

Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
Educational and Scientific Institute of Philology
Department of English Philology and Intercultural Communication

Bachelor's Thesis

**COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF JEWISH ENGLISH AND ITS FEATURES IN
THE MODERN-DAY ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD**

Nazar Povoroznyk

4th year student of the Education Program

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and Two Western European Languages’

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Supervised by:

Anna Karaban, PhD

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ABSTRACT

This Bachelor's Thesis explores the grammatical, lexical, and phonetic peculiarities of Jewish English found in 4 episodes of the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*. The study focuses on the community of Hasidic JE speakers, whose speech, as proposed by M. Newman, tends to be most notably influenced by Yiddish and Textual Hebrew, in Williamsburg, New York City. Six speakers were chosen for analysis on the presence or absence of the features described in the hypothesis.

Chapter I defines the concept of Jewish English, tracing its emergence and development within the United States, and examines the sociolinguistic conditions that have shaped its evolution. It presents a range of definitions, explores its key grammatical, lexical, and phonetic features, and discusses how these vary among Jewish communities depending on degrees of ethno-religious affiliation. Particular attention is given to the sociocultural variables that influence the manifestation of Jewish English features, with secular speakers showing fewer linguistic markers and Hasidic speakers exhibiting more distinct usage. Chapter II offers a qualitative analysis of Jewish English as portrayed in the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*, focusing on the occurrence and function of specific linguistic features. Lexical analysis revealed extensive Yiddish influence, including religious terminology, kinship terms, culinary vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions in both in-group and out-group communication. Grammatical analysis indicated limited influence, with few nonstandard structures present, while phonetic analysis highlighted notable features such as the voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/ replacing the standard English /h/. Together, the findings underscore the persistence and visibility of Jewish English features within media representations of Hasidic communities.

The study applies a qualitative approach of corpus data, based on the foregoing miniseries. By analyzing the grammatical, lexical, and phonetic features found in the segments and their correlation with in-group and out-group communication, it demonstrates how important one's ethno-religious identity might be, especially in the variety language analysis of a community.

Keywords: *Jewish English, religiolect, variety, ethno-religious identity, language community, Eastern-Ashkenazic English, Hasidic community.*

АНОТАЦІЯ

У цій бакалаврській роботі досліджуються граматичні, лексичні та фонетичні особливості єврейського варіанту англійської мови (Jewish English), виявлені у чотирьох епізодах міні серіалу “Unorthodox” (“Неортодоксальна”) від платформи Netflix. Дослідження зосереджено на спільноті хасидських носіїв єврейського варіанту англійської, мова яких, за припущенням М. Ньюмана, зазнає найбільшого впливу їдишу та текстуального івриту, у районі Вільямсбург, Нью-Йорк. Для аналізу були обрані шість мовців, з метою виявлення наявності або відсутності лінгвістичних рис, описаних у гіпотезі.

У першому розділі подається визначення поняття єврейського англійського варіанту, простежується його виникнення та розвиток у США, а також розглядаються соціолінгвістичні чинники, що вплинули на його еволюцію. Розділ містить огляд різних визначень цього терміну, описує основні граматичні, лексичні та фонетичні характеристики, а також аналізує варіативність цих ознак серед різних єврейських спільнот залежно від ступеня етнорелігійної ідентичності. Особливу увагу приділено соціокультурним змінним, які впливають на вираження мовних особливостей: світські носії виявляють менше характерних рис, тоді як хасидські — демонструють їх більш виразно.

Другий розділ містить якісний аналіз єврейського варіанту англійської, представленого в міні серіалі Unorthodox, з фокусом на функціонування та поширеність окремих лінгвістичних явищ. Лексичний аналіз виявив значний вплив їдишу, зокрема в релігійній лексиці, термінах родинних зв'язків, кулінарній лексиці та ідіоматичних виразах, що вживаються як у внутрішньогруповому, так і в зовнішньогруповому спілкуванні. Граматичний аналіз виявив обмежений вплив, оскільки нестандартні структури зустрічалися рідко. Фонетичний аналіз, своєю чергою, засвідчив наявність таких характерних ознак, як заміна глухого гортанного фрикативного [h] на дзвінкий [ɦ].

Дослідження спирається на якісний підхід до аналізу корпусних даних, отриманих із вказаного міні серіалу. Аналіз граматичних, лексичних та

фонетичних особливостей, а також їх зв'язку з внутрішньогруповою та зовнішньогруповою комунікацією демонструє важливість етнорелігійної ідентичності для вивчення мовної варіації у межах окремої спільноти.

Ключові слова: *єврейська англійська, релігіолект, діалект, етно-релігійна ідентичність, мовна спільнота, східно-ашкеназька (ашкеназійська) англійська, хасидська спільнота.*

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INTRODUCTION

Practical significance lies in the lack of extensive research of the variety and its linguistic (grammatical, lexical, and phonetic) features and especially their representation in the current media.

The **aim** of the research is to describe, analyze, and classify the varieties of Jewish English, their main phonological and grammatical features at the present moment, and reasons for the emergence of the varieties.

The following **objectives** were defined:

- to define Jewish English and distinguish its the varieties;
- to explain the main reasons and conditions for the emergence of said varieties;
- to investigate their history in the English-speaking countries, with particular attention to the USA;
- to describe main grammatical, lexical, and phonological features of Jewish English and Eastern Ashkenazic English, in particular;
- to analyze the presence of said features in the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*

The object is Jewish English.

The subject is grammatical, lexical, and phonological peculiarities of Eastern Ashkenazic English as a variety of Jewish English.

Methods. The research employed a combination of theoretical and practical methods. The theoretical framework and features that we analyzed were drawn from books and papers on Jewish English and other varieties. Practical methods include qualitative analysis of the transcribed segments from the foregoing miniseries, their interpretation, contextual analysis, and suggested etymology.

The **research base** includes papers and books by American, British, and Israeli linguists; explanatory and etymological contrast dictionary: Jewish English Lexicon (JEL); Online Etymology Dictionary (Etymonline); and the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*, based on the book by Deborah Feldman, former member of Hasidic Satmar group in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NYC, *Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots*.

As for the **structure of the work**, it comprises the following parts: introduction, two chapters, conclusions, references, and appendices.

CHAPTER 1. JEWISH ENGLISH IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD, ITS FEATURES AND VARIETIES

1.1 What is a Jewish English?

An appreciable number of linguists have studied the topic of Jewish languages and Jewish English, in particular. Along the way, they realized that in order to study such varieties, it is not enough to view it solely from a historical or sociolinguistic perspective, since neither the latter, nor the former could provide a comprehensive perspective on the issue, given the lengthy history of the linguistic relationship of the studied variety.

As a result, a relatively new field emerged, **sociohistorical linguistics**, alternatively referred to as historical sociolinguistics. It represents the merger of two well-established sub-disciplines: sociolinguistics and historical (or diachronic) linguistics. The field is primarily aimed at studying the relationship between language and society in its historical dimension (Spolsky, 2014, 2-3). We will explore the field more thoroughly in the section about the history of Jewish English varieties.

Before we delve into Jewish English, however, we first need to define it. It can also be referred to as *Judeo-English*, *Judaeo-English*, *Yinglish*, *Yeshivish*, *Englibrew*, *Yeshivish*, and *Hebrish*. The most commonly used term in modern academic literature, however, is still Jewish English. Due to the relative novelty of the topic and the lack of extensive research on it, the definition of the term has not been widely agreed upon in academic literature. Therefore, in this paper, we will focus on the most commonly used definitions.

As interpreted by one of the most prominent linguists exploring the topic, Sarah Bunin Benor, “*Jewish English* is an umbrella term that scholars use for the many varieties of English spoken and written by Jews: it incorporates hundreds of words from textual Hebrew and has other distinctive features in contrast with other varieties of English” (Hary & Benor, 2018, 414). It can be thus concluded that Jewish English includes all the varieties of English spoken and written by Jews that might also differ from one another.

David L. Gold defines it in a somewhat similar way: Jewish English is the collective name for all lects meeting the following three requirements:

- 1) Their chief component is English;
- 2) They are used by Jews;
- 3) Each lect is an adequate expression of its users' Jewish experiences.

Because of 3), then, these lects differ in various ways from non-JLs (Gold, 1985, 280).

Lect (more commonly referred to as *variety*) – a specific form of a language or language cluster. It may include languages, dialects, registers, styles, or other forms of language, as well as a standard variety (Meecham & Rees-Miller, 2001, 538).

We should not disregard the word “collective” in the above-mentioned definition, as Jewish English comprises many lects, the majority of which cannot be traced back to one single protolect.

Therefore it poses a problem when compiling a dictionary, creating a comprehensive phonological (structure) or determining specific syntactic patterns, as they will differ, depending on the variety of Jewish English.

Despite that, it was deemed feasible to assemble a **contrastive dictionary**. Such a dictionary would contrast General American English and Jewish English, consisting exclusively of lexemes that are present in JE but absent in non-JE (Gold, 1985, 281). It is fortunate that this very type of a dictionary has been created by S. B. Benor, an associate professor of Jewish studies at the Los Angeles division of Hebrew Union College, in 2012. At the time of writing, it encompasses 3,767 entries. Being the largest and the most detailed dictionary of JE, we decided to use it as a primary source of lexemes for analysis (Курганова, 2022, 55).

The presence or absence of Yiddish-influenced features often correlates with an individual's ethno-religious Jewish identity. Individuals raised in households with stronger religious observance or within more socially homogeneous Jewish networks are generally more likely to exhibit these distinctive linguistic characteristics. Additionally, those who foster a deeper connection to Jewish religious or cultural life later in adulthood often incorporate such features into their speech as well.

Since we will focus on the Hasidic community of Williamsburg, NYC, the terms **ethnolect** and **religiolect** are worth mentioning. Formerly, B. Hary used the term **ethnolect** to describe Jewish language varieties but it has since been reconsidered due to the problematic and shifting meaning of “ethnic”. While commonly associated with race, its academic definition involves complex elements such as shared ancestry, culture, and a historic homeland, making it fairly ambiguous (Михальчук, 2021, 37-38). To avoid this confusion, Hary proposed the term **religiolect**, which more accurately reflects the religious background of speakers and offers a clearer, more relevant classification for these language varieties (Hary & Wein, 2013, 86-87).

A **religiolect** is thus a language variety with its own history and development, which is used by a religious community (Hary & Wein, 2013, 88).

Michael Newman introduced the following list of social groups who are more likely to entho-religiously identify as Jewish and therefore exhibit features of Jewish English (presented in descending order):

- Hasidic;
- Modern Orthodox;
- Conservative;
- Reconstructionist;
- Reform;
- Secular (Newman, 2014, 100).

1.2 Overview of Jewish English Varieties

One of the most prominent Jewish English varieties is Eastern Ashkenazic English (Eastern referring to Eastern (or Central) Europe) whose substrate is Eastern Yiddish.

Substrate (substratum) – substrate is a language that an intrusive language influences, which may or may not ultimately change it to become a new language (McArthur & Lam, n.d.).

We can draw a major distinction of Jewish English between Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic varieties. Ashkenazic varieties can be further subdivided into EAE (Eastern Ashkenazic English) and WAE (Western Ashkenazic English) varieties, alternatively referred to as non-EAE, since the former has proven to be the most resilient to assimilation to the surrounding languages, it has retained the most of the features characteristic of Yiddish. It is worth mentioning that EAE was erstwhile considered a separate variety of English due to notable differences between EAE and non-EAE varieties. Now, however, it is considered virtually synonymous with the term Jewish English, given that other non-AE varieties largely fell into disuse (Gold, 1985, 280-282) (Appendix 1).

There are different variables that need to be taken into account when speaking of Jewish English varieties:

- **spatial**: British EAE and American EAE;
- **chronological**: older and newer American JE;
- **doctrinal**: Orthodox and Non-Orthodox varieties or Conservative and Reformist varieties;
- **stylistic**: formal and non-formal (Gold, 1985, 281-282).

Given all these, it can be concluded that Jewish English encompasses a considerable number of unique varieties.

There are two linguistic approaches to defining communities. In more traditional structuralist work, the concept of a language community has been central. This refers to all speakers of a particular language, such as English (*English-speaking world*) or French (*la francophonie*), whether or not they have ever interacted with each other. Sociolinguists, on the other hand, have found the idea of a speech community to be more meaningful. First introduced by John Gumperz and later developed by researchers like William Labov, this concept focuses less on the specific language varieties used and more on the shared social meanings attached to those varieties. In his study of New York City, Labov pointed out that members of a speech community do not all have to speak in the same way. What matters is that they understand and recognize the social value of different ways of speaking. For example,

someone may not speak with a Brooklyn accent, but they still know what it represents. Dell Hymes added to this by describing a speech community as a group that shares not only grammatical rules but also rules for using language in context, highlighting its social nature (Spolsky, 2014, 3).

1.3 History of Jewish English Varieties

1.3.1 History of Jewish English in the USA

In this subchapter, we will focus on the historical factors and circumstances that brought about the emergence of Jewish English in the USA. Despite the history being tightly intertwined with the Jewish communities in other English-speaking countries, we decided to zero in on the development of said variety in the USA only for the sake of brevity.

Between 1881 and 1911, violent outbreaks targeting Jews in the Russian Empire led to large-scale emigration, with an average of more than 60,000 individuals leaving each year. The majority of these migrants, numbering over two million, resettled in the United States. This influx dramatically altered the demographic landscape, increasing the Jewish population from approximately 6,000 in 1826 to around one million by the turn of the twentieth century (Sarna, 1989, 59-60).

Jewish presence in what is now the United States began under Dutch colonial rule in New Amsterdam and expanded during the subsequent English administration. The relative absence of restrictions on religious practice allowed Jewish communities to establish synagogues freely, reflecting a level of denominational variety similar to that of Christian sects. Many Jewish immigrants initially earned a living as itinerant peddlers before establishing small-scale commercial enterprises, particularly in states such as New York, Ohio, and Illinois (Spolsky, 2014, 221).

Despite their small numbers, Jews participated on both sides of the American Civil War. One notable incident was General Ulysses S. Grant's 1863 order to expel Jewish merchants from certain territories, which was quickly rescinded by President Abraham Lincoln.

During the mid-nineteenth century, German Jews who espoused Reform Judaism formed the dominant cultural bloc within the American Jewish population. They advocated for the use of vernacular language during religious services. However, this began to shift following the wave of immigration after 1881, which brought numerous impoverished Jews from Eastern Europe. These new arrivals often settled in densely populated tenements in New York City's Lower East Side and were employed in the garment industry, enduring long working hours. By 1910, the number of Yiddish speakers in the United States had surpassed one million, although this figure declined over the following decades due to linguistic assimilation and generational change.

Yiddish cultural life was vibrant: *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, a Yiddish anarchist newspaper, ran from 1890 to 1977. In 1910, seven daily newspapers in Yiddish were being published in the United States, with that number peaking at eleven in 1920 before falling to five by 1960. Meanwhile, English-language Jewish publications gained readership, indicating a gradual linguistic transition. By 1920, New York City had become the world's largest Jewish metropolis, with a Jewish population exceeding 1.6 million.

By the close of the twentieth century, three major synagogue movements had become well-established: **Reform** (favoring English and modernization), **Orthodox** (adhering to tradition), and **Conservative** (seeking a middle path) (Spolsky, 2014, 222). Although Jews continued to integrate into American society, xenophobia went up post-WWI. The Immigration Quota Act of 1929, influenced in part by concerns over the political affiliations of Eastern European Jewish immigrants, imposed severe restrictions on further Jewish immigration. Nevertheless, by that time, Jewish Americans had already become prominent in sectors such as finance, media, commerce, and the professions.

Assimilation frequently involved the abandonment of Yiddish and other ancestral languages in favor of English. This trend was accompanied by increasing rates of intermarriage, reduced religious observance, and a generational divide in language retention. Older members of the community were more likely to retain

Yiddish, while younger individuals often learned Hebrew through supplementary education and visits to Israel.

The fall of the USSR led to another significant wave of immigration. In the 1990s, more than 250,000 Jews from Russia arrived in the United States, settling in communities such as Brighton Beach in New York, Boston, Miami, and San Francisco. Adult immigrants typically continued to use Russian within the household. Their children, however, rapidly acquired English, resulting in a classic three-generation language shift:

1. **Heritage-language-speaking parents;**
2. **Bilingual children;**
3. **English-dominant grandchildren** (Spolsky, 2014, 224-225).

The situation with immigrants from other countries generally mirrors that of the above-mentioned Jewish immigrant group: older generations use their native languages, while younger ones shift to English.

These patterns align with Joshua Fishman's model of language shift in immigrant societies. According to this framework, the immigrant generation maintains its native language, their children typically become bilingual, and subsequent generations tend to be English dominant. The rate of this shift is influenced by several factors, including early exposure to English through schooling or the degree of communal isolation. Historical examples such as secular Yiddish schools in the 1920s or the insular nature of Hasidic neighborhoods demonstrate how some communities were able to delay or resist linguistic assimilation. Ongoing immigration can also help sustain heritage languages, although English continues to function as the primary language for most American Jews.

Israeli Jews have also contributed to the linguistic diversity of American Jewish life. In the New York metropolitan area alone, there are an estimated 121,000 residents with Israeli backgrounds, including approximately 30,000 individuals born in Israel. Many of them speak Hebrew at home, and cities like Los Angeles have developed Hebrew-language media outlets, including radio stations, reflecting the presence of active Hebrew-speaking networks. Hebrew is also widely taught in

religious and day schools across Jewish denominations. Camp Ramah, aligned with Conservative Judaism, also emphasizes conversational Hebrew.

Yiddish has also left a linguistic imprint on American English, introducing expressions such as *chutzpah* and *blintz* into everyday usage. A distinct Jewish variety of English, often referred to as “FrumSpeak” or “Yeshivish” (Spolsky, 2014, 225-226), is found in some ultra-Orthodox communities. This speech variety incorporates vocabulary from Yiddish and Hebrew, along with unique syntactic patterns and culturally specific idioms. While there is ongoing scholarly debate about whether it constitutes a separate dialect, it clearly illustrates the intersection of language and identity within a tightly knit religious subculture.

Today, English functions as the primary language of both religious and secular life for Jews in the United States. Nevertheless, the legacy of multilingualism continues to shape Jewish identity and communication across generations, reflecting the enduring influence of diverse migration histories.

1.3.2 Phases of Historical Development in America

Due to the multiple waves of migration, blurry and sometimes conflicting timelines, and the use of the variety in diverse communities (secular, Orthodox, Sephardic, etc), it has proven to be fairly complicated to categorize American Jewish history in linguistic terms. Despite that, a categorization by Sarah Bunin Benor, seems to be the most commonly agreed upon:

1. 1654–1880 (**Early**): Sephardic and then Ashkenazic immigrants start first communities. Their descendants use English with few distinguishing features.
2. 1881–1930 (**Immigrant**): Multiple waves of immigration, predominantly of urban Yiddish speakers, use English with system-level influences from Yiddish.
3. 1931–1980 (**Integrated**): Descendants of immigrants use English with few distinctive features.
4. 1981–present day (**Distinguishing**): Many Jews start using English with notable and increasing influence from Yiddish, Textual Hebrew or Arameic,

and Modern Hebrew, especially in in-group communication. For secular Jews, the situation remains generally the same as in the previous change (Hary & Benor, 2018, 415-416).

