

Linguistic Patterns in *13 Reasons Why*

A Study on Narrative Cohesion and Televisual Characterization in the Netflix Series *13 Reasons Why*

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ABSTRACT

The present study conducts a telecinematic discourse analysis of the popular Netflix series *13 Reasons Why* and investigates how the linguistic performances of the main characters establish patterns, which provide the series a structure. The aim is to determine how the series is structured linguistically and how distinct character identity is achieved through language. To do this, transcriptions are made of different parts of the main character's narration and the second main character's dialogues in each episode of the series' first season. Previous research indicates the significant role of different linguistic elements when construing characters and establishing narrative cohesion, such as repetitions, discourse markers, expressivity, stability, logical sense and style of language. This study provides further illustration of how narrative cohesion and characterization are achieved through telecinematic discourse. Such strategies provide the series a structure, which in turn supports variation in characters and setting.

Keywords: telecinematic discourse, characterization, narrative cohesion

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last sixty years, television has been one of the most significant entertainment industries in the world. Consequently, scholarly analyses of televised films and series have become more common, and the inclusion of telecinematic discourse in linguistic research in particular is becoming increasingly popular. *Telecinematic discourse* is the language used in television and film, and can “fulfil a number of specific functions: beside contributing to characterisation, it defines narrative genres and engages viewers” (Bednarek et al., 2011, p.5). There are many different aspects to consider when analyzing a television show linguistically, where the linguistic performances of different characters are at focus. For instance, televisual research can investigate the linguistic field of language and gender, where analysis is conducted on language used by men and women and how men and women are represented through language (Baxter, 2011). In a study by Beers Fägersten and Sveen (2016), male and female character traits are analyzed in the television series *Sex and the City*. Linguistic elements such as hedging, swearing and use of questions are explored.

The language within television and film is scripted, that is, it is planned and crafted, as opposed to spontaneous or naturally occurring speech. Another example of linguistic research on televised films is a study where discourse analysis is conducted on dialogues in Italian films. The linguistic elements in film speeches are examined and compared to real spontaneous speeches (Rossi, 2011). Scripted speech represents scriptwriters’ perception of language in the real world, and it is worth analyzing since it is the speech viewers encounter and need to process (Beers Fägersten, 2016). Additionally, a linguistic approach to television content “means being acutely aware of just how much language permeates the television landscape” (Beers Fägersten 2016, p. 8). Scripted speech does more than allow characters to speak; it also drives a story. It is through language that scriptwriters create their characters and build their stories, aiming to attain audience engagement. Additionally, since some television series are rewarded for their script writing, language usage should earn more attention (Bednarek, 2019).

The language of a television series has a lot to accomplish. Scriptwriters aim for realism, but also to be creative. Characters are distinguished as well as united in a discourse world. Although the language in television series is scripted, the fictional characters and their speech need to be represented in a way that is both familiar and new, so that the viewer can recognize character types and common interaction practices, but still be entertained by novel variations on such themes. Once a pattern and structure are established through language that the viewer can recognize, variation can take place, according to character and setting/mode.

1.1 *13 Reasons Why*, an Overview

In the television series *13 Reasons Why* (2017), the viewer follows the life of seventeen-year-old Hannah Baker, who commits suicide and leaves audiotapes explaining the thirteen reasons why she did it. The first season of the show thus comprises thirteen episodes, each one focusing on one tape at a time. Hannah Baker narrates the first season, and in each episode she talks about one specific person in her life and how their relationship or interaction ultimately contributed to her decision to commit suicide. In each episode the viewer gets to know more about Hannah and the specific character she is referring to, not only through her narration but also through the series' second main character: Clay. Clay was Hannah's classmate and co-worker, and he was in love with her. The viewer follows Clay throughout the whole series. The first season starts with Clay receiving a box with Hannah's tapes, which he, just like the viewer, starts listening to without knowing what they contain. Hannah explains in the first tape that everyone who has received the box is included in the set of people who are featured in the tapes. Clay immediately gets nervous, as he understands that one of the tapes is about him. From episode to episode, the viewer follows Clay as he struggles to listen to Hannah's voice telling the truth about her schoolmates, teachers and family. The story goes back and forth between the past and the present: between Hannah's narration, flashbacks to when she was alive, and Clay's present interactions with different characters.

