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Secondary Characters Coloring the Complex Cultural Atmosphere in *Unorthodox*

Multilingualism and Its Translation in Watering Screen Landscapes¹

1. Introduction

Multilingualism has been repeatedly present in fictional texts, both written and audiovisual, around the world [Grutman 1998; Cronin 2009; Delabastita 2009; Corrius and Zabalbeascoa 2011]. Delabastita and Grutman [2005: 16] suggest the following definition:

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The simplest possible definition of a multilingual text would be to say that such a text is worded in different languages, but that still begs the fundamental question of how one should understand the concept of ‘language.’ In this study, we favour a very open and flexible concept which acknowledges not only the ‘official’ taxonomy of languages but also the incredible range of subtypes and varieties existing within the various officially recognised languages, and indeed sometimes cutting across and challenging our neat linguistic typologies [*ibid.*].

Within the context of translation, real or invented languages together with the dialects present in the original texts are all called third languages, or L3. According to Corrius [2008]: “The third language (L3) is neither L1 in the ST nor L2 in the TT; it is any other language(s) found in either text.”

Thus, the presence of different languages alerts viewers to a change of cultural setting, bearing in mind that the presence of linguistic diversity “is relevant not only to language and linguistic diversity, but also to culture and identity” [Corrius and Zabalbeascoa 2011: 74].

As stated by van Dijk [1996], social groups are organized according to common action patterns since they share common values. Ideology is a central concept for van Dijk [*ibid.*: 16] since its primary function is to organize the group’s attitude and social identity: “identity is both a personal and social construct, that is, a mental representation located in personal (episodic) memory” [van Dijk 1998: 118].

According to this definition, the identity of an individual is shaped through the experiences they have and as a result of a cognitive process, i.e., people identify the action patterns they have to live by. Identity is therefore both social and personal, and identities can be revealed through discursive patterns [Hall 1996]. When fictional characters share common behavior traits with real individuals, it is easier for audiences to interpret fictional stories thanks to the cognitive patterns they have acquired in real life.

We can state, therefore, that fictional texts are produced in social contexts and multilingualism in fiction can uncover social relationships. From this perspective, translation, as a cultural operation, might alter the perception of identities mainly because the concept of identity blends two antonymic concepts: sameness (what is shared) and uniqueness [Wodak, de Cillia *et al.* 2005] since identity “never signifies anything static, unchanging, or substantial, but rather always an element situated in the flow of time, ever-changing, something involved in a process” [*ibid.*: 11].

Translation can modify the way target text audiences infer information about fictional characters.

Identities are produced, consumed and regulated within culture [...] in order to gain full understanding of a cultural text or artifact, it is necessary to analyse the processes of representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation [Woodward 1997: 2].

In order to put the previous concepts and statements into practice and determine their applicability in audiovisual productions screened via digital platforms, we chose the series *Unorthodox* because of the meaningful use of multilingualism in the series and its importance in portraying personal and social identities. We conducted a study aimed at answering the following three questions: (1) How do different languages in *Unorthodox* convey information regarding character portrayal?; (2) How does each language produce different effects on the film narrative itself?; and (3) To what extent does the visual channel play a role in the cultural and narrative domains of the series (as audiovisual language combines words, sounds, and images).

Unorthodox is a German-American mini-series aired in March 2020, based on Deborah Feldman's autobiography written in 2012, *Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots*. The series was directed by Maria Schrader and the script was written by Alexa Karolinski.

The main character of the series is Esther Shapiro (mostly referred to in the series as "Esty"), a young Hasidic woman who is trapped in an unhappy marriage. Having learned she is pregnant, she decides to flee from the ultra-Orthodox community where she was brought up and travels to Berlin, where her mother lives. Her family in New York sends her husband after her to make her go back. He goes with Moishe, a young man who had unsuccessfully tried to escape from the Jewish community.

Action patterns correspond to the social groups to which individuals belong, and in *Unorthodox* the characters' choice of language supports the coherence of the narrative. Besides, the time frame shifts back and forth, so that the narrative is built through a juxtaposition of Esty's present situation and numerous flashbacks that shed light on the reasons behind her choices.