It is also important to note that in the **Early**, **Immigrant**, and **Integrated** periods, the children of immigrants quite often learned English with, generally speaking, very few or no distinctive features. When it comes to large urban communities, however, especially in New York City, they often spoke English with some influence from Yiddish (Labov et al., 2006, 55).

Subsequent generations commonly demonstrated diglossic behavior, employing standard English in interactions with outsiders, while incorporating elements of Yiddish, Hebrew, and occasionally other linguistic influences when communicating within the Jewish community. During the **Distinguishing** period, this pattern persisted, with some individuals further enhancing the distinctiveness of their in-group speech (Hary & Benor, 2018, 416).

According to Fishman's framework, Jewish language forms often emerge when a Jewish population relocates to a region with a different dominant language. Initially, members of the community adopt the local language as part of their integration into the broader society. Over time, however, a combination of internal dynamics and external pressures leads the group to increasingly differentiate its linguistic practices. A 2008 survey revealed that younger Jewish individuals are considerably more inclined than their older counterparts to incorporate specific Hebrew and Yiddish loanwords into their speech. They include: *davka* (meaning "specifically" or "contrarily"), *Good Shabbos* (a Sabbath greeting), and *leyn* (to chant from the Torah). They also tend to adopt Yiddish-influenced grammatical structures, including expressions like "*staying by us*" and "*enough already*". Conversely, they are less likely than older respondents to use other traditional Yiddish terms, such as *macher* ("an influential person"), *naches* ("pride, especially in children"), and *heimish* ("cozy" or "familiar"). Furthermore, most participants indicated that their use of Yiddish and Hebrew vocabulary within English has grown over the previous decade or so (Benor, 2008, 1062-1066).

1.3.3 History of Jewish English in the UK

Following the expulsion of Jews from England in 1290, their reestablishment began during the mid-seventeenth century under Oliver Cromwell's leadership. The first to return were Portuguese-speaking Anusim and Sephardic Jews from the Netherlands, followed by Ashkenazi immigrants from Eastern Europe who spoke Yiddish. In 1655, the Amsterdam-based scholar Manasseh ben Israel petitioned Cromwell to allow Jews to resettle in England. Although no official law was enacted, the Council concluded that no legal prohibition remained, since the original expulsion had been a royal decree rather than a statute. In 1656, a group of Anusim in London requested the right to practice Judaism privately, citing prior persecution under the Inquisition. Their appeal was accepted, leading to the establishment of a synagogue. By 1664, Jews were granted civil rights similar to those of Catholics and Protestant dissenters, and by 1774, laws protecting Jewish communities from group defamation were introduced. These developments laid the foundation for England to become the first European country to support a stable and continuous Jewish presence (Spolsky, 2014, 255-256).

In the American colonies, Jewish refugees arriving in New Amsterdam, which later became New York, were permitted to remain. Following the English takeover in 1664, they gained greater freedom to establish places of worship. Unlike in Europe, Jews in colonial America enjoyed civic equality without needing to form official communal bodies or conform to a dominant religious framework. Such freedoms were not consistently present in Britain until the nineteenth century.

By the 1820s, British Jews had begun to assimilate culturally. This shift was visible in everyday life and religious practices, including changes in clothing, grooming, and language use. English gradually replaced Yiddish in homes and synagogues, and synagogue records began to appear in English rather than in Hebrew or Yiddish. In 1826, bilingual synagogue notices in English and Hebrew became standard, although this was later reversed due to low comprehension levels among congregants.

A major transformation occurred in 1881 with the arrival of large numbers of impoverished Yiddish-speaking Jews from Eastern Europe. They settled in urban centers such as London, Manchester, and Glasgow, where they established Yiddish-language newspapers, trade unions, and traditional Jewish schools. Over time, Yiddish began to be viewed as socially limiting, while English came to symbolize integration and upward mobility. This was especially evident in institutions like the Jews' Free School, which promoted English as a tool for social advancement.

The experience of Jewish immigrants in Glasgow illustrates how language and identity evolved. Initially a small merchant community, by the 1890s Glasgow had absorbed many immigrants from Russia and Poland, many of whom lived in the Gorbals. Employment in factories and the creation of communal institutions, including religious schools, strengthened the community. At first, Yiddish was the main language of instruction, but pressure to shift to English increased. In 1892, Reverend Simeon Singer argued that Yiddish had lost its relevance in local society.

This linguistic shift was also reflected in the Jewish press. A number of short-lived Yiddish newspapers emerged, often mixed with English vocabulary. In 1928, a new English-language Jewish weekly titled *The Echo* began publication and continued until 1992. This marked a broader transition from Yiddish to English as the primary language of the British Jewish community.

Despite the decline of secular Yiddish use, Hasidic communities in Britain continued to preserve it as a vital part of religious and cultural identity. In these groups, Yiddish functions as a primary language and as a marker of social and spiritual distinctiveness. Communities with Hungarian, Polish, and Ukrainian origins, such as the Satmar in London, have maintained strong Yiddish-speaking populations supported by close-knit family structures and community networks.

1.4 Features of Jewish English

1.4.1 Grammatical and Syntactical Features

When it comes to these features of Jewish English, it can be concluded that it has been greatly influenced by Yiddish, particularly in Orthodox communities.

Syntactic patterns include the use of the Present Progressive (Continuous) tense in contexts where Standard American English would favor the Present Perfect Progressive (Continuous) or Past Simple (Indefinite) in a more casual setting, often accompanied by the adverb “already”. This construction mirrors the Yiddish usage of “shoyt” (“שוין”, meaning “already”), as seen in sentences like “I **m living** here 10 years **already**” (Hary & Benor, 2018, 419-420). This phenomenon is referred to as *emulative* (Aronin & Yelenevskaya, 2021, 67).

Other examples of it might be seen in the employment of “should” to convey the Subjunctive Mood following verbs of volition, such as in “**I want that you should** come”. Additionally, the variety features the use of non-standard prepositions, examples of which include “**by** the rehearsal” instead of the standard “**at** the rehearsal”, “coming **to us**” meaning “coming **to our house**”, and “her bus gets **in** 10:15”, where Standard English would require “**at** 10:15” (Hary & Benor, 2018, 420).

Furthermore, Jewish English exhibits a number of phrasal verbs that diverge from mainstream usage, such as “**say over**”, “**answer up**”, and “**bring down**”. These expressions, while unmarked within Jewish communities, stand out in broader English usage (Benor, 2000, 290).

Orthodox Jews also display unique syntactic arrangements of adverbial elements. For instance, the sentence “You’ll be stuck studying all day **Torah**” reflects a non-standard placement of the noun phrase, as does the construction “You think he’s **for sure** Orthodox?” which inserts a certainty marker in a non-standard position. Another example could be the sentence “**A Cadillac**, he bought!”. This syntactic structure is characteristic of English influenced by contact with Yiddish. This phenomenon is known as **topicalization**, which involves repositioning a noun phrase,

specifically a direct object, to the front of a sentence in order to highlight or emphasize it. In standard varieties of English, topicalization typically applies only to definite noun phrases. For instance, most English speakers find “**The** Cadillac, he bought” grammatically sound, whereas “**A** Cadillac, he bought” is regarded as incorrect. However, in varieties of English shaped by Yiddish influence, indefinite noun phrases can also be fronted. In Yiddish itself, the topicalization of indefinite noun phrases is perfectly acceptable and conforms to grammatical norms within that language (Newman, 2014, 99-100).

Although the vast majority of these grammatical patterns can be attributed to influence from Yiddish, one syntactic feature appears to derive from Israeli Hebrew. This involves the insertion of “so” in sentence-initial or mid-sentence positions where no conjunction would typically appear in Standard English. This construction imitates the Hebrew discourse marker “az” (“אז”, meaning “so”), as illustrated in “If I see someone who’s using the wrong language, so I’ll realize that they’re just becoming frum” (Hary & Benor, 2018, 420).

These features are widespread predominantly in Orthodox Jewish communities. Therefore, when examining the speech of secular or Reformist Jews, their lexicon is what needs the most attention.

1.4.2 Phonological Features

One of the distinctive phonological markers in Orthodox Jewish English is the release of word-final /t/, a feature thoroughly examined by Sarah Bunin Benor in her study *The Learned /t/: Phonological Variation in Orthodox Jewish English*. The research focuses on Orthodox Jews, particularly within a Chabad community in Northern California, and explores how the released /t/ operates as a stylistic and sociolinguistic feature.

Benor's fieldwork was conducted primarily through naturalistic observation and recordings at a Chabad-run primary school and in the home of a prominent rabbi. The speaker sample included 16 individuals (6 males and 10 females) between the ages of 9 and 23, categorized into **three educational stages**:

- **Local** (ages 9–13);
- **Yeshiva** (14–19);
- **Teachers** (20–23) (Benor, 2001, 3).

The corpus consisted of approximately five hours of classroom and informal speech, all segregated by gender due to the community's norms.

The focus of analysis was on underlying /t/ in specific phonological environments: **sentence-final positions**, **ends of intonational phrases**, and contexts preceding both **empty and filled pauses**. These were further categorized into four variants: **zero realization**, **glottalization**, **flapping**, and **release with the binomial comparison** treating released /t/ as the primary variant of interest (Benor, 2001, 4).

Initially, all word-final /t/ tokens were analyzed, but the most meaningful results emerged when isolating those in sentence-final and pause-adjacent contexts. A total of 495 such tokens were ultimately evaluated using Goldvarb 2.0, allowing for multivariate analysis of **six independent variables**:

- **Gender**;
- **Age group**;
- **Sentence position** (internal or final);
- **Phrasal stress** (stressed or unstressed);
- **Preceding segment** (vowel or consonant);
- **Following segment** (Benor, 2001, 4).

Out of those variables, gender emerged as the most statistically significant predictor. Males released their word-final /t/s 47% of the time, compared to only 19% for females, a difference with $p < 0.001$. Correspondingly, glottalization was far more prevalent among females (77%) than males (50%). This pattern was consistent across all age groups, underscoring a strong gendered dimension to the feature.

Contrary to expectations, age and educational background showed no significant effect on /t/ release when modeled independently. The frequencies across the Local, Yeshiva, and Teacher groups were fairly stable (30%, 33%, and 27% respectively).

Sentence-internal /t/s were more likely to be released (38%) than sentence-final ones (26%), significant at $p < 0.009$. However, this interacted with intonational phrasing. Tokens at the end of an intonational contour but within a sentence had a markedly higher release rate (45%) than those occurring phrase-internally but sentence-finally (26%), significant at $p < 0.003$. This reflects a tendency in Orthodox Jewish English toward prosodic chunking, frequent division of sentences into multiple intonational units, often corresponding to syntactic or semantic breaks (Benor, 2022, 285).

Released /t/ was more common at the end of stressed syllables (33%) than unstressed ones (24%), significant at $p < 0.031$. This aligns with general phonetic tendencies across English varieties.

A significant increase in /t/ release was found when preceded by consonants (54%) compared to vowels (25%), with $p < 0.000$. This articulatory facilitation is likely due to the compatibility of a coronal closure with an already consonantal articulation.

Beyond statistical modeling, Benor integrated qualitative discourse analysis to interpret the social indexing of /t/ release. Released /t/ was associated with moments where speakers assumed positions of authority or intellectual dominance. This was particularly evident among male speakers who released /t/ when asserting knowledge, clarifying religious laws, or challenging others. The phenomenon is illuminated through Elinor Ochs' framework of indirect indexicality: linguistic forms signal stances and activities, which in turn index broader social identities, such as masculinity (Benor, 2001, 9).

This indirect indexing aligns with Chabad ideologies of gender. In this community, intellectual engagement and scholarship are highly valued masculine traits. As a result, linguistic features like /t/ release become stylistic cues of education, literacy, and precision, which are culturally associated with Orthodox male identity. While some women also use released /t/, it is far less frequent.

The study demonstrates that released /t/ is not merely a phonetic variation but a socially meaningful feature within Orthodox Jewish English community. Its distribution is caused by both internal linguistic and external social factors (e.g.

gender). For researchers of Jewish English, this underscores the importance of examining how phonological variables interact with the extralinguistic context of the community.

1.4.3 Influence of Yiddish, Hebrew, and Other Jewish Languages

Unlike other Jewish language varieties, Jewish English uses the Latin alphabet, with even Hebrew borrowings frequently represented in the Latin alphabet. There are, however, some differences. For example, many religious Jews spell the word *God* with a hyphen in the place of the letter *o*: “G-d”. This copies the avoidance of writing the God’s holy name, tetragrammaton.

In some Haredi communities where both English and Yiddish are actively spoken, it is not uncommon for English to be transcribed using a Yiddish orthographic system grounded in the Hebrew alphabet: “מיני מארקעט פלאס”, a sign observed in Williamsburg, New York, phonetically transcribing “Mini Market Plus” (Hary & Benor, 2018, 423).

Within diverse Jewish communities across the United States, the lexicon of Jewish English reflects a rich history of linguistic influences from Yiddish, Textual Hebrew and Aramaic, and Modern Israeli Hebrew.

This variety of English incorporates a substantial number of lexical borrowings, potentially numbering in the thousands, drawn from these three language sources. A subset of Yiddish-derived terms has diffused into the broader American English lexicon, sometimes accompanied by semantic or pragmatic shifts. Notable examples include *klutz* (meaning “an inept individual”), *maven* (referring to “a knowledgeable person”), and *shmooze* (used to denote informal conversation or networking) (Hary & Benor, 2018, 420-421).

Most lexical items of non-English origin, however, remain within Jewish usage only, particularly in speech and writing intended for Jewish audiences. Pronunciation norms vary considerably across communities. Orthodox speakers, especially those closer to Haredi practices, tend to retain phonetic characteristics linked to Yiddish, whereas non-Orthodox Jews are more likely to adopt pronunciations influenced by

Israeli Hebrew. For instance, the term for dietary law may appear as *káshris* among the former and *kashrút* among the latter. Despite this variation, only one representative pronunciation is used per term in the following discussion (Hary & Benor, 2018, 421).

Borrowings are used in a variety of different areas. In religious practice, they refer to prayer-related terms (*tallis* for “prayer shawl”, *minyan* for “quorum”, *kavana* for “spiritual intent”), religious festivals (*lulav* and *esrog*, *haggadah*, *machzor*), traditional foods (*matzah*, *homentashen*, *gefilte fish*), and life cycle rituals (*brit bat/simchat bat*, *bar mitzvah*, *chuppah*) (Hary & Benor, 2018, 421).

Some terms extend beyond specifically Jewish referents to express concepts that lack direct equivalents in English. Some of them are also present and actively used in other languages and their varieties whose historical development was influenced by Jewish communities. These include *balagan* (“disorder”), *tachlis* (“pragmatic essence; practical details”), *mentsh* (“kind person”), and *davka* (“specifically; even, specifically”). Other loanwords supplant common English terms for reasons of cultural resonance, such as *mazel tov* (“congratulations”), *polkies* (“thighs”), *sheitel* (“wig”, worn by married Orthodox women), *bubbe* (“grandmother”), and *chaval* (“a shame”) (Hary & Benor, 2018, 423).

Among Orthodox populations, clichéd expressions signaling divine involvement or intention are frequently used. Common phrases include *mertsishem* or *b’ezrat Hashem* (meaning “God willing”), *chas v’sholom* (“may it not happen”), and *bli neder* (“without binding oneself by oath”). In institutional Jewish settings (e.g. synagogues or day schools), Hebrew greetings are standard, including *boker tov* (“good morning”), *erev tov* (“good evening”), *Shabbat shalom* (“peaceful Sabbath”), and holiday greetings like *chag sameach* or *good yontif*. In written communication, closings such as *kol tuv* (“all the best”), *b’shalom* (“in peace”), and *gmar tov* (“may you be favorably inscribed”) are widespread (Bolton, n.d., 23).

Grammatically, most borrowed items are assimilated into English phonological and morphological frameworks, although some phonemes, such as the voiceless uvular fricative /x/, are retained. Plural forms typically follow English rules of

pluralization (*menorahs*, *sukkahs*, *ba'al teshuvahs*, *shtetls*). In religious contexts, however, pluralization may sometimes conform to source language rules (*aliyot*, *talmidei chachamim*, *siddurim*, *rugelach*) (Hary & Benor, 2018, 423).

Verb borrowing also reflects a hybrid integration. In some cases, Yiddish influence is prominent, yielding usages like “Let’s *bentsh*”, “She *kashered* the kitchen” (made it kosher), or “He learned how to *shecht* chickens” (perform ritual slaughter). In Orthodox registers, Hebrew verbs may be used periphrastically within English sentences, as in “They are *koveya* times to learn,” “We should all be *zoche* the coming of the Moshiach,” or “It might *meorer* the *tayva*.”

Another syntactic pattern is the use of Yiddish adjectives with the suffix *-ə* before nouns (in the pre-nominal position), such as “a *choshuve* man” or “a *yeshivishe* wedding *shtick*,” where the suffix conveys social or cultural alignment with Orthodox norms (Hary & Benor, 2018, 422).

These examples demonstrate how Hebrew-origin words function within English discourse, especially religious discourse.

Conclusions to Chapter 1.

In the first chapter, we have provided multiple definitions of the term *Jewish English* that focus on different aspects of the term and explained the main historical and social reasons for the emergence of the said variety, its development, and current state in the United States of America. It was also decided to compare the sociohistorical development of the variety in the USA and in the UK, which explained a smaller set of its variation in Great Britain.

We focused on major waves of Jewish immigration, particularly from Eastern Europe between 1881 and 1911, which dramatically reshaped the American Jewish demographic and linguistic landscape. The influx of Yiddish-speaking Jews led to a vibrant Yiddish cultural scene, though linguistic assimilation gradually favored English, especially following restrictive immigration policies in the early 20th century. Over time, generational language shift patterns emerged, aligning with Fishman’s model.

We have also described its most common grammatical, lexical, and phonetic features. It was also established that different groups of Jews might showcase a set of distinct features that might not be present (or present to a different extent) in other Jewish communities. It particularly depends on the degree to which they entho-religiously identify with the Jewish culture, with secular Jews showing less features and highly-religious (Hasidic) Jews showing more. Additionally, we explored what variables are taken into account when differentiating a variety of JE.

This section has also provided valuable insights into the lexical and grammatical structure of Jewish English, revealing how deeply embedded elements from Hebrew, Yiddish, and Aramaic are within the variety. It has also been indicated that Jewish English, despite its reliance on the Latin alphabet, incorporates Hebrew-origin terms and rules (like “G-d”), although certain Haredi communities do occasionally transcribe Hebrew borrowings using Hebrew script.

