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MASTER'S THESIS

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN ABC'S *LOST*

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ABC-NİN "İTKİN" SERİALINDA DİL VƏ ŞƏXSİYYƏTİN SOSİOLİNQVİSTİK TƏDQİQİ

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INTRODUCTION

Actuality of the topic and the degree of research. The research on language in television series as it relates to identity and power has been expanding, and the examination of the sociolinguistic aspects of television stories has recently gained in popularity. The show *Lost*, the first season aired September 22, 2004, to the best of my knowledge remains the only space in which these dynamics are thematized. The survivors from Oceanic Flight 815, whose members become stranded on the island, are a diverse unit whose relationships with one another shed light on the power of language within social relations, groups dynamics, and individual identity. In order to understand the more complex nature of linguistic communication, several studies have stressed that language variation and the use of code-switching as well as attitudes toward language are not merely used as vehicles of meaning but as tools of identity, conflict management, and power negotiation.

However, most existing studies have not explored the roles of such sociolinguistic features in media depictions of crisis, and never in the case of ensemble casts such as that of *Lost*. The first season of the show represents a small-scale version in which language becomes simultaneously a site of division and a site of unity. The use of accent, dialect, and register across characters in the novel points toward this dynamic of cultural difference and internal group relations between more characters and groups. While, in the highly stressful context, survivors do not initially trust the language they produce, language eventually represents a tool for crafting solidarity, enacting leadership, and marking membership. This interaction between variation and the distribution of power is especially apparent in scenes that feature negotiation, confrontation and/or intercultural communication.

Finally, the episodes also provide sites for tracking the formation of language attitudes in anxious and unfamiliar settings. The survivors, as they grow accustomed to the islands' ways, internalize these alternative ideas and social prejudices against one another's speech. Though most of the concerns in the previous research have been with language use in actual communities, *Lost* embodies these sociolinguistic principles within a fictional but deeply metaphorical scenario. Their linguistic patterns are both dramatic and sociological, helping to develop their characters and the social order of the narrative.

Since there are few specifically, sociolinguistic studies on mainstream TV dramas featuring multicultural casts, this study is relevant and timely. The present research directly addresses this gap by analyzing these portrayals of language variation, code-switching, and

language attitudes in *Lost* Season 1. This examination exposes language in the series as a tool that performs identity, expresses cultural roots, and represents mutable power relations. It illustrates to some extent the functioning of language in fictional contexts to mirror actual, lived social life.

The object and subject of the research. The object of this research is an examination of language use in Season 1 of the television show *Lost*, with particular interest in how linguistic features function as a mirror of an actor in character interactions and social systems. Its focus is on the interaction between survivors of Oceanic Flight 815 from varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The subject of the research concentrates on the sociolinguistic role of language variation, code-switching, language attitudes, and the politics of power as these are represented through the communicative interactions of the characters. These are all elements analyzed toward the end of understanding how they play into group identity formation, identity construction and power negotiation in the context of survival. This analysis focuses particularly on language as a means of incorporation and exclusion, of developing alliances and taking authority in this emerging phase of group life on the island. At the core of this research is a focus on making sense of characters on *Lost* as having a reality outside the one projected onto them, enabling the viewing audience to see them as characters who have experienced occurrence and who articulate speech.

Accordingly, the purpose of the present study is to explore the ways in which language functions as a reflection of identity, power, and group dynamics in *Lost* Season 1, with a particular emphasis on characters like Jack, Locke, and Kate. The focus has been on the way the series portrays people of various cultures and languages and how, particularly in terms of accent, dialect, register, and code-switching, their speech patterns shape the social interactions taking place on the island. It also investigates the degree to which these depictions of language and social roles either perpetuate or subvert current assumptions and stereotypes.

The aims and objectives of the research. The crucial purposes of this research are to explore the relationship between shifting, code-switching, variation, and language attitudes and the construction of identity and social relations, as they bring interpersonal actions in the first season of *Lost* (2004). Language use by the characters and how it functions in terms of community, power dynamics, and otherness in a high-stress, multicultural environment is also analyzed.

This can be accomplished by paying careful attention to the following goals of the present study:

−To determine key forms of language variation introduced in Season 1, such as accents, dialects, and register, and to analyze the functions of language variation in character construction.

−To identify occurrences of code-switching between characters and analyze what it is 'doing' in the scene, especially as it relates to issues of character interaction and cultural messaging.

−To identify and examine language attitudes that character's hold, and the effects such attitudes have on group dynamics, processes of inclusion/exclusion and struggles overpower.

−To analyze the way language constitutes the story, reveals the identity, and maintains or upsets social hierarchy within the speaker group.

These are questions that I will pay particular attention to when investigating and researching:

1. What do the languages and language usage of the characters in *Lost* reveal about the characters' own identities and their specific cultural contexts?

2. What role do language barriers, code-switching, and linguistic conflicts play in the development and negotiation of identity among the varied group of survivors in *Lost* when the island and a shared experience are the only elements that unite them?

3. How do survivors use power relations with one another through language?

Research methods. The research design of this study is qualitative, as it investigates sociolinguistic aspects of Season 1 of *Lost*. The qualitative analysis looks to the use of language in the narrative, seeking to find ways that linguistic choices reflect issues of identity, group relations, and power among characters.

The analysis is drawn from closely examining specific scenes in Season 1, focusing on language variation, code-switching, language attitudes and Power dynamics. Each of these excerpts was analyzed within the narrative and social situation of which it was a part in order to understand the communicative work that the linguistic features perform. The study was obtained to address the question of how speech patterns, including accents, dialects, register, and switching between language varieties, affect character development, social positioning, and conflict or cooperation between people.

This study examines identity, boundary processes and authority through analysis of the semiotic details of the text. This method provides fine grained detail on character interaction and enables a discussion of the ways in which language is represented in fiction to act as a parallel to sociolinguistic processes in the real world. Transcriptions of dialogue from the series were examined using concepts from sociolinguistics to provide insight into the ways in which language functions on the levels of narrative and society in the show.

Sociolinguistic theory forms the basis of the qualitative content analysis that will be employed here to investigate these questions regarding identity, social roles, and power relations amongst characters in *Lost* Season 1: how is identity produced by/in language use? The research was formulated to be sensitive to the details of language and the ways in which language functions for character interaction and group dynamics within the survivalist narrative of the show.

The research process involved continually viewing episodes, paying particular attention to scenes in which language discrepancies, decisions, and understandings were noticeable or felt to influence interpersonal relationships. During viewing, detailed notes were taken on:

− Clear cases of accents or regional/national variation in English used by characters.

− Instances of characters using languages other than English, especially when in dialogue with interlocutors who themselves did not know the language.

− Cases in which a character's register changed in tone or form based on situation (for example, in times of crisis vs. calm, or in a conversation with a peer vs. one with an authority figure).

− Obvious or implied responses or opinions characters have about the language, accents or lack of English abilities of others.

− Instances when language or communication matters seemed to have a direct bearing on issues of power, leadership, or social politics or inclusion/exclusion.

This information was then analyzed by classifying the observations under the several sociolinguistic concepts exposed in the literature review: language variation (accents, dialects, register), code-switching, language attitudes, and power dynamics. Excerpts from moments, exchanges, and character relationships as they appeared within *Lost* Season 1 were chosen to serve as evidence of these ideas.

This approach permitted a close examination of the incorporation of linguistic features in the attempt to master the artistic whole of the series' first season and the roles they played in

issues of character, social hierarchy on the island, and identity, cohesion, and survival from a meta-perspective. Analyses of these examples are interpreted within the context of a broader sociolinguistic theoretical framework in this study.

Scientific novelty of the research. This study is scientifically unique in that it provides a sociolinguistic analysis of fictional television dialogue in survival dramas, specifically *Lost* Season 1. While much has been done on language in communities, less research has examined the use of sociolinguistic techniques for analyzing ensemble-based television drama with diverse casts. So, this study also provides an original contribution to the field as it explores the role of sociolinguistic phenomena, language variation, code-switching, and language attitudes in the context of a survival narrative.

In contrast to the previous studies, which have either drawn on authentic discourse or focused on linguistic features, the present study looks at the functioning of multiple sociolinguistic variables in the context of a dramatized, multilingual, and multilingual setting. It demonstrates that *Lost* employs language to develop character but also to examine social cohesion, conflict, and power relations in an artificially created though symbolically meaningful space.

Another new development is the use of sociolinguistic theory in studying the beginning stages of group formation within crisis narratives. The study is limited to the first season in order to observe the characters while these social norms are in the process of being established and to understand how language is used to create new identities and relationships. This methodological tool is useful not only for the study of sociolinguistics, but it also contributes to media linguistics by demonstrating that the language of literature can reflect actual linguistic and social processes.

Thesis structure. I start by sketching the goals and scope of the study before describing the theoretical framework, which makes use of salient sociolinguistic ideas such as language variation, language attitudes, and power relations. Relevant literature will next be reviewed to contextualize the study within the existing literature. The body of the paper will be dedicated to a description of the qualitative methodology applied to the analysis of the selected episodes and a detailed presentation of the findings with respect to the research questions. The study ends with a discussion on the research implications and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER I. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Language and society

The study of sociolinguistics in which various social group's communication and their social systems are examined, which is an important relevance to the study of language in particular social contexts. Each of these groups of people understand certain patterns of communication to constitute them as distinct from others and operate on distinct spoken and nonverbal communication norms. Communication in any given society has clear beginning and ending markers (Gumperz & Hymes, 1972, p. 17). These provide useful indicators of the beginning and end of specific communication events, which can be used to help coding of interactions. These markers can be understood through sociolinguistic analyses and provide some information on the social norms and identities of these groups.

In many respects linguistic anthropology is the study of language and identity. This concern with the linguistic production of culture means that is important to look at the many diverse and culturally specific subject positions that language-speakers take up. In other words, the classic linguistic-anthropological analyses of performance and ritual, of socialization and status, do not refer to unstructured types of "speech"; there is no such thing as speech in and of itself, but only speakers who perform identities that are created and recreated through their use of language (Bucholtz & Hall, 2016, p. 369). Therefore, language is a powerful means by which identity can be constructed and negotiated and a medium through which the interplay of language, culture, and social structures can be examined. This is important as it enables us to think of language as a medium for identity formation within specific communities.

Jones and Hafner (2021) argue that a medium acts as a mediator between two entities. We typically think of 'mediated interaction' as mediated by computers or mass media (TV, radio, newspapers). But all human action is mediated in some way or another. The cultural tools that shape the mediation of our conduct can be of different types. These can be physical objects such as spoons, books, TVs. Others are abstract systems – languages, counting systems, algorithms. They are all tools for expressing identity or communicating in one way or another, from the personal to the global social level.

Vygotsky argued that the use of these tools is what constitutes human consciousness. He considered mediation as the fundamental factor on which to base the explanation of higher mental processes, and thus established a connection between cognitive development, social

interaction and tools. These are humanizing tools which make complex ideas more accessible. You are unable to act independently. You need tools to do anything, to understand anything, to relate to other people. They are an extension of our mind and communication capabilities, and they enable us to think and communicate in more complex ways. This means that our means of communication are not just useful tools but are central to forming our cognitive and social worlds.

In other words, one's tools, and how they interact with the world, are what make a person. These are tools that enable us to grasp the world and ourselves, they make the abstract concrete and create connections.

The fact that mediation plays a role in human action should provide a basis for asking the question of how these tools not only can help us but also can humanize our experiences and our identities (Jones & Hafner, 2021, p. 2). This emphasizes the role of tools both as means of understanding and as fundamental to the process of identity formation.

1.1.1. Theoretical framework

Ferdinand de Saussure's Course in General Linguistics (1959) introduced the foundations of structuralist linguistics and has continued to influence much subsequent thought on language, particularly studies of non-standard language forms. Among the most fundamental of Saussure's contributions to linguistics is the theory of the linguistic sign: "for each language, the whole apparatus of speech can be identified with the system of signs"; where the sign is made up by the "signifier" or "sound pattern," and the "signified" or "concept". He also emphasizes that the sign is arbitrary; that is, "the bond between the signifier and signified is contractual rather than natural" (Saussure, 1959, p. 67). This arbitrary nature of language use supports the argument, in sociolinguistics, that dialects, slang, and other forms are socially conditioned and context dependent.

A second important distinction drawn by Saussure is that between langue and parole. Saussure defines langue as "the system of conventions" and parole as "individual speech acts" (Saussure, 1959, p. 13). This is significant for the study of scripted speech in media, as departures from langue, such as contractions or slang, are often used as cues to characterization or to social meaning.

Also, Saussure "introduces the concepts of syntagmatic 'associative' and 'paradigmatic' relations" (Saussure, 1959, p. 121). They describe how meaning is created from words in

sequence as well as from mental connections between linguistic items and can be beneficial in analysis of dialogue and discourse structure.

Finally, his analysis of "immutability" and "mutability" (Saussure, 1959, p. 71) can be usefully extended to the relations held between change and stability in language, in that variation in the use of 'substandard' language in media presence can be related to emergent social and linguistic resistance to normative standards.

Saussure's insights provide a useful basis for developing a theory that ties language to culture and social life, by which I mean that the structure of language both mirrors and constitutes both the cultural and social identity of its speakers.

The writer's discussion thus seems itself to be timeless. The finale also reinscribes the multiple affective economies endemic to the series. Because as Christian says that which is real has transpired to these people. This emotional- triangle involves the viewer, the character, and the writer. Attending to the moments between all the characters, but between the viewers and the characters in particular, is a deeply emotional experience (Lifschutz, 2016, p. 10).

Sociolinguistic theories also inform the present study. These theories help to provide a structure through which to understand the ways in which language reflects and influences the worlds of social identities and relations constructed in the text.

1. Labov's Theory of Language Variation is employed in the analysis of how accents and speech styles signify regional and cultural geographies of characters.
2. Visualization of Gumperz's Theory of Conversational Inference provides insights for the researcher to understand character-cued social navigation strategies for communication and tactics for building relationships.
3. The examination of code-switching in sequence transitions across languages or dialects will explore the bilingual or multicultural identity of characters.

The primary focus of research in sociolinguistics has been the studies of linguistic speaker variations and language usage and code-switching, and studies and attitude analysis in order to unveil power relations in the use of language. It means, sociolinguistic is used to know the function of language, how a person uses language and how the use of that language can represent the social identity of the user. Labov (1972) stated that language variation becomes visible when speakers take their accents into performance with dialectal varieties, and with registers. The same meaning can be conveyed in several different ways across languages. In the

category of transportation, the word "car" and "automobile" refer to the identical item. Working and workin' are perceptually the same word but are pronounced differently by the speaker. The sentence structure varies across the examples given here because it reads "Who is he talking to?" He has no trouble speaking. (Labov, 1972, p.188).

