attitudes I uncover are attitudes that many children are exposed to, as opposed to only a small number. Films produced outside of the United States or before the 21st century were also excluded, as well as any prequels, sequels, or spin-offs. The latter choice was made to minimise the chances of having repeated characters. Two of the highest-grossing animated films from 2020 and 2021[12] were then added to the selection to represent current trends. This ensures that the films span across a time period of 20 years, although it must be acknowledged that films released in the 2010s is overrepresented in the selection with six films, the 2000s and the 2020s being represented with two films each. Table 3.1 below shows the films selected, along with the year of production and the production studio.

[12] At the time of the selection, Soul was the second highest-grossing 2020 film to fulfil the criteria. However, the box office numbers do not include streaming figures. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the film was released exclusively on Disney's own streaming service, Disney+, in several countries, including the United States and Canada. The numbers are therefore not representative of actual viewing numbers. Raya and the Last Dragon was still in theatres at the time of the selection and was thought to achieve higher numbers over time. It was released simultaneously in theatres and on Disney+.

Table 3.1 The films included in this study with their release year and production studio

Film	*Release year*	*Production studio*
Monsters, Inc.	2001	Pixar
Ice Age	2002	Blue Sky Studios
Despicable Me	2010	Illumination
Tangled	2010	Disney
Big Hero 6	2014	Disney
Inside Out	2015	Pixar
The Secret Life of Pets	2016	Illumination
Sing	2016	Illumination
Soul	2020	Pixar
Raya and the Last Dragon	2021	Disney

All films were accessed in both the original and the Norwegian version through three different streaming services[13]. The films also represent several different production companies so as to reveal any trends apparent in the industry as a whole. The settings are vastly different across the films, with some taking place in magical realms (e.g., Tangled, Monsters, Inc.), some in the distant past (i.e., Ice Age) and some in a society more or less like our own (e.g., The Secret Life of Pets). The speaking characters include humans, animals, and other creatures.

3.2.2 Characters

As the thesis investigates how the films in question treat different linguistic varieties, the films' characters had to be analysed on a number of variables. Meticulous notes were taken throughout the watching of the films, and I was able to create a dataset consisting of 156 speaking characters. The films varied somewhat in number of characters, with Tangled only providing seven characters speaking enough to be analysed, and Soul providing 28 characters. The average number of characters analysed per film is 16. See Table 3.2 below for the number of characters included from each film.

[13] The streaming services used were Disney+, Netflix, and TV2 Play. All films had an option to select language, meaning that every film was found on the same streaming service in both versions.

Table 3.2 Total number of characters included from each film

Film	*Number of characters*
Monsters, Inc.	16
Ice Age	12
Despicable Me	13
Tangled	7
Big Hero 6	15
Inside Out	15
The Secret Life of Pets	18
Sing	19
Soul	28
Raya and the Last Dragon	13
TOTAL	***156***

The numbers seen in Table 3.2 above are not the total number of characters *appearing* in each film, but rather only the characters included in the study. To be included, a character had to have speaking lines sufficient for the spoken variety to be determined. This means that non-speaking characters, as well as characters speaking only single words or sentences, where no salient markers exist, were excluded. Where a prominent feature of a single variety can be determined from a single sentence, the character speaking it was included in the analysis. An example of this is the unnamed "Mama" and child from Monsters, Inc., who both have a distinct Southern accent – their short interaction includes, e.g., a raised DRESS-vowel and elongated stressed vowels (see section 3.3.2.1 for more features of the Southern accent).

As other variables also have to be determined to get a sense of the language attitudes at play, studies such as Hugaas (2021) exclude characters that do not appear on-screen, such as narrators. The films in this study that have a narrator are narrated by characters that appear in the films in person, and this was therefore not grounds for exclusion. A decision was made for off-screen characters[14] to be included, as they often can be analysed in terms of most of the character variables explained in section 3.5. Where a character could not be categorised for one of the character variables, they were excluded from the given variable's results, rather than the whole study. As such, the dataset varies somewhat for each category.

[14] Or characters that only appear as shadows, like Mama and child, see 3.5.6

3.3 Linguistic variables in English

The most important variables analysed in this study are the linguistic varieties used by the various characters. This section presents the varieties used in the original American version of the films. Characters only speaking in foreign languages are excluded, as this thesis deals with attitudes towards varieties of English. To explain the linguistic features of each English variety, I will be using keywords representing standard lexical sets, meaning that words commonly pronounced with the same vowel, and the vowel in question, is represented by a keyword (Wells 1982: 127–168). For instance, *the BATH-vowel* is used to refer to the vowel found in the word *bath*, as well as words like *staff*, *brass*, *ask*, etc. Some varieties are also characterised by other features, such as non-standard grammar. In such cases, this is noted.

To categorise the characters' speech, an auditory analysis was performed to identify the salient features mentioned below for each variety. In cases of doubt, certain scenes were rewound and rewatched as many times as necessary. My supervisor was also consulted and performed a quality control of the analysis of several of the characters, thus reducing the risks of my subjectivity and possible poor judgment invalidating the results. There was a high level of agreement between my supervisor's analysis and my own in terms of accent identification.

A recurring challenge that should be mentioned is the difficulty in separating a character's voice from the voice-actor voicing them. Many of the films that are part of this study include famous actors with recognisable voices. In these cases, it is difficult to separate the information one already knows about the actor themselves from the information present in the films. As an example, Ray Romano is well known for being a native New Yorker, hailing from Queens (Internet Movie DataBase, accessed 28 February 2022). With this knowledge, I might have easily categorised his character in Ice Age, Manny, as speaking with a New York accent. However, the character did not consistently display features of the accent and was as such categorised as speaking in a General American accent. Another challenge is focusing solely on speech, not letting voice quality impact the judgment. Voice quality can make a character give out the impression of non-standard speech, even though their actual accent does not differ from the standard. An example of this is Roz, a minor character in Monsters, Inc. Roz speaks in a slow, raspy voice, but the phonetic features indicate a General American accent. Similarly, Ice Age's Sid has a prominent lisp, and his speech stands out from the other characters. Sid was also finally categorised as having a General American accent.

The next section will outline the main features of some of the accents encountered in the films. The accents are grouped into certain categories based on prevalence in the data set, as well as previous studies. Basing the categories, at least in part, on previous studies, allows for easier comparison. The accent presentations are based on descriptions given in Wells (1982), Melchers et al. (2019), Cruttenden (2014), Kretzschmar (2008), Thomas (2007, 2008), Edwards (2008), Tollfree (1999), Bauer and Warren (2008), and Gargesh (2008).

3.3.1 General American (GA)

The *General American* accent (GA) is considered by many the standard American accent and is also referred to by the term *Standard American English* or *Network American* (Wells 1982: 470). The latter term derives from the fact that GA is the accent most used and most acceptable on nationwide television broadcasts in the United States. Local accents are not especially widespread in the US, and it is GA that is the most common speech variety. It is spoken all across the US. There are, however, local accents dominating some areas, such as the South and the East (Wells 1982: 470). Foreign English learners who want to speak American English are often taught GA (Wells 1982: 118). Some of the main features of GA are presented here.

- Rhotic – /r/ realised in all positions
- Intervocalic /t/ realised as a voiced tap [ɾ]
- Dark (velarised) /l/ in all positions
- BATH-vowel realised as an open front vowel [æ]
- LOT-vowel realised as a long open back vowel [ɑː]
- GOAT-vowel realised as a diphthong with back rounded starting point [oʊ]

3.3.2 Received pronunciation (RP)

Received pronunciation (RP) is also known by the terms *BBC English* or *Standard English* and is the most prestigious variety of British English (Wells 1982:117). The variety is spoken in England but is not localised to a specific area. This is the accent that TV and radio announcers associated with the British Broadcasting Company – BBC – were demanded to speak up until the early 1970s, hence the name *BBC English.* The variety is not very widespread, in fact it is spoken only by a small minority. It is in language attitude studies proven to be associated with status and high social class, see section 2.1.3. There are also different varieties within the category of RP, but due to the limited scope of this study I will

be looking at the variety in its broadest form. Some of the main features of this broad RP are summed up below, as described in Wells (1982).

- Non-rhotic (only prevocalic /r/ realised)
- Intervocalic /t/ realised as a fortive plosive [t]
- Clear /l/ before vowels, otherwise dark (velarised) /l/
- BATH-vowel realised as a long open back vowel [ɑː]
- LOT-vowel realised as a short open back rounded vowel [ɒ]
- GOAT-vowel realised as a diphthong with mid central starting point [əʊ]

3.3.3 Other American accents

This category encompasses all American accents that are not GA, both regionally and socially marked accents. The linguistic features of all varieties will not be described here, but two of the more prominent varieties used in the dataset will be expanded on in this section.

3.3.3.1 Southern American English

Southern American English is primarily found, as the name suggests, in the southern states of the US, specifically the lowlands[15]. It will henceforth be referred to by its shortened name, *Southern*. Southern is well known throughout the world for the *southern drawl*, a speech feature where stressed syllables are elongated (Wells 1982:529). Other recurring features are as follows:

- Traditionally non-rhotic, with only prevocalic /r/ realised, now variably rhotic
- PRICE-vowel realised as long open front monophthong [aː]
- STRUT-vowel realised as mid central vowel [ə]
- BATH- and TRAP-vowels realised as front-closing diphthong [æɪ] except before fortis plosives
- THOUGHT- and CLOTH-vowels realised as a back-closing diphthong [ɑɔ]
- Diphthongisation of KIT-, DRESS-, and TRAP-vowels: [ɪə], [ɛə], [æə]
- DRESS-vowel raised before nasals into close-mid front vowel [ɪ]

[15] Wells (1982) highlights the 'southern mountain' accents of West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and some parts of Virginia and the Carolinas. This accent is not relevant to this thesis and will therefore not be expanded on. When the terms S*outhern* and *South* are used in this thesis to refer to the US, one should consider these areas excluded.

3.3.3.2 African American Vernacular English (AAVE)

African American Vernacular English is a socially marked variety of English, and is not restricted to one area, but rather occurs throughout the United States. The variety is primarily spoken by African Americans, a long-suppressed and discriminated against group, and has therefore only been researched in a neutral manner in recent years.

