



**PRONSIG ONLINE CONFERENCE**

**2 OCTOBER 2021**

The impact of linguistic profiling  
on decision-making  
Katrin Lichterfeld





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**2 OCTOBER 2021**

1. Linguistic profiling
2. Origins of linguistic stereotypes
3. Inclusive decision-making



Kelly Elizabeth Wright 2020





Linguistic discrimination  
1. natural phenomenon  
2. systemic oppression



## Variety:

1. Region


2. Gender

3. Age

4. Race

5. Socio-

economics




Variety:  
Location in spacetime  
= Contextual positioning



## Linguistic profiling:

- Informal
- On-the-spot
- Unconscious



Linguistic profiling:  
<= social stereotypes





Standard variety ↗

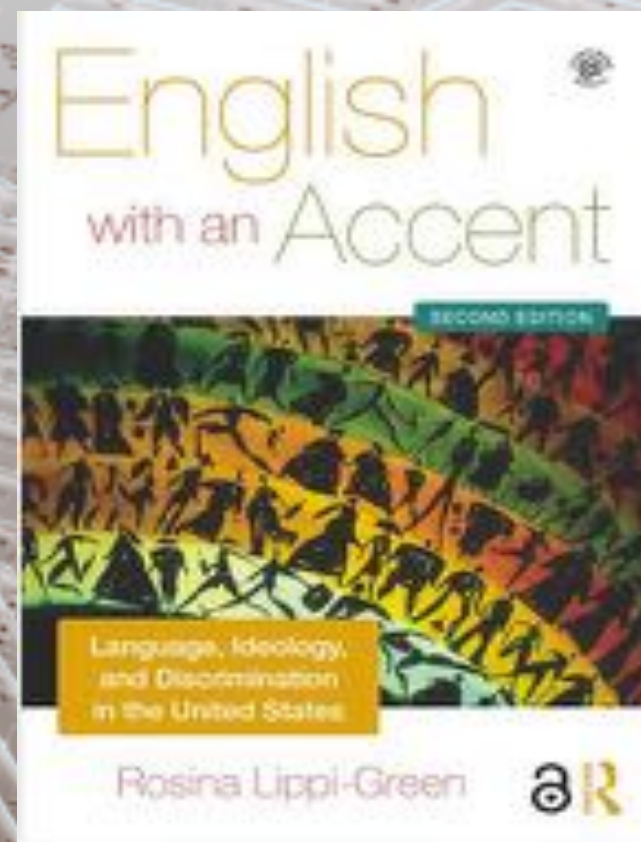
Non-standard variety ↘



Linguistic profiling:

⚡ similar to racial profiling ⚡

“Accent = first point of gate-keeping”