2. Characters as Multilingual Assets

In order to address the study's objectives, the focus is on five secondary characters surrounding or driving Esty's story. Taken together, these characters become multilingual assets coloring the cultural mosaic of the mini-series. The four female secondary characters are family members that play a central role in the narrative arc of the Esty's pregnancy. These characters were analyzed to try to establish a link between the languages they spoke and the role they played in portraying Esty's fictional universe. A male character who embodies stereotypes attributed to the cultural and ideological pattern the protagonist escapes from was also included.

Esty is an ultra-Orthodox Jewish woman who decides to leave the community she has been raised in and pushes herself towards fulfilling her true desire. The main themes in the story revolve around motherhood and living according to strict religious rules.

As the plot unfolds, the main theme is presented through Esty's interaction with secondary characters that play a decisive role both in setting the cultural context she was raised in and in developing the narrative. At times, the influence of the five secondary characters counterbalances attitudes towards community duties and personal decisions.

Each character included in the analysis represents a stereotype. Character portrayal is made through their appearance and speech; choice of language also provides critical information regarding their attitudes towards the ultra-Orthodox Jewish rules, an aspect that has a direct bearing on the Spanish dubbed and subtitled versions.² The five characters are briefly described as follows.

Esty's grandmother, Babby, plays the role of the mentor in the story: Esty has followed Babby's advice her whole life. She also provides the fundamental cultural and family essence, shown in the series through a song which connects her to her ancestors. This music initially appears in the story as Esty's connection to her past, but it then becomes the metaphorical object of her personal pursuit: music seems to be the way to construct her future with the group of friends she meets in Berlin. This approach to music automatically involves breaking the rules that ban Hasidic Jewish women from singing in front of men. This defiance brings conflict into the story. The grandmother speaks in Yiddish at all times.

² In this study, we are analyzing the dubbed and subtitled versions into the Spanish of Spain.

Leah, Esty's mother, presents a stereotypical character in opposition to Babby. Despite being of Jewish origin, Leah had decided to leave the community to escape from her alcoholic husband, even though this decision meant that she ultimately lost touch with her daughter. Thus, Leah broke with her Jewish past and fled to Germany returning to the country of her ancestors. Her escape to Germany enabled her to express her true self and come out as a lesbian.

She intentionally uses English whenever possible and only speaks Yiddish at work, giving the language a purely practical use. This decision is directly connected with her current identity as a free person as opposed to the restrictions she had experienced in the Jewish community. Her relationship with her daughter evolves throughout the series. In the first scene they are shown together, Esty keeps her distance towards her mother made explicit through the choice of language: Esty speaks to her mother harshly and coldly and switches to English at a certain point in the conversation to show the distance between them. In that scene, Leah gives Esty her ancestors' papers that may provide a way out of the Williamsburg community. As the story unfolds, Esty uses these documents to get to Germany, following in her mother's footsteps towards personal freedom. The evolution of their relationship is graphically shown on the screen in their last scene together, when they speak in English only. Leah tells her why she had to leave and draws a parallel between their situations and life choices. This scene completes the arc of their story: in the show, Leah is progressively unveiled in the pursuit of freedom and the way her story matches her daughter's in the end shows Esty's resolution/denouement of the conflict.

On a different level, Miriam Shapiro (Esty's mother-in-law) and Malka Schwartz (her aunt) also play a significant part in the ensemble of characters who, through their presence and actions, influence the way the main character in the story unfolds and, most notably, provide stereotypical references in the cultural canvas of the story. Both characters play a fundamental role in arranging Esty's marriage: Malka Schwartz for Esty, and Miriam Shapiro on behalf of her son Yanky. They share their perspective as female members of the Hasidic Jewish community, but their importance changes as the story evolves.

After the marriage, and due to Esty's problems with getting pregnant, Miriam blames her for not fulfilling her role as a woman, which is to give birth to Jewish children. Miriam reacts as a protective mother towards her son (a stereotype shown in the series through her character) and blames

Esty whenever possible for not getting pregnant, which eventually leads her to the conclusion that Esty was not the right choice for her son. She speaks mostly Yiddish and only uses English to mention products and objects alien to the Jewish community or to express emotions, as shown below. From our analysis, it follows that her role is clearly portrayed as an ideal prototypical Hasidic Jewish mother as far as community expectations go and is soon turned into a sort of antagonist of the main character.