- Non-rhotic
- Non-prevocalic /l/ vocalised as mid central vowel [ə]
- TH-fronting and -stopping – /θ, ð/ realised as /f, v/ or /t, d/
- Consonant cluster reduction, e.g., *left* /lef/, *risked* /rɪs/
- Southern vowels
- Deletion of the linking verb *be*
- Invariant be
- Lack of subject-verb agreement
- Multiple negation
- Irregular past participle

3.3.4 Other British accents

This category would theoretically comprise of several different regional and socially marked varieties of English spoken in Great Britain, but the only accent found in the dataset that fits into this category is *Cockney*. The Cockney accent is named after its speakers, as the term was originally used to describe a person from the East End of London. Cockney is a working-class accent and is generally associated with lower status and low attractiveness. Some of the main features are as follows:

- T-glottaling – intervocalic /t/ realised as a glottal stop [ʔ]
- TH-fronting – dental fricatives /θ, ð/ realised as labiodental fricatives [f, v]
- L-vocalisation – non-prevocalic /l/ realised as a close-mid back vowel [ʊ]
- H-dropping - /h/ dropped in lexical words
- Diphthong shift
    - FLEECE-vowel realised as a diphthong [əi]
    - GOOSE-vowel realised as a diphthong [əu]
    - Several vowels pronounced differently from RP:
        - FACE-vowel realised as [æɪ]

- PRICE-vowel realised as [ɑɪ]
- CHOICE-vowel realised as [oɪ]
- GOAT-vowel realised as [ʌʊ]
- MOUTH-vowel realised as [ɛʊ]

3.3.5 Other native accents

This category encompasses all native varieties of English spoken outside of the US and Great Britain. Only four varieties were found in my dataset, each being spoken by one character.

3.3.5.1 New Zealand

New Zealand English (NZE) is often compared to Australian English, as the two varieties are similar in many ways. The main differences between the two are, according to Wells, lexical, as NZE uses several words of Maori origin (1982:605). The most important phonetic difference between the two accents lies in the KIT-vowel, which in Australian English is realised as [ɪ], and in NZE [ə].

- Non-rhotic
- Velarised /l/ in all positions
- Intervocalic /t/ realised as a voiced tap
- Diphthong shift
- BATH-vowel realised as an open front vowel [aː]
- Extreme raising of the DRESS- and TRAP-vowels: realised as [ɪ] and [e]
- KIT-vowel realised as mid-central [ə]
- NURSE-vowel realised as close-mid front rounded [øː]

3.3.5.2 Indian English

India is generally not regarded as an "inner circle" country, meaning countries where English is the dominant language. Rather, it is in the "outer circle", as a country where English is not the first language of most residents, but has been important in areas such as government, education, and popular culture. However, I choose to include Indian English in the *other native English accents* section, as there is a large number of native English speakers in India, and as such I do not believe Indian English fits into the *Foreign accent* section.

- /t/ and /d/ realised as retroflex [ʈ] and [ɖ]
- /θ/ and /ð/ realised as plosives [t] and [d]

- /r/ often realised as a tap or trill
- /p/, /t/, and /k/ often unaspirated
- No distinction between /v/ and /w/, both often realised as labiodental approximant [ʋ]
- Monophthongisation of FACE- and GOAT-vowels, realised as [eː] and [oː]

3.3.4.3 Caribbean English

In the Caribbean and surrounding areas, many different languages are spoken, one of which being English. It is a diverse area, which means the accent is also diverse and varied. However, these are some common features:

- /θ/ and /ð/ realised as plosives [t] and [d]
- Consonant cluster reduction, e.g., *left* /lef/, *risked* /rɪs/
- Unreduced vowels where speakers of other accents might use [ə], e.g., wom[a]n, want[ɛ]d.
- Monophthongisation of FACE- and GOAT-vowels

3.3.4.4. Mid-Atlantic

The Mid-Atlantic accent is special in that it is no one's native accent, but a learned accent. It is known under several names, and often associated with the Golden Age of Hollywood. Many link the accent to the 1942 handbook *Speak with Distinction,* which set the standard for how actors were meant to speak, both on stage and in films (Urban 2021). The accent is seen as a mixture of GA and RP, and contains features of both, and as such does not fit under the categories of neither American nor British English. It is thus grouped together with Other native accents for the purpose of this study. It is important to note that, while the term Mid-Atlantic English is sometimes used to refer to a certain type of accent used by European speakers of English as a foreign language, that is not what the term is referring to in this thesis. The following features are based on descriptions given in Urban (2021) and Wang (2014).

- Non-rhotic
- Fronting of BATH-vowel as compared to RP
- BOOT-, BEET-, HAPPY, and THOUGHT-VOWELS consistent with RP
- CUT-, BIRD-, and POST-vowels consistent with GA
- Word-initial /wh/ realised as [ʍ]

3.3.6 English with a Foreign accent

Speakers whose native language is not English can sometimes use phonetic features of their native language when speaking English. That is referred to as speaking *English with a foreign accent*, or, in lay terms, *broken English* or simply *having an accent.* Depending on what the speaker's native language is, different features may appear, and summarising them is therefore impossible. Other distinguishing speech features can be intonation or lexical differences, with the speaker using words or expressions from the native language.

Examples of characters speaking in a Foreign accent includes Gru and his mother from Despicable Me, and Gunter from Sing. Gru was identified as having an Eastern European accent, with an extremely velarised /l/, /h/ realised as a velar fricative, /ð/ realised as [d], and /r/ realised as a trill. His mother, on the other hand, though not speaking as much, and not exhibiting as many non-standard features, realised /r/ as a uvular fricative. Gunter also had a uvular [ʁ], as well as realising /s/ as a voiced fricative [z] and at times including the German word *ja*, meaning *yes.*

3.4 Linguistic variables in Norwegian

In this section, I will briefly describe the key features of some of the Norwegian varieties found in the films analysed. Norwegian varieties are mainly regional, and as such the term *dialect* is used to refer to them (Hanssen 2010: 13). The Norwegian word *dialekt* does not contain the same negative associations as the English term but is rather used for the most part as a neutral term to describe language varieties. The Norwegian dialects differ in terms of phonology, morphology, prosody, lexicality, and syntax, and as such it is not appropriate to use the term *accent*, as this relates only to differences in pronunciation. With these big differences, it is not uncommon for a Norwegian person to be able to tell where another person is from simply hearing them speak (Hanssen 2010: 12). Dialects are also important identity markers for many Norwegians.

Norwegian dialects are most commonly divided into four main groups: Eastern Norwegian, Central Norwegian, Western Norwegian, and Northern Norwegian (Hanssen 2010: 117). These main groups are then divided into smaller dialectal areas. For the purpose of this thesis, the dialectal areas will mainly be described in terms of the counties in which they are spoken. This is based on the situation as of February 2022, with the knowledge that

some of these counties may change in the near future. All descriptions of accents are based on Hanssen (2010).

3.4.1 Eastern Norwegian

Eastern Norwegian is an umbrella term referring to the dialects spoken in the counties Viken, Innlandet, Vestfold og Telemark, and Oslo. This is a big area, and there are also major differences in dialect within the area. A distinction can be made between *flatbygdmål* and *fjellbygdmål,* which loosely translates to lowland and highland dialects. The highland dialects were not found in my dataset, and as such will be excluded from the descriptions. The lowland dialects can again be divided into four dialects groups: *vikværsk, midtøstlandsk, opplandsk,* and *østerdalsk.* The dialects spoken in Oslo can then be separated from within the *midtøstlandsk* category and divided into eastern and western Oslo dialects. Out of these, the eastern variety shares most of its identifying traits with the rest of the area, whereas the western variety is slightly different. For the purpose of this thesis, I find it particularly interesting to look at the prevalence of the Western Oslo dialect, henceforth referred to simply as the Oslo dialect, compared to Other Eastern Norwegian accents. I will therefore be presenting the most common traits of the Oslo dialect in its own category, and the remaining Eastern Norwegian dialects will be grouped into one. Following are the common traits of Other Eastern Norwegian:

- Vowel assimilation – the first vowel becomes similar to the last vowel in some words.
- Lowering of short vowels – /i/ and /y/ realised as [e] and [ø]
- /l/ realised as retroflex flap [ɽ] in certain environments
- Retroflexing – consonant clusters with /r/ followed by /l/, /n/, /d/, /t/, or /s/ realised as [ɭ], [ɳ], [ɖ], [ʈ], [ʃ]
- Vocalisation of <g> – can be realised as [i], [y], or [j]

3.4.1.1 Oslo

The Oslo dialect spoken in the west part of the city has traditionally been associated with higher status and developed from the Danish written language among the upper class. This makes it comparable to the standard varieties of English in terms of status. Some of the defining features of the dialect are as follows:

- /l/ mainly realised as [l]
- <gn> realised as [yn]

- Third person personal pronoun has no distinction between subject and object, or the forms are reversed: *dem* used as subject, *de* as object
- Little use of -a-endings in both verbs and nouns, compared to Other Eastern Norwegian
- Monophthongisation
- Only two grammatical genders

3.4.2 Central Norwegian

Central Norwegian, also known as trøndersk, is spoken in the county of Trøndelag, as well as in south-western Nordmøre, the Northern municipality of Bindal, and smaller areas of Sweden.

- Apocope – unstressed final vowel is removed
- Vowel assimilation – the first vowel becomes similar to the last vowel in some words. These words are not subjected to apocope.
- /l/ and /r/ realised as voiced retroflex flap [ɽ] in certain environments
- Retroflexing – consonant clusters with /r/ followed by /l/, /n/, /d/, /t/, or /s/ realised as [ɭ], [ɳ], [ɖ], [ʈ], [ʃ]
- Palatalisation – /l/, /n/, /d/ and /t/ realised as [ʎ], [ɲ], [ɟ], and [c] where the consonants have traditionally been long
- First person personal pronouns – most commonly *æ*, but also *e, eg, æg, æi, i,* and *je*

3.4.3 Western Norwegian

Western Norwegian is spoken along the south and west coast of Norway, in most parts of the counties of Møre og Romsdal, Vestland, Rogaland and Agder. This is quite a large area, and there are big differences in the various dialects categorised as Western Norwegian. Hanssen (2010) makes a broad three-way separation, which I will also be using for the present thesis. We will therefore divide Western Norwegian into Northwest Norwegian, Southwest Norwegian, and Southern Norwegian. A distinction can also be made between Southwest Norwegian in general, and the dialect spoken in Bergen. Bergen is a city, and its dialects therefore differ a bit from the nearby countryside. Due to the city's history, the Bergen dialect has been influenced by foreign cultures, especially German, and Bergen is somewhat of a "dialectal island" in the southwest (Hanssen 2010: 176).