Kelly Elizabeth Wright 2020

## Three native dialects

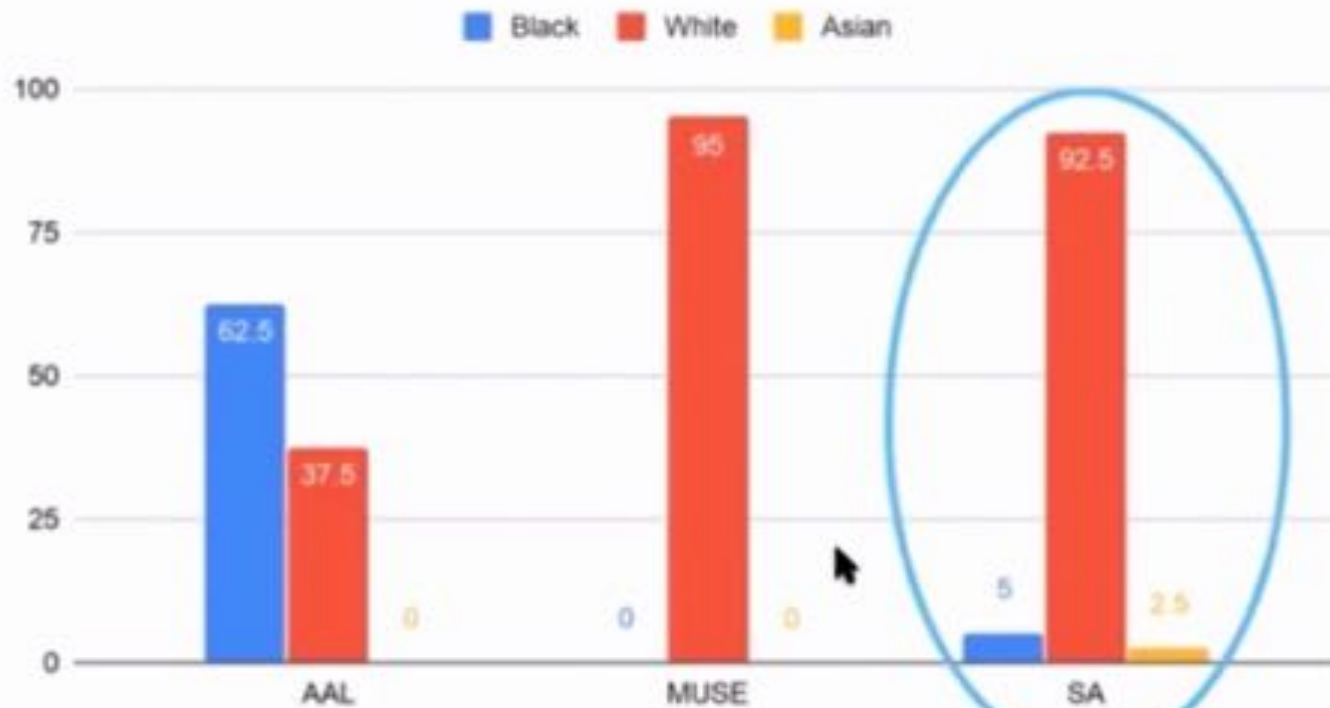
- African American
- Standardized Am.
- Southern US Am.



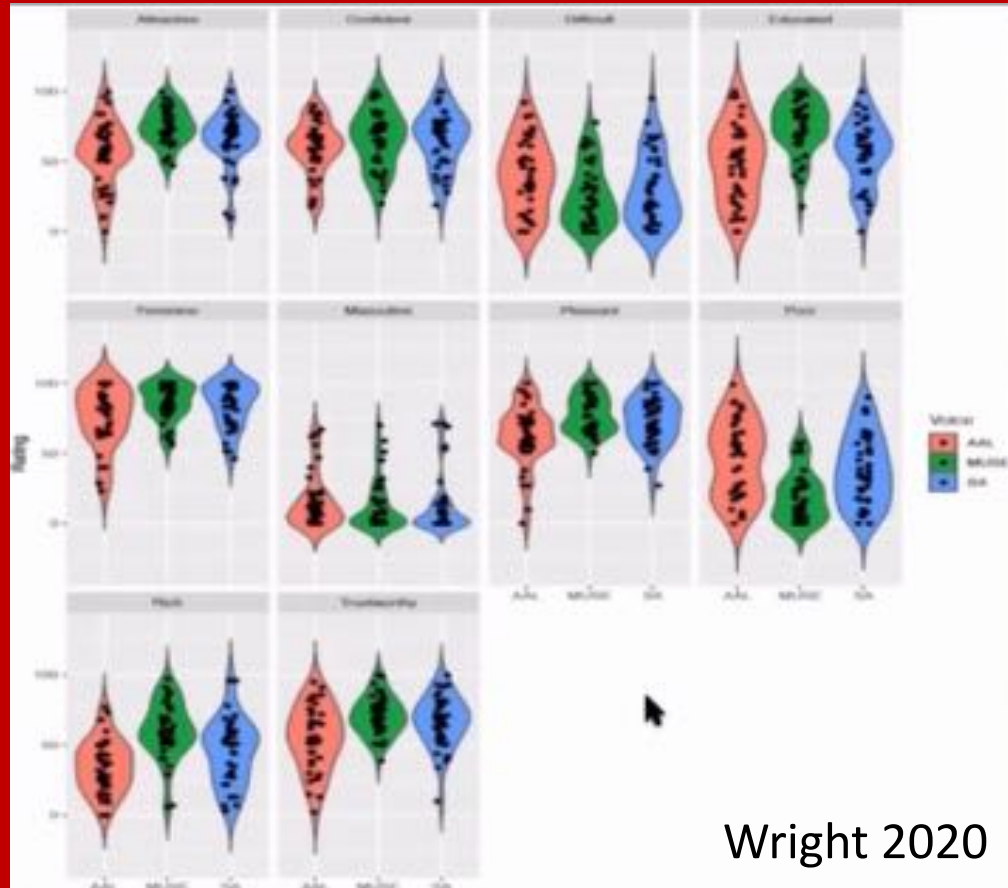
# Three native dialects

## Social Assessment Survey

- race
- region
- 10 character attributes



Wright 2020



10 character attributes

African American  
language voice

Least attractive  
confident  
pleasant  
trustworthy

Most poor  
difficult  
masculine



10 character attributes Wright 2020





South US

American voice



Most confident  
pleasant  
trustworthy...