Malka Schwartz, on the other hand, is presented as a practical proactive character who helps in matching Esty and Jacob (referred to in the series as “Yanky”) on behalf of the bride. As a traditional Jewish woman, most of her lines are uttered in Yiddish. However, almost at the end of the series, she has a conversation with Miriam where they do not see eye to eye for the first time. Miriam blames Esty for ruining the marriage, to which Malka answers, in English, that responsibility in a marriage is shared by both spouses. The use of English in this scene is clearly intended to highlight her opinion and this should be considered in the translation so as not to miss the nuance.

Finally, Moishe Lefkovitch represents a counterbalance to the previously described female characters. He is portrayed as an antagonist because of what he does. When Esty is declared missing, Moishe is appointed by the rabbi to accompany her husband Yanky and make her return to the community because she is carrying a Jewish child. He is burdened with this duty so that he can redeem himself for his past faults as a Jew. Throughout the episodes, Moishe shows an addiction to gambling, which is to be understood as having had bad consequences both for him and his family in the past.

In the story, Moishe proves to be a clever assistant to his cousin Yanky. Owing to his inquisitiveness and access to new technologies, he eventually finds the clues to locate Esty in Berlin. Especially significant is his disrespectful tone when addressing the female characters who are closest to her. His persuasion methods are particularly aggressive and menacing with women, as can be seen in the scenes with the piano teacher (episode 1, 38:10) and especially in conversations with Leah (episode 2, 19:18) and Esty (episode 4, 16:30 and 48:03). His attitude in all of these scenes shows an archetypal image of a harsh traditional application of the Jewish law embodied in a male character, contrasting with his cousin Yanky’s lack of independence, strength, and agency. In the whole series, he mostly

speaks Yiddish, except for the scene with the piano teacher where he uses English.

3. Multilingualism in the Series

Different languages can be heard in *Unorthodox*: Hebrew, German, Yiddish, and English. Each of them is associated with a different social identity and is intended to emphasize the identity of some of the characters who use Yiddish and English. Language descriptions in this section are illustrated with dialogue excerpts when appropriate. All of the examples are provided in English. However, to show the language mixing, lines spoken in Yiddish and Hebrew in the show will be shown in italics, German lines are underlined, and utterances in English will be kept in regular font.

Having said that, let us now comment on how Hebrew is dealt with. It is the least spoken language in the four episodes, heard only in scenes related to religion. It appears at Esty's wedding in episode 2 (25:00 and 27:00), when Moishe is praying (episode 4, 28:25), and when Esty's aunt and grandfather pray after their mother and wife has died (episode 4, 30:10).

The few instances where Hebrew is used are particularly relevant because they connect Yiddish speakers with the Jewish religion providing an insight into their faith, attitudes, values and social representations, i.e., their ideology and social identity. Hebrew is also present in the visual channel as written words on a cloth covering the bread during the Sabbath celebration (episode 1, 10:25).

In the original version, only two instances of Hebrew are subtitled in English, both of them during the wedding. The first one is in episode 2, 24:45 when Yanky puts the ring on Esty's finger after uttering the words: *You are betrothed to me with this ring according to the laws of Moses and Israel.* The second is from episode 2 (39:00) when the couple is asked to dance together: *The groom will now dance with his pious bride for the sake of the union of God and His Shechina. How does one dance before the bride? May they build an everlasting home. And all will dance quickly in our days toward our righteous Messiah.* These instances have been translated into English because, we assume, the words are relevant for the narrative: the commitment established by the wedding oath is not kept by Esty, and also because the audience learns about the importance of religion in the daily lives of members of the Hasidic community.

All the other instances of Hebrew in the source text do not come with English subtitles. As observed in previous studies on multilingualism and translation [Sokoli, Pujol-Tubau *et al.* 2020: 75], this is justified by the fact that the L3 utterances are kept untranslated when the meaning is meant to be understood through the picture rather than the words: this is the case in episode 4 (28:25 and 30:10), where the visual cues and characters' gestures are sufficient for the viewers to follow what is going on in the scene and the exact meaning of the L3 words is not deemed necessary or relevant.