3.4.3.1 Northwest Norwegian

Northwest Norwegian is spoken in the southernmost parts of Møre og Romsdal, and in the Fjordane-region of Vestland county. I will not go into much detail on this dialect, as it is not spoken by many characters in my data set, but a quick overview will be given here.

- No retroflexing – /rn/, /rt/, /rd/, and /rl/ all realised as two separate consonants
- Palatalisation of velars - /k/, /g/, <ng> and <nk> followed by /i/ or /e/ realised as [c], [ɟ], [ɲ] and [ɲc]
- /r/ realised as a trill [r]
- First person personal pronoun *e, i, æi,* or *ai*

3.4.3.2 Southwest Norwegian

Southwest Norwegian is spoken in the majority of Vestland and Rogaland counties, as well as in western Agder. Bergen falls within this area but is defined separately in section 3.4.3.3.

- A-ending in verbs in the infinitive form
- No retroflexing – /rn/, /rt/, /rd/, and /rl/ all realised as two separate consonants
- /r/ realised as a uvular [ʁ][16]
- First person personal pronoun *eg* or *e*
- Lenisation in southernmost parts of the area - /p/, /t/, and /k/ following a long vowel realised as [b], [d], and [g]

3.4.3.3 Bergen

The Bergen dialect is spoken only in the city of Bergen. As mentioned previously, there are several linguistic and grammatic features separating this dialect from the southwestern dialects spoken in the surrounding areas. Some of the most important features, as described in Hanssen (2010), are listed below.

- E-ending in verbs in the infinitive form
- Only two grammatical genders
- /r/ realised as a uvular [ʁ]
- Unstressed /e/ in final syllables realised as [æː]
- Monophthongisation in certain words, such as *heime* > [heːmə]

[16] This has not traditionally been characteristic of the whole region but has spread throughout the 20th century. In some areas, the older generations will use a tap, [ɾ], while the younger generations will use the uvular [ʁ].

- Contraction of syllables – words with a short final syllable followed by /l/ or /n/ can be pronounced either with a long vowel + syllabic consonant, or contracted fully into only one syllable (*mannen* > [maːn̩> maːn]

3.4.3.4 Southern Norwegian

Southern Norwegian is spoken in eastern Agder, as well as in the southernmost parts of Vestfold og Telemark county. As with the Northwestern dialect, this is only spoken by one character in the dataset and will therefore be only briefly summarised.

- Lenisation of consonants - /p/, /t/, and /k/ realised as [b], [d], and [g]
- /r/ realised as a uvular [ʁ]
- /g/ sometimes realised as [v] after long vowels
- First person personal pronoun most commonly *e* pronounced [ɛ]

3.4.4 Northern Norwegian

The dialectal area of Northern Norway encompasses the two northernmost counties, Nordland and Troms og Finnmark. These two counties also make out a dialectal subdivision, with minor differences between them. One big difference is the realisation of /l/ as [ɽ] in the southernmost parts of the area. The following is a description that encompasses the main features that the two counties have in common.

- Palatalisation – /l/, /n/, /d/ and /t/ realised as [ʎ], [ɲ], [ɟ], and [c] where the consonants have traditionally been long
- Retroflexing – consonant clusters with /r/ followed by /l/, /n/, /d/, /t/, or /s/ realised as [ɭ], [ɳ], [ɖ], [ʈ], [ʃ]
- First person personal pronoun *e, eg, æ,* or *æg*

3.4.5 Norwegian with a Foreign accent

In both versions of the films, characters speaking Foreign accents could be found. See section 3.3.6 for an explanation of the term *Foreign accent,* and examples of traits found in the dataset. The main difference between the Foreign accent users in the English versus Norwegian versions of the films lies in the character Gunter from Sing, who in the Norwegian version has a higher frequency of German words, e.g., saying '*zusammen'* instead of the Norwegian '*sammen' (*translation: together), and '*mir'* instead of the Norwegian '*meg' (*translation: me).

3.5 Character variables

As the main focus of this thesis is on language attitudes, it was necessary to look at some of the features and variables associated with each linguistic variety. Every character was categorised in terms of the variables gender, alignment, age, character role, level of sophistication, species, and ethnicity. The results were then analysed to see if any correlations could be found with the varieties used. This section will explain each subcategory and how the characters were placed into each one. The variables are largely based on the variables used in previous studies to allow for comparisons.

3.5.1 Gender

In studies of language attitudes, gender is one of the factors most often included. Research shows a clear difference in the way males and females speak, making it interesting to look at in this context as well. I operated solely with the categories male and female, and categorisations were made about each character based on appearance, pronoun use, and voice quality. The latter two was especially important in categorising non-human characters, as appearance alone often was not enough. An example of a character with ambiguous appearance is Baymax in Big Hero 6. As Baymax is a robot, he does not have distinguishing human features, and his voice is robotic and non-descript. However, other characters (most importantly his creator, Tadashi) refers to Baymax as *he*, and he was therefore categorised as male. Also challenging to categorise were a group of characters in the film Soul, specifically Terry the accountant and several characters called Jerry. These are cosmic creatures, and as such might not have a gender in the way that humans observe it. In addition to this, neither their appearance nor pronouns can be used to categorise them, as they can shapeshift, and none of them are referred to in the third person. This leaves us with voice quality, where some of the beings could have been categorised. Terry, however, has quite a neutral voice quality, and is hard to pinpoint. A decision was finally made to fully exclude these creatures from the gender variable due to their nature as cosmic beings with no discernible gender.

3.5.2 Alignment

Alignment is the term used to show whether a character is good or bad, looking at a character's motivations. For the purpose of this study, no ethical judgements were made, rather it was assumed that the protagonist of each film was considered *good.* The other characters' alignment was then seen in comparison to this. Characters that aide the main

character or in other ways display the same motivations are characterised as good, whereas characters that have conflicting motivations are seen as bad. This leads to the Captain of the Guard in Tangled being characterised as bad, even though his intentions might be good, as he works against the main characters. The same logic applies to Despicable Me's main character Gru, who is characterised as good, despite being a villain. Characters that have no clear motivation are placed into a *neutral* category. Some characters change motivations throughout the film, such as Diego in Ice Age. These are placed in a *mixed* category.

3.5.3 Age

Several studies show that speech patterns differ with age, and as such this is an extremely relevant factor to analyse. For this variable, I operate with the categories young, adult, and elderly. I have chosen to use *adult* as somewhat of a default category, where I place characters who are not markedly young or elderly. The analysis will be based on the characters' age for the majority of the film. Children are placed in the *young*-category, as are teenagers under the age of 18. To make a judgment on each of the characters, I analysed appearance, information and context given in the film (e.g., Rapunzel in Tangled looking forward to and subsequently celebrating her 18th birthday), and societal roles. An example of societal roles is Meena and her family in Sing. Meena's mum and grandfather occupy the societal roles of mum and grandfather, which makes it easy to categorise the former as an adult and the latter as elderly. Meena herself occupies the role of daughter and is therefore categorised as young.

There were several challenging characters to categorise within this variable. For one, some characters are said to be unnaturally old, despite not appearing so, such as Mother Gothel in Tangled and Sisu in Raya and the Last Dragon. Mother Gothel appears as younger while under the influence of Rapunzel's magic, but this is a deception, and one of the main plot twists is her revealing her true age and appearance. She is therefore categorised as *elderly.* In the case of Sisu, she sometimes appears as a young woman, but is, in fact, a dragon. By the context given throughout the film, one can assume that she is a young dragon, and I have therefore categorised her as such. Sisu is somewhat clumsy and naïve and does not seem to be as wise or experienced as her siblings, giving off the impression that she is not fully adult. When it comes to films where most, if not all, characters are non-human, I have also used context to determine age. In Monsters, Inc., almost all characters have full-time jobs, leading me to categorise them as adults.

Another challenge occurs with a commonly used cinematic tool – the time skip. In Raya and the Last Dragon, several years appear to pass between the opening and final scenes. In films with time skips I made the decision to analyse the character based on their age for the majority of the film. This means that if a time skip is performed after the opening scene, the characters age after that is the one used in the analysis. In this particular case, all characters remained in the same age category despite the time skip – Raya was still *young* in the end, and her father was still an adult.

3.5.4 Character role

A character's role in the film's plot was categorised according to screen time and importance. Distinctions were made between *main characters, major characters, minor characters,* and *peripheral characters.* Peripheral characters include characters who have minimal screen time and little importance to the plot. Several of these characters are unnamed, some speaking only one line. Main characters are the characters who the plot revolves around – the "heroes". This is often only one character, but in some cases I have included two or more, such as in the case of Sid and Manny in Ice Age, and Sully and Mike in Monsters, Inc. The major characters have significant screen time, and are significant to the plot, but the story does not revolve around them. Many of the antagonists in the films fall under this category, such as Mother Gothel in Tangled, and Robert Callaghan in Big Hero 6. The hero's aides can also often be found here, like Bing Bong in Inside Out and Boun in Raya and the Last Dragon. Minor characters exist in the borderland between major characters and peripheral characters and can sometimes be hard to categorise. A trademark of these characters is that they appear several times within the story, speaking several lines, but do not drive the plot forwards.

3.5.5 Level of sophistication

Level of sophistication is a difficult category to define and is not to be confused with a character's class. Rather, it relates to a character's intelligence. The categorisation within this variable was done by looking at factors such as appearance, a character's actions, and the way other characters relate to the character in question. Many characters are not markedly sophisticated or unsophisticated and are as such placed in a *neutral* category so as not to skew the results. Some sophisticated characters include Randall of Monsters, Inc., Mother Gothel in Tangled, and Snowball from The Secret Life of Pets. These characters are often intelligent, in control, and cunning. Unsophisticated characters are often unintelligent, goofy or clumsy,

some examples being Fred in Big Hero 6 and Sid in Ice Age. A look at the characters Snowball and Fred confirms that level of sophistication does not correlate to societal class. Snowball is a lower-class character, to the extent of living in the sewers. He is, however, markedly sophisticated, producing grand schemes to take over the world. Fred, on the other hand, is upper class. He lives in a grand mansion with a butler, and his family owns a secret, private island. Despite this, he is unintelligent and unhygienic, and was categorised as unsophisticated.