1.2 Aim & Research Questions

Several studies have been made focusing on the impact of the series *13 Reasons Why* on its viewers. For instance, a study by Sinyor et al. (2019) examines the number of young suicides in Ontario, Canada, before and after the release of *13 Reasons Why*. One of the study's findings is that there was an 18% increase in young suicides during the nine months following the release of the series, which suggests a possible contagion effect (Sinyor et al., 2019). However, there has yet not been any linguistic studies conducted on the language used in the series. *13 Reasons Why* is a complex television show, featuring many characters with parallel stories. The thirteen episodes of the first season alternate between Hannah's perspective and Clay's: between Hannah's narration through the tapes and Clay's own interactions with the different characters. The language usage should inevitably vary according to character (Hannah or Clay) and mode (Hannah's audiotapes or Clay's interactions). Hannah speaks for herself and assures that she is including everything she wants to convey through her tapes, which means that her speech is planned. In contrast, Clay's interactions include two

characters carrying on a conversation, which means that the speech is spontaneous. While the characters and stories provide a source of linguistic diversity, the series is nevertheless anchored by the general structure of each episode based on one audiotape. This study explores how televisual characterization and narrative cohesion are achieved through the language used by the main characters in the popular Netflix series *13 Reasons Why*. The aim of this essay is to analyze the language used in the first season of the series to determine how the series is structured linguistically and how distinct character identity is achieved through language.

A television series such as *13 Reasons Why* can have great impact on young viewers who are still figuring out their own identity and might therefore be easily influenced by what is represented on television, be it true or scripted. It should be borne in mind that the language is scripted to reflect, as accurately as possible, the language of adolescents in the real world that the viewers may identify themselves with. It is highly likely that if the speech did not come across as realistic, the series would not be a success, with its viewership of over six million people, its three awards and fifteen nominations.

Moreover, *13 Reasons Why* tackles some tough, real-world issues, such as sexual assault, substance abuse and suicide. As the title indicates, it is not only one factor that can be a person's downfall, but several problems combined. The television series aims to shed light on these difficult topics, and to encourage the viewers to start a conversation about the importance of mental health. As it displays the arduous reasons that led to a girl taking her own life, the series requests the audience to engage in an emotional ride. To make the viewer as amenable as possible to Hannah's distressing stories, the television series offers comfort of familiarity by providing a structure with recurring recognizable features. This approach allows the viewer to focus on and process new information, such as each one of Hannah's reasons. This study provides an interpretation of how such structure is achieved through linguistic means, which allows for continuous revelations and variation in plot.

The research questions of this study are:

- How does language use in *13 Reasons Why* establish narrative *patterns*, that is, re-occurring linguistic features which frame the episodes and provide both structure and cohesion?
- How does language use reflect *variation*, that is, linguistic features which allow the viewer to recognize different characters' linguistic identities?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into three sections, presenting previous studies on telecinematic discourse, televisual characterization and narrative cohesion. These studies suggest the significance of different linguistic elements in telecinematic discourse, which are further explored in this study's analysis of narration, dialogue and characterization in *13 Reasons Why*. Accordingly, the studies are further mentioned and discussed in chapter four.

2.1 Telecinematic Discourse, Dialogue

Telecinematic discourse analyses investigate linguistic performances by different television/film characters. *Dialogue* is a conversational exchange through which characters use language, and is therefore relevant to examine when analyzing telecinematic discourse. In a study by Rossi (2011), discourse analysis is conducted on Italian film dialogues. The study explores fluency, allocution, discourse markers, glosses and repetitions, among other “typical phenomena of film language” (Rossi, 2011, p. 26). One of the analyzed scenes is a speech from the film *L'onorevole Angelina*, where the character speaks fluently with a lack of spontaneous-speech markers, such as hedges, repetition, and fragmentation. The film's speech scene is compared to real speeches from politicians and professors, collected from a corpus. The speakers of real, spontaneous speeches (even though they are educated), use more repetitions, self repairs and hesitations compared to the “immaculately fluent” speech in the Italian film. (Rossi, 2011, p. 29). Accordingly, “film language is closer to the written than to the spoken pole” (Rossi, 2011, p.31).

Furthermore, specific discourse markers are used, such as “you see” and “you know” in Italian, which function as a way of introducing an argument and getting the listener's attention on a specific topic. These discourse markers are “more likely to be associated with drama, dialogues in novels and film scripts, than with real life exchanges, as a symbol of reproduced spoken language...” (Rossi, 2011, p. 31). However, many other discourse markers which are frequent in real-life conversations, such as “then”, “exactly” and “so”, are absent in the film language of *L'onorevole Angelina*.

Additionally, “pragmatic non-realism” is analyzed in another Italian film called *La Dolce Vita*, as there is unnatural cohesion within dialogue turns (Rossi, 2011). Repetition is used, but not for the same purposes as in spontaneous conversation: in the film, repetitions are used for “aesthetic motivations” to involve the audience, whereas in spontaneous speech, repetition is used to compensate memory gaps and “planning difficulties”, and is a crucial strategy for precision of cohesion (Rossi, 2011, p. 37).