The Spanish version applies the same criterion towards the translation or non-translation of the Hebrew lines as the English version. Only the lines transcribed above are subtitled into Spanish in the dubbed or the subtitled version.

German is hardly spoken in the mini-series, and when it is heard or read, its main goal is to signal that the setting has moved to Germany.

In episode 3, Esty's husband walks the streets of Berlin and when a police car goes by, the audience can then read *Polizei* (24:43). When he goes into the nursing home where Esty's mother works (25:26), the word *Gemeinschaftsraum* ("common room") is written on the wall next to a door. A similar example is when Esty's mother is at the concert hall in Berlin, and the signs are in German (i.e., *Bühneneingang*, episode 4, 33:05), making the audience aware of the city where the action takes place. This is absolutely necessary if we bear in mind the multiple flashbacks in the four episodes. But German becomes the language of the past as well. For instance, episode 4, 46:53 includes a close-up of a birth certificate in German confirming German citizenship of an ancestor with the emblem of the Third Reich.

In spite of the rarity of dialogues in German, images of well-known buildings and streets in Berlin complement the narrative as they act as cultural referents reinforcing the visual landscape and add information about the setting. The details in the visual channel play a significant role for location change between Berlin and Williamsburg. Examples of the use of visuals as location markers can be found, for instance, in episode 1 (8:10), after Yanky tells her parents that she is missing, the episode shows an image of the Berliner Fernsehturm (TV tower), followed by a panoramic shot of the airport. Other iconic elements of the city are present throughout the series and appear usually as a signal of the return to the current story from a flashback.

In a relevant conversation in episode 1 (39:09), Esty talks to a friend in Berlin about the similarities between German and Yiddish and the audience can hear certain words in German, such as *echt*, *genau* or *stimmt*, which have the same cognates in Yiddish. This could be understood as another element that makes Esty and her mother return to their roots after their unfortunate marriages.

Yiddish is the main language spoken by the Orthodox Jewish community members, and it becomes the primary means to convey information about its connection with the social identity. In fact, Yiddish becomes the language that binds its speakers together. Despite their attachment to it, speakers living in Brooklyn use some seemingly inevitable code-switching with English, and individual English words (for instance “hospital”) pop up unexpectedly in Yiddish conversations when characters refer to realities only available to them through English. In Example 1, Esty’s mother-in-law visits her and they have an intimate conversation about the problems she is experiencing in her marriage and the impossibility of having full intercourse.

EXAMPLE 1. EPISODE 3, 5:00-6:00

- Miriam: *I’ve brought something that will help you.*
 Esty: *What is this?*
 Miriam: *Read the instructions on the box. It makes things easier... down there. You should figure this out before that boy loses his confidence. Do you understand?*
 Esty: *I...*
 Miriam: *Yanky is... very sensitive. You have to make him feel...*
 Esty: *Like a king. I know. A man should feel like a king in bed.*
 Miriam: *My Yanky should always feel like a king.*
 Esty: *Does that make me a queen?*

It is interesting to point out that the words in English used by Miriam in this conversation refer to objects external to the community (in this case, a lubricant, but mentioned extremely vaguely through the words “Read the instructions on the box”) and two words related to feelings or emotions: “confidence” and “sensitive”.

In other situations, we also see that even the characters the audience interprets as more inclined to observe the Hasidic rules make use of English

to express their negative feelings and emotions. In example 2, Miriam and Malka talk about Esty's grandmother's health.

EXAMPLE 2. EPISODE 4, 19:17-20:09

- Malka: *Did he tell her my mother's dying?*
 Miriam: *Of course not. He has enough to worry about, chasing down his crazy wife in a foreign country!*
 Malka: *It takes two, you know. Esty didn't ruin the marriage alone.*

As illustrated in the previous dialogue excerpt, in the instances where two languages are spoken, the dubbed version offers subtitles for both languages. Consequently, the target audience loses the multilingual hints as they were originally intended.

Some of the conversations are held in Yiddish and English with speakers outside the Hasidic community, as in the case when Esty's grandmother dies and her husband calls for an ambulance (Example 3). During this conversation, paramedics speak mainly English and Esty's grandfather answers in Yiddish, perhaps quite unwittingly.