A functional system represents the core of sociolinguistics. Language is socially contextualized "*though a direct association with specific social groups*" within a social community. The focal question of the book concerns the influence of factors outside the society and culture and of external elements on the discourse-related aspects of conversational behavior (Kazimov, 2021: 36).

People adjust many forms of speech while they are participating in spoken interaction which is co-present. It is not necessarily clear how people may gauge the many languages surrounding them. The local identity constructs were explored through code-switching and code-mixing mechanisms in the language (Akhtar et al., 2020, p. 365). Put in other terms, Thurstone (1931) writes that an attitude is a "*system of positive or negative affective responses to a psychological object*". Allport (1954) offered a comprehensive one, defining it as "*a learned predisposition to think, feel, and behave toward a person or object in a particular way*" (Garrett, 2010, p. 19). It is an apparatus of power that permits the leading group to govern the way in which others conduct their processes. When employed in the context of power and control, language is a medium of power and control. Language operates as a social practice in which power and ideology sustain a complex relationship with each other (Fairclough, 2001, p. 7).

More critical studies of contemporary television programs have similarly found communities of large numbers of fans speculating on plot, interpreting characters, and dissecting themes (Reichart, 2014).

1.2. Linguistic practices and social meaning

This study focuses on the linguistic variation, multilingualism and language attitudes and the explicitly identity- related power dynamics at play in the characters' dialogue, language and interactions. The analysis of these scripts and linguistic practices in this paper is meant to assess four things:

1. A variety of linguistic forms of all types (accents, dialect, registers) are employed by different characters.

2. Code-switching to the extent that they switch back and forth between two languages or linguistic varieties.

3. Attitudes – These are the individual's impression or evaluation of the language use of some other individual.

4. Each of the characters' cultural backgrounds creates an additional layer of complexity to the power dynamics within the group, as their levels of competence in the language allow them to determine their social status.

Sapir (1929) noted that language is a guide to 'social reality'. While language is generally not considered to be part of the core concerns of students of social science, it shapes all our theorizing about social problems and processes. Men live in the objective world and in the world of social activity, but they do not live outside of or independent of social activity in the sense that "understanding the world is not a matter of getting to know something that exists independently of us as knowers, something that we could then simply "acquire" It is a great illusion to think that one adapts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is only an accidental vehicle for solving certain communicational or reflective problems. The reality is that much of the "real world" is constructed unconsciously on the language habits of the group. "Two languages are never sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality" (Sapir, 1929, p. 209). The worlds of the different societies are different worlds and not the same world labeled differently.

Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956) offers a series of essays on the complex interconnections between mind and language. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, as Whorf's main point is now commonly called, asserts that the form of a language determines the modes of thought of its speakers to a great extent. The linguistic relativity hypothesis suggests that language is not just a neutral medium for the expression of thought but rather that it organizes thought and the world in culturally specific ways.

Whorf also identifies between linguistic determinism, the strongest form of the hypothesis, in which language enforces a particular mode of thought, and linguistic relativity, a weaker form of the hypothesis in which language merely influences thought. Using examples from the Native American languages, particularly Hopi, he compares their views of time and space to the ones encoded in SAELs. According to Whorf, Hopi speakers, for example, do not experience time as a linear sequence of events, but rather as a more cyclical and process-oriented occurrence. The disparity between the two languages reflects the cognitive patterns

that languages' systems encode, and it is related to the way in which speakers categorize experience.

Whorf's work has had implications in several fields including anthropology, philosophy, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. Though the most extreme versions of linguistic determinism have been thoroughly discredited, "most" researchers accept that language can have a subtle effect on memory, attention, and categorization. Many contemporary studies in cognitive linguistics, for instance, begin with Whorf's vision and explore how bilinguals manage multiple worldviews and how language affects identity and worldview.

In the end, Whorf's ideas continue to be at the heart of the debates about language and cognition, and they highlight the inextricable link between linguistic structure, habit of thought, and cultural practice.

Prescriptive norms of language are often regarded by linguists and anthropologists with suspicion for the reasons the former suggests: they are constructed norms associated with forms of education and power. These may be good reasons for individuals to subject themselves to these measures, even if one need not go so far as to celebrate them. Prescriptivism is not only generated in schools and institutions, but also diffuses at the local level, where such standards are assessed and implemented. With the blossoming performance of the wider anthropological literature on standardization, the repertoire of locations in which linguistic standards are upheld has also expanded in such research (Chrisomalis, 2015, p. 64).

1.2.1. Language variation: accents, dialects, and register

According to Coupland (2017) all people do not speak the same. This variation, which clearly correlates with identity, is of a phonological or accentual type, lexically based on vocabulary, grammatical regarding syntax, or discursive at discourse levels.

Of course, the kind of variation we are interested in capturing in this paper is only one of the possible manifestations of variation in a language. Just like any other language, American English shows variation, not only across geographical areas ("dialects"), cultural, social and class groups ("sociolects"), and other demographic variables such as race, age, or gender, but also within everyone since no two speakers of the same language express themselves identically to each other ("idiolects"). The variation we are detailing here likely does correlate with such dimensions, because many of these dimensions correlate with political alignment, e.g.

geography; "red states" and "blue states". Above all, our findings are not at odds with those examining other dimensions. And if space or age explain some degree of variance in, for instance, variation in frequency of use, I'd say this rather contributes to making linguistic variation puzzles fit together. Given that our corpus spans only a few months, we do not regard it as diachronic data, but we have attempted to create as large of a time depth as possible on which to draw conclusions about what could count as a form of an evolutionary mechanism – socio-political divergence in the case of the current study (Karjus & Cuskley, 2024, p. 2).

Accents: Differences in pronunciation that indicate a speaker's regional or social background (Zhang & Liang, 2024, p. 417). Among a group of international plane crash victims, the fact of having different accents is a must and the only clue to immediate origin and potential 'outsider' position.

According to Kainada and Lengeris (2015), the study of L2 intonation has also been based on the AM approach in the attempt to clarify the mechanisms by means of which speakers acquire 'foreign accents. This method explains why intonation patterns are difficult for other L1 groups and also offers an explanation for accent development in L1 learners of L2.

Accent can convey information about speakers' place of origin, social class, and ethno-cultural identity. Another key factor in the social perception of accented speech is the accent of the listener. As with any in-group marker, accent has a strong influence on our perception of accented speakers. Language also has a meaning over and above its semantic content. Even with the same spoken language, people from different areas of a single country can speak and sound very different. Accent is the variation in pronunciation of the same language between different communities. Although the grammar of different accents of a given language is essentially the same, the phonetic, phonological, and prosodic variation between them justifies the classification of distinct accents. Even non-natives can detect accents and regional information about the speaker by simply hearing a voice in some cases, they are accurate in their social judgments, such as assessments of friendliness or intelligence of the speaker – thus, the accent of a speaker is indeed significant social information for a listener. Accents are frequently linked to social categories and can be indicative of a specific geographical location, ethnic group, or social class – like educational level and type (Bestelmeyer, 2024, p. 652).

Dialects: Includes variations in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Degree of dialect is perhaps even less marked among speakers of English from various nations than it

would be between those who all live in the same country, but choice of wording or syntax can still be indicative of background (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 28).

The meanings of the term "dialect" have been many and various. For others a dialect is any "type of linguistic variation that can be described either linguistically or socially, including Standard English". Non-standard variants, especially those bound to a certain region, tend to be considered more variable. These varieties, but, have tremendous communicative value in that they are windows into both linguistic diversity and communicative patterns in the relevant communities (Migdadi et al., 2020).

Dialects can differ in vocabulary and grammar, citing for example, variations in the use of regional verbs and patterns of negation. The value of learning these dialects from the inside out, for the grammatical rules that structure them and not just in their connection to the grammar of Standard English, is heavily stressed (Migdadi et al., 2020).

Register: One type of linguistic variation is register, which can be broadly defined as language used for specific communicative purposes in specific contexts. Registers may concern formality, occupation and social group for example. Within the language of professional jargon, the medical setting may use words like "ashcash" while general slang employs "bladdered". The disparity in register is important in demonstrating that English is a flexible language that can adjust to various communication requirements (Migdadi et al., 2020).

Migdadi et al., (2020) emphasized register also involves other, less formal categories, and ultimately the informal and personal linguistic choices, such as family language or sociolects, which mark social solidarity. Standard as well as non-standard forms thus belong to the multifaceted and socially expanding English language regardless of the diverse functions and expressive possibilities both forms may serve to a society.

The variation in actual language uses these accounts for or is governed by contextual reference points, or social context. People's register shift according to wit hr they are speaking to, what they are doing, and the setting (Gumperz & Hymes, 1972, p. 63). It should be noted, that changing quickly between these kinds of informal, panicked speech, and more formal, or authoritative language, such as giving orders, is normal in a survival scenario.

A linguistic variable is a linguistic item for which there are recoverable variants, which are the rankable alternative forms that they can take in a context. For instance, singing and fishing come out sometimes as singin' and fishin'. Those are the linguistic variables and their

two variants are [ŋ] in the case of singing and [n] in singin'. Another example of this type of linguistic variable is that of the English words farm and far. These words are often heard with r-less pronunciations; in this case we would have the linguistic variable (r) with two variants [r] and Ø ('zero, 'null'). Two types of variation are at the basis of a two-basic- type of variation. One is of the ng kind having its variants] or [n] or (th) with a dental or [θ] and [t] or [f] instead, for example with pronounced as with, wit, or wif (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 149).

1.2.2. Code-switching

In its basic definition, bilingualism is the state of being able to speak two languages. Bilinguals can be more proficient in one language than in the other, and this proficiency can be either high proficiency in the L2, or low proficiency in the L1, so the L2 becomes the stronger language of the bilingual. The level achieved is important because it much of the time it determines the presence of bilingualism and for that reason it has been defined as the use of two languages rather than simply "ability" . This bilingualism, also defined within the tradition of language mixing . More recently, bilingualism has been defined on a continuum, meaning that it is adaptable to different individual situations. According to this definition bilinguals are "persons or groups of persons emerging in the course of language-based interaction, who can be identified through the use of two or more linguistic codes, including dialects." In particular, this paper aims at examining language choice in a bilingula tv show, and has as its focus bilingualism in a community of speakers. It is thus not mandatory to establish the level of bilingualism and the proficiency in the two languages at stake (Alaiyed, 2020, p. 262).

The thesis examines language choice in a bilingual TV show, keeping attention to the actual act of bilingualism among a speech community. Therefore, there is no need to determine the degree of bilingualism or proficiency in the two given languages.

Code-switching is a common strategy among bilingual speakers and it may be produced when both languages co-occur in the same environment. Code-switching may be motivated by the need for filling a lexical gap, among other things. Code-switching in the discussion of TV series will be explored in the following section. Code-switching is frequently used to signify the interjection of English into characters' vernacular during crisis moments.

Gumperz, (1982), for his part, defined code-switching as "*the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems*" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 59). He argues that speakers of two or more languages in a community often interject each other's language or code. Such a change might take place in

order to fill a lexical gap, or for specific communicative purposes. Gumperz, in discussing code-switching, really drives this point home when he states the following: code-switching "is not a symptom of language deprivation, but an added resource utilized as an available means for conveying specific socio- and psychosocial messages and rhetorical functions". He noted that the shift in language has expressive and pragmatic functions and that non- linguistic elements of the "speech situation," including social status, relationships, conversational context, audience design, and topic, can influence which code is chosen. He also made a distinction between situational and metaphorical code-switching. Situational switching refers to external changes, such as a change in participants or context, while metaphorical switching has to do with shifts in the thematic or social focus of the talk. But, as some scholars have pointed out, it is difficult to impose this kind of binary distinction on actual interaction (Alaiyed, 2020, p. 263).

However, some scholars argue that this binary distinction is not that easy to apply to actual interaction. These sociolinguistic theories would be useful in your thesis on bilingualism and code-switching in a TV series, as they emphasize the connection between language and identity and language and social interaction. Looking at code-switching as a practice of the characters reveals the subtlety of the use of language in relation to individual and collective identity and social interaction. This study can help to understand how language functions as a means through which bilingual characters negotiate their multiple identities, establish relationships, and cope with crises, enhancing the story and contributing to a broader comprehension of cultural and social dynamics within a bilingual context.

1.2.3 Language attitudes

Tamburelli, Gruffydd, Breit, and Brasca (2025) stated that language attitudes, in general, are concerned with the evaluative opinions or consistent response patterns that people have towards a language or characteristics of a language like accents, or dialects, or archaic or historical forms of the language.

More recent social psychological research has demonstrated that individuals often have attitudes of which they are not entirely conscious. Though there is some controversy over the distinctiveness of implicit and explicit attitudes, attitudes are capable of influencing behaviour, even if the strength of that relationship may vary. Implicit measures have been proposed to work better as predictors of automatic or habitual behaviours (Tamburelli, Gruffydd, Breit, & Brasca, 2025).

This linkage is important to understand when attempting to employ language attitudes for measuring language vitality and policy making. Language policies should be directed toward promoting behaviours, e.g. the use of the language and the transmission of the language to future generations. Such policies will only be successful if they are based on attitudes that are representative of real frequency and context of language use (Tamburelli, Gruffydd, Breit, & Brasca, 2025). It is not yet clear, but how distinct measures of attitude attach to policy. For example, some MGT studies find that attitudes can be impacted by policies, while others find mixed results, a difference that may be policy specific. Attitudes are most measured using self-reports or the MGT. While MGT is considered an implicit method, it does include explicit instructions for participants to make judgments of the speakers and is thus arguably an indirect but explicit method. For this reason, MGT is sometimes referred to by some researchers as an indirect rather than fully implicit measure (Tamburelli, Gruffydd, Breit, & Brasca, 2025).

Language attitudes are typically determined as the evaluations of speech varieties and speakers of them (pro-con). Speech and speaker are not fully independent; evaluations of the speech entail evaluations – of the speakers' judgments and stereotypes – of the social groups the speaker is assumed to be associated with (Garrett, 2010, p. 15).

1.2.4 Identity and power dynamics

Jaffe (2022) noted that Language ideologies are a mediating technology by which people understand the connection between linguistic and other communicative practices and socially relevant categories. Language ideologies are concerned with assessing socially visible activity as meaningful about questions of power, authority, and difference. They can be seen, more generally, as a set of categories that connect language use (or other forms of communication) with particular social locations. Language ideologies are studied as a question of what language users "accomplish" socially through their behavior, activities, and social relations. Since the social work of language ideologies is based on indexical processes, a semiotic framework is necessary for analysing it, one that reveals how people index context, and therefore also what they understand about social distribution.

Irvine and Gal (2017) defined that Fractal recursivity is to project an already existing opposition onto another level. For instance, variations within a group may affect its interactions with another group, or the other way around. This can result in a division into subcategories or in the formation of categories that include both poles of the contrast, and are thus opposed to something else. These oppositions can be repeated and multiplied, like fractals or social

structures, in new configurations that construct identity. Significantly, these contrasts allow people to construct varying identities and roles, rather than static social categories.