With this theoretical foundation in place, Chapter 2 will shift focus to the practical application, we will develop a hypothesis to verify the presence or absence of the previously mentioned grammatical, lexical, and phonetic features in the segments of the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*.

CHAPTER 2. USE OF JEWISH ENGLISH IN THE MODERN CONTEXT

2.1 Corpus Selection, Methodology of the Study and its Limitations

Given that, as of the time of writing, a curated and widely available Jewish English corpus has yet to be developed (Hary & Benor, 2018, 425), it poses serious restrictions on what can be analyzed and used in research. Therefore, the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*, which is based on the eponymous memoir, was selected as the primary corpus for analysis. We decided to analyze the whole series, consisting of 4 episodes, amounting to approximately 3 and a half hours of content. Yet, half the series was filmed in Yiddish, and some of the communication in English occurred between non-JE speakers, and thus was disregarded for the purposes of the study, leaving us with circa 45 minutes of Jewish English speech. Once transcribed, the database comprised nearly 2,000 words (or around 8,000 characters).

The narrative in the miniseries centers on the Hasidic Satmar community, a group of Orthodox Jews residing in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York City. Within this insular community, Eastern Yiddish serves as the principal language for internal communication. However, most community members are also native speakers of English, having acquired both languages from an early age. This bilingual environment offers a valuable opportunity to examine the influence of Eastern Yiddish on the specific variety of English used by speakers within this socio-religious context, referred to as Jewish English.

A total of six speakers were selected from the miniseries for in-depth analysis based on the consistency and clarity of their speech, as well as their relevance to the community portrayed. These speakers include: Ester (Esty) Shapiro, Leah Mandelbaum (Esty's mother), Yaakov (Yanky) Shapiro (Esty's husband), Moses (Moishe) Lefkovitch (Yanky's cousin), Malka Schwartz (Esty's aunt), and Mordechai Schwartz (Esty's father). Each of these characters is either an active or former member of the Williamsburg Hasidic community and is characterized by native bilingualism in English and Yiddish. Their speech serves as an authentic representation of oral language use within the community, allowing for meaningful qualitative analysis of lexical, grammatical, and phonetic features.

Although the show includes additional Jewish characters, such as Yael, she was excluded from the study due to linguistic and sociolinguistic considerations. Specifically, Yael is not a native English speaker, and her accent is primarily shaped by her background in Modern Hebrew rather than Eastern Yiddish. Including her data would introduce a variable not aligned with the research focus, thereby potentially compromising the study's findings regarding Eastern Yiddish influence on Jewish English.

Due to the limitations outlined above, it was determined that obtaining substantial quantitative data was not feasible. As a result, qualitative methods were adopted for this study, with the primary aim of offering a detailed descriptive and interpretive analysis of the linguistic features observed. The focus is on identifying which features of Jewish English appear in both in-group and out-group communication among speakers. Particular attention is given to phonetic characteristics, as they offer insight into the influence of Eastern Yiddish and the ways in which linguistic identity is expressed across different social contexts.

So as to evaluate the data, we used:

- **Praat** (a computer software widely used in linguistic research predominantly used for phonetic analysis of the data. Its functionality encompasses formant analysis, pitch extraction, spectrogram visualization, along with speech synthesis);
- **Jewish English Lexicon** (a contrastive dictionary of Jewish English, including the features present in the JE varieties and largely absent in Standard English).
- **Online Etymology Dictionary** (Etymonline) (an etymological dictionary that encompasses a considerable number of entries and etymologies that might be absent in JEL)

However, we shouldn't disregard the limitations of the study. The data was extracted from a scripted Netflix miniseries rather than from interviews or recordings of spontaneous, natural conversation. Currently, there is no accessible corpus of Jewish English that includes transcribed recordings or interviews, which significantly restricts the availability of authentic spoken data. Furthermore, the researchers do not

speak Yiddish or Hebrew, which presents an additional challenge in data collection and interpretation. These difficulties are compounded by geographical limitations that prevent direct fieldwork or community-based data gathering. Nevertheless, it is relevant to note that the actors portraying the selected characters are of Jewish descent and possess at least a proficient or upper-intermediate level in Yiddish. This is evident in the series through the frequent use of extended in-group conversations conducted in Yiddish, which supports the authenticity of the linguistic representations used for analysis.

2.2 Hypothesis

Given that the community to be analyzed is Hasidic, therefore speaking Eastern Yiddish, some of the features mentioned in the previous chapter merit particular attention when analysing the influence of Yiddish on their variety of Jewish English:

- **Grammatical peculiarities of JE;**
- **Religious vocabulary and other culture-specific terms, prevalent in Jewish communities, and their everyday lexicon;**
- **(Eastern) Yiddish phonetic features.**

Now, we will dwell a bit more on each of the foregoing points.

Grammatical peculiarities of JE

We will try to determine the influence of Yiddish syntax and morphology on the variety of English studied. In particular, we will try to identify features similar to those described in Chapter 1:

- Use of the Present Progressive where, normally, the Present Perfect Simple or Progressive would be preferred (especially, with the word “already”);
- Non-standard prepositions;
- Non-standard placement of objects in the sentence;
- Topicalization.

Religious vocabulary and other culture-specific terms, prevalent in Jewish communities, and their everyday lexicon

We will aim to identify peculiar examples of semantic vocabulary categories that are culture specific and cannot be found in the speech of other varieties, namely Judaic religious vocabulary, Yiddish kinship and culinary vocabulary, unique everyday lexicon, and idiomatic expressions connected to the culture.

(Eastern) Yiddish phonetic features

The analysis will encompass three features:

- Presence or absence of influence of Hebrew voiceless velar fricative /x/ and Eastern Yiddish voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/ on standard English voiceless glottal fricative /h/;
- Presence or absence of monophthongization of English diphthongs;
- Presence or absence of th-stopping.

These features were specifically chosen, as Yiddish, which is prevalently used for in-group communication in studied community, might have notable influence on the foregoing features due to the absence of their equivalents in it. Among these are the absence of voiced and voiceless dental fricatives (/ð/ & /θ/), a smaller and different set of diphthongs (Jacobs, 2005, 92-93), and the variety of h-sounds (/x/, /ɦ/, and /h/) in certain dialects of Yiddish, especially Eastern, spoken by the studied community in Williamsburg (Jacobs, 2005, 114-115).

2.3 Results of the Analysis

2.3.1 Results of the Grammatical Analysis

Building upon the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 1, this subchapter presents the findings of the practical analysis concerning the grammatical features identified in the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*. The analysis revealed a limited number of such features, specifically two syntactic patterns and no morphological peculiarities. This limited result can be attributed to several factors, most notably the relatively small size of the selected corpus and the linguistic background of the speakers, who frequently communicate in English and have received formal education in that language. As a result, their use of English largely conforms to the

norms of General American English, reducing the likelihood of identifying structures that would be considered non-standard or ungrammatical in that variety.

The features that were observed tended to emerge during emotionally heightened moments in the narrative. This is noteworthy, as such instances may reflect shifts in language use prompted by affective states. Additionally, these moments occurred during in-group communication conducted in English. This context likely contributed to a more relaxed linguistic environment for the speakers, allowing for the emergence of features that might otherwise remain unexpressed in more formal or out-group settings. The presence of familiar interlocutors may have encouraged more natural and emotionally resonant speech, offering limited but valuable insights into the grammatical and syntactic tendencies influenced by the speakers' bilingual backgrounds.

The first indication of Yiddish influence appeared in Episode 2 during a conversation between Leah, Yanky, and Moishe (as Moishe spoke entirely in Yiddish, his speech was excluded from the analysis, since only English-language data was considered within the scope of this study):

“And you came all the way to Germany, why?” (episode 2, 19:34)

Here, Leah employed a non-standard English calque derived from a Yiddish emphatic question structure. This phenomenon is referred to as a ***sentence-final wh-question***. It involves placing a wh-word such as “who”, “what”, or “why” at the end of a declarative sentence, thereby transforming it into a question. For example, *“You're traveling with **who**?”* This construction is occasionally found in informal General American English, often conveying surprise or the need for clarification. However, it is particularly characteristic of Yiddish-influenced English, where it reflects a direct syntactic transfer from Yiddish. Such structures are typically used for emphasis or to express disbelief.

It is widely present in Yiddish sentences like *“Du geyst in shul, ven?”* (טו גײסט אין שול, ווען?), and the foregoing English sentence precisely mirrors this emphatic structure.

Another syntactic feature that we observed is the omission of the preposition “to” before the **indirect** object in the sentence, “this child”, which reflects a Yiddish-influenced double object construction:

“I have nothing to **give this child**.” (episode 4, 26:15)

In Yiddish, the equivalent structure allows for the indirect object (the recipient) to appear without a preposition, following a double object pattern:

“**געבן דעם קינד**.” (*I have nothing to **give the child**.*)

In this instance, “dem kind” (the child) is in the dative case, and no preposition like “to” is used. Yiddish syntax licenses this structure, and when literally adopted into English it might lead to omission of “to” in indirect object constructions, which is not considered grammatical in standard English.

In this case, the double object construction is used instead of the prepositional dative. Yiddish-influenced speakers tend to generalize them more broadly, even in contexts where the preposition would typically be required in standard English.

The foregoing example can be interpreted as **syntactic calques**. Such calques emulate syntactic functions or constructions of the source language into the target language, in violation of their meaning (Górnicz, 2023, 13). For example, the use of “by” instead of “with” in the phrase “fine by me” is thought to have come from Yiddish *bei*, namely from the 1930s Yiddish Broadway musical song *Bei Mir Bistu Shein* (Shapiro, 2013).

2.3.2 Results of the Lexical Analysis

In this subsection, we turn to the lexical peculiarities of the Jewish English variety we observed. We will focus on how these lexemes reflect Yiddish influence within the English spoken by characters in *Unorthodox* who were analyzed.

The characters to use the lexical units, marked by Yiddish influence, were Esty and Leah. This was surprising to find, since the latter disowned the Hasidic community she belonged to and moved to another country, staying out of contact with the community for a long while, whereas the former did not renounce her community outright, she still expressed some certainty regarding it. It is also important to note that Esty mostly used lexemes, influenced by Yiddish, in out-group communication,

primarily with the purpose of explaining certain cultural phenomena or kinship terms peculiar to her community. Conversely, in Leah's case, Yiddish influenced units were found in in-group communication only and they were predominantly out of the scope of **culture-specific items** (CSIs), alternatively referred to as **culturemes**, **non-equivalent lexis** or **realia** (Мукатаева, 2022, 174).

Culture-specific items can be defined as a cultural phenomenon that is present in culture X but not present (in the same way) in culture Y, as proposed by Christiane Nord (Nord, 1997).

Another scholar, Yves Gambier, focuses on the areas of vocabulary that CSIs encompass, defining them as “expressions or terms that reflect various aspects of daily life such as education, politics, history, art, institutions, legal systems, measurement units, place names, cuisine, sports, and national traditions, as they are uniquely experienced within different countries and cultural contexts around the world” (Gambier, 2021, 122-123).

The lexical units influenced by Yiddish that were identified in the analysis span multiple semantic fields. For the purposes of clarity and systematic discussion, we categorized these items into four lexical domains:

- **Culinary terms;**
- **Kinship terms;**
- **Religious vocabulary;**
- **Everyday lexicon.**

The following section provides a more detailed examination of each lexical category, accompanied by representative examples from the speech of the Hasidic community, represented in the miniseries *Unorthodox*. This analysis aims to highlight the specific functions and cultural peculiarities of the Yiddish-influenced lexical items identified within each domain and provide etymology of the lexical units.

The first category we will look into is **culinary terms**. Culinary vocabulary includes lexical units related to food, cooking techniques, and kitchen operations. This encompasses terms for ingredients, cooking methods, tools, and even presentation styles. Essentially, any word or phrase used to describe or discuss

aspects of food preparation and service can be considered culinary vocabulary (Surayyo, 2021, 175-176).

Examples of the above-mentioned category appeared only once, during an out-group conversation in episode 2:

- *So, what do you cook at home [in Williamsburg]?*
- *Everything. Soups, **kugel**, **cholent**, **goulash**, cakes...* (episode 2, 36:17)

Kugel (alternatively spelled as *kugl*, *kigel*, and *kigl*) [n.] – baked pudding or casserole made with eggs and various ingredients, including noodles, potatoes, or spinach. Yiddish spelling: קוגל (Benor, n.d.).

Cholent (alternatively spelled as *tchulent*, *chulent*, and *tsholent*) [n.] – a slow-cooked stew made of beef, beans, potatoes, and other vegetables that is eaten on Shabbat. Yiddish spelling: טשעלנט (Benor, n.d.).

This word is believed to have arrived into English through Old Judeo-French as an intermediary language (“chalent” (“warming”)), originally deriving from Latin “calentem”, present participle of “calere” (“be warm”).

Intermediary language – a mediating language or linguistic system that serves as a bridge between two languages, especially in the processes of translation, borrowing, or semantic transfer (Людмила, n.d., 56-57).

Goulash [n.] – a highly seasoned Hungarian soup or stew of meat and vegetables, flavoured with paprika. It derived from Hungarian “gulyáshús”, from “gulyás” (“herdsman”) + “hús” (“meat”), meaning “beef or lamb soup made by herdsmen while pasturing” In Hungarian (*Online Etymology Dictionary*, n.d.).

Although the word itself is not of Yiddish origin, it clearly reflects the influence of Eastern Ashkenazic Yiddish. As noted in the previous chapter, this variety of Yiddish was predominantly spoken in Eastern Europe, the region where the dish originated and was subsequently incorporated into culinary traditions of Hasidic Jews living there. The lexical borrowing thus signals the origin of substratum of the variety of English spoken by the community.

Another group of lexemes observed belongs to **kinship terminology**. Kinship terms are the expressions used to denote family relationships. Since languages and

cultures differ in how they perceive and group relatives, the usage and classification of kinship terms can vary significantly across societies.

Examples of the foregoing category appeared both in in-group and out-group communication, which only highlights the fact that they are tightly connected with the family members they denote and are, therefore, used even with outsiders who might not necessarily understand these terms.

The first instance of such a term occurred in episode 1 when Esty and her father Mordechai come to collect rent from a woman who doesn't belong to the community: "**Tatty**... *answer the phone*" (episode 1, 30:28).

Tatty (alternatively spelled as *tate*, *tati*, *tattie*, and *tata*) [n.] – a dad. Yiddish spelling: טאַטע. In general, this lexeme is frequently used to refer to "d" within Orthodox Jewish communities, particularly among older generations. Given that Esty is portrayed as a minor during the events depicted in the series, her use of this specific kinship term prompts further inquiry into the motivations behind such lexical choice. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that this term maintained its relevance and never fell out of use among Ashkenazic Jews (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

The letter "y" at the end of the foregoing example might trick us into thinking that this is the diminutive suffix -ie/-y, thus making us think that the word "tatty" means "daddy" rather than "dad". This, however, is not the case, since this word purely emulates Yiddish pronunciation of the word, resulting in different spellings. The real diminutive of the word "dad" uses Yiddish suffix, leading to the word "tatele" (Yiddish spelling: טאַטעלע).

Even though, at the time of writing, we failed to find a reliable source of etymology for said lexeme, we can clearly see the similarities with Ukrainian word "**tato**" and Polish word "**tata**", suggesting a possible borrowing from Slavic languages into EAY and English later on.

The following term appeared in the miniseries multiple times:

"*Yeah, I learned everything from my **babby***" (episode 2, 36:40);

*“This is the first time in 15 years I get to speak to you without a chaperone... no Malka, no **Babby**”* (episode 4, 26:40);

*“You left me when I was three, and **Babby** and Malka had no choice...”* (episode 4, 26:52).

Babby (alternatively spelled as *bobe*, *bubbe*, *bobie*, *babi*, *bubah* etc.) [n.] – an old woman or, more commonly, grandmother. Yiddish spelling: באַבע.

This lexeme seems to follow the same pattern as the previously mentioned one, falsely imitating a diminutive suffix. Etymology of the word suggests connection and borrowing from Slavic languages as well, however, no definitive proof of it has been found in credible etymological dictionaries due to the absence of said lexeme in their entries. Nevertheless, certain similarities can be observed with the word “баба”, which is widely attested across many Slavic languages and belongs to the same semantic field (kinship terminology), denoting the same person in the family (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

The next layer of vocabulary can be attributed to the category of **religious vocabulary**. Religious vocabulary refers to the set of words used to express ideas connected to faith, spiritual beliefs, religious practices, and institutions. It includes language that describes divine figures, holy writings, places where worship takes place, ceremonies, moral teachings, and personal or communal experiences of spirituality. Terms such as prayer, scripture, mosque, church, temple, sacrament, and pilgrimage are all part of this type of vocabulary.

Now, we will turn to such terms in Jewish English identified in the miniseries.

Examples of this category were found in two episodes:

*“Bands at weddings and **bar mitzvahs**, maybe.”* (episode 2, 09:15);

*“Those few months were... they were beautiful. Until the **rabbi** sent his guys to terrorize me”* (episode 4, 27:35).

This limited number of lexemes observed can be explained by the fact that the majority of communication about religion was in-group, and therefore took place in Yiddish.

Bar mitzvah (despite the word having more than one spelling, the foregoing one has been proven to be the most common in English) [n.] – the ceremony of a 13-year-old boy’s entrance into adulthood in Jewish life. There is also an adjective, denoting the result of this ceremony, “bar-mitzvahed” (“having undergone his bar mitzvah ceremony (of a boy)”) (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, religious vocabulary was influenced not only by Yiddish, but also by Textual Hebrew. Therefore, we have different spellings of this noun phrase in these two languages, due to the peculiarities of Yiddish spelling with Hebrew characters:

Textual Hebrew: בר מצווה;

Yiddish: בר-מצווה.

The origin of this word signifies the importance of this well-known and commonly practiced religious ceremony in Judaism over the centuries and millennia, originally deriving from Aramaic “בֶּר”, meaning “son”, and Hebrew “מִצְוָה”, meaning “commandment” or “law”. This results in the full phrase: “son of the commandment”.

Rabbi [n.] – the spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation or, less commonly, a respectful title when addressing a teacher. Textual Hebrew spelling: רַבִּי (literally meaning “my teacher” or “my master”). It was used as a title prefixed to personal names in Middle English, also “a spiritual master” generally, it derived from Late Latin *rabbi*, from Greek *rhabbi*, from Mishnaic Hebrew *rabbi*. This is formed from *-i*, first person singular pronominal suffix, and *rabh* “master, great one” (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

Last but not least, we have the layer of **colloquial** or **everyday lexicon** that is prevalent in different spheres of life of this Jewish community. It pertains to the words and expressions frequently used in everyday interactions by a specific community or social group. This type of language is typically informal and conversational, reflecting how people naturally speak in casual settings. It covers not only commonly used vocabulary but also terms related to particular hobbies, tasks, or aspects of daily routines. This category was the most plentiful, appearing in every episode of the miniseries:

“- **Mazel tov**

- *Why do you care?*” (episode 1, 45:15);

“- *To Esty!*

- **L’chaim**” (episode 2, 37:56);

“- *But Moishe says...*

- *Moishe’s a **shmuck***” (episode 3, 32:08);

“*There’s always **a Moishe***” (episode 4, 25:25);

“*Until the rabbi sent his guys to terrorize me, **his Moishes**, calling, turning up in the middle of the night*” (episode 4, 27:35).