Standard US

American voice



WHITENESS

h cated  
etc.

10 character attributes

Wright 2020

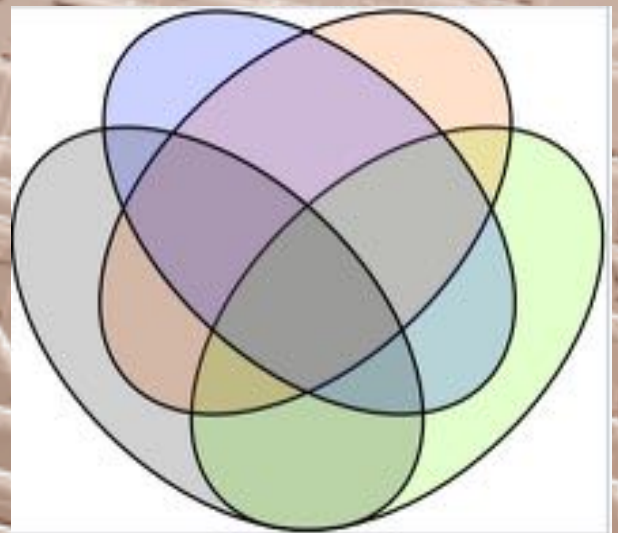


Linguistic profiling:

- Informal
- On-the-spot
- Unconscious

Systemic oppression

Intersectionality



## 2. Origins of linguistic stereotypes



### Trust?

- In-utero
- 7-month-old babies
- 5-year-old children

## 2. Origins of linguistic stereotypes



### Trust **AFFINITY BIAS**

- Similar accent
- Accent > race
- Social status
- Native speaker  
> foreign-accented speaker



## 2. Origins of linguistic stereotypes



# Stereotyped accents in animated films



Lippi-Green 2012  
Disney animated films

Critical discussion about gender roles,  
racism or historical inaccuracies?