Erasure occurs when an ideology simplifies and renders certain individuals or activities invisible. It is selective about information that can be included and information that must be excluded, and it dismisses, or provides explanations for, those facts that do not fit the narrative. This can be seen in the example of thinking of a group or a language as homogenous, which disregards an internal diversity. Ideologies are premised on a desire for totality and thus will always overlook or reinterpret anything that does not fit within their paradigm. Erasure does not entail the complete elimination of these elements; rather they may be ignored until they are perceived as a threat and action is taken to eliminate them.

In examining linguistic variation, we have been concerned with the way in which identities are constructed through the process of defining oneself against an "Other". This process is not unique to academic literature. Anthropologists also know that the "Other" is frequently viewed as homogeneous. This means reducing linguistic acts to naturalized traits, rather than as historical outcomes. These attitudes could account for linguistic variation or could even give rise to it, particularly when social distinctions are to be marked (Irvine & Gal, 2017, p. 38).

Goffman's (1959) concept of 'performance' suggests that the identities of people in social situations are managed via a performance in which they present themselves in a manner consistent with society's expectations and norms. This notion of 'face-work' is especially pertinent in an analysis of the ways in which characters in *Lost* negotiate their identities in the restricted, high-stakes context of the island, where language is a crucial asset in the construction of personal identity and the struggle for control (Goffman, 1959, p. 23).

Patriarchy, and more specifically male dominance and male superiority, is also a relevant factor in the formation of linguistic variation. Indeed, linguistic distinctions between the two genders frequently reflect a more general social inequality in terms of social status and power. In societies with gender hierarchies where men are more powerful, language often mirrors these inequalities (O'Reilly & Lanigan, 2023).

This is often the case because power is another trait that women are socialized out of and is also detected in their language. As a result, they may be more inclined to use language forms that are considered less assertive or more 'powerless,' while men are more likely to use more dominant forms of speech. A clear sign of this is the fact that men interrupt women more

often than the other way around, which represents a sign of domination. Women, on the other hand, often learn to defer to these interruptions and to cede the floor without a fight (O'Reilly & Lanigan, 2023).

Moreover, interrupting more frequently in mixed gender conversations is also common among men, and may be an attempt to steer the conversation or control its content. However, there are conflicting results regarding this issue. O'Reilly & Lanigan (2023) stated that there is not a "marked variation between the sexes" in the frequency of interruptions, meaning that men and women interrupt each other at the same rate. In addition, lack of consensus in the definition of an interruption further complicates interpretations of this behavior.

Furthermore, not all interruptions have the same function. Women were more likely to deploy interruptions as part of a cooperative, or supportive, engagement, which suggests the need to examine the larger context and intention of an interruption before interpreting it as a power play.

Siebenhütter (2023) offers a more comprehensive exploration of the intricate relationship between multilingualism and identity and challenges the assumption that the use of several languages leads to a multilingual identity, but it is important to distinguish between multilingualism as a linguistic competence and multilingual identity, or linguistic identity, as a sociopsychological construct, which is constructed internally by perception, culture and social context.

In this sense, the author alerts that "one can be competent in a language without feeling identified or emotional about it". This highlights the fact that the self is not only constituted by linguistic competence but also by the social meanings of language use. In addition, the paper explores the ways in which multilinguals handle and negotiate multiple identity positions depending on the context, the interlocutors, and the power dynamics between them.

Also, Siebenhütter (2023) uses the concept of multilingual profile, which he defines as "the unique combination of language competence, preferences, emotional bonds, and behavior that determine a person's position in society". This profile is not fixed, but changes with people's movements between environments and social groups. Overall, this study highlights the importance of a holistic view for understanding multilingual identity that looks at the affective and social experiences of the speaker with the languages, beyond the assessment of language proficiency.

Language allows us to express our point of view, but also our identity, our place of origin or where we come from, our nationality, levels of education or types of intelligence. From a sociolinguistic point of view, language attitude in a multilingual society is an interesting problem to observe. Attitude and behavior and language closely relate to one another in determining what language will be used, as well as whether a language will live or die (Amin, 2020).

The creation of national identity and nationalism is fundamental to people's identification with a nation. Similarly, both national identity and nationalism must be seen as political and cultural processes thereby giving prominence to certain discourses, languages, sentiments, and symbols, political and cultural discourses (Dong, 2018, p. 3)

1.3. Standard vs non-standard English

The most successful internationally recognized global lingua franca is English. Yet not all sociolinguists agree with the latter sentiment as to the complexity of the world English varieties in terms of standardization. There is little explicit consensus about Standard English' exact status. Many of us who use working with English assume it is there. Within diverse linguistic studies, and dictionaries and grammar books of this form of discourse, the depiction of this form in various linguistic studies, dictionaries about it, and grammar books of it, reveal the variation in people's notions of Standard English. Among the sociolinguists, the definitions of standards or good English varieties are still a matter of contention. This paper has the following objectives: to point out the views and difficulties on the classification of English varieties as standard and non-standard by the lexicon they use. It points to the ways in which words marked, widely used, popular, colloquial and high or low marked language. Apart from the lack of practical discussion and few examples, the paper is a great input, in that it helps place our understandings of Standard English and Non-standard varieties (Migdadi et al., 2020). Standard and non-standard English should never be confused with formal and informal language (Litteraturer, 2019, p. 3).

Kachru (1992) provides a classification of English in the world in three circles. The outer circle consists of countries where English is a second language and the expanding circle covers countries where English is a distant second, or foreign. To exemplify, the first World Englishes circle of Kachru's model would involve first language English countries such as the United States of America, Great Britain and Australia. The second circle, interestingly, incorporates the speakers of English as a Second Language (ESL). They are based in countries

in which English is an established or potential official language, or as a language of instruction. The newest circle involves the EFL speakers that learn English as a second language for common communication. This is illustrated in the following diagram:
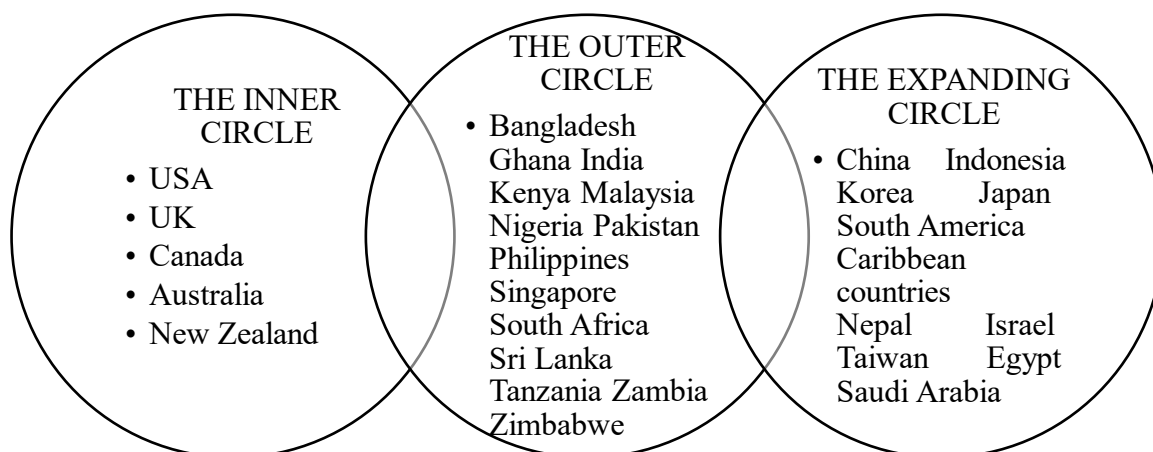
THE INNER CIRCLE

- USA
- UK
- Canada
- Australia
- New Zealand

THE OUTER CIRCLE

- Bangladesh Ghana India Kenya Malaysia Nigeria Pakistan Philippines Singapore South Africa Sri Lanka Tanzania Zambia Zimbabwe

THE EXPANDING CIRCLE

- China   Indonesia Korea   Japan South America Caribbean countries Nepal   Israel Taiwan   Egypt Saudi Arabia

Figure 1.3.1. Kachru's circle model

The Concept of Standard English: the notion of "Standard English" is common in that it is very often appealed to in linguistic studies, and yet it is one of those things that is resistant to a definition. Its definition varies by locale and social setting, which makes it difficult to define. The written standard, plus, consists of books, official documents, newspapers, and media and it is there that variation from this norm is considered 'nonstandard'. And as a widely accepted and used linguistic form, it also becomes a "social fact" in the sense of being elevated as a norm over other dialects (Migdadi et al., 2020).

The history of the standardization of English has been one in which standardized forms often begin at the upper classes before eventually being adopted by the rest of society. The definition given to it by grammar books and dictionaries that stipulate norms of spelling, pronunciation and usage, is what provides it its stability and uniformity. It is because of these codified standards that allow Standard English to act as the language of instruction and communication in particular contexts in various English-speaking countries. The variations between Standard English and other dialects are very small, especially in terms of grammar, which reveals its structural similarities with most English dialects (Migdadi et al., 2020).

Figure 2 displays a summary of the features analysed in the transcripts and it presents a characterization of non-standard versus standard linguistic traits. The comparison is made to illustrate the perceived salient features of each form, in terms of their lexicon, grammar and syntax.

On the one hand, non-standard language features unusual in written, or formal, language are colloquialisms, regional dialects, informal contractions, and slang. These qualities typically depart from the expected norms of grammatical and usage that one associates with standard English. They are identity labels, cues to social group affiliation, and implies communication.

In contrast, the register of center is characterized by formal grammar, standardized vocabulary, and regular sentence structures. These are elements which, following established norms and rules, are normal to academic, professional, and official contexts. Standard English, particularly regarding correctness and clarity, is largely a communicative tool for the interaction between speakers of varied forms.

The appeal of looking at non-standard as well as standard forms is that both these linguistic forms contribute to the understanding of the nature of variability and function of language varieties by illustrating the dynamism of English in diverse social and cultural environments.

Non-standard varieties of English are often viewed as departures from Standard English, but they are patterns that are meaningful and need to be investigated so prior to being compared to Standard English. They feature distinct grammatical, morphological and semantic characteristics, characteristics often influenced by geographical and social factors. Nonstandard dialects, for example, would regularize the past tense of "do" by using "done" as well as "negative concord" as in "I couldn't find none nowhere," demonstrating the grammatical particularities of these dialects. On top of that, within NSVs we can include slang and colloquial, vocabulary whose boundaries are nebulous and context dependent. These varieties, which may coexist with standard varieties, are common in informal or colloquial contexts, such as family or public contexts. The communicative potential of these "dialects" can be of limited use value to some, they may operate in very instrumental ways within certain communities to substitute for more expressive and culturally specific signification (Migdadi et al., 2020).

Contractions	**e.g.** *wanna* instead of *want to*
Grammar	**Double negation:** *"You don't know nothing"* **Irregular concord:** *"She weren't there"* **Copula deletion:** *"You with us?"* instead of *"Are you with us?"*
Pronunciation	**H-dropping:** *'ere instead of here* **Non-standard you:** *ya* instead of *you*
Violation of discourse	**Politeness norms:** *e.g.,"Hey sweetheart"* **Intimacy and Distance:** using code-switching
Vocabulary	**Taboo words:** *"Son of a bitch" "damn", "hell"*

Figure 1.3.2. Overview of analysed non-standard linguistic features.

1.3.1. Contractions

Code English contractions are identified in this study as verb contractions and not-contractions. Verb contractions involve the use of auxiliary verbs, also commonly referred to as operators, such as "be" and "have", and modal verbs such as "will" and "would" (Broussard et al., 2000).

These contractions are:

Be:

am becomes 'm	are becomes 're	is becomes 's
(e.g., "I'm")	(e.g., "they're")	(e.g., "it's")

Have:

have becomes 've	has becomes 's	had becomes 'd
(e.g., "I've")	(e.g., "she's")	(e.g., "we'd")

Modals:

will becomes 'll	would becomes 'd
(e.g., "we'll")	(e.g., "they'd")

Verb contractions can also be used with certain other words such as wh- words, 'that', and 'there'—forming contractions like that's, where's, and there're.

Not-contractions occur when the negative particle 'not' is reduced to 'n't', becoming unstressed and attaching to the verb or modal preceding it. Examples include:

Auxiliaries/Main Verbs:

are not becomes aren't	was not becomes wasn't
do not becomes don't	is not becomes isn't
have not becomes haven't	were not becomes weren't

Modals:

cannot becomes can't	would not becomes wouldn't
should not becomes shouldn't	did not becomes didn't
does not becomes doesn't	had not becomes hadn't
has not becomes hasn't	will not becomes won't
could not becomes couldn't	

Bergman (2013) wrote that reduced forms like "gonna," "wanna," and "gotta" are particularly interesting because they have been increasing in frequency in spoken American and British English and have been widely introduced and spread through representations in the speeches of television characters in the last decades. One possible interpretation of these criticized forms is that they represent ongoing processes of grammaticalization. By Grammaticalization we mean the historical process whereby lexemes assume the expression of grammatical or morphosyntactic features, i.e. of the functions and relations between elements that were not coded or coded differently in an earlier stage of a language.

A few studies have explored the development of such phrases as "want to," "have to," and "have got to" into their phonologically reduced forms, "wanna," 'hafta", and "gotta", respectively, out of primary verbs. These changes indicate a move to a less formal and more free-framing expression, based on the necessities of brevity and ease in daily conversation. Comparative studies using heterogeneous corpora of both American and British English have shown that the development and spread of these forms have regional patterns. More

specifically, British English has been observed to be slower than American English in the adoption of these forms (Bergman, 2013).

Demographically, some interesting patterns emerge in the socio-linguistic data. Reduced forms such as "gonna" and "wanna" are the most common for younger speakers and, especially those under 24, show the highest odds ratio when considering the full forms "going to" and "want to". This trend reflects a generational move to more informal language. Conversely, amongst older speakers, especially those over 45, seem to prefer the full forms. The generational gap in the use of this language feature speaks to the fluidity of language change and cultural shifts that permeate language. On top of that, youth might be more apt to contract these forms due to larger cultural movements towards efficiency and informality in communication (Bergman, 2013).

A clear instance of this tendency to employ modal constructions is represented by the replacement of "want to" with "wanna". A significant difference between the two English varieties is also found, with "wanna" having a much higher frequency in American English than in British English, "which could be related to cultural or linguistic reasons". In a number of the emerging modals, we find that contracted will must be more common than the contracted forms of other modals, such as 'gonna', gotta', 'wanna,' et.al. for all of these. Also, even in studies that have not shown these larger proportions of contracted forms among women, this is a general trend in the overall literature. And these patterns are not mere cases of stable linguistic variation but are processes of linguistic change.