Mazel tov [interj.] – “congratulations”. This lexical unit can be traced back to modern Hebrew *mazzal tob* “good luck, good fortune”, literally “good star”, from Hebrew *mazzaloth* (plural) “constellations” or “destiny”. The lexeme most likely made its way into English through Yiddish (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

In the context of the series, it was used by Leah to seek favor from her daughter Esty who spoke predominantly Yiddish with the former to show her connection to the community and its values (i.e. religion and family-orientedness).

L’chaim (alternatively spelled as *lechaim*, *l’khaim*, and *lekhaim*) [interj.] – “cheers”, literally meaning “to life” (a common Jewish toast). It can be traced back to Hebrew (Textual Hebrew, Modern Hebrew, and Yiddish spelling: לחיים) (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

Shmuck (alternatively spelled as *shmok*, *schmuck*, and *shmuk*) [n.] – an annoying, irritating person; a penis (obscene). This word came into English through Yiddish (שמצוק), meaning “penis”, “prick” or “fool”, “jackass”, however, further etymology remains questionable offering different source-languages: Old Polish *smok* (“grass snake” or “dragon”); German *Schmuck* (“jewelry”, “adornments”) (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*). The word is considered a serious swear in Yiddish, therefore exemplifying Leah’s strong disgust for Moishe.

A Moishe [n. (proper)] – a very common Jewish name. Despite that, in the series, it has been used as a derogatory term as well (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

No dictionary entry was found for the lexeme *Moishe* on its own, nonetheless, we found a New Jersey Yiddish (NJY) phrase, from which it could have derived: **Moyshe Kapoyr** [n. (proper)] – a contrarian, an annoying person, with Kapoyr literally meaning “opposite” in Yiddish (משה קאפויער) (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*). Some examples of its use include:

*“He has a streak of **Moyshe Kapoyr** in him”;*

*“Don’t argue; don’t be **a Moyshe Kapoyr**”;*

*“He gets things so balled up, so topsy-turvy, his name could be **Moyshe Kapoyr**”;*

*“Everybody wants to go out for Italian but he insists on Chinese! ...What **a Moishe Kapoyr!**”* (Benor, *Jewish English Lexicon*).

Two of the foregoing examples also incorporate the use of the indefinite article *a* before a proper noun, which leads us to believe that it has adopted to the General English standard use of the indefinite article before a proper noun to indicate a general person or a type of a person, having some characteristic, like in the following example:

*“He was **an Einstein** of his time”* (meaning “a smart person”) (*Online Etymology Dictionary*, n.d.).

The exact origin of the idiomatic expression “Moishe Kapoyr” is yet to be verified. Despite that, it has been proposed that it derived from the name of a cartoon character in a *Forverts* series by B. Kovner, published as a book in 1919.

Given that, it can be proposed that the studied community adopted the expression (and shortened it to just “(a) Moishe”) due to its proximity to the NJY, where it is commonly used.

All of the foregoing examples from the miniseries occurred during both in-group and out-group communication, which suggests strong correlation with their Jewish heritage, namely Eastern Ashkenazic Yiddish and its Williamsburg variety, due to some features originating after the arrival of EA Jewish communities to the US and its partial assimilation to the norms of the English language.

2.3.3 Results of the Phonetic Analysis

This subsection focuses on the phonetic characteristics of Jewish English observed in the miniseries *Unorthodox*, with particular attention to the variety spoken within the Hasidic community of Williamsburg. This regional and sociolectal variant is notably shaped by the influence of Eastern Ashkenazic Yiddish, which has left a significant imprint on pronunciation patterns. The analysis aims to highlight how these Yiddish-influenced phonetic traits contribute to the distinctiveness of the Jewish English variety studied.

The first feature to be analyzed was mentioned in the first chapter: “Most borrowed items are assimilated into English phonological and morphological frameworks, although some phonemes, such as the **voiceless uvular fricative** /x/, are retained”. In fact, during the research, we observed the absence of the foregoing sound due to the absence of borrowings from Yiddish in the corpus. Nevertheless, we found that in certain cases the **voiced glottal fricative** /ɦ/, which is also present in Ukrainian and is commonly represented as [ɾ], appeared instead of the usual **voiceless glottal fricative** /h/.

The distinction between the **voiceless** /h/ and the **voiced** /ɦ/ can be reliably identified through several spectral and temporal features. The voiceless /h/ typically manifests as aperiodic noise shaped by the formants of the following vowel, with no visible pitch track and an absence of low-frequency voicing. Conversely, the voiced /ɦ/ often contains weak periodic energy, a visible pitch track beginning in the fricative region, and a smooth transition into the vowel, all of which indicate glottal vibration during the fricative articulation.

In the analysis of the utterance “You have a lot of friends” (Appendix 2) (episode 1, 19:54), we observed clear voicing activity in the waveform prior to the vowel onset in “have”. The spectrogram reveals a visible pitch contour beginning within the fricative segment, and the waveform shows periodicity, both of which are strong indicators of a voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/. Similarly, in the utterance “I have time” (Appendix 4) (episode 1, 20:13), the acoustic characteristics mirror those of the first sentence. The pitch track is present within the fricative region, and voicing is

apparent in the waveform, again suggesting that the speaker (Esty) produced a voiced /h/ in “have”.

In contrast, the utterance “I can help you” (Appendix 3) (episode 1, 20:08) presents different acoustic evidence. The fricative preceding the vowel in “help” lacks both periodicity and a pitch track, with the waveform displaying clear aperiodicity. These features support the interpretation that the glottal fricative in this context is voiceless, consistent with the production of /h/.

Based on the above observations, we can conclude that the fricative in the word “have” in the first and third sentences is most accurately characterized as a voiced glottal fricative /h/, while the fricative in “help” in the second sentence aligns with the acoustic profile of a voiceless /h/.

The analysis now turns to the analysis of the same feature of a different speaker, this time focusing on a male character, Yanky.

In the utterance “I asked her for a divorce” (Appendix 5) (episode 4, 14:30), we focus on the segment corresponding to “her”. Looking at the data, we can see the presence of voicing: consistent pitch track in the fricative region, beginning slightly before the vowel and continuing through it. Additionally, the waveform in this region shows signs of periodicity, further confirming the presence of vocal fold vibration. These features are characteristic of the voiced glottal fricative /h/.

By contrast, in the utterance “I have to take her home” (Appendix 6) (episode 4, 15:01), three glottal fricatives are present. In all the cases (“have”, “her”, and “home”), we observe a weak or absent pitch track during the fricative segment, with the pitch emerging clearly only as the following vowel begins. The waveform in these regions is largely aperiodic and lacks the smooth glottal pulses seen with voicing. Therefore, it can be stated that in this sentence all the tokens of the fricatives were realized without voicing, which makes them all voiceless glottal fricatives /h/.

Now, we will determine the absence or presence of **monophthongization** in the speech of three speakers: Esty, Moishe, and Leah.

Monophthongs are characterized by a steady-state articulation, meaning that during their production the tongue position, formant structure, and vocal tract

configuration remain relatively stable. This results in relatively flat and unchanging formant trajectories, especially in the first and second formants (F1 and F2). In contrast, diphthongs involve a dynamic articulatory movement from one vowel quality to another. Acoustically, this transition is reflected in visible glides within the spectrogram and noticeable shifts in formant trajectories over the duration of the vowel.

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The first case involves the pronunciation of the final sound in the word “Americano” (Appendix 7) (episode 1, 19:44). We observe a relatively steady configuration. F1 remains quite flat, and F2 does not exhibit significant upward movement. The pitch track is stable, and the waveform does not suggest a transition that would accompany a diphthong. Therefore, we can conclude that this is a monophthong.

The second case presents the utterance “No, no” (Appendix 8) (episode 1, 30:52), where the target /ou/ occurs at the end of both instances of “no”. Here, we see formant movement across the duration of each vowel. In both tokens, F1 decreases steadily while F2 increases, forming a consistent pattern of transition typical of the diphthong /ou/. Importantly, the shift in formants is not abrupt but gradual and

smooth, which supports the presence of a dynamic articulatory gesture. Thus, we should classify these vowels as diphthongs.

In the third case with the word “Nobody” (Appendix 9) (episode 1, 30:56), the spectrogram clearly illustrates a transitional movement within the vowel. The initial portion exhibits a higher F1 and a lower F2, which then transitions to a lower F1 and a slightly higher F2. These movements match the articulatory pattern expected of /ou/, as the tongue moves from a lower to a higher position while also advancing slightly. The consistent change in resonance confirms that this is a diphthong.

Finally, in the utterance “Don’t” (Appendix 10) (episode 1, 30:58), we can observe clear movement in both F1 and F2 over the course of the vowel. F1 shows a lowering trajectory consistent with the transition from a mid-back rounded vowel to a higher position, while F2 slightly rises, which suggests forward movement of the tongue. The curved and sloping nature of both formant paths indicates a classic diphthongal structure, thus we can confirm that the vowel is not a monophthong but a diphthong.

Now, we will analyze the speech of a male character, Moishe, on the absence or presence of the same feature.

In the word “about” from the utterance “You know exactly who I’m talking about” (Appendix 11) (episode 1, 38:11), we observe a clear downward shift in F1 and a noticeable upward glide in F2, which are characteristic of the tongue moving from a low central to a high back position. The pitch remains stable, and formant trajectories are smoothly curved. Thus, we confirm that the vowel is realized as a diphthong.

In the production of the vowel in the utterance “Don’t” (Appendix 12) (episode 1, 38:35), the acoustic characteristics indicate that this is a monophthong, since no F1 decreasing and F2 increasing is found. In this instance, both F1 and F2 remain relatively stable throughout the vowel. The formants show little to no curvature, and the pitch contour is flat and steady. This proves that the articulatory movement was minimal, which makes it consistent with a monophthong rather than a diphthong.

Lastly, we will analyze the speech of another female character, Leah, on the absence or presence of monophthongization. She presents a very interesting case, since she has been out of touch with the Williamsburg Jewish community for a long while, thus we could try to determine if this somehow affected her speech patterns.

In the first two examples (the diphthong /**oo**/ in the utterances “**no**” (Appendix 13) (episode 1, 45:28) and “**go**” (Appendix 14) (episode 1, 45:30)), we can see strong evidence of diphthongs: a falling F1 and a slight but clear movement in F2. These shifts suggest a dynamic articulatory process, which aligns with the expected glide of the diphthong /oo/.

The third example, in the utterance “**okay**” (Appendix 15) (episode 1, 46:14), however, notably differs from the foregoing two. Here, the formant structure appears largely stable. There is little to no shift in F1 or F2 across the vowel’s duration, and the trajectory remains flat. This lack of spectral movement strongly proves that this sound is a monophthong.

We will turn to the last phonetic feature to be analyzed in the study, **th-stopping**. To determine whether a given production of a “th” sound reflects th-stopping, we look for specific acoustic markers. In usual dental fricatives like /θ/ or /ð/, we expect to see fricative noise in the spectrogram, typically high-frequency, turbulent energy that lacks clear voicing in the case of /θ/ and includes periodicity for /ð/. In contrast, th-stopping involves a substitution with a stop consonant, often /d/ or /t/, where the spectrogram reveals a moment of silence or closure followed by a burst and a sharp onset.

In the first case of Esty’s speech (“**Thank you for helping me.”) (Appendix 16) (episode 1, 04:28), the data do not suggest th-stopping. There is no visible closure or burst preceding the vowel. Instead, we observe a noisy segment that extends briefly before the following sound. This segment matches the expected acoustic pattern of /θ/.**

In the second case (“**Thank you”) (Appendix 17) (episode 1, 04:38), however, the spectrogram shows a brief silence followed by a sudden release of energy, lacking any fricative noise prior to that release. The waveform and spectrogram together**

suggest the presence of a stop articulation, more consistent with /t/ than with a true interdental fricative. Therefore, this instance appears to be a clear example of th-stopping.

In the third case (“You stopped being my mother...”) (Appendix 18) (episode 1, 45:22), the sound under examination shows clear voicing and a continuous waveform with low-frequency energy. There is no burst or closure, and the formant transitions appear smooth. These features are consistent with the voiced dental fricative /ð/, not a stop replacement.

In the first instance of Leah’s speech (“... to give you this”) (Appendix 19) (episode 1, 45:43), the segment displays no visible closure or burst. Instead, the waveform shows continuous voicing, and the spectrogram lacks silence between segments. The low-frequency energy and gradual formant transitions further support the interpretation of a voiced fricative.

The second (“Born there”) (Appendix 20) (episode 1, 45:55) case follows a similar pattern: no disruption in the waveform, and the acoustic signal shows voicing that continues through the consonant into the following vowel, which is typical for an intervocalic /ð/. Again, we find no sign of a stop substitution.

In the third case (“Those documents”) (Appendix 21) (episode 1, 46:20), the articulation of the initial consonant shows periodicity without any indication of a closure. The waveform exhibits smooth glottal pulses, and the formant structure continues without interruption. There is no evidence for the presence of a stop, which suggests that the /ð/ sound has been preserved.

And lastly, we will continue with Yanky’s speech.

The analysis of the utterance “then” (Appendix 22) (episode 4, 13:53) reveals a consistent fricative quality, with no evidence of a preceding closure or burst typical of stop consonants. The energy is distributed in higher frequencies, and the articulation appears continuous, which confirms the presence of the expected voiced dental fricative /ð/.

On the other hand, both “think” (Appendix 23) (episode 4, 14:42) and “that’s” (Appendix 24) (episode 4, 15:03) show signs of th-stopping. In “think”, the onset is

marked by an abrupt closure and a release burst, characteristic of a voiceless stop like /t/ rather than the expected fricative /θ/. Similarly, in “**th**at’s”, there is minimal friction and a noticeable period of silence before the following vowel, which points to a substitution of /ð/ with a voiced stop such as /d/. In both cases, the spectrograms reflect examples of th-stopping.

Thus, we can conclude that the voiceless uvular fricative /x/ is not present in any of the segments, which can be explained by the fact we encountered no borrowings from Hebrew with the foregoing sound in them, therefore there was nothing to be retained. Also, we observed that the voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/ replaced the voiceless glottal fricative /h/ in certain cases. Particularly, when the word with that sound was stressed in the utterance.

Th-stopping was present in certain segments as well, however, it was found only in the initial position but never in the medial or final positions. Monophthongization of the the diphthong /oo/ occurred predominantly in the unstressed segments of the utterances analyzed. When the diphthong was stressed, it was always realized as a diphthong with no sign of monophthongization.

Conclusions to Chapter 2.

The second chapter provided a comprehensive analysis of the features described in the hypothesis. These included grammatical constructions such as the use of the Present Progressive in contexts where Standard English would typically require the Present Perfect, the use of non-standard prepositions, unusual object placement within sentences, and instances of topicalization. Lexically, we looked for culturally specific vocabulary categories that could be influenced by Yiddish, as well. Phonetically, our attention centered on the influence of Yiddish sounds. Particularly, the presence of the voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/ and the Hebrew /x/ in place of the standard English /h/, the monophthongization of English diphthongs, and the occurrence of th-stopping, all of which are shaped by the phonological system and structures of Eastern Yiddish.

With the use of a qualitative approach, we have attempted to examine the reasons for certain grammatical choices that the analyzed speakers made and lexical units that they used. It has been indicated that the influence of Yiddish is clearly present in the speech of the studied members of the Hasidic Jewish community in Williamsburg, NYC.

The results of grammatical analysis, however, have shown that the characters' speech is not notably influenced by the Yiddish, which can be proven by the absence of peculiar morphological features and only two entries of emulative or calque syntactic structures that speakers of standard English would find ungrammatical.

We have observed multiple examples of different Yiddish-influenced vocabulary categories being used in both in-group and out-group communication. Lexical analysis has provided us with multiple entries of different layers of vocabulary: Judaic religious vocabulary, Yiddish kinship and culinary vocabulary, unique everyday lexicon, and idiomatic expressions connected to the culture. All of the foregoing categories were found in out-group communication and most of them in in-group communication, the former of which can be exemplified by multiple instances of Esty using Yiddish-influenced lexical units in communication with her friends who do not belong to any Jewish community. This only proves how strong the cultural influence is in the analyzed community.

Our phonetic analysis has suggested a clear influence of Yiddish phonology as well, with the most illustrative example being the appearance of the voiced glottal fricative /fi/ in multiple positions where the voiceless glottal fricative /h/ should have been present.

We can therefore conclude that our analysis has found the features prevalent in the communication of Jewish English variety speakers.

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, we have developed a comprehensive understanding of Jewish English as a sociolinguistic variety shaped by historical, cultural, and ethno-religious influences. Our primary objectives were to define Jewish English and its varieties, explain the historical and social factors that contributed to their emergence, explore their development in English-speaking countries with a particular focus on the United States, and identify the main grammatical, lexical, and phonological features of Jewish English, with specific attention to Eastern Ashkenazic English. In the first chapter, we established the theoretical framework by presenting definitions of Jewish English, outlining its evolution in the United States and the UK, and examining the sociolinguistic conditions that have shaped it over time. A comparative overview with the United Kingdom highlighted the more limited variation of Jewish English in that context. We also considered how linguistic behavior varies according to levels of cultural and religious identification, noting that highly observant communities such as Hasidic Jews tend to retain more distinct linguistic features.

The second chapter applied this theoretical knowledge to an empirical analysis of selected segments from the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*, which portrays members of the Hasidic Jewish community in Williamsburg, New York. Our analysis focused on three linguistic domains: grammar, lexicon, and phonology. The grammatical analysis examined features often associated with Yiddish influence, such as the use of the Present Progressive in place of the Present Perfect, non-standard prepositions, unusual object placement, and topicalization. However, these features were found to be relatively rare, and the speech remained largely aligned with standard grammatical structures of English.

Lexical analysis revealed a much stronger influence. We identified a wide range of culturally specific terms, including religious vocabulary, kinship and culinary expressions, and idiomatic phrases tied to Jewish cultural practices. These terms appeared in both in-group and out-group communication, indicating the depth of cultural continuity in linguistic usage. The phonological analysis was conducted using Praat software, which allowed for the precise examination of fricative

segments. In several cases, the spectrogram displayed a clear pitch contour and the waveform showed periodicity, both of which are strong indicators of the voiced glottal fricative. This confirmed the presence of voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/ in positions where standard English would use a voiceless /h/, suggesting a clear influence from Eastern Yiddish phonology.

We can therefore conclude that our findings demonstrate that Jewish English, particularly in its Eastern Ashkenazic variety, is most clearly distinguished by its lexical and phonological features. Grammatical influence appears to be limited. The linguistic traits observed are most evident among speakers with strong religious and cultural identities. This confirms the status of Jewish English as a distinct and meaningful variety within the broader context of American English and highlights its role as both a communicative medium and a marker of community identity.