- Actively discouraged
- Interest in profits
- No impact on box-office numbers



## Lippi-Green 2012 The Nielsen Company

- Merchandising storm
- Ubiquitous presence in children's lives

Deep and long-lasting effect on  
socialization and development of identity





Lippi-Green 2012

Disney animated films: 1937 - 2009

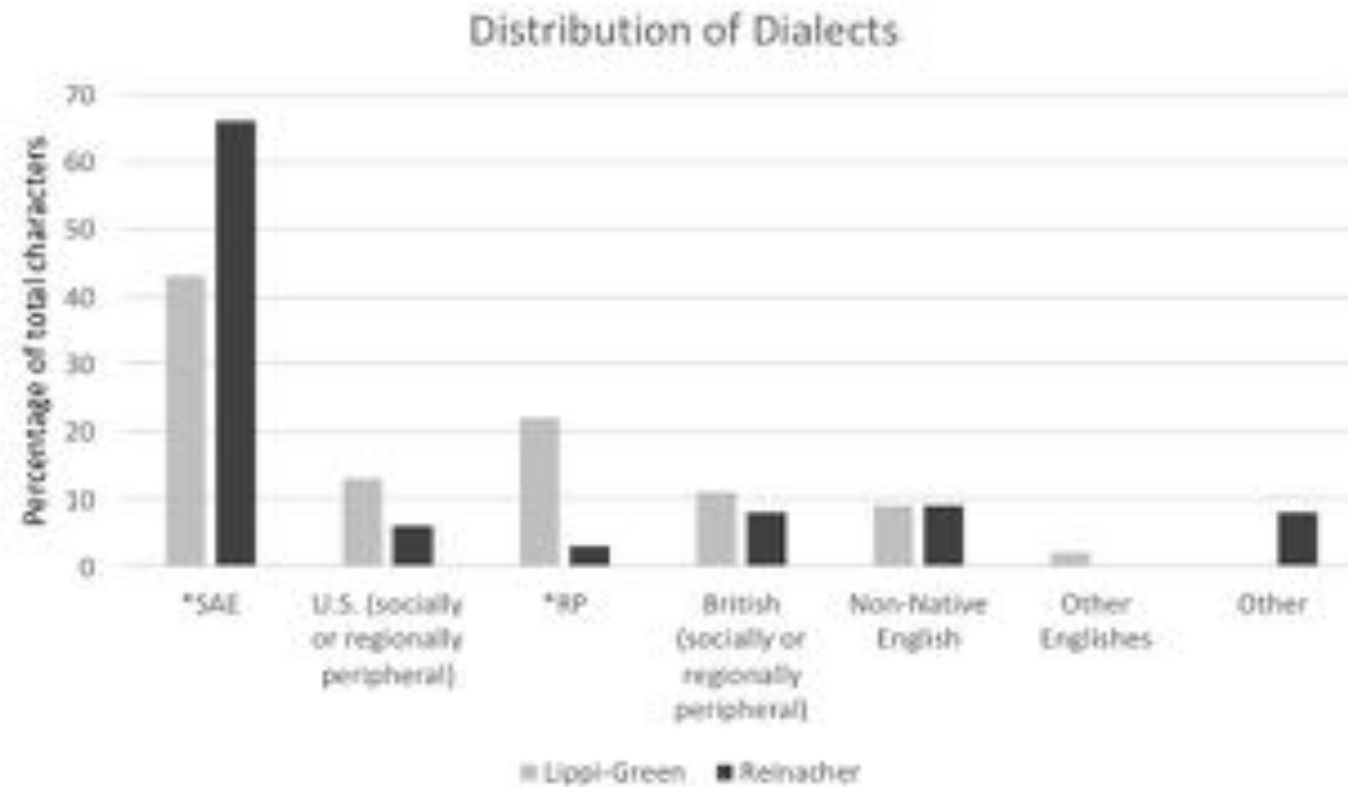
Systematic exposure to  
Standard English ideologies  
Social and linguistic stereotypes



Reinacher 2016  
Disney and Dreamworks:  
2009 - 2015



# Reinacher 2016





## Reinacher 2016

- Higher number of characters/  
dating or married couples with SAE
- Number of evil characters with foreign accent:  
40% → 4%
- Number of characters with fictional accent:  
0% → 10%