Part of this process will be a look at future tense expressions especially the role that "going to" and "gonna" play as variant forms of future tense expressions. "Gonna" is salient in that it is primarily a feature of spoken language and is thus quite widespread in that context; its use in writing is rare and generally limited to quotations or other text that is spoken, such as dialogue. Socially, it has been claimed that the first person with "gonna" is favored by youth and certain social layers, and that this form is used more prolifically by male than female speakers. Other patterns are the positive correlation identified between "gonna" and slang words and double negation, which again confirms its informal character (Bergman, 2013).

Finally, studies on the grammaticalization and variability of deontic modality in English have contributed knowledge on obligation markers such as 'have to', 'have got to' or 'must'. "Must" is presented as receding across generations, "got to" and "gonna" used minimally, by primarily older and younger respondents. There is little fluctuation in variability in the use of

"have to" and "have got to". In sum, "gonna" is a more recent occurrence in this grammatical space and it is a relatively new feature of language evolution. Importantly, these studies have also found that there are no gender effects, except for some types of forms, such as "gonna" (Bergman, 2013).

1.3.2. Grammar

Lippi-Green (1997) stated that there is thus agreement between linguists and non-linguists in seeing grammar as a set of rules, but they diverge on the character and source of these rules. When linguists refer to 'grammar' they are referring to the way languages are rules based. Sentences are then generated based on these rules. Children have learned a mastery of this 'grammar' of their mother tongue by the age of 4.

The following are example sentence that I, as a linguist, would not say are ungrammatical:

1. If you're going out, I'm coming with.
2. I might could stop at the store on the way home.
3. You know Vicky be working after school.
4. For reals, he won the lottery!
5. If I had had three of them, you could've tooken one.
6. Here are five things Joe should have went to jail for.
7. I would of helped if I had known.
8. We misunderestimated them.
9. That's just what Maria said to Marcos and I.
10. Ain't nobody can beat me no how.
11. Which of the three boys was less troublesome?
12. The house needs painted.
13. He's the kind of guy that's always borrowing money.
14. The data does not support your conclusion.
15. Put it in your pocket.   (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 11)

According to Lippi-Green (1997), the "mistakes" in these sentences would be more or less apparent to those who care about these things, with perhaps the last two examples being exceptions. In these cases, most scholars would likely insist that the noun data should be treated as a plural, requiring a plural verb (The data do not support your conclusion); very strict prescriptivists would be certain to inform you that you put things into a pocket. For those who

are not linguists, the term grammaticality is applied in a looser and more general way. This includes the spoken and written word, as well as questions of style and even punctuation. But, the most relevant distinctions with respect to the notion of socially motivated grammaticality are the following.

According to Pinker (1994), the people whose language skills are most underestimated are right here in our society. Linguists are constantly debunking the myth that the working-class, and the middle class when less educated, speak a more simplified or coarser language. This is because in the ordinary flow of conversation this appears seamless. Natural language, along with color vision or walking, is a beautiful piece of engineering – a technology that works so well that its users do not have to be aware of the intricacies of the technology to reap its benefits. Behind even seemingly "simple" sentences such as "Where did he go?" Behind, for example, "Or the guy I met killed himself" – which any English speaker has the ability to produce spontaneously – are dozens of processes that move words around into meaning. Though there have been attempts for decades, no artificial constructed language system is even close to being able to mimic the speech of ordinary people.

The language mechanism itself is not visible to its user, and discussion as a result tends to focus on its surface features, such as distinctions of dialect. Small variations, such as "isn't any" versus "ain't no," "those books" versus "them books," and "dragged him away" versus "drug him away," between the mainstream and other groups' dialects are misconceived as markers of "proper grammar" . These differences are no more relevant for grammatical complexity than the linguistic variations across regions in naming insects or animals, such as "dragonfly" or "darning needle" or "dogs" or "chiens" in French. It is a misnomer to refer to Standard English as a "language" and to these other forms as "dialects," as though this were a distinction that was particularly meaningful (Pinker, 1994, p. 28).

1.3.3. Pronunciation

Babel (2025) gave the example: He also had difficulty repeating an apostrophe + s in the context of a possessive. For instance, he was able to repeat the sentence "Who has Jane's pencil?" after being exposed to it and being asked to repeat it. To which he replied, "Who has Jane pencil"? This is a common tramp for an ESL student whose mother tongue does not have a similar structure for possessives. Among those who do consider "Who has Jane pencil?" an acceptable possessive structure in African American English are many linguists. Even if it were, that's what my son would have written, it cannot be considered as a proof of unsuccessful

English language acquisition. Rather, it might indicate that he has acquired some features of this dialect from his African American peers, as a large part of the students in his school are said to be African American. My son may also have gotten it wrong, or the teacher may not have heard correctly. Whether the punishment is warranted or not, the racialized view of language, and the apparatus to back it up, is key in this example (Babel, 2025, p. 67).

Some phonological features showed up in the speech samples which are also typically believed to distinguish RP from GenAm. Interestingly, among the samples there were several tokens of /t/ realized as [ɾ] and alternatively as [t] for GenAm and RP respectively. Another relevant variable was /r/; its rhotic [ɹ] and non-rhotic [Ø] variants. [ɑ] and [ɒ] both had multiple instantiations as well, the realization of which was collapsed into one open back realization. The back high rounded vowel [u:] and its relationship with the palatal approximant, [ju:], was considered as well. As with relatively low, the use of [ʊ] and variations thereof was not unanimous but less common. for /ɔ:/ in your; /oʊ/ and /əʊ/ in though and local; /ɪ/ and /ɪə/ in appeared; and [e] and [eə] in 'where' and 'they're' (Carrie, 2016).

Pronunciation has a major role in affecting the social meaning of words. This influence can be seen not only in plain language but notably in the pronunciation of swear words. The variation in the way a swearword is pronounced may also be used to nuance or change its intended meaning and/or degree of intensity. Small variations in stress or vowel length can for example indicate different pragmatic intentions. The above is representative of the very complex relation between prosody and social perception, since prosodic, i.e. phonetic, cues affect the interpretation of meaning in a subtle, but crucial, way.

The (ING) variable, which is a heavily researched sociolinguistic feature, is a classic case of how pronunciation can influence social disfavor. The English plural of words ending in a velar [ɪŋ] and alveolar, the [ɪn] ending also serves as a social indexer meaning that its connotations depend on its position in the regional, social, and situational space. In this way swearwords containing this variable could also have different social values based on their phonetic form, which is again an additional example of how phonetics can affect meaning.

This pronunciation variability is consistent with the notion of sociolinguistic profiling, in that multiple linguistic variables combine in order to create a complex social identity. This perspective suggests that the socio-indexical associations of swearwords are fluid and situational, making them an excellent domain for research questions about the relationship between phonetic variation and social meaning.

The emphasis of the study is on the influence of pronunciation on the social perception of swearwords. For example, two experiments I will unpack are a variant categorization task and a matched-guise task. The first experiment was intended to determine if there was a bias for the ending to be "-ing" or "-in" by classifying acoustically ambiguous swearwords. Importantly, it does hint at the tendency to hear "-in" in swearwords, and the association with slang or colloquial speech (Hunt et al., 2022).

According to Hunt et al. (2022), these phonetic and social interactions are further investigated in the second experiment, a matched-guise task. The inclusion of alternate profanities will be used to investigate the listeners' perception of the role of prosody in swearing. Results support the idea that the relationship between swearwords and pronunciation has a marked effect on social perceptions, validating some of the socio-indexical effects of linguistic variation. It is argued that this sort of fine-grained linguistic detail can affect how swearing is understood and received.

Language and identity studies examine the role of linguistic forms in the construction and indexing of social identity. /h/-dropping is an example of such a feature and is a well-known sociolinguistic variable in many of the dialects of England, with frequent social significance. It is symbolic of class and education. Socially, the /h/ is also associated with politeness and education and, historically, there is a strong relationship between the /h/ retention and the consideration of education and politeness, whereas the loss of the /h/ sound is linked to informality and low social status. Yet this feature also has positive in-group social value because it is associated with friendship and commonality, indicating a complex relationship between linguistic behavior and social identity (Leach, 2021).

It has been shown that /h/-dropping and other forms of language variation are highly related to class and identity. Macro- level class distinctions have been widely used in the explanation of linguistic patterns, but more recently the need to integrate to this view the relevance of both local and macro varieties in the construction of identity is highlighted. This view is useful to understand how linguistic forms become correlated with characteristics of social stratification. Research on /h/-dropping in Stoke-on-Trent reminds us of the local nature of the processes at play in constructing sociolinguistic identity. The many different languages spoken in the region are one aspect of its historical industrial identity that indexes larger social identities through variations in language. Even in /h/-dropping regions, but, variability in the potential to drop /h/ hints at a shifting of the social meaning of the variable.

Leach (2021) showed the indexical meanings of linguistic forms like /h/-dropping are not reducible to class differences. They are constitutive of, and reflective of more general social categories and they tell us something about how language is used in acts of identity negotiation. Language is a tool of identity performance as well as categorization, and it marks and mirrors social distinctions. This is in line with the view that identity is formed through strategic linguistic behavior and "the connection or disconnection from the social forms of life".

The sociolinguistic analysis of /h/-dropping exposes the issue of it as a social choice – as identity marker and social differentiator. Through understanding these processes, we are provided with valuable insights on how language is closely connected to identity and how linguistic features do in fact both reflect and construct the social reality of communities. This becomes a call for a more complex view on the study of linguistic variation that must consider the entwined relationships among language, identity, and social structure (Leach, 2021).

1.3.4. Violation of discourse features

When examining the difference between Standard and Non-standard English it is pertinent to keep in mind that discourse features are also features of compliance and non-compliance. These kinds of violations of discursive etiquette are not arbitrary; they expose the social context, the intentions, and the power relations embedded in communication. As Wodak (2001) explains in Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis, critical discourse analysis offers a method for systematically analyzing these types of violations.

Wodak (2001) argues that CDA allows for analyses that "*go beyond the mere surface structures of language and concentrate on the implicit meanings and the social and political consequences of discursive practices*" (Wodak, 2001, p. 25). Through the analysis of discursive deviance, we can see the discourse's ideology and power structures. This is especially valuable in the case of English, where departures from the 'standard' can tell us a great deal about speakers' identities and social locations.

The strategic breaking of the rules of discourse within Non-standard English can be used for multiple purposes, including resistance against the dominant norm or as an act of solidarity within a community. Some examples include overlapping speech, strategic interruptions or non-conventional turn-taking, which may be indicative of resistance to authority or of a preference for dialogue over monologue. Wodak's framework can help unpack these practices by placing them within broader social and political contexts.

The discourse norms in Non-standard English does not suggest a lack of communicative competence, but rather the dynamic and context-dependent nature of language. These transgressions may disrupt existing power structures, resist hegemonic language ideologies, and create space for alternative discourses. Through CDA, scholars like Wodak stress the need to interpret these characteristics in terms of general social processes rather than simply as linguistic problems.

From Wodak's critical discourse analysis we understand that discourse feature violations can be seen as providing important views on power and identity. They highlight the intertwined nature of language, society and individual agency. This is important in order to understand the validity and value of Non-standard English varieties that, because of their differences, express distinct social realities and identities.

Discourse analysts have also focused on written texts as well as on conversation. They have extended the descriptive frameworks developed to analyze exchanges in conversational interaction to dialogue in drama and has created a framework for describing how particular types of modernist drama dialogue are characterized by discursive norm violations . According to this view then, the purpose of discourse analysis of written text is to attempt to uncover the implicit norms and rules that guide the production of language and that are especially concerned with the fact that discourse is composed of sets of hierarchical units that form discursive structures. The contributions of discourse analysis have been in paving the way for new areas of research: beginning to investigate the systematic organizational features of language and trying to create a system of notation and description for these units of organization. It has, but, been criticized for a variety of reasons. Initially, while it does take into account language in use in 'real' language contexts, discourse analysis is not concerned with how social relations act upon the text, make the sense inside of it, and interject in between them (Mills, 1997, p. 140).

1.3.5. Vocabulary

The idea of narrative closure can be understood by recourse to a natural demand for our questions to be answered in the sense that it matters to understand what questions narrative provokes us to pose and what kind of answers we find satisfying (Clémot, 2016). It indicates that stories must successfully provide audiences with closure that fits their wishes or questions. The characters add into their discourse swearing, although often regarded as taboo, is complex and situated within the social and linguistic context. Given that it is ubiquitous in nearly all languages and cultures, it seems likely that its function is not that of simply violating social

norms. Swearwords and other types of taboo language can be used to express emotions and form social relationships as well as to assert identity . It lies the paradox of swearing; it is a potentially offensive or uncomfortable conversational action that never the less pervades everyday talk. The sheer prevalence of swearing indicates that it must have some communicative purpose beyond the ability to horrify or scandalize (Hunt et al., 2022).

However, depending on the social context, curse words also carry a social meaning that varies. They can represent strength, realness or brotherhood. Swearing may also have been a bond-building experience that facilitated social connection among those who grew up in environments in which profanity was an indicator of intimacy or trust within a group. Humor is a second axis along which swearing operates, as intentional norm-breaking may be more or less funny or ironic (Hunt et al., 2022).

Hunt et al. (2022) stated that society's perception of swearing is conditioned by gender, ethnicity, and class. Gender discrepancies in use of swearing reproduce larger social norms regarding language and behavior. One such instance might be men's reinforcement of masculinity through swearing and women's subversion of gender norms through swearing. In addition to gender, ethnicity and social class further complicate the issues, as swearwords may also serve as a means for asserting cultural difference or engaging with social power relations. Considering these aspects allows us to understand the use of swearing as a social act that both contributes to, and is reflective of, identity (Hunt et al., 2022).

In conclusion, the connection between swearwords, their sound structure, and social categorization demonstrates the complexity of our perceptual ability with regard to language. Thus, swearing is not simply taboo; rather, it is an active and contextual part of language, whose meanings derive from pronunciation and social context. Both studies provide insight into sociolinguistic cognition and highlight the necessity of models that combine language with social processing. These insights are also important in the context of the present study for providing some perspective on the relationship between the swearwords studied and the larger picture of research into sociolinguistic variation and perception, as well as the understanding of language in society in general.

CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Overview

This research is one in which all of the analysis is qualitative and that is based on empirical data. It consisted of a manual coding process at the level of individual episodes of ABC's *Lost* to gather themes and language specific to identity and language use. Their aim was to thoroughly investigate how the identities of characters are manifested through words and interactions. The observational aspect consisted of watching each episode and taking detailed notes on important moments and dialogues within them. The view of the series, through a deeply qualitative approach, enabled a complete exploration that would produce depth knowledge of the language-identity interface. The study is interested not in large groups of people but rather in how individuals, specifically fictional characters, operate in language-use in relation to interpersonal dynamics, power, or social inclusion.