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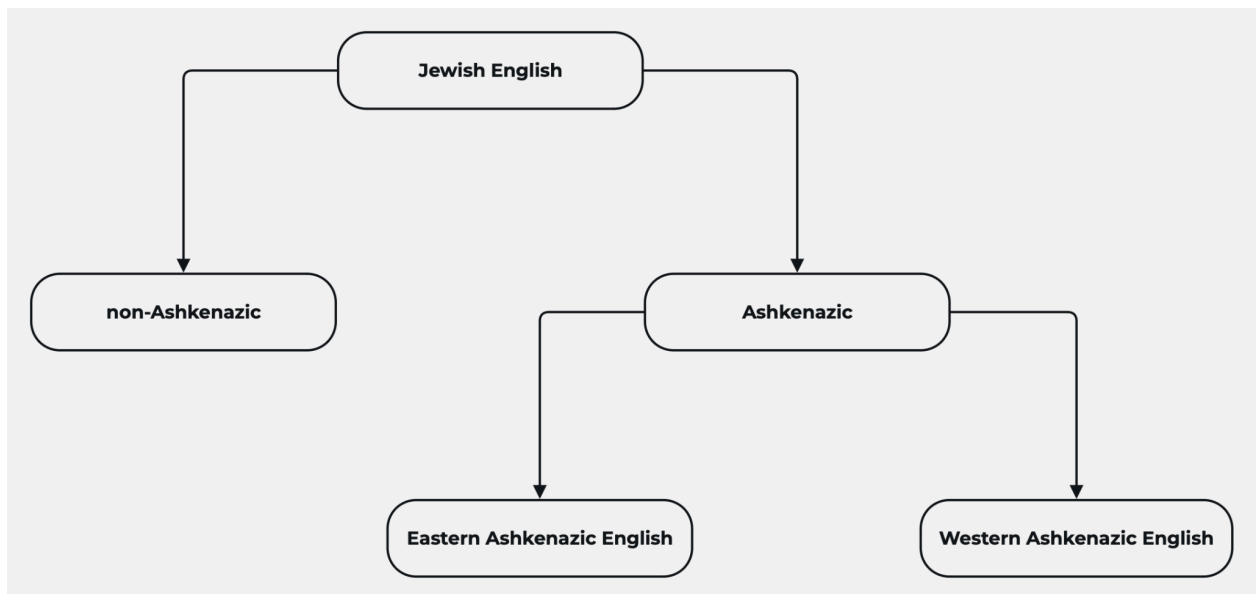
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APPENDICES

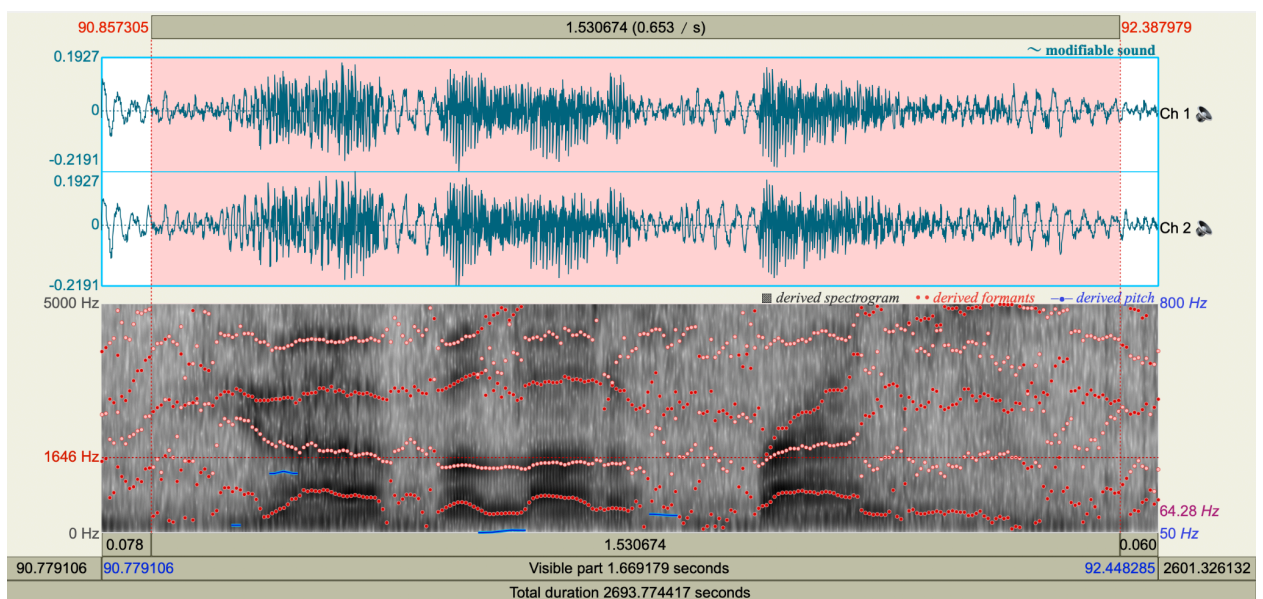
Appendix 1

Classification of Jewish English varieties



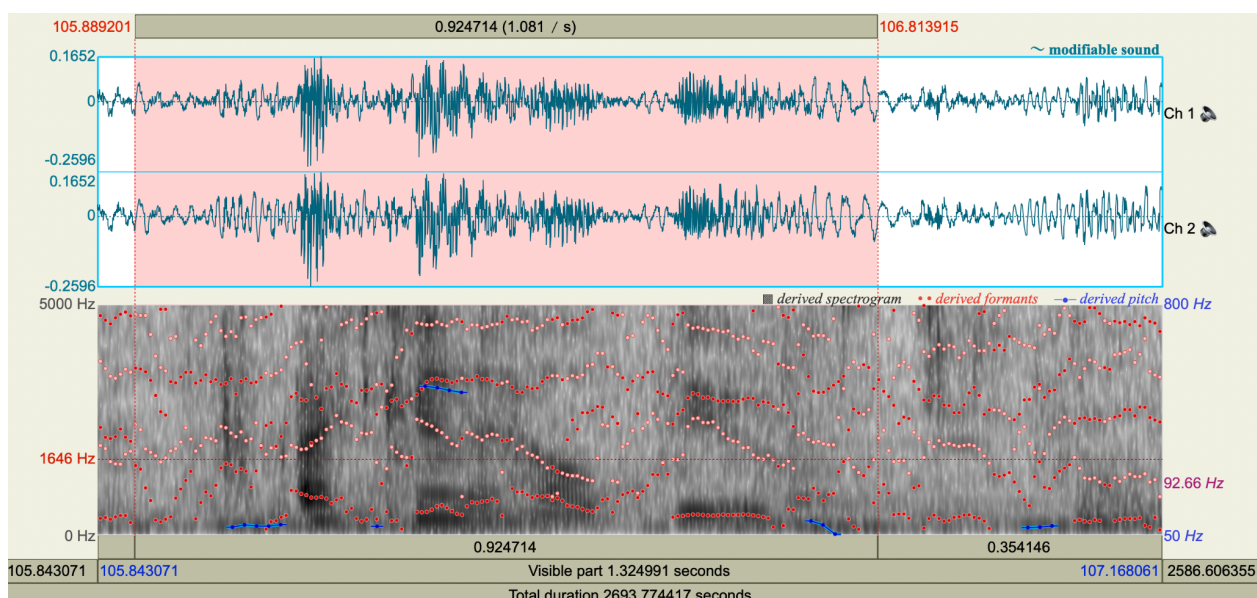
Appendix 2

Visual representation of the utterance “You have a lot of friends” (episode 1, 19:54)



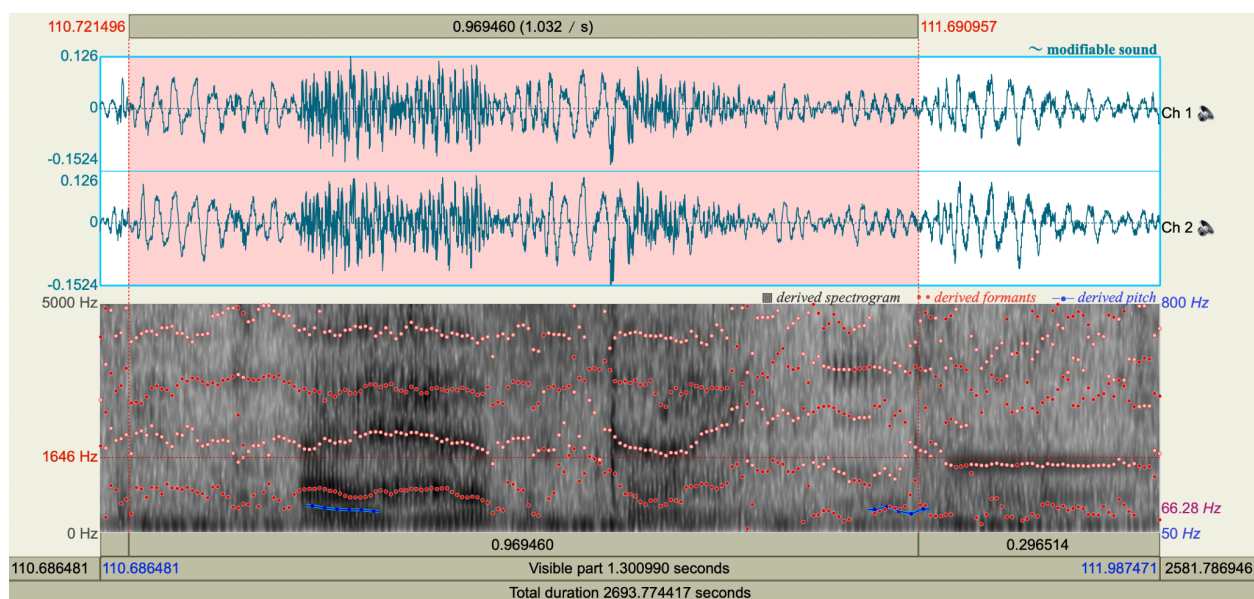
Appendix 3

Visual representation of the utterance “I can help you” (episode 1, 20:08)



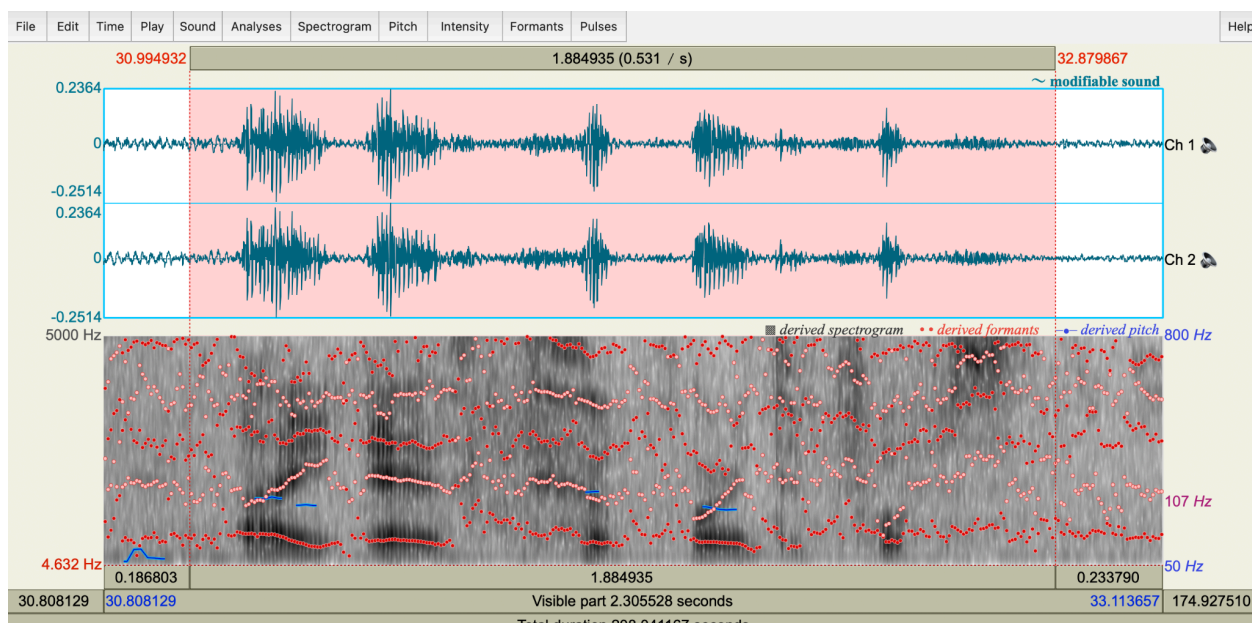
Appendix 4

Visual representation of the utterance “I have time” (episode 1, 20:13)



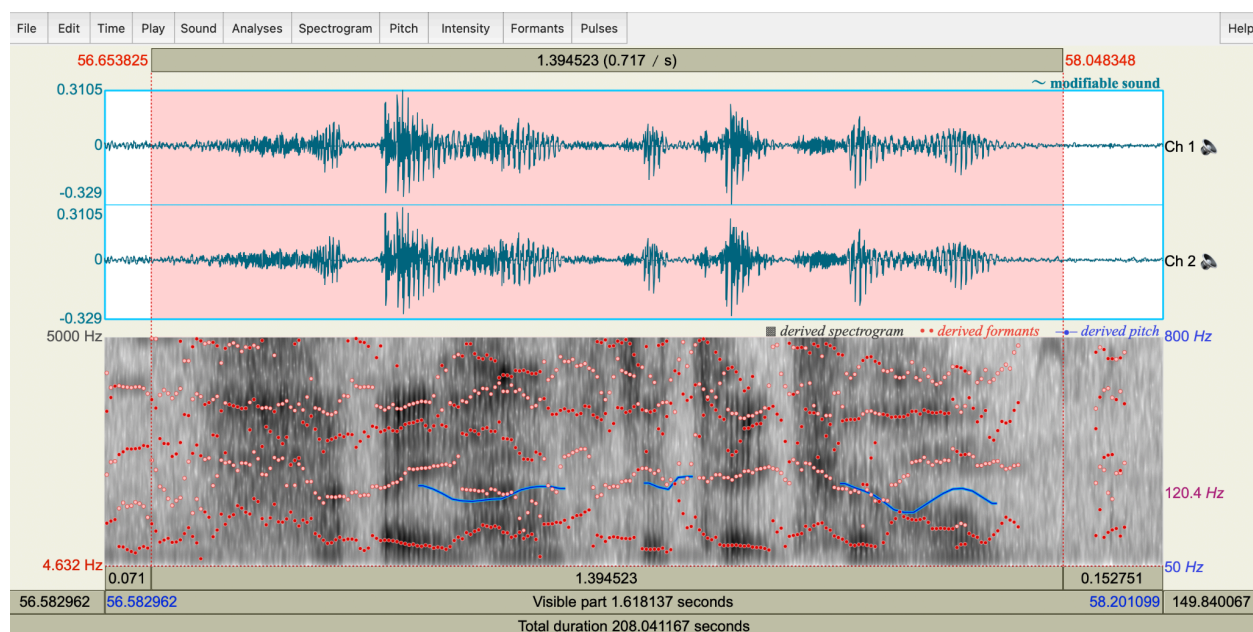
Appendix 5

Visual representation of the utterance “I asked her for a divorce” (episode 4, 14:30)



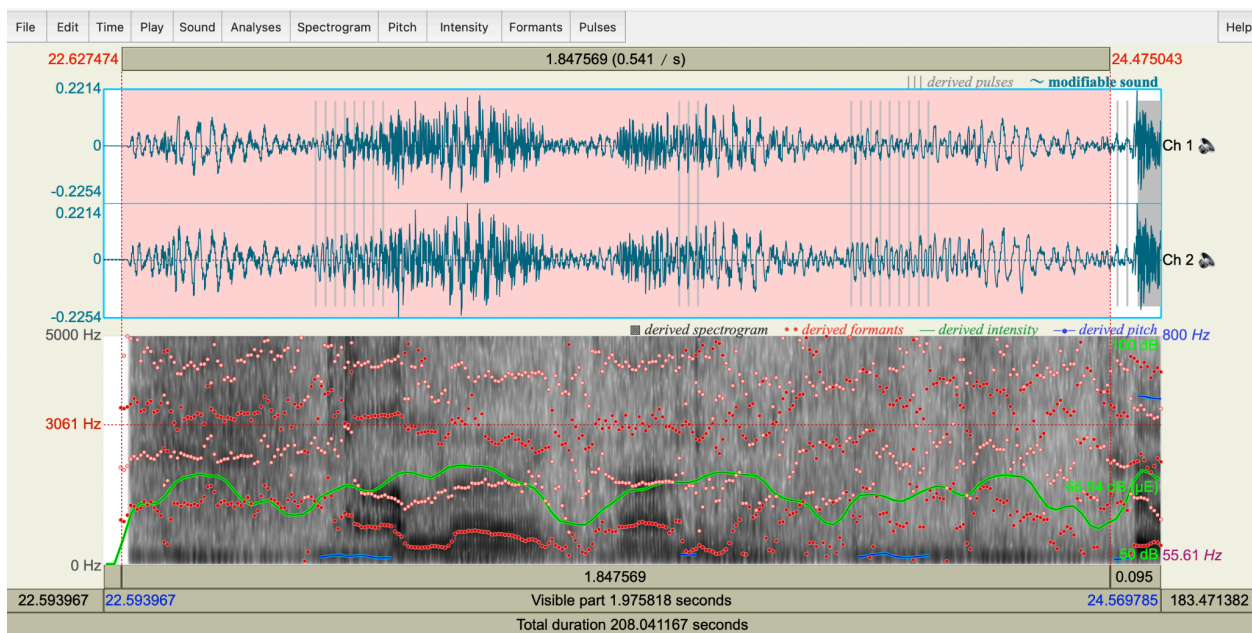
Appendix 6

Visual representation of the utterance “I have to take her home” (episode 4, 15:01)