3.5.6 Species and ethnicity

For the species and ethnicity categories, characters were first analysed in terms of whether they were human or not. Non-human characters were divided into *animal* and *Other*. The *Other* category comprised of quite a few different creatures, but they were not distinct enough to each warrant their own category. Characters within the *Other* category includes all monsters from Monsters, Inc.; the humanoid emotions and other beings inside the main character's mind in Inside Out; and Baymax the robot in Big Hero 6, among others. The *animal* category only includes speaking characters and consists of most characters in the films Ice Age, The Secret Life of Pets and Sing. Non-speaking animal characters, even though they might be important to the plot of the films, were not included, as their speech could not be analysed. This includes, e.g., Pascal and Maximus from Tangled. Extinct animals, such as mammoths, sabre-tooth tigers, and dodos (all appearing in Ice Age), are also placed in the *animal* category. The categorisation was done mostly by appearance, i.e., if a character looks like a dog, they are categorised as an animal. Some characters appear as both human and *other,* such as Sisu in Raya and the Last Dragon, and the characters Joe Gardner and 22 from Soul. In these cases, they were categorised according to what they first appear to the audience as. This results in Sisu (a dragon who can shapeshift into human) and 22 (a soul, later taking on the human body of Joe Gardner) being placed in the *Other* category, and Joe Gardner (a human at the beginning of the film, then a soul, later inhabiting the body of a cat) being categorised as a human.

The humans included in the analysis were then further categorised by ethnicity. The following categories were used: Caucasian, Black, East-Asian, Arab, Hispanic, and Indian. However, in the discussion of the results, I will mainly be analysing the characters in broader categories, namely Caucasian and non-Caucasian. This is due to the small number of characters in some of the ethnicity categories. The main character in Big Hero 6, Hiro

Hamada, is canonically half-Asian, but for the purpose of this study, he is characterised as East-Asian. This also applies to the character's brother, Tadashi. The reason for this is that both characters have traditionally Japanese names, as well as East-Asian features. This would mean that they would be subject to the same stereotypes as if they were fully Asian. Other East-Asian characters include all human characters in Raya and the Last Dragon, which is based on South-East Asian traditions and stories. The remaining categories each have one character: Soul's Principal Arroyo is Hispanic, an unnamed guard in Despicable Me is Arabic, and an unnamed doctor in Soul is Indian. As the sample size is so small, no generalisations can be made for the latter categories. Again, appearance played a big part in the categorisations, as well as name (as in the case of the Hamadas) and setting (the scene where the abovementioned guard in Despicable Me appears takes place in Egypt). Two human characters were excluded from the ethnicity category, as they do not appear on screen. Only their shadows can be seen, meaning I was able to categorise them as human, but no further analysis could be made. The characters in question are the unnamed "Mama" and child in Monsters, Inc.

3.6 Summary of variables

A large variety of variables have now been presented, both relating to language and character traits. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 below present a brief overview of the accents and dialects used to categorise characters in the English and Norwegian versions, respectively. Table 3.5 shows the non-linguistic character traits.

Table 3.3 Overview of linguistic variables: English

GA	***RP***	***Other Am. Accents***	***Other Br. accents***	***Other native accents***	***Foreign accents***
		Southern	*Cockney*	*NZE*	
		AAVE		*Indian Eng.*	

Table 3.4 Overview of linguistic variables: Norwegian

Eastern Norwegian	***Central Norwegian***	***Western Norwegian***	***Northern Norwegian***	***Foreign accents***
Oslo		*Northwestern*		
Other Eastern		*Southwestern*		
		Bergen		
		Southern		

Table 3.5 Overview of non-linguistic variables

Gender	***Alignment***	***Age***	***Character role***	***Level of sophistication***	***Species***	***Ethnicity***
Female	*Good*	*Young*	*Main*	*High*	*Human*	*Caucasian*
Male	*Bad*	*Adult*	*Major*	*Low*	*Animal*	*Black*
	Neutral	*Elderly*	*Minor*	*Neutral*	*Other*	*Asian*
	Mixed		*Peripheral*			*Other*

4. Results

This chapter will present and discuss the results of my analysis of the ten films. I will first give a general overview of the accent distribution in the films in both languages, before going into detail on each of the character variables presented in section 3.5. The results will be presented in numbers and percentages, and percentages will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

4.1 General overview

This section will present the overall accent distribution in the films analysed. Based on previous research, I expect that the majority of characters will speak GA in the original films, and the Oslo or Other Eastern Norwegian dialects in the dubbed versions.

4.1.1 English

My findings show that in the ten films analysed in this thesis, GA is the most prominent accent, being spoken by 115 out of 156 characters, comprising a total of 74% of characters. The umbrella term *Other American accents* is the second most spoken accent, being spoken by 10% of the characters. 8% of characters speak in a Foreign accent, while RP, Other British accents, and Other native accents, are each spoken by 3% of the characters. **Feil! Fant ikke referansekilden.** below shows the general distribution of accents in percentages.

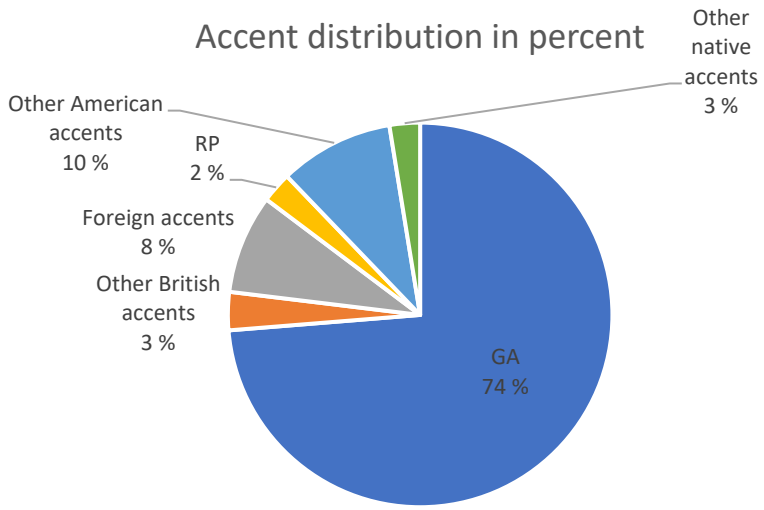

Figure 4.1 General distribution of English accents

These findings are in accordance with the findings from previous studies, which also generally show a predominance of GA speakers. This can be seen as a result of the films being produced in the United States, as GA is the most spoken accent in the country. However, the percentage of GA speakers in this study is considerably higher than found by other researchers, and the percentage of RP also lower. In most of the previous studies referred to in section 2.4, GA speakers make up roughly half of the characters analysed (Lippi-Green 2011; Sønnesyn 2011; Urke 2019; Hugaas 2021). Søraa (2019) is a notable exception, as GA is only the second most commonly used accent in her dataset. A possible explanation for this lies in the choice of films, and the films' settings. Many of the films analysed in previous studies are based on or similar to fairy tales and are set in mythical locations. In fantasy fiction, RP is often used as a tool to "transport the viewer to a different reality" (Wheeler 2012). This is also indicated by the results of the previously mentioned studies. My selection of films, however, does not include many mythical settings – most of the films are set in the 'real world' and thus do not require the audience to be "transported". This leads to a lower percentage of RP speakers in my results, and a higher percentage of GA.

The second most common accent varies in the other studies as well. Whereas the second most spoken accent in my dataset is Other American accents, Hugaas found Other British accents to be more widely spoken. Lippi-Green found RP to be significantly more frequent, making up 22% of the characters. This is in stark contrast to the 3% found in my

study. The category Other native accents is the least used in all studies where the category is included, except in Søraa (2019).

Among Other American accent speakers, there is only one speaker of the New York accent, Mike from Sing. This is despite the fact that a different film, The Secret Life of Pets, takes place in its entirety in New York. This might be explained by a phenomenon seen in later years where the accent is dropping out of use, or changing beyond recognition (McClear, 2010). The remaining characters categorised as speaking Other American accent all speak AAVE or Southern.

Looking at the results by film shows that three out of the ten films analysed have characters exclusively speaking GA – Ice Age (2002), Inside Out (2015), and Raya and the Last Dragon (2021). Two of these films are set in places or times where GA does not exist. Ice Age takes place in the ice age, while Raya and the Last Dragon is set in a fantasy world inspired by South-East Asian myths and legends. Especially for the latter, one might expect an accent such as RP, to transport the viewer to a different reality. Inside Out, however, mostly takes place inside the mind of a young American girl, with many of the speaking characters being parts of her, be it emotions, imaginary friends, or workers keeping her memories in check. One can therefore argue that these characters naturally would speak the same accent as the girl in question.

4.1.2 Norwegian

For the dubbed versions of the films, Other Eastern Norwegian dialects are most prominent, being spoken by 135 of the 156 characters. Only one character speaks Northern Norwegian, and one speaks Central Norwegian. The number of Foreign accent speakers is somewhat lower than in the originals, with eight in the dubbed versions compared to 13 in the original versions. The distribution of dialects in percentages can be seen in **Feil! Fant ikke referansekilden.** below.

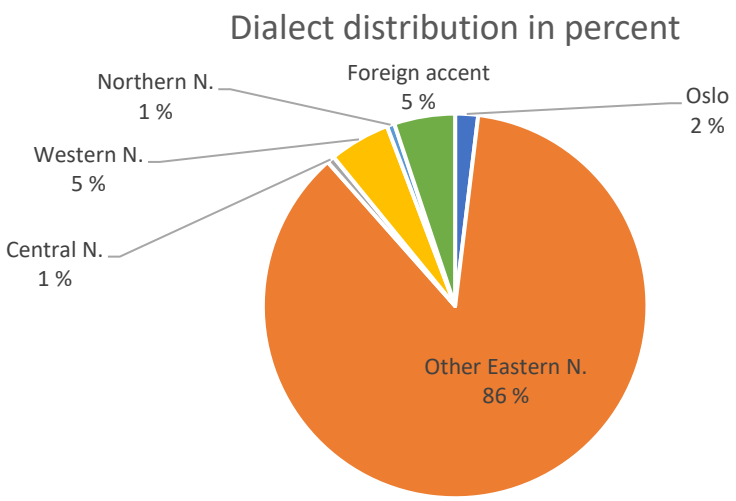

Figure 4.2 General distribution of Norwegian dialects

In contrast to Hugaas (2021), I do not find the Oslo dialect to be very widespread. However, the percentage of speakers of either Oslo or Other Eastern Norwegian dialects in my dataset (87%) is comparable to Hugaas' results (83%). This shows a general trend for the Eastern dialects of Norwegian – Oslo included – to be predominant in animated films, even though the distribution of dialects within the category might differ. The percentage of speakers of Foreign accents is also the same in both my study and Hugaas'. The decrease in the Oslo dialect and increase in Other Eastern dialects between Hugaas and the present thesis might be explained by the same factors as the aforementioned low percentage of RP speakers: fewer mythical settings. The Oslo dialect is comparable to RP in terms of status, and one might expect the two to have a partial correlation.