EXAMPLE 3. EPISODE 4, 28:55-29:28

- Paramedic 1: *How long has she been lying here?*
 Zeidy: *I don't know. I found her like this and then I called.*
 Paramedic 2: *Does she take medicine?*
 Zeidy: *Our daughter always brought her medicine.*
 Paramedic 2: *Charge 150. Clear. Charge 190. Clear.*

Code-switching can even involve three languages (German, Yiddish, and English), as when Yanky and Moishe (Example 4) check in at a hotel in Berlin (episode 2, 12:30).

EXAMPLE 4. EPISODE 2, 12:30-13:08

- Receptionist: Welcome. Checking in, fellows? (in German)
 Moishe: *Moses Lefkovitch.*
 Receptionist: *Lefkovitch, right. May I have your credit card, please?*
 Moishe: *You've got cash, right?* (to Yanky)
 Yanky: *Uh... Yes.*
 Receptionist: *First time in Berlin?*

Moishe: *No.* (in Yiddish)

Yanky: *Yes.* (in English)

Receptionist: It's always a great pleasure to host guests from Israel here in Germany. *Shalom!*

Moishe (with a distinctive American accent): Israel? *Zionists!* We're from New York, the United States of America. Did someone leave a package for me?

In the original version, both the German and Yiddish (L3) lines are subtitled. The dubbed version into Spanish follows the original soundtrack pattern for L3 lines and renders them through subtitles. In the subtitled version, all utterances are rendered without any indication of language, thus producing a neutralization of code-switching. This is the translation pattern observed in all of the conversations in the series that display code-switching.

English is portrayed mainly as a *lingua franca* or used by characters who wish to move away from the Hasidic community. Different Hasidic characters show a varied range of attitudes towards English, but in most of the cases Yiddish speakers use English when they are outside their community.

In Esty's case, she always speaks English outside her community, and she uses English with her piano teacher, for instance. When she meets Vivian in Brooklyn (episode 1, 29:53-31:20), she is with her father, and they try to collect the rent Vivian owes them for the apartment. Both Esty and her father use English all the time while speaking to Vivian. Again, in episode 4 (22:10-23:29), Esty explains to Vivian in English that she wishes to fly to Berlin. Likewise, when she sells her jewelry to pay for the travel expenses to Germany (episode 4, 23:28-24:40), she seems to be very fluent in English. And then, in Berlin, she uses English with speakers from different parts of the world; most of her interactions are with the musicians she meets at the conservatory.

Esty's mother, Leah, wishes to attend her daughter's wedding, but she is banned by her sister-in-law, Malka, who uses English to tell her to leave (episode 2, 34:30): "I have to ask you to leave right now. Please leave."

Leah, who once belonged to the Hasidic community by marriage, is no longer a part of it and the language she is spoken to in this situation, English, highlights this. A similar situation arises (Example 5) when Leah visits her daughter once she learns she is getting married. Leah begins the

conversation in Yiddish, but Esty refuses to speak it with her and switches to English, the linguistic code used with strangers, and finally her mother gives up and the conversation continues in English.

EXAMPLE 5. EPISODE 1, 44:54-45:40

- Esty: *What is she doing here?*
 Leah: *I heard you're getting married.*
 Babby: *I'll be in the kitchen.*
 Esty: *No. Don't go.*
 Babby: *You're a bride now, Esty. I will wait in the kitchen.*
 Leah: *Thank you. You're getting married. Congratulations!*
 Esty: *What do you care?*
 Leah: *Esty! I'm your mother.*
 Esty: *You stopped being my mother the day you left Williamsburg.*
 Leah: *No. I will always be your mother. No matter where I go. I wanted to give you this.*

It needs to be pointed out that the use of English can also be associated to freedom and acts as a marker to indicate who belongs to the Hasidic community and who does not. Leah refuses twice to speak Yiddish in Berlin. The first time we see it in the series is in episode 2 (Example 6). Moishe and Yanky go to Leah's apartment to threaten her and she makes her point very clear. She has decided not to speak Yiddish in her house:

EXAMPLE 6. EPISODE 2, 18:40-20:10

- Leah: Hello? Hello, who is there? (in German)
 Yanky: Hello?
 Leah: Hello, someone there?
 Yanky: Hello, this is Jacob Shapiro. I am Esther Shapiro's husband. *She let me in. That's good. Right?*
 Moishe: *It's something.*
 Yanky: I'm Jacob.
 Leah: I know who you are, Yanky. I was at your wedding.
 Yanky: Really? So, is she here?
 Leah: Esty? No.
 Moishe: *Do me a favour, lady.*
 Leah: English! We speak English in my house! And you are?
 Moishe: *I'm his cousin, Moishe.*

- Leah: And you came all the way to Germany, why?
 Moishe: *Enough with this! Because Esty is here.*
 Nina: Leah! Wer ist da? (German, not subtitled)
 Yanky: *If she's not here, where else would she go?*
 Leah: What happened, Yanky? Things must be pretty bad for you to believe she'd gone this far. Are they bad? Tell me the truth.
 Moishe: *No, you tell us the truth!*
 Leah: Stop! This is not your world. You can't threaten me here.
 Nina: Who are you?
 Leah: They are nobody, they are just leaving.

There is another scene in episode 3 (Example 7), where Leah tells Yanky about her attitude towards Yiddish, since he finds out that Leah speaks Yiddish with the residents of the care home, where she works.

EXAMPLE 7. EPISODE 3, 25:10-26:48

- Yanky: Miss Mandelbaum.
 Leah: What are you doing here? I'm working.
 Yanky: I know. I came to talk to you.
 Leah: Yeah, but you have to go. *Mr. Katz, I'll bathe you now.*
 Patient: *Who is he?*
 Yanky: *I'm her son-in-law.*
 Patient: *Ah! I didn't even know you had a daughter.*
 Leah: *All right, Mr. Katz? Close your eyes!*
 Yanky: You said you didn't speak Yiddish anymore.
 Leah: Only at work.
 Yanky: Why?
 Leah: What else was I to do? No education, no skills... I didn't speak Yiddish as well as everyone else in Williamsburg, but I spoke it well enough to get me a job here. You have no idea how the real world works.
 Yanky: You could have stayed in our world. We take care of women in Williamsburg.
 Leah: Do you? Really? My husband was a drunk who could barely take care of himself, let alone a family. I didn't see you people come running to help. *And the other side.*

No doubt there is an intentional use of English in the series. Characters like Esty and Leah, who leave the group, prefer to speak English in an attempt to reveal their pursuit of freedom.

In the dubbed version, English is dubbed and Yiddish is subtitled in Spanish. Therefore, the Spanish audience is well aware of the multilingualism and is as likely to understand its meaning as the viewers of the original version. Only code-switching is never translated as such and the conversations where it occurs are regarded as L3 homogeneous dialogues subtitled without any code-switching marks.

Besides being expressed through verbal utterances, multilingualism is also present in the series through meaningful visual cues in numerous scenes. As an example, we present a brief observation regarding the initial scene of the final episode (1:00). Episode 4 begins with a flashback scene, with the whole family gathered around a table. The camera is focused on the grandfather, who says, in Yiddish, *Time for the four questions*. Then, Aunt Malka calls a boy to help read out the text regarding these four questions. The camera then pans out and we see men and women sitting separately around the table: the men are in the upper part of the frame, with the grandfather leading the prayers at the center, and the women in the lower part. At a certain point of the grandfather's speech, Esty rises from the table (taking all the other members by surprise) and goes to the kitchen. As the camera follows her, we discover that all the furbishing and utensils in the kitchen have been covered in aluminum foil as they are non-sacred objects. She removes a foil covering a stew, eats an onion, and then drinks water from a plastic bottle. Both the image and the actions provide visual hints of the metaphorical escape of the protagonist.

Another clear example of meaningful content conveyed through the visual channel can be found in episode 2, in the rituals Esty follows to become a bride (cleansing through water, E2, 4:00), all the scenes leading to the marriage (episode 2, 21:00-26:18; 31:11-34:52; 38:20-40:47), and the hair shaving after she has become Jacob's wife (40:48). Finally, a crucial moment in the story, fully narrated through the visual channel, is when the protagonist walks into the lake and takes off her wig in episode 1, 37:08, in a symbolic act of liberation.