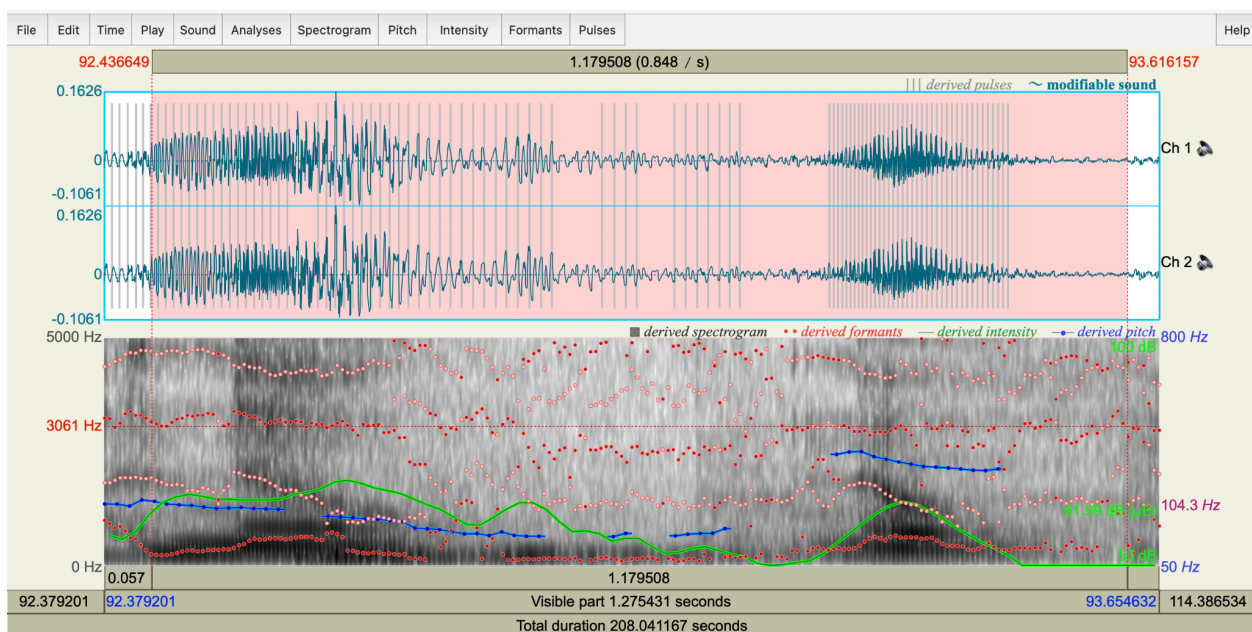
Appendix 7

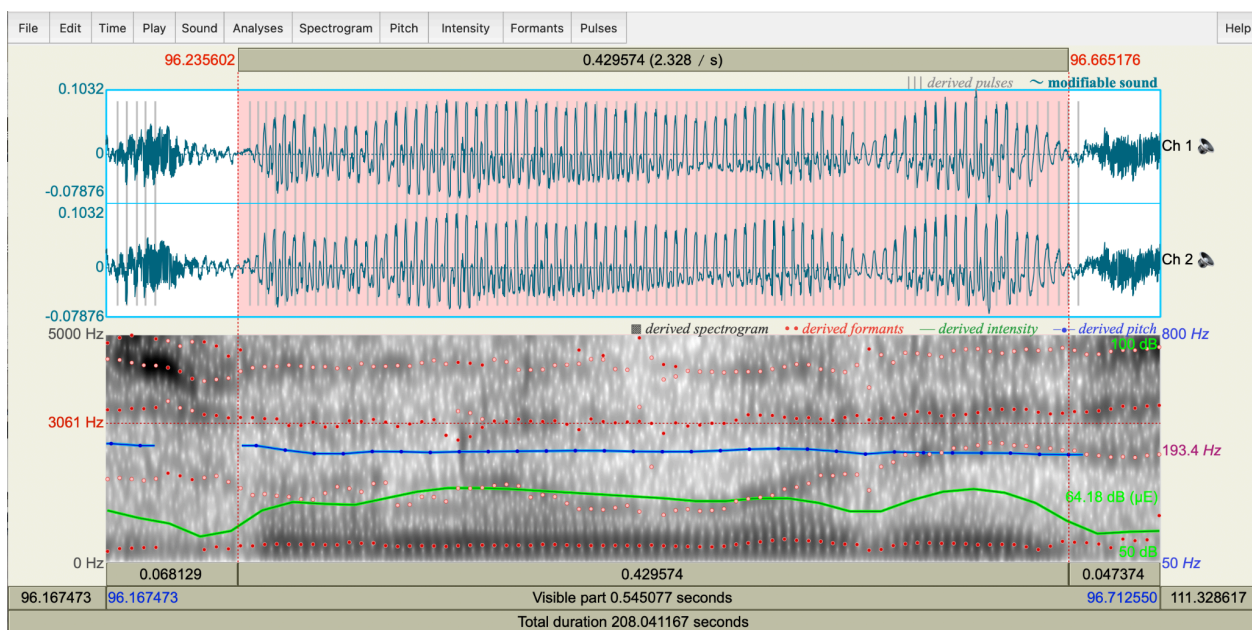
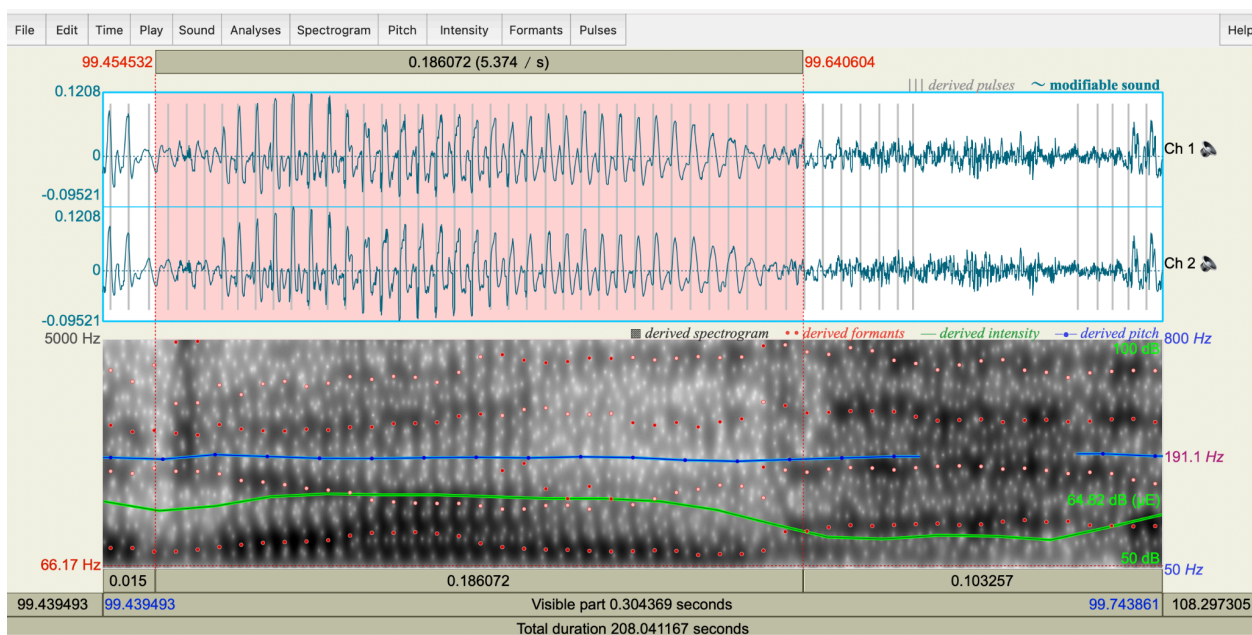
Visual representation of the utterance “Americano” (episode 1, 19:44)



Appendix 8

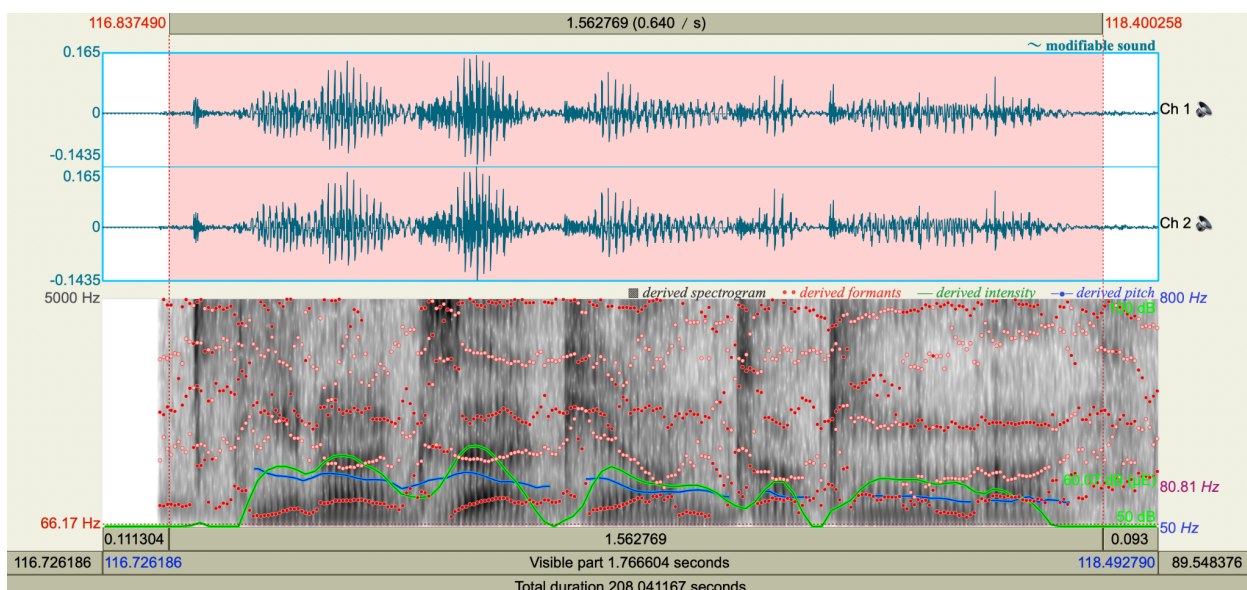
Visual representation of the utterance “No, no” (episode 1, 30:52)



Visual representation of the utterance “*Nobody*” (episode 1, 30:56)Visual representation of the utterance “*Don't*” (episode 1, 30:58)

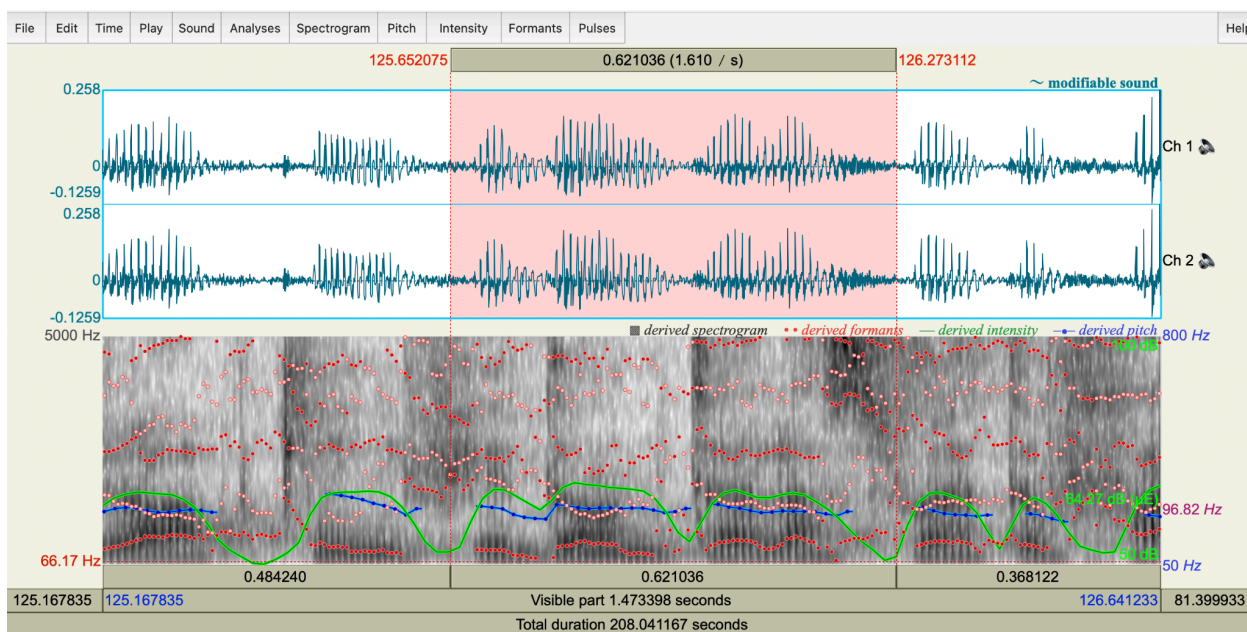
Appendix 11

Visual representation of the utterance “You know exactly who I’m talking about”
(episode 1, 38:11)

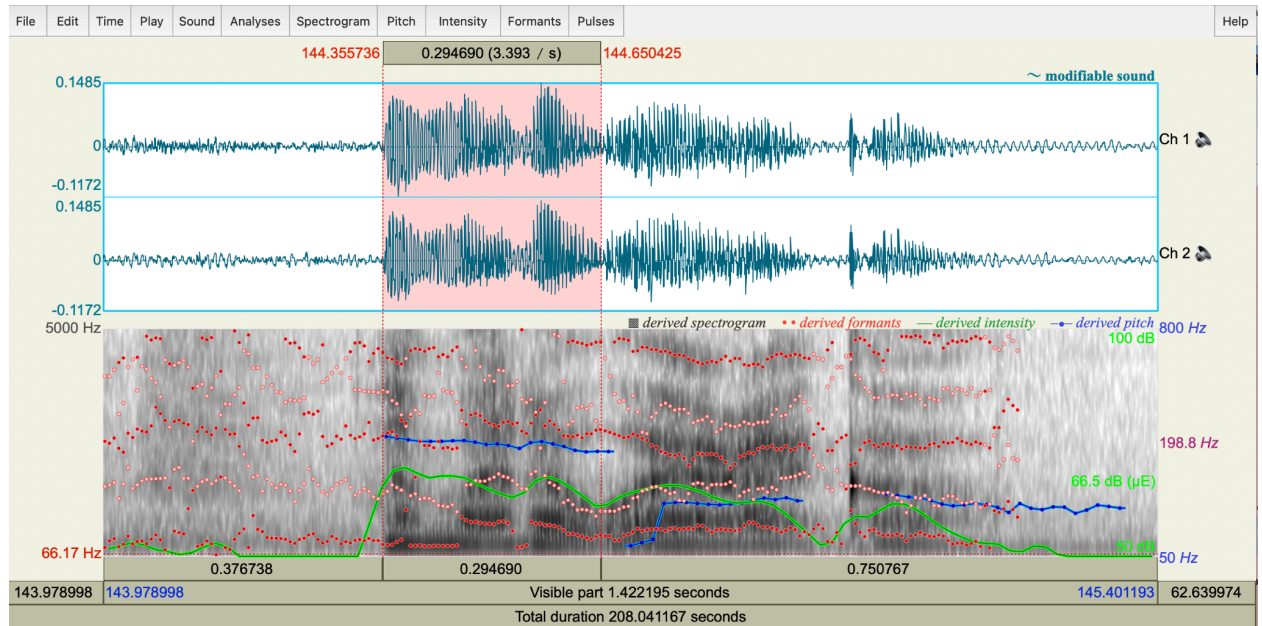


Appendix 12

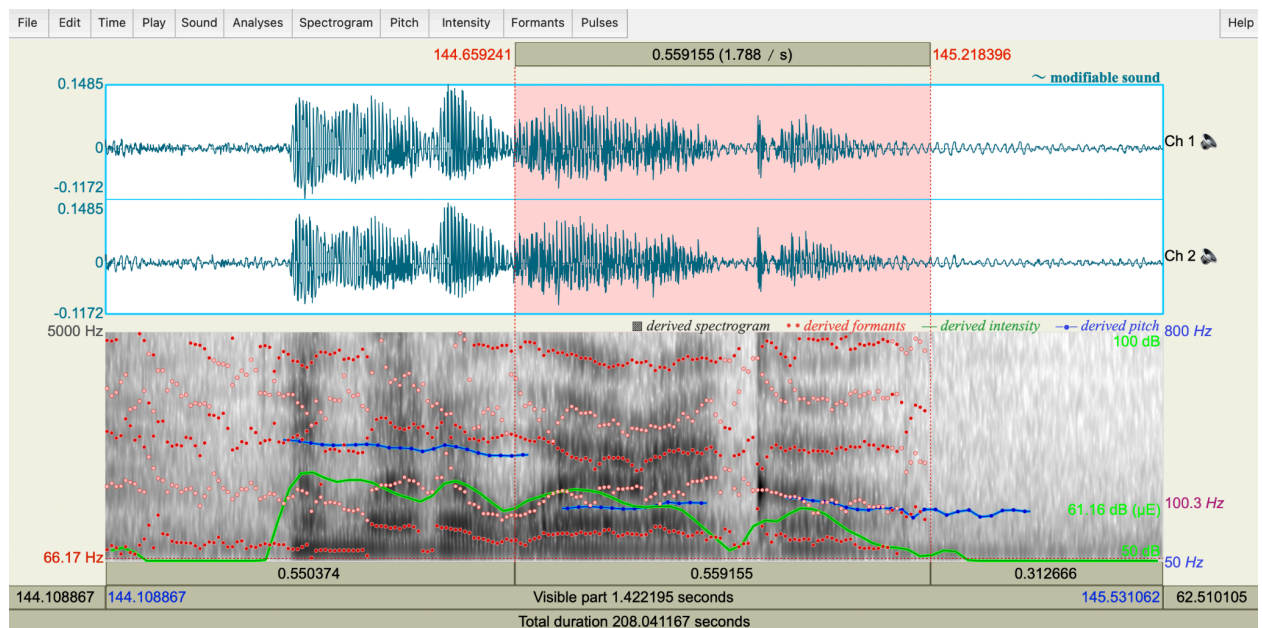
Visual representation of the utterance “If you don’t tell us...” (episode 1, 38:35)