Qualitative research is also used in the study of language and is integrated in aspects of sociolinguistics, above all critical and interactional sociolinguistics, where the objective is to study language as cultural behavior. Here the generalizations are not about the speech of specific groups of people, but about the use of language to accomplish social tasks. These notes were further categorized related to repetition patterns in the use of language for identity.

The data collection and analysis processes are illustrated in Figure 2.1.3. It is a flow-chart that shows the actual step-wise process that will be explained in sections 2.2.
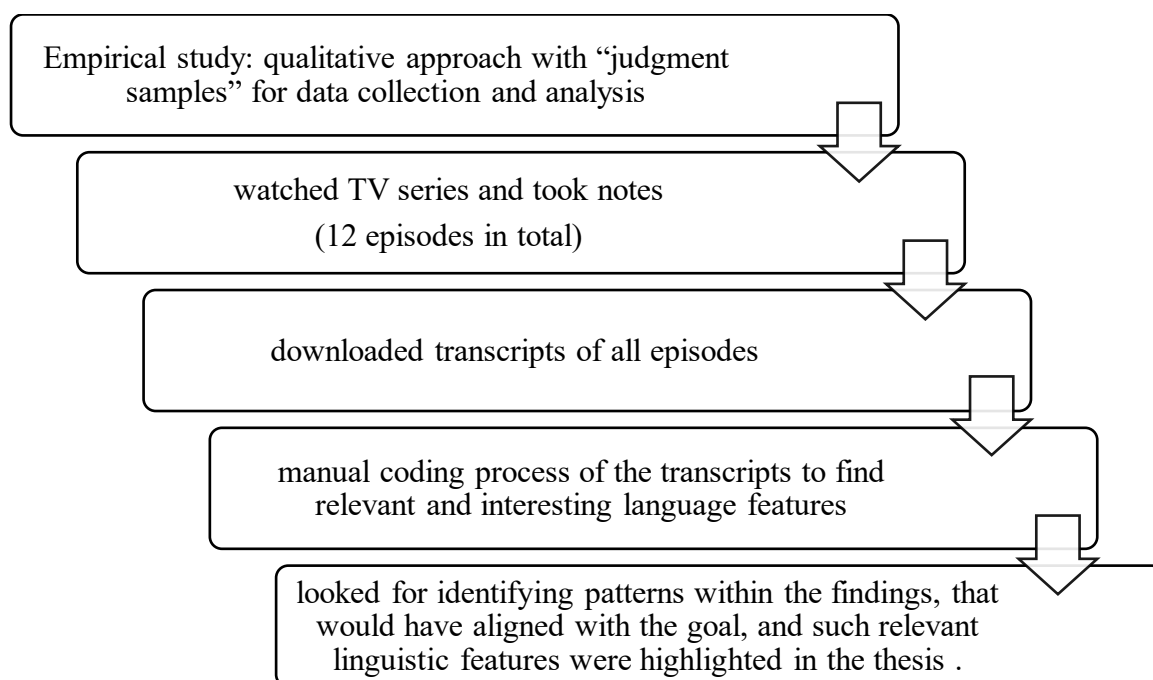
Empirical study: qualitative approach with "judgment samples" for data collection and analysis

watched TV series and took notes
(12 episodes in total)

downloaded transcripts of all episodes

manual coding process of the transcripts to find relevant and interesting language features

looked for identifying patterns within the findings, that would have aligned with the goal, and such relevant linguistic features were highlighted in the thesis .

Figure 2.1.3. Overview of the methods collecting and analysing data step by step.

2.1.1 Selection data

The choice of material made in this thesis is crucial, intended to identify a specific nuance of sociolinguistic awareness within Season 1 of *Lost*. Although conducted in isolation, this selection was exhaustive, and attempted to guarantee that my dataset would productively reveal the relationships among language variation, identity construction, and power among the characters stuck on the island.

Character and Cultural Diversity: Central to this analysis is the varied cast of *Lost*. They are characterized by the variety of both languages and cultures they represent in that series. The selected episodes follow suit, while they specifically feature scenes that highlight relationships between agency staff of different ethnicities and nationalities. Because of the variation needed to study the impact of linguistic variables such as accent and dialect on identity as perceived by its speakers and on social interaction, both groups are absolutely necessary. The study, for examples, selects episodes where language variation can be used as a vehicle for expressing cultural identity and for affiliating or disaffiliating with one's in a group.

Linguistically Rich Interpersonal Interactions: The choice highlights scenes in which language use is a dynamic focal point – specifically those in which characters are engaged in negotiation, conflict or forming an alliance. These interactions are particularly worth analysing because they often make linguistic tensions salient – each character's manipulation of language as a tool of power negotiation and group cohesion. The dialogues between Jack and Locke, or dialogues between characters such as Sun and Jin who interact across different language barriers, were scenes which provided a great deal of data as to the functioning of language within a crisis situation. These moments are illustrative of the ways in which language can be both a unifying and dividing force amongst majorities and minorities.

Examples of Language Phenomena: A part of the selection of data was the ability to pick and choose episodes or scenes in which one could discern certain sociolinguistic phenomena – for instance, code-switching, register shifts, or a language barrier. Among many other examples, the series often dramatizes situations in which characters code-shift, or adapt their manner of speaking, based on context, and identity and performance accordingly. For example, Sun's calculated use of the English language and Korean inform readers about her identity politics as an individual and cultural being as well as the way she communicates or

fails to communicate with the other survivors. By focusing on the scenes in which these events take place, the analysis can explore the relationship between social forces in the community and attitudes toward language.

Selection of Episodes: Character and narrative information were gathered by watching and listening to all of Season 1. This required a scene-by-scene inventory of levels of language as well as character interactions and looking for scenarios where language itself plays a role in the storyline. This is helpful as a preliminary process as it avoids missing relevant data that should be part of the study of the sociolinguistic processes under analysis.

Purpose of selection: The selectin in this study aims to be representative of the linguistic variation through which *Lost* explores these issues, including but not limited to variation by individual and group identity, power dynamics, and social structuring. Through a look at moments of key intercultural exchange and linguistic plurality in a text, this investigation can more effectively assess fictional portrayals of language and society. The particular data chosen therefore sets up the parameters for understanding how linguistic details in *Lost* can function as microcosms for larger sociolinguistic issues, allowing for the extrapolation of insights about how language works in fiction as well as real- life social exchange.

2.1.2. Analysing data

The analysis, in this thesis, uses a revised form of discourse analysis, where I break down the sociolinguistic issues in the specific scenes in *Lost* Season 1. This section explains the specific way in which the analysis is conducted, with a particular interest in the linguistic mechanisms through which identity and power politics are inserted into the narrative of the series.

Transcription and Initial Observations: The analysis started with very detailed transcriptions of the dialogues of the scenes chosen, paying particular attention to every element of speech, intonation, pauses, and emotional inflections. Because it included the following, it was critical for more than just the words being spoken, as it was also necessary for the subtle communicative gestures that shape the dynamics between characters and between the viewer and the viewed. During the transcription process, immediate attention was given to observed language discrepancies, such as the characters' particular accents or changes in tone. This approach informed the development of an initial code book and allowed for a close examination of the ways in which language is functioning in the series.

Coding of Linguistic Features: After the transcriptions were complete, the data was coded for relevant sociolinguistic features according to a coding framework based on established sociolinguistic theory. This coding specifically included accents, dialects, registers and codeswitching and also noted language attitudes expressed by or towards characters which constituted language variation that seemed to be of some significance. Each occurrence was described in terms of the narrative function it served – supporting identity, positions of power, or group cohesion. Kate's style shifting between formal and informal register, for instance, reveals her dependability but also shapes her power within the collective.

Thematic and Contextual Analysis: After the coding process, consistent themes related to the discussions between identity, boundaries, authority within the group and others were identified. All these themes were analysed within the narrative, looking at what the linguistic choices indicate, and how they contribute to, the overall social relationships of the survivors. This stage involved understanding at the level of the narrative how language in the scene contributes to, supports, or undercuts the larger social structures and interpersonal dynamics at work in the film. Through an exploration of particularly salient linguistic factors in the narrative context, the study examined the ways that language functions as more than just a tool of communication, but also as a narrative technique that plays a role in character and plot evolution.

Integration with Sociolinguistic Theory: The results of the thematic analysis, related to sociolinguistic theory for further interpretation. This meant explicitly connecting the fictional representation of language dynamics with actual linguistic phenomena. The adoption of theories of community of practice and linguistic capital in this study contributed to insights into the ways in which *Lost* makes not just language a site for addressing social issues. It explained how language is used within the show to engage in the issues of unity, power, and cultural identity in an invented, but poignantly relevant, space.

Final Synthesis and Interpretation: In the final stages of the analysis these findings were drawn together to speak to the primary research questions about identity, power, and the place of language in crisis narratives. Through careful analyses of how characters interact with one another and within groups based on language cues, it was possible to gain some understanding of how *Lost* a sociolinguistic small-scale version of our own world is. This perspective emphasizes that "the series can be seen to faithfully reflect really linguistic and social processes, and story worlds may be used as a conceptual space in which to begin to recognize the centrality of language to constructions of identity and social reality".

2.2. Limitations of the study

There are several limitations to this study. The first is that it is only concerned with the first season of the television show *Lost* (2004), which narrows analysis to early character development and dynamics within the group. This enables a narrow focus on understanding early interactions and linguistic variations, as characters begin to acclimate themselves to their life on the island, but it prevents an analysis of character development or longer-term linguistic change in later seasons.

The subjectivity of the qualitative content analysis may also be seen as a limit. This interpretation introduces the possibility of researcher bias, as the researcher will be making judgments on linguistic aspects like an accent, code-switching and language attitudes. Even if an attempt was made to work with a standard set of codes previously validated by sociolinguistic theories, the analyses are not therefore objective.

Additionally, the dialogue in the television show's scripts is that of fictional characters, created for dramatic purposes. As a result, the ways that characters "speak" may not necessarily represent language as it extends to the 'real' world, but rather conversational or story-telling dialogue. Though the soap opera provides a good site for sociolinguistic research, given that it is a dramatic, scripted fiction, the conclusions drawn from the soap opera may not be applicable to multilingual or multicultural situations elsewhere.

In addition, the study is limited to English discourse, including differences in accent, register, and sporadic non-English language use. Other issues, like nonverbal communication or translated subtitled text. Further, even among the general sample set, there was some selection bias towards scenes in which dynamics of or about language were predominant.

Nevertheless, the study provides some insight into the role of language in a multicultural and high-stakes world, and its relation to meaning-making, power dynamics, and unity in the case of *Lost* Season 1

CHAPTER III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Accents and Dialects:

Jin and Sun are Korean, and Jin speaks to Sun in Korean. This insertion of a non-English language authenticates the characters and underscores their cultural heritage. An example from the script: "Don't disappear by my side. No matter where I go, please follow me. 어느 것을 읽었느냐 알겠지? It means, "You can't leave without me. "Anywhere outside, you must follow me. "Get it?

In Charlie's dialogue, British slang and pronunciation is present, indicative of his Englishness. He uses words like "Cool" nonchalantly, and hums a tune of his own band, and he has a casual, almost rock-star dialect. (S01E01)

Sayid's Accent: His non-native accent could imply some unknown negative assumptions, introducing forms of prejudice related with his Middle Eastern background and the social environment in the early 2000s. (S01E02)

Sawyer's distinctly Southern American accent and slangy dialogue ("Brother, you've got to wake up and smell the bull crap") showing independent character. It also serves to accent his linguistic difference from the other characters, in support of his position as outsider and skeptic. His speaking style is casual and well-stocked with colloquialisms, which again increases his sense of rebellion against norms.

Sayid's language clear, precise and technical, as is demonstrated in his discussion ("Basic photography – point and shoot"). This preciseness also emphasizes his analytical nature and military experience; these elements of his personality make him a suitable authority figure on all things related to survival. His accent might also have complex implications for the rest of the group: while Sawyer's racially insensitive nickname for him, "Abdul" and "Al Jazeera," suggests hidden bias, Mr. Salzmann is stoic and exudes nothing but tranquility. (S01E03)

Sawyer's Southern American vernacular ("pork pie," "hell no") and colloquial style reveal his non-conformity, and capacity for rebellion and regional dialects. (S01E04)

Sawyer speaks in colloquial southern slang, "caveman style," and "ain't," heightening the rugged individualism of this character. His dialogue, for example, is less clinical and more

conversational than Jack's, due to the differences in their worldviews and upbringings. (S01E05)

Charlie and Liam: The two brothers have a uniquely Manchester accent. This provides authenticity to their characters and makes them unique from the other castaways with American accents. They use terms such as "bloody" and "sodding", exhibiting their origin from British slang. Sayid's dialogue and vocabulary indicate that Arabic might be his first language, as Sayid uses unique phrasing and some formal language. This points to his identity, and even elicits for some, stereotypes about him associated with his accent. (S01E07)

Characters such as Sun and Jin who are Korean and Charlie, who sports a British accent, provide issues of racial diversity within the survivors. Charlie's use of the British slang term "bloody" and colloquialisms link Charlie to his cultural background, as do Sun and Jin's expletives in Korean throughout the series, which highlights their otherness and, in some moments, their alienation when speaking to someone who is not fluent in Korean. (S01E08)

Sayid's Middle Eastern accent, and his choice of Arabic when praying, also serve to highlight Sayid's heritage, and identity as an Iraqi. These features not only signify his outside-of- the group status as a non-American but also link his history and present as he tries to find his place on the island. His accent cannot be removed and is a visible reminder of a former life and history. Through the short flashbacks and select scenes on the island in which Arabic is spoken, it is also evident that Sayid's story contains a degree of linguistic and cultural diversity. In this way, the language variation itself helps to create a sense of authenticity and depth, informing readers about his identity and background. (S01E09)

Accent also serves to demark background and identity for each character. Claire's Australian accent is one of the means by which she is established as other to the primarily American cohort and influences the way she is heard and responded to. Ethan's unremarkable, even flat accent can also add to his air of mystery, making his identity indistinct; it further promotes unease about the character's intentions. (S01E10)

Register:

Jack speaks about medical conditions in the language that would be customary for persons within the medical profession. He employs exact medical terminology such as "dural sac", and "spinal fluid" when describing his medical treatment, and thus speaks with authority as a doctor.

Kate, who at first resists providing medical help ("You want me to sew that up?"), shifts to a responsive and supportive register, which characterizes her flexibility and willingness to take on these roles when necessary.

Informal vs. Formal: In informal situations, such as the initial chaos at the beach, most characters employ unwieldy and immediate speech. E.g. Shannon's panic, "Help! Similarly, it is important to note the emotional tenor of Peter's plea ("Please help me!") as opposed to Jack's steady, guiding speech ("Hey you, just give me a hand!").

Cultural references: A major dialectal aspect is Charlie's band, Drive Shaft, and the song "You All Everybody". Kate notices this, pointing to his musical cultural identity.