4. Conclusions

Language variation in *Unorthodox* is used as an essential device for the audience to understand the relationship between the characters and their social background, their interpersonal connections, and the setting where the scenes take place. The analysis carried out in the previous sections has led to the following conclusions that answer the questions of the study.

First of all, the analysis shows that the four languages spoken in the series help the show to convey different cultures and identities, depicting personal and social constructs that van Dijk [1998: 118] identified in his definition of identity. In that respect, the active use of Hebrew and Yiddish in the series are marks of social identity and being part of the Hasidic Jewish community. There are several scenes in the series with conversations that include words in Yiddish and English spoken by characters fluent in both languages. In these scenes, the choice of language provides information on the characters' portrayal. Speaking Yiddish is regarded as a mark of social identity, whereas using English in the same conversations is connected to the personal identity of characters with Jewish origin attempting to leave the community.

The analysis of multilingual utterances in the series shows how the spectator is led to match each of the four languages roughly with a particular use in the cultural canvas displayed around Esty's escape. In this cultural scenario, Hebrew is given a particular religious, ceremonial use, in the marriage scenes or family gatherings. In its turn, German, both through written signs and oral utterances, is used to complete the setting and to inform the spectator that the scenes take place in Berlin. Since the series' storyline develops through constant flashbacks and returns to the present, visual references visible in the setting are aimed to provide the audience with the necessary information to identify the place and time of a given scene.

Yiddish is uttered as evidence of a social group affiliation membership and ideology. Finally, English seems to have a double use in the production: (1) as the *lingua franca* spoken by speakers of different nationalities, being, for instance, the language shared by the conservatory students in Berlin, (2) English is also associated with the ideology of freedom or escape in dialogues with Jewish people when spoken by Leah or Esty. Despite their Jewish origin, they choose to switch to English in certain Yiddish conversations to show an intentional distance to the culture this

language is associated with. In the Spanish dubbing, English is treated as L1 and is rendered into Spanish as L2.

If we focus on the role of multilingualism in the plot, we can conclude that the choice of language produces different effects on the film narrative itself: the linguistic choices between Yiddish and English show the Esty's progressive freedom, following her mother's path.

As regards the final question, the recurrent role of images in the show is to reinforce the narrative development. Besides, the visual channel helps the viewer to follow the story shifts (flashbacks without dialogue and location changes). In certain instances, the visual domain also aids in understanding of the multilingual mosaic through the display of words written in different languages, for instance, with Hebrew embroidered in the cloth covering the bread or in the documents proving Esty's right to German citizenship.

Finally, a word on the translated versions into Spanish is in order. In the dubbed version, multilingualism is retained: Hebrew, German, and Yiddish are never dubbed and relevant translations are rendered through subtitles. English is treated variously depending on the context. As it is given L1 status, it is generally dubbed into L2 Spanish without subtitles. However, certain conversations in L3 Yiddish also include expressions, sentences or individual words in English (thus showing the geographic American location of the Williamsburg community). These mixed language conversations are treated as L3 dialogues in their entirety and subtitled as such in Spanish. Instead, utterances in all four languages are given the same formal features in the subtitled version, making them indistinguishable. This causes a neutralization of the multilingual variety of the series in the subtitles: multilingualism is lost for viewers who are not familiar with the spoken languages rendered as L3. Taking into account the different layers of cultural, social or identity meanings that provide the full, culturally eclectic mosaic of *Unorthodox*, we come to the conclusion that the dubbed version successfully renders the screen landscape this production is colored with.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to analyze how different languages in the series *Unorthodox* convey information on characters' identities, and whether, at the same time, the choice of language produces different effects on the film narrative itself. Since we are dealing with audiovisual products, in any full account of the story, the image must be considered as an essential factor affecting the audiences' interpretation of the show.

The article analyzes how multilingualism is rendered in its Spanish version and shows that different translation solutions may change how each character's identity is perceived. We found that the main four languages of the series (English, Yiddish, German, and Hebrew) are used to convey different personal and social identities to each character. Besides, linguistic choices between Yiddish and English show the evolution of the main character towards freedom. Although multilingualism is hardly present in the visual channel, cultural references conveyed through images help the viewer to follow key shifts in the story.

Keywords: L3, audiovisual translation, multilingualism, visual channel, identity