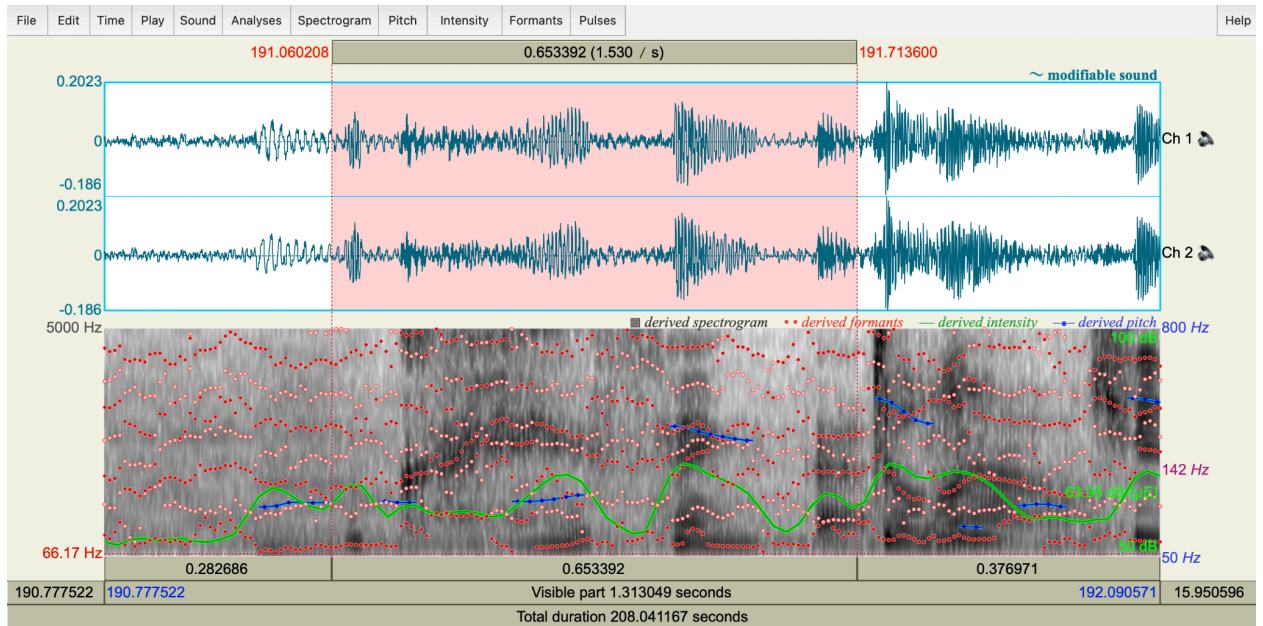
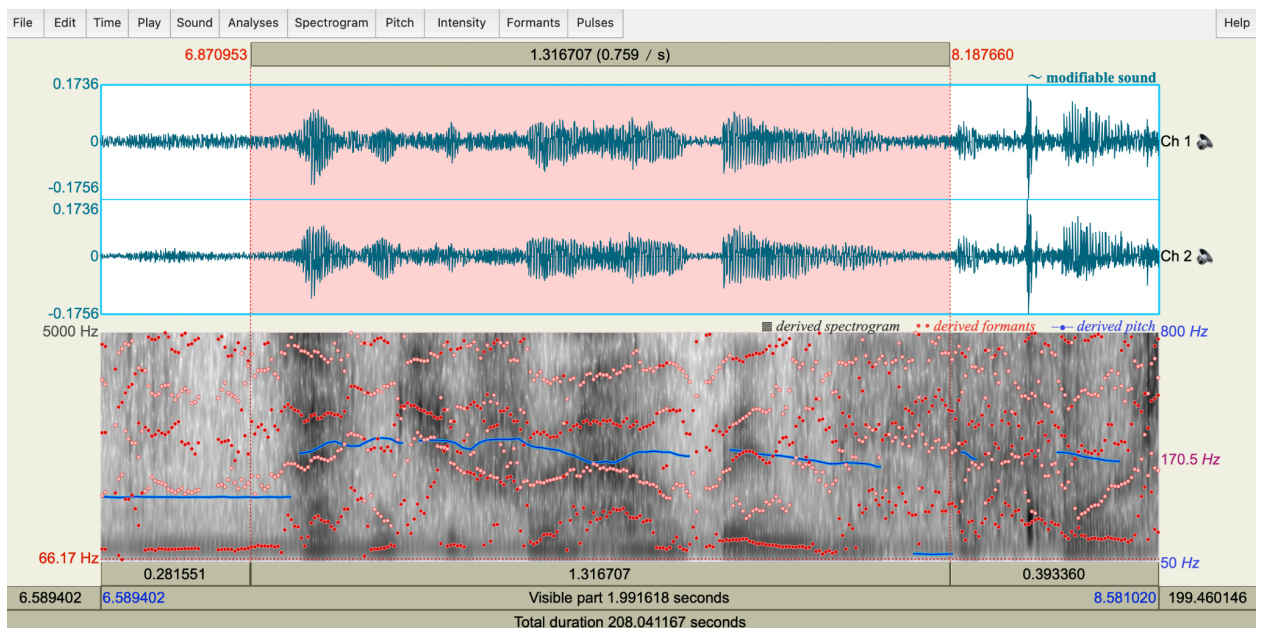


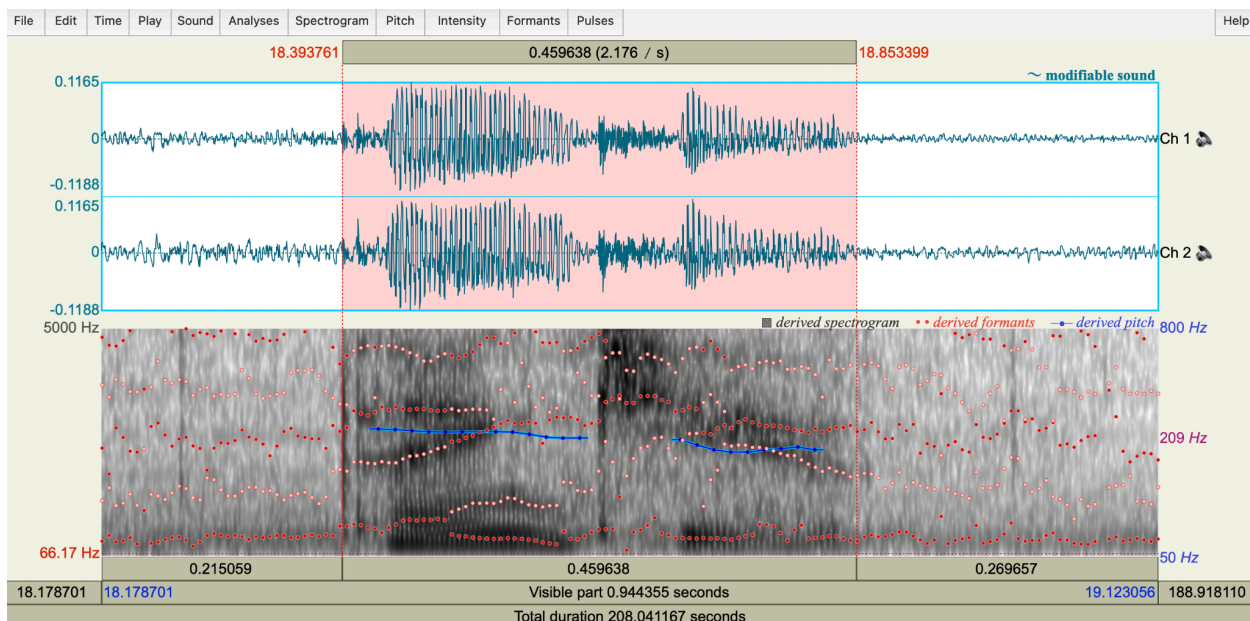
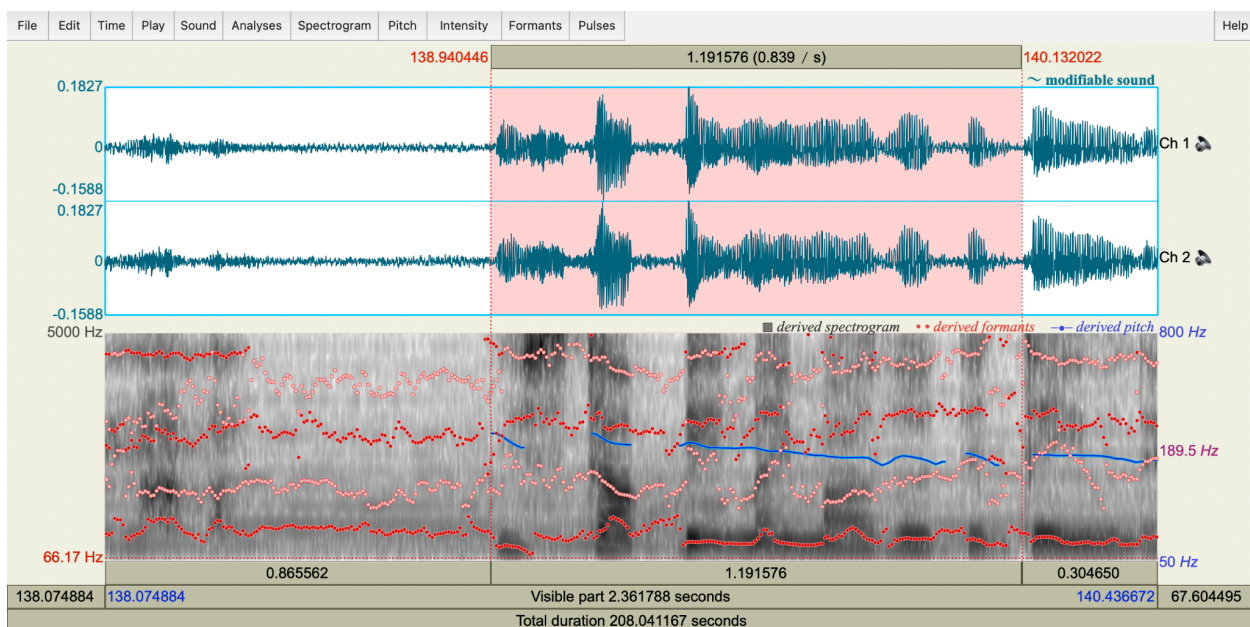
Visual representation of the utterance “No matter...” (episode 1, 45:28)



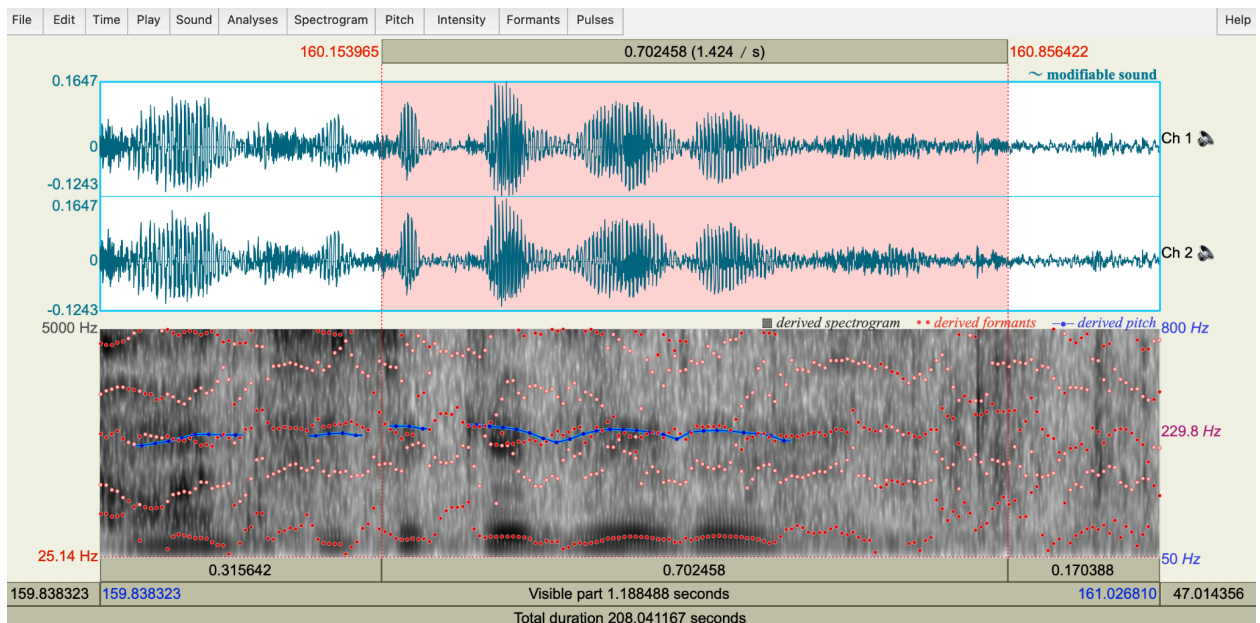
Visual representation of the utterance “... where I go” (episode 1, 45:30)



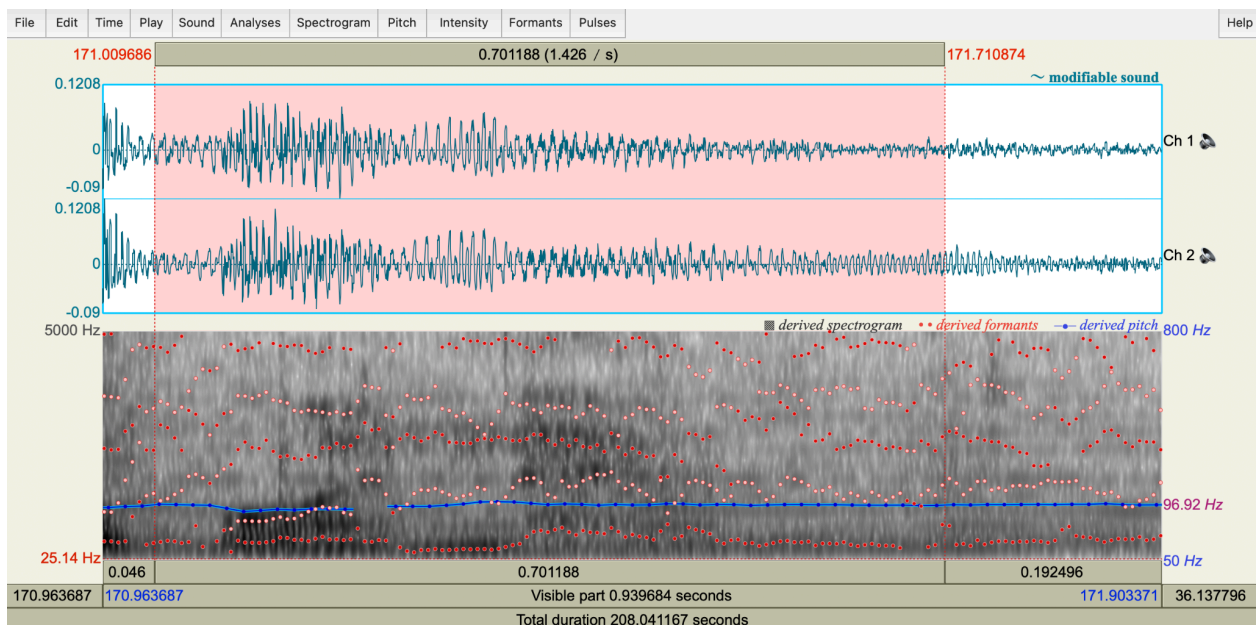
Visual representation of the utterance “Okay, you think that...” (episode 1, 46:14)Visual representation of the utterance “Thank you for...” (episode 1, 04:28)

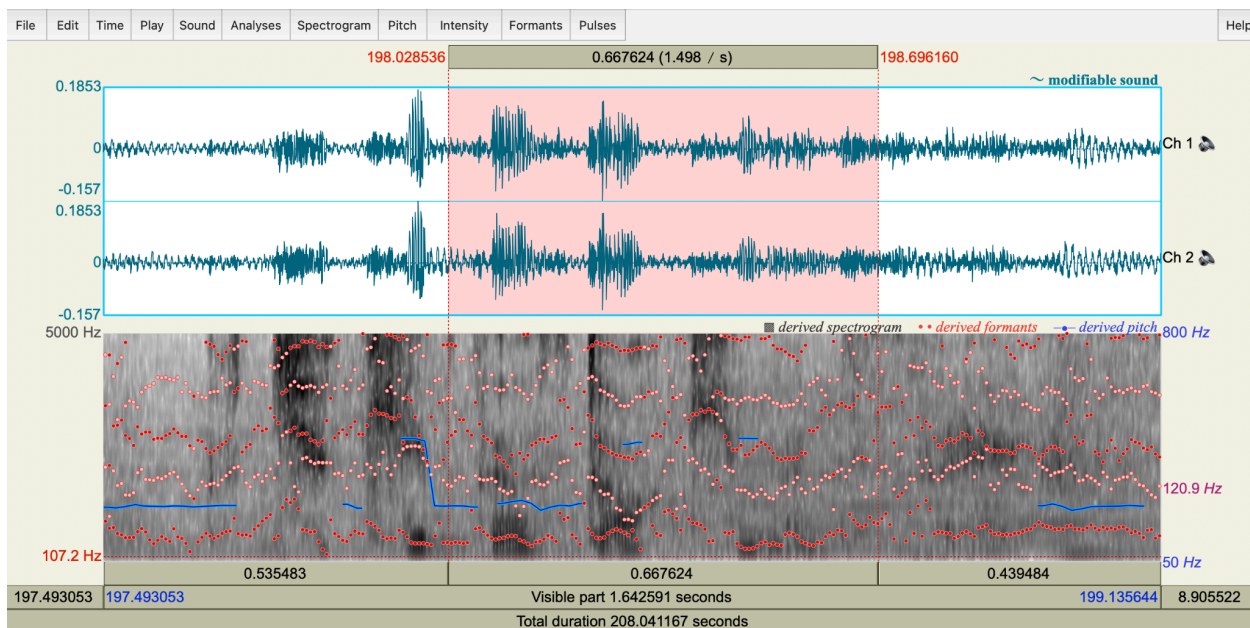
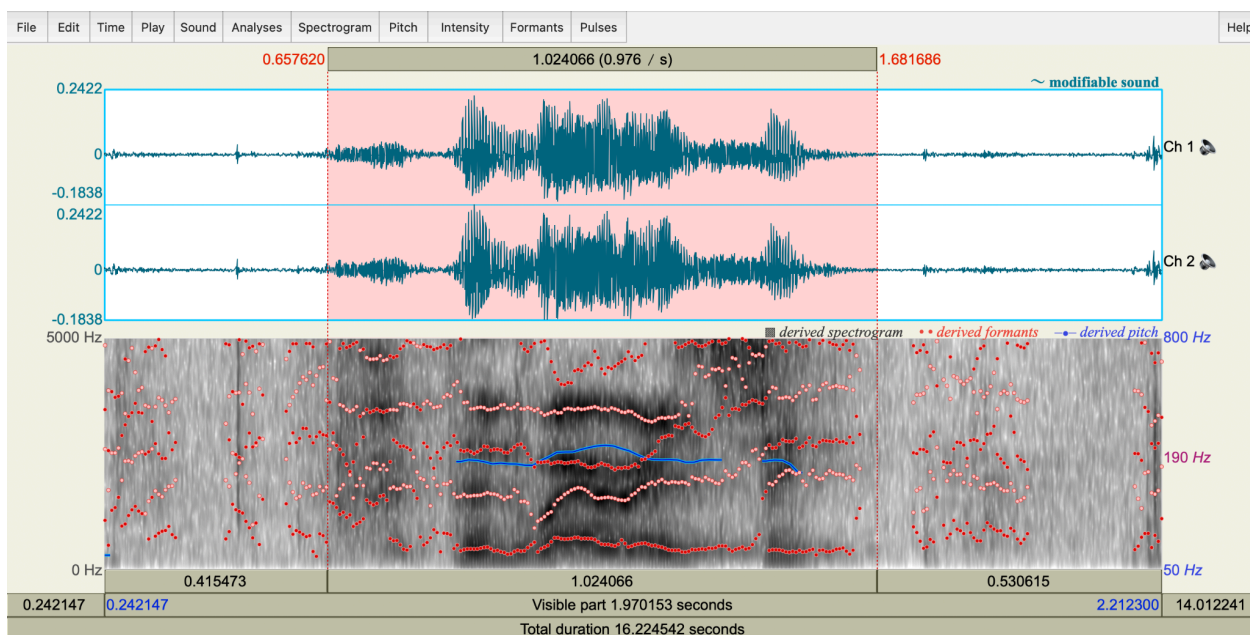
Visual representation of the utterance “***Thank*** you” (episode 1, 04:38)Visual representation of the part of the utterance “You stopped being my mother...”
(episode 1, 45:22)