Three of the films feature no other dialects than Other Eastern Norwegian: Big Hero 6, Inside Out, and Raya and the Last Dragon. The latter two are comparable to the original version, where the only accent featured is GA. When it comes to Big Hero 6, in its original version, the film only has one character not speaking GA: an RP speaking butler. The third film that did not feature any other accents in the original version is Ice Age, which in the dubbed version has one character speaking a dialect other than Other Eastern Norwegian. The character, Sid, is an extremely unsophisticated comical character. In the original he has a particular voice quality, as well as a lisp, and in the Norwegian version he speaks in a Bergen dialect. The Bergen dialect is often poorly rated, with speakers generally being regarded as talkative and boastful (Aursland & Garvik 2011), befitting a comical character such as Sid.

An interesting find lies in the dubbing of Foreign accents. One would expect that, in order to stay true to the originals, the dubbed versions would have the same number of Foreign accented characters. This is, however, not the case. While the original films feature 13 characters with a Foreign accent, the dubbed versions only have eight. Out of the five characters who do not speak in Foreign accents in the dubs, four are from the same film, Soul (2020). Only one of the characters who lose their Foreign accent in the dubbed version has a role larger than peripheral. This is also coincidentally the only one of the five who does not appear in Soul. Four out of five is dubbed into Other Eastern Norwegian.

4.2 Gender

Out of the 156 characters included in this study, 56 are female, making up 36%. 60% of the characters are male (n=94). The remaining 4% are characters that are genderless or who have unidentifiable gender, see section 3.5.1. The gender imbalance is similar to that found in previous studies, where roughly 20-40% of the characters are female, and 60-80% are male. This imbalance on its own would be quite interesting to study, but that is outside the scope of the present thesis.

Previous studies indicate that female characters generally speak more standardised than males (Lippi-Green: 2011; Sønnesyn 2011; Søraa 2019; Urke 2019; Hugaas: 2021), and this is also expected in the present thesis. I also expect, based on Hugaas (2021), that the Oslo dialect will be more common in female characters than in males, while the opposite is true of Other Eastern Norwegian dialects.

4.2.1 English

For both genders, GA is the most spoken accent, accounting for 75% of the female characters and 73% of the males. The percentages of speakers of Foreign accents and Other American accents are also similar for both genders, with 9% of both female and male characters speaking in a Foreign accent, and 9% of females and 11% of males speaking Other American accents. RP is spoken by one female character and two male characters. For Other British accents and Other native accents, the percentages are reversed between genders. No female characters speak Other British accents, while 5% speak in a non-American, non-British, native English accent. None of the male characters included in the study speak Other native Englishes, and 5% speak in a non-standard British accent. Tables Table 4.1, Table 4.2, and

Table 4.3 below show the distribution of accents for both genders, and the 6 unidentified characters.

Table 4.1 Accent distribution in female characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	42	75%
RP	1	2%
Other American accents	5	9%
Other British accents	0	0%
Other native accents	3	5%
Foreign accents	5	9%
Total	***56***	***100%***

Table 4.2 Accent distribution in male characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	69	73%
RP	2	2%
Other American accents	10	11%
Other British accents	5	5%
Other native accents	0	0%
Foreign accents	8	9%
Total	***94***	***100%***

Table 4.3 Accent distribution in characters of unidentified gender

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	4	67 %
RP	1	17 %
Other American accents	0	0 %
Other British accents	0	0 %
Other native accents	1	17 %
Foreign accents	0	0 %
Total	***6***	***100 %***

The results show little difference between male and female speech in the original films. This does not align with previous studies. Both males and females have a high percentage of GA accents, and the results for the remaining accents are also roughly the same between genders.

There are two accent categories that are only represented among one gender. There are no males speaking Other Native Englishes, and no female characters speaking Other British English. The latter category, which only consists of the Cockney accent, is spoken only by characters that are implied or known criminals. Cockney is generally found to be a low-status accent, and most of these characters are rough and street-smart, four of the five being in a gang – or the gang leader. There are no female characters in relation to these gangs, which might be one of the reasons why the Cockney accent is not found in any female characters.

The Disney films analysed in previous studies (Lippi-Green 2011; Sønnesyn 2011; Urke 2019) mostly follow a traditional 'good versus evil' plot, where the gender roles are also often of the traditional kind. Female characters in the traditional plot are princesses, mothers, and wives, rarely working outside the home (Lippi-Green 2011: 114). My selection of films, however, do not always follow the same pattern. The princesses included in the present thesis, i.e., Tangled's Rapunzel and the titular Raya in Raya and the Last Dragon, are not of the traditional kind. They are strong, taking matters into their own hands to solve the issues that arise. The strong female characters included in the analysis can be the reason why there are little differences in accents between genders.

4.2.2 Norwegian

The Norwegian results in the gender category show little difference between genders. Other Eastern Norwegian dialects are spoken by 84% of the female characters and 89% of the males, which is similar to the total percentage of Other Eastern Norwegian speakers at 86%. None of the female characters speak Central or Northern Norwegian, whereas none of the males speak Central Norwegian or the Oslo dialect. The total dialect distribution of female, male, and unidentified characters respectively can be seen in Table 4.4, Table 4.5 and Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.4 Dialect distribution in female characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	3	5%
Other Eastern Norwegian	47	84%
Central Norwegian	0	0%
Western Norwegian	3	5%
Northern Norwegian	0	0%
Foreign accents	3	5%
Total	***56***	***100%***

Table 4.5 Dialect distribution in male characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	0	0%
Other Eastern Norwegian	84	89%
Central Norwegian	0	0%
Western Norwegian	4	4%
Northern Norwegian	1	1%
Foreign accents	5	5%
Total	***94***	***100%***

Table 4.6 Dialect distribution in characters of unidentified gender

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	0	0%
Other Eastern Norwegian	4	67%
Central Norwegian	1	17%
Western Norwegian	1	17%
Northern Norwegian	0	0%
Foreign accents	0	0%
Total	***6***	***100%***

In the Norwegian versions of the films, there is a slightly higher percentage of Other Eastern Norwegian speakers among males than female characters. The Oslo dialect, however, is only represented among female characters. The latter finding is partly in line with Hugaas (2021), who also found more Oslo speakers among female than male characters. The results can be seen in comparison to the findings from the original versions of the films in the present thesis, where there are no female speakers of the Cockney accent. This shows a general preference for high-status, rather than low-status, varieties in female characters.

4.3 Alignment

In the alignment variable, 60 characters were unmarked, and thus placed in the neutral category. 60 characters were good, 31 were bad, and five characters had a mixed alignment, changing motivation throughout the film. Based on previous research, the results are expected to show more standardised speech among good characters, and an increase in socially or regionally marked accents among the bad characters. Hugaas (2021), however, finds that in the dubbed versions of her films, there is more (although little) dialectal variation among good characters than bad. She also finds that the Eastern dialect is quite prevalent among both good and bad characters.

4.3.1 English

GA is the most frequent accent used for all categories, but the percentage of GA speakers is slightly higher among the good characters. The mixed category has the lowest percentage of GA speakers, but as the category has quite few characters one cannot draw firm conclusions from this.

Among the good characters, none speak in a socially or regionally marked British accent. Five characters speak a non-standard American accent, while there is one character each speaking RP, Other native accents, and Foreign accents. Results for the bad characters show a predominance of GA and none speaking RP. The distribution of accents in good and bad characters can be seen in tables Table 4.7 andTable 4.8 below.

Table 4.7 Accent distribution in good characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	50	83%
RP	1	2%
Other American accents	5	8%
Other British accents	1	2%
Other Native accents	1	2%
Foreign accents	2	3%
Total	***60***	***100%***

Table 4.8 Accent distribution in bad characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	22	71%
RP	0	0%
Other American accents	3	10%
Other British accents	3	10%
Other Native accents	2	6%
Foreign accents	1	3%
Total	***31***	***100%***

The accent category *Other British accents,* which only contains the Cockney accent, is only spoken by one good character, with all others being bad or mixed. The only good character, however, is Despicable Me's Doctor Nefario, who is a villain, only categorised here as good due to his alignment being in line with the main character's. This means that no morally good characters speak in Other British accents. This is in contrast to the RP accent, which, as mentioned above, is not spoken by any bad characters. No mixed characters speak in a

Foreign accent or Other native accents, making the American accents (both GA and Other American accents) the only to be represented among all alignments. Both are, however, more spoken by good or neutral characters.

The results for the original films conform with the expectations of more accent diversity among bad characters, however as the numbers are so small, it is difficult to make sweeping generalisations. An explanation of why bad characters tend to speak non-standard accents might lie in the concept of audience identification – a process in which the audience for a limited amount of time takes on the identity of a character in media (Cohen 2001). This makes the audience internalise the character's goals and empathise with the character when said goals are reached. The process of identification can be caused by similarities between the audience and the character, similarities of speech being one of them. The majority of people in the films' original release country, USA, speak GA, and as such can easier identify with other speakers of GA. Having children identify with the bad characters may lead to disappointment if their goals are not achieved, which they often are not, as there is a tendency in films for 'good' to prevail.

4.3.2 Norwegian

In the dubbed films, the percentage of Other Eastern Norwegian speakers is higher among both good and bad characters than the general distribution. The number of Western Norwegian speakers is somewhat higher for good characters than for bad. 75% of all Foreign accent speakers are neutrally aligned, the remaining two characters are split between good and bad. No Oslo speakers are neutral. TablesTable 4.9 and Table 4.10 below show the dialect distribution of good and bad characters.

Table 4.9 Dialect distribution in good characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	1	2%
Other Eastern Norwegian	54	90%
Central Norwegian	0	0%
Western Norwegian	4	7%
Northern Norwegian	0	0%
Foreign accents	1	2%
Total	***60***	***100%***

Table 4.10 Dialect distribution in bad characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	1	3%
Other Eastern Norwegian	28	90%
Central Norwegian	0	0%
Western Norwegian	1	3%
Northern Norwegian	0	0%
Foreign accents	1	3%
Total	***31***	***100%***

In the dubbed versions, the results are very similar across both the good and bad categories, which is partly in line with Hugaas (2021), who finds only slight differences between the two. She also finds that the Eastern dialect is quite prevalent among both good and bad characters, as in the results of the present thesis.