Reinacher 2016

NO Standard US American English

= Deviation from conservative family values

= Existing stereotypes + certain varieties of English

# 3. Inclusive decision-making

Trustworthiness of accents



RP

Southern English

**HALO EFFECT**

**HORNS EFFECT**

Cockney

Birmingham

Liverpudlian



# 3. Inclusive decision-making

Trustworthiness of accents

Neuroscience:  
Change over time

# 3. Inclusive decision-making

Trustworthiness of accents

Change over time



**CONFORMITY BIAS**  
**GROUPTHINK**  
**IN-GROUP/OUT-GROUP**

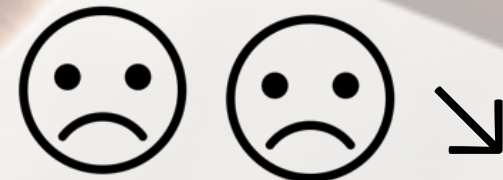


# 3. Inclusive decision-making

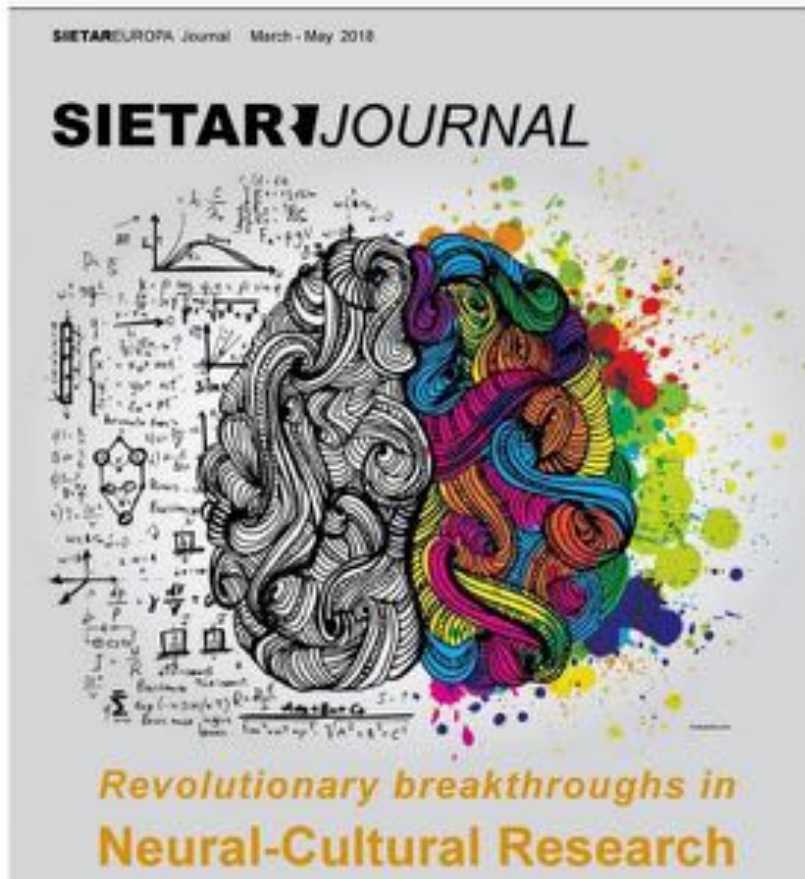
## Trustworthiness of accents



Accent + behaviour



# 3. Inclusive decision-making



CONTEXT

= software of the mind

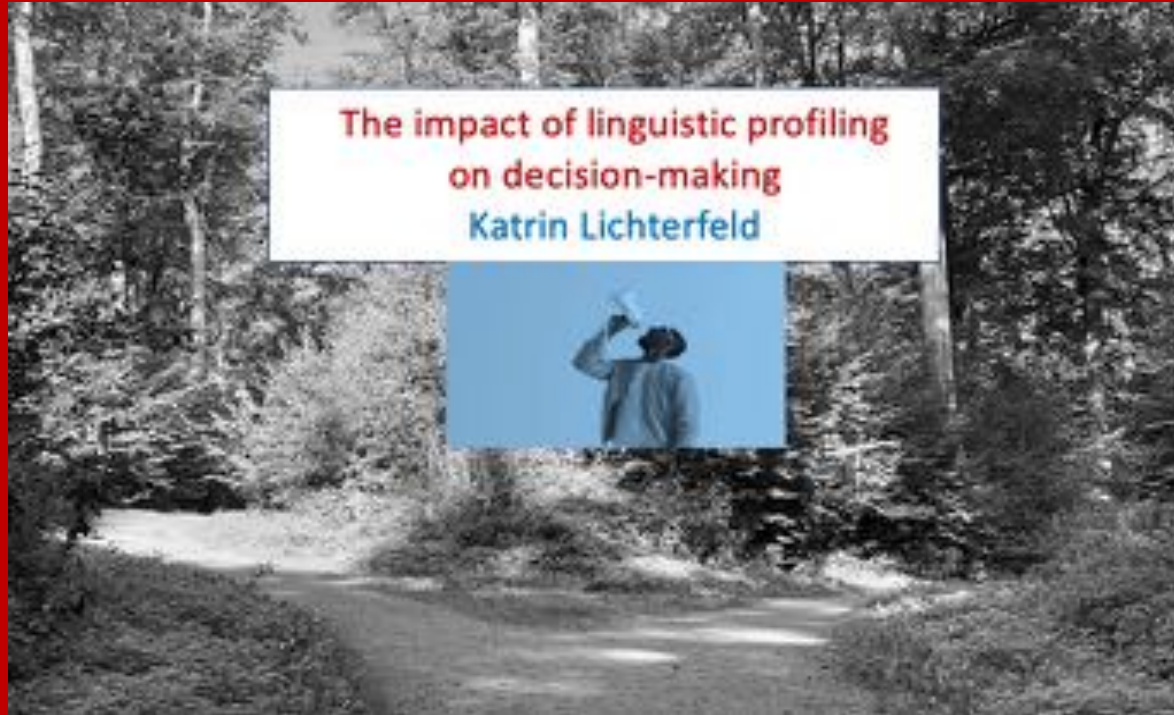
Mai Nguyen-Phong-Mai



# 3. Inclusive decision-making



(based on Lippi-Green 2012, 74)



Thank you very much

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