Visual representation of the part of the utterance “... to give you this” (episode 1, 45:43)

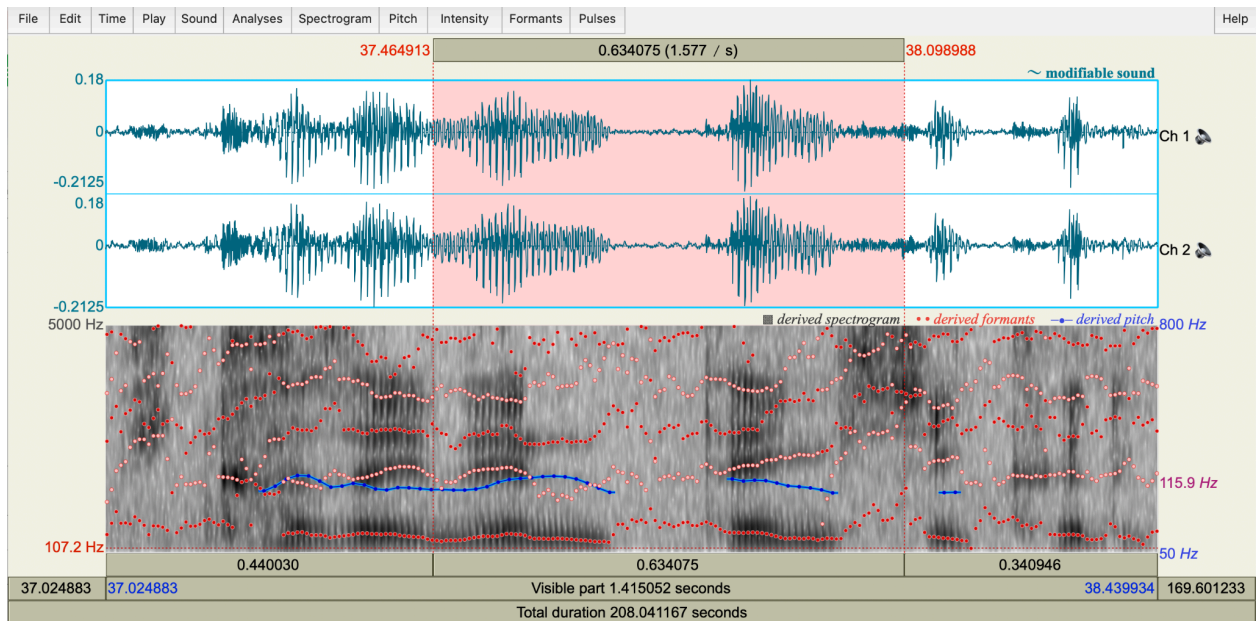


Visual representation of the utterance “Born there” (episode 1, 45:55)



Visual representation of the utterance “Those documents” (episode 1, 46:20)Visual representation of the utterance “Then where’s she?” (episode 4, 13:53)

Visual representation of the utterance “Didn’t think” (episode 4, 14:42)



Visual representation of the part of the utterance “That’s my...” (episode 4, 15:03)

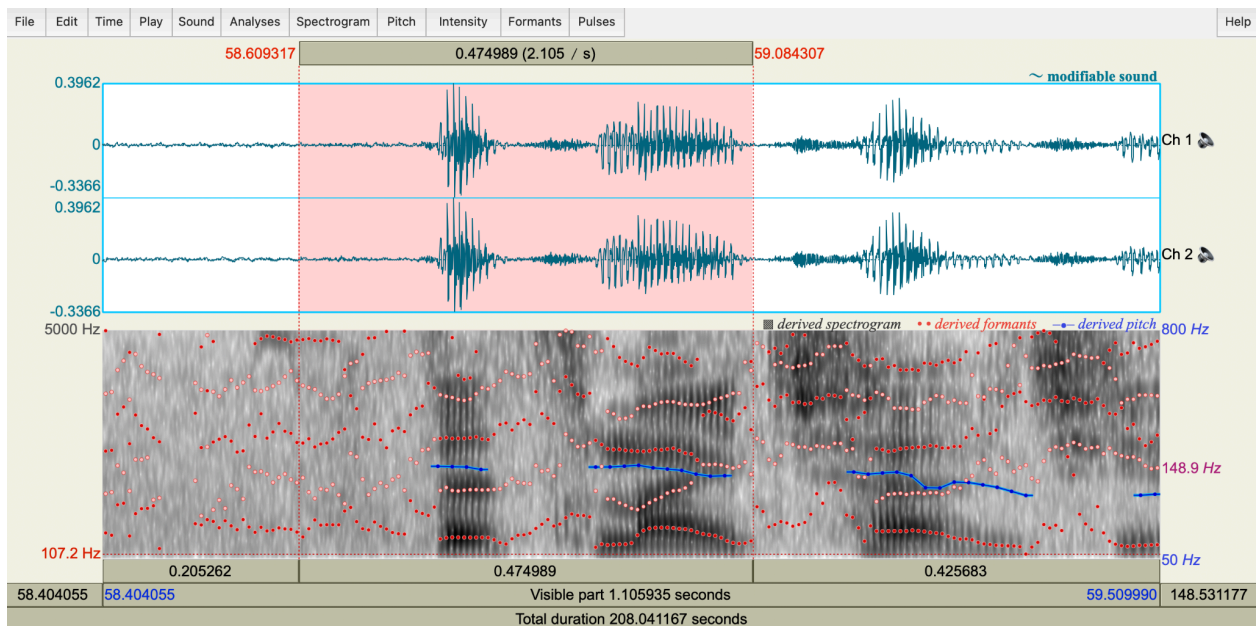


Table of transcribed content for analysis

Episode	Speaker(s)	Transcript	Lexical Analysis	Grammatical Analysis	Phonetic Analysis	Extalinguistic Context
Episode 1	Esty	<u>Th</u> ank you for <u>h</u> elping me. <u>Th</u> ank you				out-group communication
	Esty	<u>G</u> o the long way around Williamsburg, please.				out-group communication
	Esty	Coffee. Just coffee. Me? Americano. <u>Th</u> anks. You <u>h</u> ave a lot of friends. I can <u>h</u> elp you. I <u>h</u> ave time.				out-group communication
	Esty	I'm Esty. See you around.				out-group communication
	Esty	It was a beautiful concert. It was <u>th</u> e most beautiful <u>th</u> ing I've ever <u>h</u> heard. Where are you <u>g</u> oing? Can I come with you?				out-group communication
	Esty and Mordechai	M: I am Mordecai Schwartz. <u>Th</u> is is my daughter. You are late, I'm <u>h</u> ere. E: We're here to collect <u>th</u> e rent. M: My father needs rent. E: Tatty ... answer <u>th</u> e phone. No , no I mean, sometimes when n obody sees. Anyway, we don't <u>h</u> ave one at <u>h</u> ome.	Kinship term: Tatty			out-group communication
	Esty	It's still <u>th</u> ere? New York. I've never been anywhere else. Where are you from? My grandparents lost their whole families in <u>th</u> ese camps.				out-group communication

		it? I'm going to make a family with Yankee Shapiro. Lots of children. A real home. I <u>won't</u> ever need anywhere else to go. <u>This</u> is what I want. L: <u>O</u>kay, you think that now... E: <u>D</u>on't you tell me what I <u>th</u>ink. You <u>don't</u> even <u>know</u> me. L: Maybe not but you keep <u>th</u>ose documents safe, please.				
Epis ode 2	Esty	i'm Ester Shapiro, I'm-I'm sorry. <u>'twas</u> just one night I promise. I <u>won't</u> do it again. New York. I <u>don't</u> have any things, I'll <u>go</u> <u>now</u>..			/twa:z/	out-group communica tion
	Esty	I would love to play music like your students. I've never seen a concert like <u>th</u>at. Bands at weddings and bar mitzvahs, maybe. And my piano teacher used to play for me sometimes. What's in this sandwich? I'm sorry. I <u>th</u>ought the ham would make me sick. It didn't. Where I come from, there are many rules. I wish I could afford to study here. Difficult circumstances? Does Williamsburg count as a warzone? What would I have to do? That's it?	Religious vocabulary: bar mitzvahs			out-group communica tion

	Yanky	Where is Esty? Where is Esty, telephone?				in-group communication. In this clip, we have encountered an example of code-switching where Yanky asked the question, speaking Yiddish prior to that. This merits attention, as when engaged in code-switching, languages tend to have more influence each other phonetically.
	Esty	I would like to apply for <u>the</u> special training program. I... filled out the paper application. Professor <u>H</u> afez told me to bring it to <u>th</u> is office. My circumstances are extraordinary. Just read my application. Please, it's all in <u>h</u> ere. I <u>don't</u> actually <u>h</u> ave an address yet but... wait. <u>Th</u> ank				out-group communication

	you. <u>Th</u> ank you <u>so</u> much.				
Leah and Yanky	Y: <u>Th</u>is is Jacob Shapiro<u>.</u> I am Ester Shapiro's <u>h</u>usband. L: I <u>kn</u>ow who you are, Yanky. I was at your wedding. Y: Really? <u>So</u> is she here? L: Esty? <u>No</u>. English! We speak English in my <u>h</u>ouse! And you are? And you came all the way to Germany, why? What happened, Yanky? <u>Th</u>ings be pretty bad for you to believe she'd run this far. Are they bad? Tell me <u>th</u>e truth. Stop. <u>Th</u>is is not your world. You can't threaten me <u>h</u>ere. They're are <u>n</u>obody. <u>Th</u>ey were just leaving. Y: I need to talk to Esty. L: I told you, I have <u>n</u>o idea where Esty is.		"why" at the end of the question - sentence-final wh-question	in-group communication	
Esty	Are you <u>ok</u> ay? You play <u>so</u> well. <u>H</u> ospital? I'm sure they will love it. My family just cares <u>th</u> at I'm a good wife and mother. What? Really?				out-group communication
Malka	I'm asking you to leave right now. Let's <u>go</u> , please. After you. Let's <u>go</u> .				in-group communication
Esty	Do you know Dasia? <u>How</u> can I help? Yeah, I'm <u>Ok</u>ay. I cook a lot at <u>h</u>ome. Everything. Soups, kugel, cholent, goulash, cakes... It's hard to explain. It's just normal Jewish food. Yeah, I learned everything from my babby. It's my grandmother. she raised me. <u>Th</u>ey also live in Berlin? I'm sorry. Make it sound like I	Kinship term: babby Culinary terminology: kugel, cholent, goulash Colloquial or everyday lexicon: l'chaim			out-group communication

		was in prison. But I loved, without telling anyone where I was going. It's Okay . Got expected too much of me. I need now. I need to find my own path. L'chaim .				
	Esty	I had to get as far away as possible from my community. I just didn't fit in there . But look at you now. All of you. I really hope to get that scholarship. What? Okay . where's the bathroom?				out-group communication
Episode 3	Esty	Hello. I submitted an application. I'd like to withdraw it now and cancel my audition. I don't know. Yes. Ester Shapiro.				out-group communication
	Esty	The pregnancy test at home was positive, and then I had a blood test last week. But I left New York before I got the results. Options? But I don't wanna terminate the pregnancy. Where I come from, children are the most precious thing . But we are rebuilding the six million lost. Jews killed in the Holocaust . That's the baby's heart ?				out-group communication
	Esty	Salam. I didn't expect... it was late. I think she did, actually. But I guess I had to hear it. Yeah, I need some... information. How does this work? Anything? Okay . Is there a God? There are too				out-group communication

	many answers.				
Yanky	Don't touch me. Please. I can't do this. <u>No</u>, <u>no</u>! I mean it! I cannot touch any woman but my wife. I don't know anything... <u>about</u> women. If I... could touch you... what would you like? <u>No</u>. Yes, I mean... Tell me what you like. What gives you pleasure?				out-group communication
Leah and Yanky	Y: Mrs. Mandelbaum? L: What are you doing here? I am working. Y: I <u>know</u>. L: Yeah, then you have to <u>go</u>. Y: I'm alone. You said you didn't speak Yiddish anymore. L: Only at work. Y: Why? L: 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 well enough to get me a job here. You <u>have no idea</u> how the real world works. Y: You could've stayed in our world. We take care of women and Williamsburg. L: 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 <u>help</u>. Y: So.... You miss nothing? L: I miss plenty. But I <u>thank</u> God every day for my freedom. Y: God?				in-group communication

		L: What? Do you th ink you own him, too? So much damage done in Brooklyn in the name of God. All the rules. All the gossip. No wonder Esty couldn't stand it.				
	Leah and Yanky	Y: I want to believe you. M: Th en believe me. Esty isn't staying with me. Y: And if you knew where she was, you would tell me? M: Again, yes, but you h ave to leave now. I've th ings to do. Y: But Moishe says... M: Moishe's a shmuck . Y: Just call me if you h ear anything. M: Sure.	Colloquial or everyday lexicon: shmuck			in-group communication
	Esty	Hi Robert. I needed some air. Me too. And... I need your h elp with something. My audition is Th ursday morning. I need th e scholarship. More th an anything. I can't go back to where I came from.				out-group communication
	Esty	H ey. Good. Big secret. Th ank you for dinner last night. Sorry I rushed out. Where? H ere?				out-group communication
	Esty	What? Th ank you. I love your red lipstick.				out-group communication
	Esty	No . Tomorrow morning. 9 AM. Th is. Yes, yes. You'll see. Did you tell him abou t me? Th ank you.				out-group communication

	Leah and Yanky	Y: You lied to me. I know she's here. L: She's not. Y: Then where is she? I know about the audition. Tell me the truth! Where is my wife? L: Stop it! Y: I'm sorry. Y: I asked I asked her for a divorce. L: Why? Y: Because I didn't think she could get pregnant. But then she did. L: Esty's pregnant? That's why you're chasing her isn't it? That's why the rabbi sent your cousin after her? Y: I have to take her home. That's my child she's caring. What else can I do? L: Ask Esty what she wants.				in-group communication
	Esty	Pregnant. Not like this. Williamsburg is not America. You don't know the rules. The Talmud says, if not me, then who? If not now, then when? Documents from my mother, proving my right to German citizenship. So, will you help me?				out-group communication
	Esty	Hello. Good. This is my... yeah. How much for all of this? I'm in a real tight spot here. Is that really all you can do? Okay.				out-group communication
	Esty and Leah	E: It's Esty. L: Esty? What happened? Oh, Esty, come, come inside.				in-group communication

	L: Oh my God. Okay. Can I take this? E: No, no. L: Don't worry. E: He chased me. He wants to take me back to Williamsburg. L: Moishe? Did Moishe give you this? Did he follow you here? Y: You know Moishe? L: There's always a Moishe. They do anything, say anything, to make you believe you will not survive in the outside world. E: But he's right. I'm pregnant, and I have no money, no education, I have nothing to give this child. Esty L: You're its mother. You'll give and it your love. Leah E: Like you gave me yours? I don't even know what mothers do. L: I'll help you. E: Stop it. L: I promise I'll help you. E: I said, stop it! L: No, I won't stop. This is the first time in 15 years I get to speak to you without a chaperone... no Malka, no Babby. Listen to me, I love you and I'll help you. E: You left me. L: No, I didn't. E: You left me when I was three, and Babby and Malka had no choice... L: You were taken from me. E: That's a lie.	Kinship term: babby Religious vocabulary: rabbi Colloquial or everyday lexicon: a Moishe (derogatory)	"nothing to give this child" - omission of the preposition 'to'	in-group communication
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	L: No. No, it isn't. Look... I was married off at 17 to a man in a foreign country. Nobody prepared me for living with your fath<u>er</u> it was... impossible. But then I had you, and a friend help me find an apartment for us. E: For us? L: Yeah, you and me. Those few mon<u>th</u>s were... they were beautiful. Until the rabbi sent his guys to terrorize me, his Moishes, calling, turning up in the middle of the night. And then they send their lawyers, and then I was out of my league. I lost you in court. Not a day went by where I didn't think about you.				
Esty and Leah	L: Nina, come and have a look. Oh, that's a good idea. It's perfect. E: I want to warm up first. L: Okay. I'll see you there. E: Thank you.				in-group communication
Esty	My name is Ester Shapiro. I'm from New York. Song. I know. And if you don't allow it, I understand. How come actually, I asked someone.				
Leah	You won't mess us up for her. You understand me? You're not the only one that can make threats. Get out.				in-group communication
Esty	My grandmo<u>th</u>er loved it. It was our secret. Well, I come from a community in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, women are not allowed to sing				out-group communication

	in public. A woman performing <u>loudly</u> among men is considered to be immodest. Even seductive. I went to school until I was 17. I <u>don't</u> have access to proper training of any kind. But for the past <u>three</u> years, a musician living in a building <u>that</u> belongs to my grandfather <u>ther</u> , gave me piano lessons in exchange for rent. <u>This</u> was also a secret. I mean, my <u>husband</u> knew, but <u>he</u> didn't approve. Nineteen. <u>Okay</u> .				
Leah	<u>Don't</u> keep your fan club waiting				out-group communication
Esty	<u>This</u> is my... mo <u>ther</u> . Yanky?				out-group communication

SUMMARY

Кваліфікаційна робота бакалавра присвячена дослідженню єврейського варіанту англійської мови, зокрема східноашкеназької форми, яка функціонує в межах ультраортодоксальних громад США. Метою дослідження стало визначення характерних граматичних, лексичних і фонетичних рис цього різновиду, а також виявлення ступеня впливу іврити та їдишу на його формування.

У першому розділі розглянуто історичні та соціолінгвістичні передумови виникнення єврейської англійської, особливу увагу приділено США як основному середовищу її розвитку. Проаналізовано хвилі імміграції з Центральної та Східної Європи, зміну мовних практик серед єврейських громад, а також процес поступової асиміляції на фоні збереження окремих елементів мовної спадщини. Визначено основні граматичні, лексичні та фонетичні особливості, а також фактори, що впливають на варіативність — передусім рівень етноконфесійної ідентичності.

У другому розділі здійснено прикладний аналіз мовлення персонажів міні серіалу *Unorthodox*, який висвітлює життя хасидської громади у Вільямсбурзі, Нью-Йорк. У дослідженні використано якісний метод аналізу, а для фонетичної частини — програму Praat, що дозволило виявити та практично довести наявність таких характеристик, як дзвінкий гортанний фрикативний звука /h/ у позиціях, де носії стандартного варіанту мови використали б /h/. Лексичний аналіз засвідчив активне використання релігійної, родинної, кулінарної та повсякденної лексики, запозиченої з їдишу, в обох типах комунікації — як внутрішньогруповій, так і зовнішній. Граматичні особливості були значно менш виражені, лише поодинокі випадки демонстрували відхилення від норми.

Таким чином, робота підтверджує, що єврейська англійська, зокрема в хасидському середовищі, зберігає низку ідентифікаційних мовних ознак, що дозволяє розглядати її як окремий соціолінгвістичний різновид англійської мови.