Interactions Reflecting Backgrounds: Kate is initially resistant but her willingness to participate. As she starts to feel more confident her vocabulary becomes more informal, changing from "What?" to "interaction".

Sayid and Charlie: Sayid speaks in clear, direct English, which becomes important when it is revealed that he is a former military intelligence officer; Charlie's speech utilizes more colloquial and humorous slang than Sayid's, representing his free-spirit musician lifestyle. (S01E01)

Dialogue frequently switches from formal to informal. Jack acts as a kind of informal leader in this scene, greets the group formally, and gathers them together ("We've got to decide about being rescued"). On the other hand, informal exchanges can be found in conversational or confrontational dialogues, like Sawyer's banter with Kate. (S01E05)

That Sun shifts to English when speaking with Michael indicates the strain in her marriage to Jin and the extreme actions she believes must be taken. Words, as this clearly demonstrates, can also be chosen as a survival and adaptability tool in a multicultural context.

In stressful or formal situations, the dialogue often moves to a more formal, rigid register, to show the gravity of the situations at hand, in the case of locking up Jin. (S01E06)

They converse about Charlie's drug problem in an act that requires a transition for both brothers. Locke's metaphorical language and guiding patience is more philosophical and accepting, while Charlie's language is more open and emotional, a sign of vulnerability. (S01E06)

Characters alternate between registers by situation and relationships. Jack's scientific, distant dialogue with Claire regarding her pregnancy is juxtaposed with Charlie's more colloquial, friendly manner of addressing her, representing their respective roles and connections to Claire; Jack assumes the role of medical authority and Charlie serves as supportive friend. (S01E10)

In the few instances where Locke describes tracking to other people, he shifts his register and takes on a teacher-like tone to establish his authority. This use of code- switching not only educates the group but also reiterates Locke's position of power as the expert in the land of wilderness survival. (S01E11)

Sawyer's language is colloquial, and he frequently relies on humor or snark as mechanisms of aversion or resistance, demonstrating his resistance to integration with the group's cultural norms and power structures. (S01E12)

Code-switching

Jin speaks only Korean to Sun, and their conversation is subtitled in English for the viewer. Jin's lines are spoken entirely in Korean, subtitles allow the audience to code-switch between Korean and English while watching.

For Jin and Sun, this code-switching within the fabric of the narrative demonstrates their closeness as well as their cultural continuity. Although Jin never attempts to speak in English and speaks in Korean throughout the film, the presence of English subtitles, while not a language switch for Jin, functions so for the audience, mediating linguistic gaps. This shows how varied types of linguistic codes are integrated into a single exchange, which allows for comprehension among speakers of different languages within the diverse group. (S01E01)

Jack and Sayid are put into a situation in which Jack asks Sayid repeatedly "what is going on?", suggesting either his confusion or urgency. Sayid's answer is "Ibn Al-Kalb" an Arabic curse translated as "son of a dog". This type of code-switching represents Sayid's intense emotions, meaning anger or frustration, which might not adequately translate in English. The decision to change languages demonstrates Sayid's cultural identity and serves to authenticate him as a character but also demonstrates Jack's predicament and the difficulty of communication as the ambiguity of the language barrier increases the drama of the situation. This exchange highlights the fusion in the narrative of cultural subtleties and character. (S01E02)

The use of Korean and English combined throughout the dialogue between Jin and Sun highlights both their cultural distance and closeness. Their relationship is telling of language as a block while meaning a deep connection. (S01E03)

Sun and Jin maintain their use of the Korean language, a cultural isolate and communication barrier to others, thereby heightening their solitude on the island. Interestingly, but Sun knows how to speak English, an advantage unbeknownst to Jin, and this inherent power dynamic creates a peculiar tension in their relationship. (S01E06)

Sayid's code-switching between Arabic and English, and between formal and informal register, is indicative of his flexibility. This is important skill that is needed both for an interrogation but also for the presence of multilingual and multicultural interactions that take place on the island. His code-switching emphasizes the insulation provided by his competence at connection between different cultural environments and the implications of this skill for trust and agency. (S01E09)

Language attitudes

Korean is used to indicate cultural identity and alienation from the larger, English-speaking community. Characters can be seen as protecting their privacy or not comprehending their language, but it could just as easily cause social ostracism or misinterpretation as a result of a language barrier, evidencing a kind of discrimination against non-English speakers, as well as group dynamics that make use of multilingualism simultaneously help and impede communication.

Sayid, an English second-language speaker, communicates with specificity and efficiency which may signal a desire to challenge any assumptions about his proficiency and clarity rooted in his Middle Eastern identify. It is also the case that characters may react positively or negatively to him based upon markers of his cultural and linguistic identity, revealing implicit language attitudes toward nonnative speakers of English.

Jack's specialized and technical doctor's language marks him as an expert and earns him the respect of the group. This concerns attitudes toward and preference for a specific type of technical and educated language that can also elicit authority and expertise in other characters, for example, that language which conveys authority can be either comforting. (S01E01)

These diverse speech patterns lead to implicit biases amongst and respect amongst the groups. Sawyer's sarcastic and derogatory tone towards Sayid reveals latent xenophobia and a tendency to mistrust those with accents and of different ethnicities than his own. Hurley's casual and relaxed language ("Yo," "dude"), creates a mentality of warmth and connection, signaling that he is not a threat, to be embraced, welcomed and even encouraged among the group. (S01E03)

Attitudes develop covertly in response to language. This is evident when Sawyer insists on calling Sayid "Abdul" and other derogatory nicknames. Sayid's responses are level-headed, but dignified, which affirm his intelligence and agency. (S01E04)

Locke's debates with Jack over the island and leadership also position him as a mysterious presence in the film and a guiding force within the group, someone who quietly shares knowledge and wisdom that provokes thinking ("Because a leader can't lead until he knows where he's going"). (S01E05)

Jin's violent outburst towards Michael and the ensuing cultural and language barrier is one such moment, revealing how miscommunications can foster antagonism. Jin and Michael are defensive; there is a tension for power in each situation. (S01E06)

Power Through Language: Jack uses control-asserting words in his language which project his authority over the pigs. This interaction is perhaps the best example in the novel of negotiation and power plays through medical knowledge. Sawyer's refusal to release the case to Kate, and handing it over to Jack, shows a complicated power dynamic. The battle for the Island, then, occurs on the level of language – sarcastic and mocking Sawyer vs. calm, reasonable Jack. (S01E12)

Identity and power dynamics

Identity and power relations are key themes that construct the interactions and relationships among characters in the television show *Lost*. The doctor, Jack, is positioned as the natural leader because of his knowledge of medicine and authoritative attitude. This makes him the default leader, with the group looking to him for decision-making, and therefore creates a hierarchy based upon know-how and coolness under fire.

Kate both supports and leads. At the outset, her desire to help Jack functions to support the male protagonist, but her conviction, drive and decisions during moments of crisis, for example her insistence on trying to locate the cockpit, extends beyond traditionally defined

gender roles. The fact that she is an agent of power shifts the power dynamics in the community and question gender roles and how power is negotiated in society.

Jin and Sun, who are Korean speakers, are separated by their own linguistic discomfort. There is clearly a power dynamic, as language is monitoring but this tends to be thought of as a direct reflection of the level of access and participation its users have to and in society. Language further solidifies social hierarchies as the non- dominance, or non- English-speaking, group has been singled out from the rest.

Sayid fills the role of intelligence and technical expertise; he is the Iraqi and former military man. His skills empower him in situational ways, but because he is also an ethnic "other" he can also be a victim of discrimination, particularly in a post- 9/11 environment. His role shows how outside stereotypes can condition internal presence and the role one takes within the group.

In his dry and mocking wit, Sawyer as a southern American has cast himself as a sort of a renegade, or an anti-hero. Because desocialization has destroyed his ability to effectively engage in the existing social structures of the world that have oppressed him, his disposition is one of defiance – he is a cynic and is defiant of figures like Jack. Though he remains engaged in conflict with other members of the group, Sawyer embodies the streetwise aesthetic that provides him with a sense of autonomy and a rebellious power.

The identity and power issues taken up in *Lost* are symptomatic of and resonate with broader cultural debates around authority, identity, and belonging. The individual narratives expose the relationship between biography, language, and performance in deploying and challenging power in the microcosm of the cell and are used to develop character and move the tension of the plot in the series.

The fact that he speaks a technical language, a functionality he carries out with the transceiver, is a source of power and respect for him; but these conflicts with Sawyer continue to validate tension and power struggles. (S01E01)

Sawyer: Through his language (slang, sarcasm) expresses identity of defiance and isolation. His speaking style is used to agitate, to create a space between himself and those listening to him, to further his image as one outside of society.

Charlie: His insecure, self-deprecatory, and colloquial narrative voice positions him as the underdog. The casual conversation is a barrier to his own vulnerability.

Shannon: Shannon's shifting of register during her conversations with Boone in juxtaposition to her own assertions of presence in the hike reveal complex discourse of her struggle for an identity and personal agency that contradicts the world's assumptions surrounding her passive, privileged status. (S01E02)

Kate's previous life on the run is a stark contrast to her position among the survivors. Through her interactions she struggles with who she was and who she hopes to be. Her revelation for Jack, combined with her secretiveness about her criminal past, reveals the complexities and dualities of her character.

She uses both secrecy and skills (like having a gun) as a source of power, and her choice to reveal her secret to Jack becomes a quest for absolution and acceptance. (S01E03)

But, Locke's mysterious behavior, words of wisdom to Walt, and assistance to Michael suggest that Locke is a quasi-mystical and perhaps wise character. This would indicate his sensitivity to the environment and to the Island at more complex levels than the most characters, rendering him as a highly perceptive character. (S01E03)

Locke has the most commanding. His dialogue asserts power and knowledge, key to the survival of the group gather round him. This is demonstrated by his touchstone quote "Don't tell me what I can't do," a quote that highlights an internal battle for freedom and respect, akin to the contradiction between his physical and cognitive abilities, as there is no other place on the island, he is not able to go. (S01E04)

The conflict between Boone and Jack is motivated by a power struggle; Boone refuses to heed Jack's command and Jack, in asserting his leadership, questions Boone's insubordination, "You're not the only one who knows what to do around here." It is the beginning of language as a means of exerting autonomy or challenging authority.

Jack's self-doubt and his sense of responsibility for his father's death are embodied in his questioning and reflective lines. His inability to step into a leadership role connects to his flash back scenes, in which he fails at a personal level ("I don't know how to help them. I will fail"). (S01E05)

Sawyer's dialogues with other characters are frequently as battlefields in which power is fought for; his sarcastic responses and questioning of authority ("Which I had to move because everybody just wants to help themselves…"). (He had also been considered the gang's leader but decided otherwise") are indicators toward an unwillingness of being a leader, and a

follower of a collective living lifestyle, as another way to push the limits of power dynamics within the group. (S01E08)

The calm, rational tone of Locke provides a contrast with Jack's emotionally charged conversation, emphasizing their contrasting styles of leadership. Locke's propensity for nature-based metaphors ("the ground is telling me") hints at his mystical bond with the island, legitimating his wise man status and empowerment in the community. Michael's tension with Locke unearths power dynamics within the group. His discourse expresses his sense of being marginalized and runs counter to power structure; but Walt's respect for Locke as a "warrior" indicates that definitions of power and authority varied within the group as well. (S01E11)

Standard English:

Jack: As a doctor and leader, Jack's use of language is almost always Standard English, proper grammar, formal tone, particularly when speaking of medical concerns or providing directions. This language positions and authorizes him as a professional.

Sayid: His straightforward, unadorned Standard English, second language but reflective of his military education, underscores a sense of competency and dependability. His participation in a local high school allows him to speak to outsiders across the potential language barrier.

Non-Standard English:

Charlie – Charlie's language is peppered with British slang and colloquialisms, as he is British and a rock musician. Phrases such as "You all everybody" suggest a distinct, casual, non-standard vernacular, a variation from American English that only endears him to the audience further.

Sawyer: Obviously, Sawyer's speech contains southern and southern speech-like features, as well as colloquial phrases that tend to sound sarcastic or dismissive. His nonstandard English, idiomatic expressions, and loose grammar also contribute to his depiction as a rough, defiant individual who is frequently in conflict with a more authoritarian presence, such as Jack.

The employment of standard and non-standard English in *Lost* has the effect of reminding viewers of characters' individual backgrounds and social identities, and this linguistic difference is critical both to the character's development and to the show's commercial context. Standard English is typically the language of authority, education, or the

desire and/or reason to show one's grasp of a heterogenous group. Unlike standard varieties, non-standard English is associated with issues of cultural identity, personal identity, and locates the speaker as an agent in opposition to mainstream authority. This variety strengthens the narrative by making sure that the characters' backgrounds feel authentic and also helps flesh out the dynamics of interpersonal relationships and group hierarchy.

Non-standard English can involve differences in grammatical catchment areas, vocabulary, pronunciation, and the use of contractions from those dictated by Standard English. Often, these variations can be hints at a character's background, social identity, and personality. This is how these components would apply to the *Lost* script to represent non-standard English:

Contractions:

Contractions may be particularly drawn from a less formal register of written language, or contractions that one is not accustomed to using. For example, words such as "gonna" for going to and "wanna" for want to might surface in the language of characters like Charlie or Sawyer, indicating less formal and more casual speech. (S01E01)

Because of Charlie's relaxed, musician personality, he frequently employs contractions like "there's," "I'm," and "we're," indicative of an informal and casual method of communicating.

Sayid occasionally uses contractions. He also speaks relatively formally and very plainly, revealing, for instance, his military background, though he does not use contractions to do so ("it's," "I'm") in order to keep the conversation moving along. (S01E02)

There are also frequent uses of contractions, such as "gonna," "wanna," "gotta," and "what's". These indicate informality and are a regular feature of conversational English. They are useful in that they help create a sense of tension and pressure for the characters.

Characters like Sawyer and Hurley overuse contractions, reflecting their lackadaisical, offhand personalities. In contrast, Locke has very few used contractions, a fact that emphasizes his overall seriousness which, in turn, underscores his determination. (S01E04)

Sawyer: "The difference between us ain't that big" (Act 4). Represents his working-class southern identity, his defiance of authority.

Charlie: "I'm gonna stay in today" (Act 1). Casual speech as a sign of vulnerability/addiction. Sawyer's "ain't" is juxtaposed against Jack's proper grammatical

expression ("I wish I shared your faith"), to again work with issues of class. Charlie's gonna seem desperate and unbalanced. (S01E07)

These take the form of contractions, such as it's, you're, he's, can't, and didn't and appear often, as they are consistent with the everyday conversational style. This usage could be considered in line with the survival environment, where formalities are insignificant.

Sawyer: "No, I whooped a thief cuz he was going through my stuff" (Act 2). Defensive language justifying his violent territoriality.