4.4 Age

A vast majority of characters in the films analysed are placed in the adult category (75%, n=117), with only 14% and 11% of characters being young (n=22) or elderly (n=17), respectively. Based on Hugaas (2021), I expect GA to be the most commonly used accent among young and adult characters, and RP to be most common among the elderly. For the Norwegian versions, I expect Other Eastern Norwegian dialects to dominate among the young and adults, but Oslo to be the most common among elderly characters.

4.4.1 English

Results for the adult category are quite similar to the overall results presented in section 4.1.1 and will therefore not be thoroughly discussed in this section, where I will be presenting the results for the young and elderly categories.

GA is the most used accent in both categories, however while only 53% of elderly characters speak the accent, it is used by an overwhelming 91% of young characters, with only two characters speaking in other accents. The remaining two characters speak in non-standard British and American accents, respectively. Among the elderly characters, all accents

are represented. Tables Table 4.11 and Table 4.12 below show the distribution of accents among young and elderly characters.

Table 4.11 Accent distribution in young characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	20	91 %
RP	0	0 %
Other American accents	1	5 %
Other British accents	1	5 %
Other Native accents	0	0 %
Foreign accents	0	0 %
Total	***22***	***100 %***

Table 4.12 Accent distribution in elderly characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	9	53 %
RP	1	6 %
Other American accents	3	18 %
Other British accents	1	6 %
Other Native accents	1	6 %
Foreign accents	2	12 %
Total	***17***	***100 %***

Contrary to the hypothesis, GA is the predominant accent among all age groups. There was an expectation, based on previous studies, for RP to be more dominant amongst elderly characters, however the percentage of RP speakers overall is lower in my study than others.

The large percentage of GA speaking young characters should be commented on. All but two young characters speak GA. It is also interesting to note that of the 22 young characters, 18 are main or major characters in their respective films. The choice of accent in these cases I believe again is a tool to aide audience identification – as the target audience for these films are children, they are more likely to identify with the young characters. Having the young characters then speak in the most common accent in the film's country of origin and

main market makes identification even more likely. The fact that these characters are also important to the plot means that they are likely to have goals of their own that, when reached, provide the audience with a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of joy. Among the young characters who do not speak GA, one is a peripheral character speaking in a Southern accent. In this case, I believe the accent is used to quickly build the character. The other character, Sing's Johnny, is the young son of a gangster. Johnny's Cockney accent is the same as his father's, thus allowing the audiences to easily recognise the familial ties between them.

4.4.2 Norwegian

The results in the age category for the Norwegian dubbed films show that all young characters speak Other Eastern dialects. The same dialect is spoken by 85% of all adults, roughly the same as its general distribution. For elderly characters, the percentage is slightly lower, at 76%. Two out of the three Oslo speaking characters in the dataset are elderly. The dialect distribution in adult and elderly characters is presented in tables Table 4.13 and Table 4.14 below.

Table 4.13 Dialect distribution in adult characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	1	1 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	100	85 %
Central Norwegian	1	1 %
Western Norwegian	7	6 %
Northern Norwegian	1	1 %
Foreign accents	7	6 %
Total	***117***	***100%***

Table 4.14 Dialect distribution in elderly characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	2	12 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	13	76 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	1	6 %
Northern Norwegian	0	0 %
Foreign accents	1	6 %
Total	***17***	***100%***

The results for both versions of the films show clear differences in characters' speech according to age. In the dubbed versions the younger characters all speak the quite common Eastern Norwegian dialects, again likely due to audience identification. This is all in line with previous research. Similarly to Hugaas (2021), I have also found that the more prestigious Oslo dialect is more used by elderly characters than by any other age group, however the data set is quite small.

4.5 Character role

When it comes to character role, the smallest category is main characters, which consists of only 15 characters. 31 characters have major roles (20%), 40 have minor roles (26%), and the remaining characters are only peripheral (45%, n=70). Previous studies show varied results in this category, and it was therefore hard to predict the results. However, I expect the characters categorised as main characters to speak more standardised, with more accent diversity among the minor and peripheral characters. This is based on the assumptions that accents can be used to quickly provide characteristics to characters with little screentime, and that audience identification is an important aspect of film watching.

4.5.1 English

Out of all main characters in the films, only one speaks an accent other than GA. GA is the most frequent accent for all other categories as well, making up 84% of the major characters, 80% of the minor characters, and 61% of the peripheral characters. Among the major

characters there are no instances of RP or Foreign accents, and Other native accents are not represented among the minor characters. The peripheral characters category is the only one where all accents are represented. Tables Table 4.15, Table 4.16, and Table 4.17 below show the distribution of accents among characters in major, minor, and peripheral roles.

Table 4.15 Accent distribution in major characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	26	84 %
RP	0	0 %
Other American accents	2	6 %
Other British accents	1	3 %
Other native accents	2	6 %
Foreign accents	0	0 %
Total	***31***	***100 %***

Table 4.16 Accent distribution in minor characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	32	80 %
RP	2	5 %
Other American accents	2	5 %
Other British accents	2	5 %
Other native accents	0	0 %
Foreign accents	2	5 %
Total	***40***	***100 %***

Table 4.17 Accent distribution in peripheral characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	43	61 %
RP	2	3 %
Other American accents	11	16 %
Other British accents	2	3 %
Other native accents	2	3 %
Foreign accents	10	14 %
Total	***70***	***100 %***

Looking at the results, there is a clear preference for the more common, standardised variety in main characters, whereas there is more diversity among the peripheral characters, as expected. The only main character not speaking GA is Gru, the protagonist of Despicable Me. Gru speaks in a Foreign accent I have assumed to be Eastern European or Russian[17], and is the only Foreign accented character to appear in a main or major role. However, it should be noted that Gru is morally bad, despite being labelled as good in this study[18]. Gru speaking in a non-standard accent thus conforms with the expectations for bad characters mentioned in section 4.3. The main characters mostly speaking GA could be a way for the audience to easily identify with the characters, as explained in 4.4.1.

The accent diversity in peripheral characters can be explained by the filmmakers using accents as a quick to build a character, which is a practice that has long been in use in the film industry, and in theatre before film even existed (Lippi-Green 2011). By making use of the stereotypes connected to an accent, a character is assigned different traits without needing a backstory or significant exposure.

4.5.2 Norwegian

The Norwegian dubs have a similar pattern of all but one main character speaking Other Eastern Norwegian dialects, with the exception this time being Ice Age's Sid (see section 4.1.2). However, the other categories also have a large majority of Other Eastern Norwegian. Central and Northern Norwegian are both only represented in peripheral characters, and Foreign accents are only found in minor and peripheral characters. The distribution of

[17] See section 3.3.6 for examples of the linguistic features in Gru's speech
[18] See section 3.5.2

characters among major, minor, and peripheral characters is shown in tables Table 4.18, Table 4.19, and Table 4.20 below.

Table 4.18 Dialect distribution in major characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	2	6 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	28	90 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	1	3 %
Northern Norwegian	0	0 %
Foreign accents	0	0 %
Total	***31***	***100%***

Table 4.19 Dialect distribution in minor characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	1	3 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	33	83 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	4	10 %
Northern Norwegian	0	0 %
Foreign accents	2	5 %
Total	***40***	***100%***

Table 4.20 Dialect distribution in peripheral characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	0	0 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	60	86 %
Central Norwegian	1	1 %
Western Norwegian	2	3 %
Northern Norwegian	1	1 %
Foreign accents	6	9 %
Total	***70***	***100%***

Interestingly, Despicable Me's Gru loses his Foreign accent in the dubs, as mentioned in section 4.1.2. His character thus conforms more with the expectations for a main character to speak in a standard accent. The choice of Sid speaking in a non-standard accent accentuates his character's role as comedic relief. The Bergen dialect is often referred to as one of the least liked dialects in Norway (Greiner 2010; Skilbred 2005), and people speaking the dialect are seen as annoying, boastful, talkative, and confident (Aursland & Garvik 2011).

We also see that all dialect categories are represented among minor and peripheral characters if we group the two together, which is in line with the hypothesis of more accent diversity in characters with less screentime.

4.6 Level of sophistication

Less than half of the characters analysed are markedly sophisticated or unsophisticated, with roughly equal distribution. Approximately 60% of all characters are neutral (n=93), 21% are highly sophisticated (n=32), and 20% have low sophistication (n=31). Based on previous studies I expect sophisticated characters tend to speak more standardised (Sønnesyn 2011; Urke 2019). There is also an expectation that, while GA will be common among both types, RP will be more widely spoken by sophisticated than unsophisticated characters. For the Norwegian dubs I expect there to be a predominance of Oslo and Other Eastern dialects among sophisticated characters, and very few Oslo speakers among the unsophisticated.

4.6.1 English

Among the characters of low sophistication, there are no speakers of RP or Other native accents. All accents are represented among the highly sophisticated characters, as well as the neutrals. There is, however, a predominance of GA speakers in all categories. Among the sophisticated characters, 25 (78%) speak GA, and for each of the other accents there is only one to two speakers. The unsophisticated characters have a rather large percentage of speakers of Other American or British accents, at respectively 16% and 10%. There are only two Foreign accented characters that are not characterised as having neutral sophistication, one being marked as high sophistication and one as low. See tables Table 4.21 and Table 4.22 below for accent distribution in sophisticated and unsophisticated characters.

Table 4.21 Accent distribution in sophisticated characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	25	78 %
RP	1	3 %
Other American accents	2	6 %
Other British accents	1	3 %
Other native accents	2	6 %
Foreign accents	1	3 %
Total	***32***	***100 %***

Table 4.22 Accent distribution in unsophisticated characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	22	71 %
RP	0	0 %
Other American accents	5	16 %
Other British accents	3	10 %
Other native accents	0	0 %
Foreign accents	1	3 %
Total	***31***	***100 %***

As expected, there are no RP speaking unsophisticated characters. It is also in line with previous research that GA is heavily represented in both sophisticated and unsophisticated characters, although more common among the former. Regionally and socially marked American and British accents are more common in unsophisticated characters, which is also in line with our hypothesis. This is partly in line with the stereotypes associated with non-standard accents. As seen in section 2.1.3, non-standard accents tend to score quite low in the status and prestige dimension in language attitude studies.

4.6.2 Norwegian

Among the sophisticated characters, only two characters speak in a dialect other than Oslo or Other Eastern Norwegian (6%). Among the unsophisticated characters the corresponding number is three (9%). Table 4.23 Dialect distribution in sophisticated charactersand Table

4.24 show the dialect distribution in sophisticated and unsophisticated characters, respectively.

Table 4.23 Dialect distribution in sophisticated characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	2	6 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	28	88 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	2	6 %
Northern Norwegian	0	0 %
Foreign accents	0	0 %
Total	***32***	***100 %***

Table 4.24 Dialect distribution in unsophisticated characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	1	3 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	27	87 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	2	6 %
Northern Norwegian	0	0 %
Foreign accents	1	3 %
Total	***31***	***100 %***

My hypothesis for the Norwegian versions of the films can be said to be confirmed, as only 6% of the sophisticated characters speak a dialect other than Oslo or Other Eastern Norwegian, whereas for the unsophisticated characters the number is slightly higher, at 9%. In addition to this, there are more Oslo speakers that are markedly sophisticated than unsophisticated, though the numbers are quite small for both categories.

4.7 Species

In terms of species, human is the largest category (46%, n=71). The animal and Other categories are roughly the same size, with 43 animals (28%) and 42 Other (27%). Based on the results from Urke (2011) I expect less accent diversity among humans than any other

species for both languages. Lippi-Green (2011) observes that most AAVE and Southern speaking characters are non-humans, and I thus expect this to be the case in my dataset as well.

4.7.1 English

GA is the most widely spoken accent among all species of characters, making up 73% of humans, 70% of animals, and 79% of Other characters. For humans and animals, Other American accents are the second most common, while for Other, Foreign accents are more widespread. There are no *Other* characters speaking in socially or regionally marked American or British accents, and no animals speaking Other native accents. Humans are the only species where all accents are represented. Tables Table 4.25, Table 4.26, and Table 4.27 below show the accent distribution for the three species.

Table 4.25 Accent distribution in human characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	52	73 %
RP	1	1 %
Other American Accents	9	13 %
Other British Accents	1	1 %
Other Native accents	2	3 %
Foreign accents	6	8 %
Total	***71***	***100 %***

Table 4.26 Accent distribution in animal characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	30	70 %
RP	1	2 %
Other American Accents	6	14 %
Other British Accents	4	9 %
Other Native accents	0	0 %
Foreign accents	2	5 %
Total	***43***	***100 %***

Table 4.27 Accent distribution in "Other" characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	33	79 %
RP	2	5 %
Other American Accents	0	0 %
Other British Accents	0	0 %
Other Native accents	2	5 %
Foreign accents	5	12 %
Total	***42***	***100 %***

My expectations for this category were not met, as human is the only category where all accents are represented, thus having more accent diversity in the originals.

Lippi-Green (2011) found that AAVE and Southern accents were only found in animals and Other characters, contrary to my findings. The number of speakers of Other American accents among humans in my dataset is higher (n=9) than for animals (n=6) and Other characters (n=0). This might point towards society being less racist in its portrayals of Black people and AAVE speakers. Another possible reason might be related to the portrayal of animals themselves. In many of the films Lippi-Green includes in her study, animals feature as very animal-like. However, in several of the films analysed in the present thesis, animals and Other species are much more human-like, living in a normal city society. With animals being portrayed like humans, one might expect the same results for both categories, however as this is not the case for all films in the present thesis the results only reflect the portrayal to a limited degree.

4.7.2 Norwegian

In the Norwegian versions of the films, there is no species where every accent is represented. For all three species there is a predominance of Other Eastern Norwegian speakers, however the percentage is higher among humans, and the lowest among the Other characters. The distribution of accents per species is shown in tables Table 4.28, Table 4.29, and Table 4.30 below.

Table 4.28 Dialect distribution in human characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	1	1 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	63	89 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	2	3 %
Northern Norwegian	1	1 %
Foreign accents	4	6 %
Total	***71***	***100 %***

Table 4.29 Dialect distribution in animal characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	2	5%
Other Eastern Norwegian	37	86%
Central Norwegian	0	0%
Western Norwegian	2	5%
Northern Norwegian	0	0%
Foreign accents	2	5%
Total	***43***	***100%***

Table 4.30 Dialect distribution in Other characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	0	0%
Other Eastern Norwegian	35	83%
Central Norwegian	1	2%
Western Norwegian	4	10%
Northern Norwegian	0	0%
Foreign accents	2	5%
Total	***42***	***100%***

The Norwegian results in this category are more in line with the expectations than the English results, as one can see that the percentage of speakers of the 'standard' Other Eastern dialects is higher among humans than any other species. It is also noteworthy that no characters in the Other category speak in the prestigious Oslo dialect. One must, however, take into account that all three human characters speaking either Western or Northern Norwegian appear in the same film: Soul. Soul is the film with the highest number of characters, thus impacting the dataset more, but it is also one of the films with the lowest amount of GA (50%, n=14) and RP speakers (7%, n=2).

4.8 Ethnicity

As ethnicity only applies to humans who appear on screen, only 68 characters are analysed in the category. Of these, 34 are Caucasian, 17 are East-Asian, eleven are Black, four are Hispanic, one is Arab, and one is Indian.

4.8.1 English

Among three of the ethnicities, GA is the most spoken accent – East-Asian (100%, n=17), Black (64%, n=7), and Caucasian (76%, n=26). Among the six remaining characters only one speaks GA, and the rest speak in Foreign accents or Other native accents. The only character speaking in an Indian accent is also the only character with an Indian ethnicity. Table 4.31 Accent distribution among Caucasian charactersbelow shows the accent distribution among Caucasian characters, while the results for non-Caucasian characters have been compiled in Table 4.32.

Table 4.31 Accent distribution among Caucasian characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	26	76 %
RP	1	3%
Other American Accents	3	9 %
Other British Accents	1	3 %
Other Native accents	1	3 %
Foreign accents	2	6 %
Total	***34***	***100 %***

Table 4.32 Accent distribution in non-Caucasian characters

Accent	*n*	*%*
GA	25	74 %
RP	0	0 %
Other American accents	4	12 %
Other British accents	0	0 %
Other native accents	1	3 %
Foreign accents	4	12 %
Total	***34***	***100 %***

It is quite clear that Caucasian is the ethnicity with the most accent diversity in the original films, as it is the only ethnicity where all accents are represented, however there is a massive prevalence of GA speakers. An interesting find in this category lies in the East-Asian ethnicity, where all characters speak GA. This is especially surprising when taking into account that one of the films in the dataset, Raya and the Last Dragon (2021), is inspired by South-East Asian legends, and its setting is reminiscent of South-East Asia as well. In addition to this, almost all voice-actors in the film are of Asian descent (Lee 2021).

It should also be noted that among the Black characters, 36% (n=4) speak Other American accents, of which all speak AAVE. No non-Black humans speak AAVE, which is expected.

4.8.2 Norwegian

The Caucasian characters in the Norwegian dubs have a higher prevalence of the ‘standard’ varieties, as all but two (94%) speak Other Eastern Norwegian, and one character speaks the Oslo dialect. In non-Caucasians, 28 speak Other Eastern Norwegian (82%), two speak Western Norwegian, one speaks Northern Norwegian, and three speak Foreign accents. The distribution of dialects among Caucasian and non-Caucasian characters can be seen in tables Table 4.33 andTable 4.34 below.

Table 4.33 Dialect distribution in Caucasian characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	1	3 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	32	94 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	0	0 %
Northern Norwegian	0	0 %
Foreign accents	1	3 %
Total	***34***	***100 %***

Table 4.34 Dialect distribution in non-Caucasian characters

Dialect	*n*	*%*
Oslo	0	0 %
Other Eastern Norwegian	28	82 %
Central Norwegian	0	0 %
Western Norwegian	2	6 %
Northern Norwegian	1	3 %
Foreign accents	3	9 %
Total	***34***	***100 %***

The data shows a wider range of dialects among non-Caucasian characters than Caucasian. There is, however, less diversity in the Norwegian versions than in the original films. One can see that among the Foreign accented Caucasian characters in the originals, one loses their accent in the Norwegian versions, the by now extensively discussed Gru. However, one non-Caucasian Foreign accented character also loses their accent. Soul's Principal Arroyo, a Hispanic woman, speaks in a Spanish accent in the original film, but a Southern Norwegian dialect in the Norwegian version. She is the only character in the entire dataset to be labelled as speaking Southern Norwegian, and thus is markedly "other" compared to the other characters in the film, even without a Foreign accent.

Among the Black characters, there is a higher prevalence of Other Eastern Norwegian (82%, n=9) than there is of GA in the original films (64%, n=7, with the remaining characters

speaking AAVE). This can be seen as proof that Norwegian does not have a specific accent associated with Black people, as AAVE is in the US. In addition to this, the only Indian character, an unnamed doctor in Soul, who speaks in an Indian accent in the original, speaks a 'standard' Other Eastern Norwegian in the dubs. The only non-Caucasian character to *gain* a non-Eastern accent also appears in Soul, the charismatic Dorothea Williams, who speaks in a Western accent originating from the area surrounding Bergen.

4.3 The translation of accents

A central part of the present thesis was to discover whether there was any pattern in the translation of any specific accent. Figure 4.3 Translation of accents below shows each accent category in the original films, and the various Norwegian dialects they have been translated into.