Sawyer's use of "cuz" instead of "because" also condenses language but does so in a way that sounds "authentically" southern working-class and antihero. It is an expression of rebellion and repudiation of responsibility via brute pragmatism. This casual contraction sets him apart from Jack and Sayid's expressions of love and highlights the survivalist nature of his response and his own emotional barricade. Linguistically, "cuz" elsewhere in Lost's power struggles, cements his lone-wolf moral ambiguity. (S01E08)

There are many contractions used in dialogue which give the characters a somewhat informal and conversational air. For example, Jack says "You want it easy, quit moaning," where 'want it' instead of 'want it to be', "quit moaning" instead of "stop moaning" indicates his impatience and casual manner. Sawyer also says, "I've got to change these bandages," rather than, "I have got to change these bandages," highlighting informality. (S01E09)

Jack, for example, casually states, "I'd say when someone makes their fists so tight they dig their fingernails a quarter of an inch into their palm they probably weren't dreaming about riding ponies"; the use of contractions in "I'd" and "weren't" creates a casual and conversational tone that functions in juxtaposition to these taut moments. (S01E10)

Similarly, when Jack announces, "Has anyone seen Ethan?" the use of a contraction increases the urgency and anxiety of the moment. Likewise, Locke's "You're asking the wrong question" also contains a contraction, retaining a conversational speed even in the face of doubt. (S01E11)

The dialogue is interrupted with contractions such as "it's," "you're," "don't," "I'll," and "we've". The contractions also give a spoken and relaxed feel to the dialogue, further helping to make the characters accessible and real. Of these, Sawyer's informal, colloquial diction indicates his relaxed, rebellious disposition. (S01E12)

Grammar:

In addition, non-standard grammar involves constructions that are not accepted in standard written English, but that occur in spoken language. This can be seen with double negatives as in "I don't know nothing" or in the use of sentence fragments for emphasis as in "no way."

Jack: "You okay?" (Act 4). Context: After the cockpit crash, Jack asks Kate, "You okay?" omitting "are". This indicates a sense of urgency and an informal relationship.

Sawyer's diction often utilizes such unorthodox grammar, making him appear both defiant and informal. (S01E01)

Charlie employs unconventional grammatical forms to convey a sense of desperation and colloquialism, for example, "Pardon me for appearing desperate". His colloquial diction indicates his nervousness and informality.

Sawyer frequently deviates from conventional syntax with sentence fragments like "Just try it" or with rhetorical and informal language like "Guess what? I just shot a bear!" It is a testament to his boisterous, out-spoken nature.

Avoidance of "to be" verbs (e.g., "You okay?" rather than "Are you okay?") is a characteristic of crisis communication. But in situations of life-and-death characters do not adhere to grammatical etiquette:

Jack's medical authority: When Jack asks, "You okay?" (Act 4), the truncated syntax reflects his dual role as a caregiver and pragmatic leader. The deletion mirrors his focus on action over consolation, reinforcing his clinical detachment.

Sawyer's confrontational tone: "You speak French or not?" (Act 5) strips away politeness markers, framing his question as a challenge rather than a request. This aligns with his distrust of others and his survivalist ethos.

Michael's paternal anxiety: "You sure?" (Act 2) to Walt condenses his worry into two words, revealing his struggle to balance protectiveness with emotional restraint after his son's trauma. (S01E02)

Most often Sawyer's dialogue employs colloquial grammar, for example: "What you couldn't" and "Not my problem". It suggests a lackadaisical, hippy skater bohemian personality, unconcerned with social norms or regulation.

Elliptical Constructions: Subjects and auxiliary verbs, when they can be inferred from the context are frequently omitted (e.g., "See the world"). This is less formal and indicative of the high-stress, high-urgency context of the island. (S01E03)

Informal grammar, such as subject and auxiliary deletion, is common, which mirror spoken language (e.g., "Sawyer, what your problem?").

Elliptical Constructions: Characters frequently employ elliptical sentences in which words are understood, but not actually said, to save space. E.g., "You okay?" than "Are you okay?" This points to a sense of urgency felt by the characters. (S01E05)

Characters deploy sentence fragments and partial- sentences, particularly in moments of high emotional stakes, or in rapid conversation. This is indicative of the urgency and tension in their environment (e.g., "You checking me out?") "Why not?"). (S01E05)

Sawyer: "I don't give nothing to nobody" (Act 4) Reinforces his cynical, anti-authority persona.

Function in the narrative: Sawyer's flouting of language norms correlates with his refusal to participate in group identity and social responsibility.

Sawyer: "Sucks, don't it?" (Act 6). "Don't" for "doesn't" to reflect his being working class. Narrative Function: Emphasizes Sawyer's lack of respect for formality and authority. (S01E05)

Non-Standard Syntax: As an additional aspect of vernacular authenticity, conversational language displays syntactic "incorrectness" in the same way that people represent pronunciations in their everyday speech. It is common for there to be sentence fragments and unusual structure ("Not going to admit defeat"). (S01E06)

Liam (flashback): "We was supposed to walk away" (Act 4). Reflects working-class British dialect and familial tension.

Liam's non-standard grammar mirrors his chaotic influence on Charlie's addiction. (S01E07)

Frequently the authors do not finish their sentences, and use context in place of complete thoughts, which is prevalent in rapid or dramatic conversations "You sure know how to make a girl feel special, Sawyer." (implied: "with your comments.")

Sentence fragments are frequently employed by characters to indicate a sense of urgency or emotional intensity "Barely. Anyway, I ..."

Most frequently in dialogue, these fragmentary statements imply a sense of hurry or high emotion, as well as a need for context on the part of the reader to complete understanding. "He'll come back when he's found what he's looking for," where both subject and action are inferred from surrounding material.

Hurley: "No peanuts. No nothing" (Act 4). Emphasizes resource absence and frustration. (S01E08)

The script is often urgent or emotionally charged and will also sometimes be incomplete. For example, when Sayid is being tortured, he used "Please listen" without including a "to me" so that the pain and urgent nature of the situation is reflected. Sentence fragments appear as well, as in Kate's response to Jack's question in an abbreviated, for-emphasis style of simple "An accident." (S01E09)

In the case of Jack's "Claire!! Charlie! Claire!" the cut off and repetitious nature of his cries further highlights a sense of panic and desperation. Sentences like "What happened? What…" are incomplete in order to reflect the surprise of the characters, their attempts to understand. (S01E11)

Informal grammar and sentences structures, such as absent subjects or auxiliaries ("What the hell you doing?"; "Ain't gonna miss it") connote the characters' urgency, their affectivity, and the informal situation of being stranded on an island. (S01E12)

Pronunciation:

Characters like Sawyer, who speaks with a Southern American accent, may not "sound" the way Standard English marks their pronunciation with written words that do not follow pronunciation (such as "y'all" for "you all" or "runnin' instead of "running".) It is a way of pronouncing that enriches regional authenticity and particularity.

Charlie's nonstandard pronunciation via British accents and/or British specific vowels sounds or intonations that differ from American English also align with his cultural identity. (S01E01)

Charlie, as a Brit, articulates British English intonations and sounds that distinguish him from other American speakers, which contributes to his offbeat and laid-back identity within the group. (S01E02)

Charlie: "Followin' me?" (Act 4) G-dropping indicates that Charlie is British and of the working class.

Sawyer: "Nothin'" (implied Southern drawl). Casual speech indicates he is an outsider. (S01E07)

H-Dropping: Characters might display h-dropping, in which the "h" sound from words such as "have" or "him" are eliminated, as in "'ave" or "'im". This occurs in certain English dialects and adds to both character individuality and informality of speech.

H-dropping might also be perceived during informal or sarcastic moments or in colloquial phrases, and, in these contexts, Sawyer does occasionally h-drop, as when he is behaving informally or sarcastically, h-drops for example "'em" instead of "them," perhaps sounding as if he is h-dropping in rapid or relaxed informal speech. (S01E08)

Omitting –ing sounds: Characters frequently omit the –g sound in –ing endings so "running" becomes "runnin'," or "going" becomes "goin'". This style is reflective of conversational written English, as well as spoken English, and reinforces the casual or tense nature of the characters' interactions.

Omitted G Sounds: What would be omittance of the g sound in other words in general informal speech, leading to a more colloquial and regional way of speaking also.

Sawyer's informal, "g-dropping," speech drops the final "g" of words ending in "-ing." He says "pointin'" for "pointing" and "sittin'" for "sitting". It is the pronunciation we use in casual speech and is frequently used as a shortcut to indicate the figure's regional background or casual, informal persona.

Sawyer typically drops his g's, a linguistic feature that corresponds with his informal, folksy sounding speech style that is consistent with his rough, southern, personality. This speech analysis is illustrative of the character of Sawyer – simple, and/or unpretentious, not worried with formality. It has the additional effect of giving his dialogue realism and creating a unique sound to his dialogue voice. (S01E02)

Though it is not specified in the script, the language and phrasing indicate regional accent. Although its direct notation of accent the reader does not detect, Sawyer's use of language, such as calling Jack "Dr. Quinn," does indicate a Southern identity. (S01E09)

For example, Charlie's statement, "I've this dream. I'm driving a bus, and my teeth start falling out," is evocative of British humor and self-deprecation via the vocabulary and tone. (S01E10)

Word choice and expressions are used to suggest a character's particular accent; dialects are not explicitly displayed, but knowledge of the characters' backgrounds and dialects can be inferred from their dialogue. By saying "Alrighty, Tattoo, where do you think Ethan came from?" he uses "Alrighty" and "Tattoo" to respond to Walt to demonstrate informal manner.

Sawyer's employment of "ain't" and expressions such as "son of a bitch" reinforce his Southern, roguish characterization as well as offer cultural and sociolectal layers. The non-standard usage does not conform to proper grammar but is consistent with the rough, individualistic character of the protagonist. (S01E12)

Violation of Discourse:

Non-standard English can often be marked by interruptions, overlaps, and other discursive informality characteristic of spoken language. Characters might rely more heavily on discourse markers such as "um" or "like," or may cut each other off more often, signaling a violation of formal discourse rules.

Hurley: "Dude, I'm not going anywhere" (Act 1).

"Dude" is a casual term, juxtaposed with Jack's authority. This is indicative of the casual nature of Hurley and the band's non-hierarchical structure.

Jack's Commands: "Hey you, come on. Give me a hand!" (Act 1).

The lack of a "please" in the direct, imperative phrasing highlights the urgent nature of the situation.

Characters such as Sawyer and Charlie might trespass on the patterns of conventional discourse that govern collective conversation as a way of asserting their identity or resisting authority. (S01E01)

Sawyer often violates politeness norms during interactions, making combative, confrontational, or sarcastic statements to Hurley, for example calling him "Lardo," or Sayid. This highlights power dynamics in which he rebels against authority and group cohesion.

Shannon interrupts and insists on her inclusion in group exercises; for example, she insists, over Boone's objections, on participating in the hike, which highlights her struggle for identity, and for agency.

Sawyer's derogatory nicknames:

"Shut up, Lardo" (to Hurley, Act 3) is an example of using body-shaming as a weapon for control.

"Sweet cheeks" (Act 5) sexually objectifies Shannon, to deny her agency, this objectification reflects his own negative views of people and relationships.

Function: Sawyer's insults serve to undermine the group's solidarity and to mark Sawyer as an out-group enemy. His use of language taps into a way of seeing the world in which vulnerability is turned into an opportunity, not that which needs to be safeguarded.

Boone and Shannon's familial bluntness:

Boone: "You're just being worthless over here" (Act 4).

Shannon: "Screw you" (Act 4).

Function: This mutual disrespect highlights their toxic relationship as siblings. Their privilege and resentment are indicated through dialogue between Shannon and Boone which sounds in stark opposition to the collaborative language employed by the other survivors.

Hurley's "dude":

Hurley's employment of "dude" ("Dude, I'm… starving," Act 4) positions him as a go-between. His vernacular support system acts as a foil to Sawyer's antagonism, providing a language-based parallel to the tension in the group.

Why this matters: Politeness violations are social X-rays, revealing power dynamics (Sawyer's bullying), troubled home lives (Boone/Shannon), and efforts toward social cohesion (Hurley). (S01E02)

Characters engage in dialogs where they aggress one another that are accusatory in nature, Jack at Sawyer: "What did you do?" suggesting a lack of the back-and-forth collaborative process that we typically find in relaxed, polite conversation. (S01E03)

Interruptions and Overlaps: Characters frequently interrupt each other and speak on top of one another, their dialogue feeling a bit fragmented and overlapped as in arguments or urgent scenarios. (S01E04)

Like Mr. and Ms. this one doesn't really get thrown around a lot in the script in relation to the Characters on the Island, which is meant to reflect the high-stress, low formality nature of the show and their interactions, as well as the directness of the language used. Social etiquette is abandoned early on by the survivors who become concerned only with survival, and with one another. (S01E07)

Numerous interruptions indicate a sense of tension, urgency, or conflict. Kate's interruption of Jack's rationalization demonstrates impatience: "Well, accidents happen when you torture people, Jack."

Sarcasm and Mockery: There is also a high level of sarcasm in the dialogue between characters, particularly Sawyer, that breaks through polite culture and that signals tension and/or disgust. "Doctor playing golf. "Woo, boy howdy, now I've heard it all." (S01E09)

Jack's arguments with Locke are rife with interruptions as both men vie for control of the scene. Similarly, in the flashback to his father's operating room, Jack's angry "You call it" expresses defiance and anger. (S01E11)

There are also direct confrontations and sarcasm that shed light on personal conflicts and relationships. Sawyer even taunts Kate with, "Me Kate. Me throw rock," which emphasizes Kate's independent streak, but also their flirtatiously antagonistic relationship. (S01E12)

Vocabulary:

Slang or colloquialisms, for example, is regular feature of non-standard English. Charlie would use slang from Britain and Sawyer would use regional American slang. For example, Sawyer's use of contractions like "ain't" or words like "folks" point to an informal lexicon that is foreign to Jack's more formal English.

Such 'lexicon' is used not only for characterization, individual traits but also in order to convey a specific cultural and social background.

These non-standard English features add to the strength of the narrative by rendering dialogue more authentic in some of those multiple identities. They foreground the unofficial interactional processes in which participants are engaged in out 'in the world' and expose the social circumstances behind this interface and the dispositions of those acting out the roles.

Charlie: "What the hell just happened?" (Act 3)

Pilot: "What the hell was that?" (Act 3)

This is the only expletive in the transcript; stronger language (such as "shit," "goddamn") is rare in the transcripts for network TV shows because of industry standards. But hell comes back as a socially marked, mild taboo word. The multiple uses of the word "hell" are shocking and cause fear; they create a sense of the characters' lives existing under extreme duress. (S01E01)

Sawyer employs non-standard lexicon, with slang and idioms such as "sweet cheeks" and "piss off". His non-standard, casual and abrasive language is similarly intended to lead fans to construct a fan identity of him as nonconformist and challenging.

Shannon's use of informal and colloquial language ("Screw You") reflects her frustration and anger towards Boone and she creates a sense of sibling rivalry and independence.

Hugo says, "chain-smoking jackass," where his use of "jackass" allows him to vent his annoyance with this person who has been bugging him, a person who has been bugging him not only because of their smoking, but also because of their attitude. "Jackass" is a mild, almost joking insult that Hurley employs to express irritation in a humorous way. This linguistic choice also reflects Hurley's very plain-speech, and direct style but also a little of humor of the exchange. Sayid's straightforward response, "Some people have problems," implies an understanding or at least a tolerant attitude, in contrast to Hurley's blunt and direct, humorous plan. Such a dialogue exchange also draws attention to the disparity in the characters' personalities and coping mechanisms.

Shannon: "The hell I'm not" (Act 4) – Defiant and desperate, says this to Boone to correct him.

Boone: "What the hell's that?" (Act 4) – Fear of the unfathomable threats on the island.

Function: "Hell" serves as a profanity and a metaphysical reference. The use of the word "hellscape" is appropriate, as it is the "hellscape" of the island's surreal dangers (polar bears, whispers), but also because its repetition reflects the survivors' spiraling sanity.

Sawyer's "son of a bitch": This phrase, directed at Sayid (Act 3), functions as a weapon of Otherness. Sawyer uses post-9/11 fears to project attention away from his crime by labeling Sayid as a "terrorist".

Jack's "damn it!": Act 5, when he becomes frustrated during surgery, is also when his act drops. The forbidden word humanizes him and shows the cost of leadership. (S01E02)

Informal and Slang Terms: Words such as "Doc" and "Freckles," which Sawyer uses, display his laid-back, irreverent character. Nicknames and slang subtly create some sense of hierarchy and often familiarity, or lack thereof, between the characters.

Jargon and Technical Terms: Jack's "perforated lung" is used as a source of strength and authority in the face of adversity, through medical jargon which also establishes his identity and expertise as a doctor. (S01E03)

Colloquialisms and slang words like "metro" and "peachy" reveal the characters' histories and the casualness of social exchanges in a survival situation.

Jargon and Specific Terms: Locke uses specific hunting jargon (e.g. "flanking a piglet), which highlights his survival skills and leadership. But Connett's use of such technical terms situates him as a specialist in the wild.

Sawyer: Jackass, pork pie, peachy, Metro (used as an insult by Sawyer to refer to Jack).

Hurley: Dude; crud'; son of a...

Sawyer's sarcastic reply: "Hell no, it's the best idea I ever heard" reiterates his antagonistic outsider and non-authority trusting demeanor.

Hurley's colloquialisms ("Dude, quit asking me that") act as a bridging mechanism and allow for situational comedy, bringing the group together and decompressing some tension. Charlie: "What the bloody hell was that?"

Sawyer: "Aw hell, screwing over everybody".

Shannon: "What's a four-letter word for I don't care?"

Stress and Conflict: Expletives punctuate moments of crisis (e.g., failed hunt, food scarcity).

Power Dynamics: Sawyer's insults ("Lardo") destabilize group cohesion, while Shannon's dismissiveness reveals toxic sibling dynamics. (S01E04)

Informal vocabulary, such as "crap idea," "git," and "pessimists," is rife within the text and designates the informal, albeit tense, tone of their conversation. Hurley: Damn it, crap, son of a… (Act 4). Existential frustration during failed fishing.

Charlie: "'Least some git hadn't nicked it" (Act 4). The British slang "git" places serious emphasis on class tension.

Narrative Function: Signals crisis (drownings, theft) and indicates anti- authority figures (Sawyer, Charlie). (S01E05)

Distinct idiomatic expressions ("Captain Falafel," "belle of the ball") are employed for characters like Sawyer to amplify his individual character and sarcastic personality.

The word Locke uses when addressing Charlie in Act 4 is "Bugger off". Rude slang dominates Charlie. Narrative Function: Indicates moments of crisis (bee attack) and cultural tension (Charlie's working-class British vs. Locke's power). (S01E06)

The use of more informal language, such as "piss off" and "bloody hell", also injects the dialogue with a sense of reality and reminds the viewer that the script is taking place in the late twentieth-century. Charlie: Bloody hell! (Act 3) – British slang maximizes chaos of the cave-in.

Liam: "You're still a junkie" (Act 5). Fetishizes pain; describes dependency.

Sawyer: Piss off! (Act 4) Dismissive slang asserts dominance.

Identifies moments of crisis (the cave collapse) or cultural conflict (Charlie is British, Locke stoic). (S01E07)

Language is colloquial and sometimes slang, indicating familiarity and sometimes contempt. "Ain't" and "gen-u-ine I-raqi" are in imitation, and mockery, of Sawyer's informal speech. (S01E08)

Sayid's speech is based in military and technical knowledge and skill – directly reflecting his origins. "sacrifice"; Strategic thought, responsibility.

The light use of taboo language in the transcript of Jogn's conversation, reveals contextual tension and cultural identity. Sawyer's use of "damn Arab" is, of course a racial slur that, coupled with "damn" increases his aggression toward Sayid, and reveals his own prejudice. His folksy "boy howdy" satire distorts Southern U.S. colloquialism in order to sarcastically undercut Jack's behavior. Hurley's "crap" and "freakin' polar bears" employ euphemisms to express his disbelief at what is happening to him, and the humor as well as frustration such euphemisms create. The playfulness of Charlie's "Bollocks" (British slang to denote "nonsense") is further enhanced by its indication of his angry, but recognized as in jest, cultural foregrounding. While these two words prevent the novel from being as vulgar as it might otherwise be, they do reveal a sense of tension and urgency, nuggets of character and a sort of cultural zing that places the high stakes drama of the island in terms that are conversational and relate-able. (S01E09)

When Hurley says "Dude, I'm just saying, it'd be sweet if we could have, I don't know, something to do," he uses the slang "dude" and "sweet" calling attention to his informal attitude even in terrible situations. (S01E09)

When Claire becomes distraught Jack repeatedly breaks into her soliloquy to question or advise her, reinforcing the primacy of chaos and alarm in their lives. (S01E10)

Hurley's use of everyday, casual expressions, such as "Your blacks can't get in," while playing backgammon with Walt also make the experience of the two men more accessible and relatable to the reader. (S01E11)

Characters have a blunt and restricted vocabulary ("pretty bad," "kind of wary") that emphasizes the immediacy of the characters' survival and affective circumstance and highlights the bluntness of the situation of survival. (S01E12)

3.2. Discussion

This study of the sociolinguistic dimensions of language use in the first season of *Lost* seeks to contribute to an area that has received very little attention at the intersections of media studies and sociolinguistics. Though real-life language dynamics have been a prominent focus of research, how these dynamics are depicted in fictional texts and particularly in ensemble-based survival dramas has received less attention. Finally, missing in the literature that focuses on issues as people is a study that analyzes language as a means of identity, power struggle and group identity.

Lost demonstrates that language is a key mechanism for both connection and alienation among the varied characters on the island. These characters' different accents, dialects, and registers of speech are not merely tropes, but are in fact central to the way they identify themselves and are perceived by others. Cultural and individual identity is communicated, and individuals and characters are represented and interact with each other through these variations.

Code-switching is also employed quite frequently by the characters, reinforcing the complexity of intercultural communication and identities. This linguistic feature is significant as it exposes interpersonal conflicts and alliances and depicts the characters' struggle to move about in a multicultural, high- intensity setting. The show's language attitudes allow communication to become embedded with power relations, both acting as a medium of inclusion and of exclusion.

This work may help to shed some light on the ways in which fictional media can reflect and stage these nearly universal sociolinguistic processes. As an example of how language can impact on social hierarchical structures and the development of community, *Lost* serves as an interesting case study regarding more general sociolinguistic questions. The use of language to construct identities and power relations in this show again underscores the ways in which the media both reflect and construct social reality.

Though such analysis is helpful, it focuses solely on the first season of *Lost*. Further seasons of this series could be analyzed in order to observe how language use may change as social relations and structures differently emerge in the series. Also, the analysis of additional ensemble-based television dramas as well as comparisons between ensembles can strengthen the conclusions drawn from the analyses of language variation and attitudes within this corpus of sample dramas. A study of the reader's reaction would provide the most insight into the power of these linguistic representations.

This analysis suggests that language use is a crucial factor in identity development and power breaking in oral narration, raising important questions regarding the role of sociolinguistic processes in such a setting that results in the textual product of *Lost*. Through the consideration of language variation, code-switching, and language attitudes, this study contributes exploring the influence of media representations on real sociolinguistic facts, and vice versa. These results help highlight the continued significance of linguistic analysis in media studies; they highlight force of language as a key factor in human interaction and social organization, both on and off the screen.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this thesis was to analyse the complex links amongst language, identity, and power in the television drama *Lost*, using the lens of a qualitative study to reveal what the social meanings produced by the use of certain language varieties tell us about what is happening among the characters and the unity as a whole in a survival story. Through an examination of linguistic features and issues of code-switching, language variation, and attitudes, the work demonstrates that language is not just a medium for communication but an important tool for power negotiation, identity formation and managing the delicate social balance of life on the island.

This analysis reveals that language in *Lost* serves as a reflection of cultural identity and as a site of power struggle. Jack, Locke, and Kate all use various linguistic tactics – register shifts, tone, and code- switching – to exert power, form coalitions, and subvert authority. These characters' linguistic styles and tones also serve to define their roles: Jack's authoritative tone marks him as a natural leader, while Sawyer's sarcasm and colloquialisms mark him as an outsider. Language barriers and multilingual exchanges (Sayid's Arabic, Jin's Korean) contribute to a discourse on exclusion and fleeting moments of cross-cultural solidarity, and linguistic diversity functions as a narrative strategy to address questions of belonging and alienation.

The research highlights the link between language attitudes and power in conflict situations. The biases of survivors against accents or dialects, for example, contribute to real-world stereotypes about, for example, non-native English speakers, and code- switching becomes a survival mechanism to resolve conflict or to gain social power. Communication on the island is high stakes and everyday conversations become identity negotiations because of the isolation of the island. These results are consistent with the predictions of sociolinguistic theories, and illustrate how fictional narratives can capture real social processes, such as the use of language to assert power or create group solidarity.

This qualitative, close analysis of dialogue and character interactions was necessary to capture the nuances of linguistic performance. The analysis of particular scenes, for example battles over leadership or instances of intercultural collaboration, reveals the ways in which less language use, such as a change in register from formal to informal, influences macro-level group processes. This approach helped to provide an understanding of how the language of *Lost*

is employed not only in the service of character development, but also in the service of critiquing power structures in society.

This study opens up the possibility for media linguists to explore fictional narratives such as *Lost* as valuable sites for sociolinguistic research. This study connects the gap between fictional and actual language use, demonstrating how crisis situations bring language to the forefront of identity formation. This framework could be broadened in future research to other seasons of *Lost*, or to other ensemble dramas; it could be used to explore audience reactions to linguistic representation, or it could be supplemented with quantitative analysis to ascertain the frequency and effect of particular sociolinguistic features.

In conclusion, ultimately, this thesis contends that language is the island we move through and around on a daily basis- the space in which identities are challenged, power is negotiated, and relationships are built or destroyed. In exposing *Lost*'s narrative techniques, via a sociolinguistic examination of the series, this study shows to the reader to consider how language structures our world around us. Ultimately, the survivors of Oceanic Flight 815 are not simply lost on an island, but they are lost in language; and it is through language that they attempt to recover the meaning, the sense of belonging, and the agency that has been stripped from them.

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APPENDICES

ABSTRACT

The present study examines the complex interplay between language and identity by conducting a sociolinguistic study of the television series *LOST* (2004-2010). Specifically, in the first season this study examines the ways in which language not only discloses characters' ethnic and social backgrounds and statuses, but also actively constructs and molds these identities, and thus interpersonal dynamics within the nascent island society. The main argument is that sociolinguistic markers, specifically language variation, code-switching, and language attitudes, play a major role in the development of the characters and the narrative of the show.

The research also fills a gap in the existing matters, which has not applied sociolinguistic frameworks to ensemble-based television dramas, particularly those with multicultural casts in crisis. Although language variation, code-switching, and language attitudes have been explored in previous research on real-world communities, this dissertation explores the ways in which *LOST*, as a fictional narrative, reflects and refracts these real-world sociolinguistic phenomena.

Using a qualitative approach, the study closely examines specific scenes of *LOST* Season 1 that contain language variation (accents, dialects, and register), code-switching, and explicit or implicit language attitudes. Transcriptions of dialogue are analyzed using a sociolinguistic framework to understand how language use relates to identity formation, power relations, and social hierarchies among the survivor group. Jack, Locke, and Kate are analyzed as case studies of how the speech of key characters in the series impacts their social positioning and the series as a whole.

The analysis shows language in *LOST* to be a fluid mechanism of inclusion and exclusion, through which alliances are formed, leadership is claimed, and group membership is marked. Through the characters' responses to and acceptance of linguistic variation in a high-stress situation, the series offers a nuanced and layered representation of the relationship between language, identity, and social power. The analysis shows that *LOST* does not use language as a neutral medium for the transmission of information, but rather as a performative force that constructs characters and social relations on the island.

Finally, this study makes a unique contribution in that it shows the importance of using sociolinguistic methods to the study of media narratives. It demonstrates how a fictional television drama can be a microcosm of actual sociolinguistic processes, and it shows the centrality of language in identity construction and negotiation, especially in a multi-ethnic community in a time of crisis. These findings should remind us that in trying to understand media narratives we must also consider the sociolinguistic forces at work, and that while we may feel "lost in language," it is also language that allows us to find ourselves and to relate to others.

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I would like to express my most sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of those who perished in the horrific airplane crash of Azerbaijan Airlines Embraer E190 aircraft in Kazakhstan on December 25, 2024. Much of my work deals with issues of language, identity, and experience in crisis situations, and I am reminded that these are not only problems within a fictional story or research project but the lives behind the story carried off by the current. To the lives lost I would like to sincerely dedicate this work, and I pray it adds in some small regard to a better understanding of human solidarity and human resilience.

LIST OF FIGURES

Here are the episode titles for the first 12 episodes of the TV series "*Lost*," from Season 1:

1. S01E01 - Pilot, Part 1

2. S01E02 - Pilot, Part 2

3. S01E03 - Tabula Rasa

4. S01E04 - Walkabout

5. S01E05 - White Rabbit

6. S01E06 - House of the Rising Sun

7. S01E07 - The Moth

8. S01E08 - Confidence Man

9. S01E09 - Solitary

10. S01E10 - Raised by Another

11. S01E11 - All the Best Cowboys Have Daddy Issues

12. S01E12 - Whatever the Case May Be