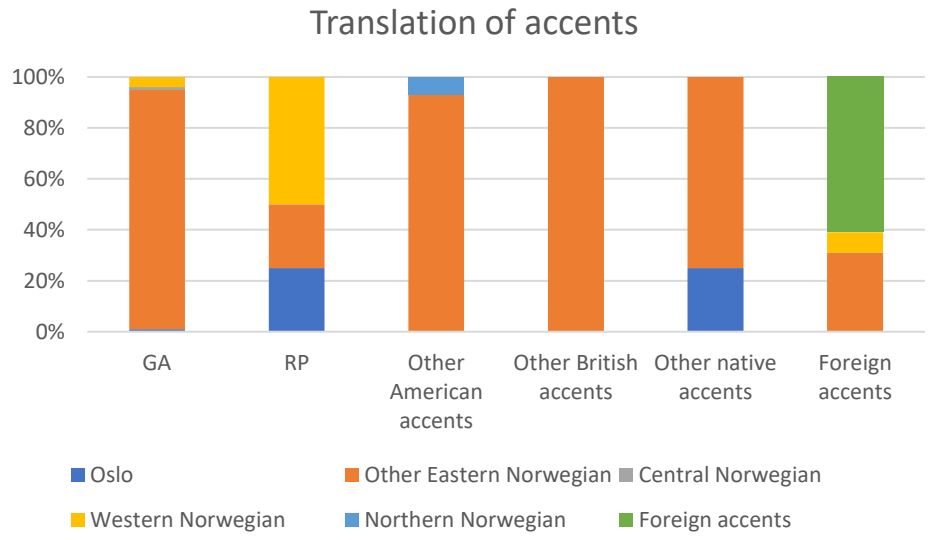

Figure 4.3 Translation of accents

The most interesting accent in these results is RP – a high status accent in English. RP is translated into several different Norwegian dialects in my dataset – Oslo, Other Eastern Norwegian, and Western Norwegian. Looking further into the broader dialect categories, we see that the dialects in question are all dialects from larger cities, namely Oslo, Bergen, and Stavanger. This can be sign of a tendency in Norway to view the city dialects as more

prestigious than regional dialects. The prestigious Oslo dialect is also translated from one other English accent – the Mid-Atlantic accent. This accent is also associated with high status.

The Cockney accent, shown in Figure 4.3 Translation of accentsas Other British accents, is the only accent to be consistently translated into one Norwegian dialect. The Cockney accent often scores quite low on both status and social attractiveness in language attitude studies, which is comparable to the low rating of Eastern lowland dialects in Omdal (1978, in Omdal 1982). Other American accents, which are also generally negatively rated accents, are almost exclusively translated into Other Eastern Norwegian, with the exception of one AAVE-speaking character being dubbed into Northern Norwegian. Northern Norwegian is also rated negatively in the Norwegian studies, cf. section 2.1.4. These studies are, however, mainly based on linguistic qualities, and do not necessarily reflect the dialects having low status.

A general tendency can be seen for high-status accents to be translated into Norwegian city dialects, and low-status accents to be translated into negatively rated Norwegian dialects. The stereotypes and attitudes present in the original films can therefore be said to remain in the Norwegian dubbed versions.

5. Summary and conclusion

In the following chapter, the thesis' aim and method are summarised, and results are summarised and discussed. A conclusion will be made based the research questions and hypotheses of the thesis. Finally, I will present suggestions for further research in the field of language attitudes, as well as my own contributions to the field.

5.1 Summary

The aim of this thesis was to uncover the language attitudes present in American animated children's films from the 21st century, and their Norwegian dubbed versions. There is an underlying assumption that filmmakers use language variation deliberately, thus reflecting their language attitudes in the choices made. As these films are aimed at children, this is an important topic to study. Children are easily influenced by the media they are exposed to, and as such may acquire the language attitudes and stereotypes present in the films as their own.

Ten animated films were analysed in both versions in this study. The selection of films was based both on box office results – prioritising films that are watched by many, as they have the potential to influence society more – and the selections made in previous studies on the topic, so as to not have any overlap in results. All characters with enough speech to be categorised were then analysed according to their linguistic varieties in both languages, as well as seven character variables: *gender, alignment, age, character role, level of sophistication, species, and ethnicity*. Most linguistic varieties were placed in broad categories, with the exception of GA and RP in English, and the Oslo dialect in Norwegian.

The aim of the thesis was to uncover how accent use in the animated films reflect language attitudes, and how these attitudes are adapted to a Norwegian context in the corresponding dubbed versions of the films in question. To gain insight on this, the following research questions were postulated:

1. Are there systematic correlations between language varieties and character traits in either version of the films?

2. Are there systematic correlations between English varieties and Norwegian, i.e., does one variety in English always get dubbed to the same Norwegian variety?

A hypothesis for **RQ1** was then formulated for each of the seven character traits, and the results for each will be discussed in order, before turning to the hypothesis for **RQ2**.

Hypothesis **1a** stated that female characters were expected to speak more standardised than males in both versions, meaning a higher percentage of speakers of GA and RP in the originals, and the Oslo dialect in the dubbed versions. The results for both versions of the films showed little difference between male and female speech, with a high percentage of GA in the originals and Other Eastern Norwegian dialects in the dubbed versions. Hypothesis **1a** is thus refuted. However, the hypothesis was supported by the findings in regard to two varieties: Cockney was found to be only spoken by male characters, and the Oslo dialect only by female characters. A reason for the similarity in speech between male and female characters could be the lack of traditional gender roles in the films analysed, which often do not follow the traditional fairy-tale pattern in Disney movies.

According to hypothesis **1b**, good characters were expected to speak more standardised than bad characters in both versions, with more Other American and Other British accents among bad characters in the originals. The results show no morally *good* characters speaking in Other British accents, and no *bad* characters speaking RP. GA is spoken by characters of all alignments but is more prevalent among good characters. In the dubbed versions, results are very similar across categories. There is no apparent reason for this, but it is in line with Hugaas (2021). Thus, hypothesis **1b** is confirmed for the original versions, but refuted for the dubbed versions.

In terms of age, hypothesis **1c** stated an expectation for RP and the Oslo dialect to be the most prominent varieties among the elderly characters, with GA and Other Eastern Norwegian being more prominent among young and adult characters. This hypothesis was only partially confirmed, as GA and Other Eastern Norwegian dialects are the most prominent varieties across all age groups. However, there is a higher percentage of RP and Oslo speakers among elderly characters than in any other age group. Interestingly, young characters are the most homogenous of the age groups, with 20 of 22 characters speaking GA in the originals and all 22 speaking Other Eastern Norwegian dialects in the dubbed versions. This could be a choice related to audience identification, where the viewer takes on the identity of a character. This process can be caused by similarities between the viewer and the character, and with GA

and Other Eastern Norwegian being the most common varieties in the US and Norway, respectively, many of the children watching will speak those varieties as well, thus being even more likely to identify with the characters

Hypothesis **1d** postulated that main characters would have more standardised speech in both versions of the films, while there would be more accent diversity among minor and peripheral characters. The results show a clear preference for standardised speech in main characters, with all but one main character speaking GA in the originals and Other Eastern Norwegian in the dubbed versions. The character not speaking the 'standard' variety is not the same for both versions. The results also show more accent diversity among minor and peripheral characters for both versions, and hypothesis **1d** is thus confirmed.

Sophisticated characters were expected to speak more standardised, with a higher percentage of RP speakers, according to hypothesis **1e**. For the Norwegian versions, Oslo and Other Eastern Norwegian were expected to be predominant among sophisticated characters, with very few unsophisticated characters speaking the Oslo dialect. The results show no RP speaking unsophisticated characters, while Other American and Other British accents are more common among unsophisticated than sophisticated characters. GA was the most used accent for both categories, though more prevalent in sophisticated characters. In the Norwegian dubs, 94% of the sophisticated characters speak either the Oslo dialect or Other Eastern Norwegian, and among the Oslo speakers, there are more sophisticated than unsophisticated characters. Hypothesis **1e** is thus confirmed.

For the species category, hypothesis **1f** stated an expectation for humans to speak more standardised, with more accent diversity among animals and Other species in both languages. Contrary to the expectations, humans are the only species where all accent categories are represented in the original films. There are also more humans than non-humans speaking Other American accents. There is thus more accent diversity among humans than animals and Other species. **1f** is thus refuted for the original versions. In the Norwegian dubs, however, a tendency is shown for humans to speak more standardised, supporting the hypothesis.

Hypothesis **1g** predicted more standardised speech among Caucasian characters in both versions of the films. The results, however, showed that Caucasian characters have the most accent diversity in the original films, as they are the only category in which all accent category is represented. All East-Asian characters speak GA. **1g** is thus refuted for the

original films. The results for the Norwegian versions conformed with the expectations, with more accent diversity among non-Caucasian characters.

According to hypothesis **2**, high- and low-status accents in the English version would be translated into corresponding dialects in the dubs. The results showed that RP and Mid-Atlantic, two high-status accents, were the only two accents translated into the Oslo dialect in Norwegian. RP was also translated into the city dialects of Stavanger and Bergen – both rated low on linguistic qualities, but high in status and prestige. Cockney is consistently translated into Eastern lowlands dialects, both negatively rated in terms of status. Hypothesis **2** is confirmed, as there are clear correlations between some English accents and Norwegian dialects.

5.2 Conclusion

Looking at these results, one can conclude that there are many systematic correlations between character traits and language varieties in American animated films and their Norwegian dubbed versions. However, one way in which these results differed from the results of previous studies is the sheer number of speakers of the GA and Other Eastern Norwegian varieties. There is a massive predominance of GA in the originals, and of Other Eastern Norwegian in the dubs, much more so than in previous studies. This is in contrast to the results from Urke (2019), which show a decrease in the use of GA in Disney films released between 2010 and 2018 compared to ones released between 1937 and 1994. As society has progressed, one might expect more diversity in films in general. However, the increased focus on political correctness might have led to filmmakers wanting to avoid certain stereotypes in fear of offending minority groups, and as such elect to not include any representation of that group. Thus, political correctness might have led to less accent diversity in film.

5.3 Contributions and further research

A master's thesis has limited time and scope, and it was therefore not feasible for me to explore all avenues possible within this study. I was limited to a relatively small number of films produced in a short amount of time, and there are many possibilities to further this research. This thesis is the most recent in a long line of language attitude research on films, and likely will not be the last. I have contributed to the field of language attitudes by producing new data on films that have not yet been analysed and can provide new insight into

the attitudes that children, both English speaking and Norwegian speaking, are exposed to. What separates this thesis from others is the inclusion of dubbed versions, as well as including films from several production companies. By doing the latter, one can assume more safely that the trends are prominent across the film industry, and not just in one individual company. This thesis also stands out from most other theses in this area by only including films from the 21st century. A unique combination of character traits was also analysed, and an extreme predominance of GA and Other Eastern Norwegian was uncovered, more so than found in any previous research.

Further study in the field of language attitudes is needed to confirm whether or not the increase in standard varieties is a lasting trend. It would also be interesting to see whether Norwegian dubs have changed in terms of language attitudes, and this can be achieved by doing a diachronic study on dubbed films. Including other character traits as categories would also be possible, to capture other aspects than the ones I have focused on. One possibility is to compare different types of animals. Another possible topic for further research is dubbing of films from Norwegian to English, both in a synchronic and diachronic perspective, to see if the same trends appear.

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