Television dialogues are scripted, which means that the focus is on the language and how the story and its characters are portrayed through linguistic means. Scriptwriters aim for audience engagement, however, it does not suggest that telecinematic discourse is always uncomplicated and easily comprehended. In another study on television dialogue, an analysis is conducted of the dialogue in the crime television series *The Wire*, which the author describes as “difficult to understand fully, but no less absorbing and enjoyable for that” (Toolan, 2011, p. 161). In the study, research subjects were asked to watch a scene with conversing characters in *The Wire*. The participants were given transcriptions of the scene where segments were removed and replaced by an extended underline. Their task was to record parts of the scene where the missing words in the transcriptions were being said. The participants’ transcriptions of the segments were compared to Toolan’s own “target transcript”, and ratings were given to the lexical items that matched the target transcript. The results were compared to a similar test taken by the same participants, but with another comparable crime series called *State of Play*. In conclusion, the rate scores of the transcriptions of the *State of Play* segments were much higher than those of *The Wire*, which reflects the difficulty in comprehending the dialogue in *The Wire*.

Comprehension of film narrative is complex, and to understand the communication in *The Wire*, it requires more than decoding only the speech on its own; it requires attending to the multimodality integrated in the characterization and story-telling, that is, the interplay of speech with other features, such as visual modes and sound effects (Toolan, 2011). Additionally, Toolan argues that repetition is a key feature in the narrative discourse and more frequent in *The Wire* than in other comparable television series. The use of repetition of lexical items facilitates the viewer’s comprehension of the characters’ speech (Toolan, 2011).

Television dialogue is one of the main essential linguistic means through which viewers follow the story of a series/film and learn about the fictional characters, and is therefore one of this study’s main foci. The studies summarized in this section analyze television dialogues in Italian films (Rossi, 2011) and American television series (Toolan, 2011). Both studies mention the use or the lack of repetition in dialogue and how it affects the style of language and the viewer’s comprehension of the telecinematic discourse. Additionally, the study by Rossi (2011) also gives account for linguistic elements that function as spontaneous speech markers, and compares telecinematic discourse to real spontaneous speech. Spontaneity constitutes a central part in dialogue, which is further analyzed and discussed in this study of *13 Reasons Why*.

2.2 Televisual Characterization

This section continues to explore how *characterization* is achieved through language; that is, the significant role that language plays in building television characters and gaining audience engagement. An overview of televisual characterization is provided in the article by Bednarek (2011a), where the author argues for the important role of expressivity when analyzing the construal of fictional characters. Televisual characterization is explained from three perspectives. Firstly, professional practice, such as handbooks on scriptwriting written by professionals, focus on characters and their importance in storytelling and getting audience engagement. The handbooks recommend scriptwriters to do research on their characters, for instance by reading/listening to dialogues, and thinking about what the characters' personality should be like and what kind of language they should speak. It is clear that language is an important part in characterization; however, the handbooks do not clarify "what kinds of linguistics devices contribute to construing character" (Bednarek, 2011a, p. 5).

Secondly, *expressive character identity* is an important aspect when analyzing television characters, as referring to character characteristics involving attitudes, emotions and values. These characteristics involve for instance the use of questions and verbal humor to construe friendships between characters. Expressive linguistic resources include intensifiers, exclamations, swearing, repetitions, interjections among many other features (Bednarek, 2011a). Moreover, television dialogue plays a significant role in presenting a character's personality (Kozloff, 2000).

Earlier studies on film, media and television characterization also consider the important role of fictional characters in storytelling and audience engagement (Pearson, 2007; Selby & Cowdery, 1995). Studies point out how television characters can sustain a whole series due to their *stability*, that is, their linguistic consistency and continuity and low occurrence of linguistic variation (Huisman, 2005; Pearson, 2007). Additionally, it is argued that some genres make characters stand out with their attitudes and values in contrast to each other (Feuer, 2001). In other genres, characters are "construed to be easily recognizable by the audience, both social types... and stereotypes" (Bednarek, 2011a, p. 6).

Televisual characters' stability is essential, since they "need to sustain a whole television series" (Bednarek, 2011b, p.186). A corpus stylistic analysis is conducted on the television series *Gilmore Girls* by collecting keywords uttered in dialogues to investigate variation between conversing characters (Bednarek, 2011b). The keywords include: content words, names, reference to family roles, pronouns and interpersonal markers such as greetings, intensifiers, discourse markers. One finding is that the differences between seasons

in one character's dialogue are minimal and no significant variation can be discovered. The low occurrence of variation depends on the fact that scripted language is outlined to represent characters in a way that viewers can identify with them, which generates audience engagement. (Bednarek, 2011b). Furthermore, since variation in *Gilmore Girls* concerns mainly the development of relationships between characters, rather than the characters themselves, "television series incorporate both stable and changing elements" (Bednarek, 2011b, p. 193). In summary, the articles by Bednarek (2011a & 2011b) emphasize the importance of language within characterization and give account for the significance of expressivity and stability in television characters. Linguistic features such as intensifiers, discourse markers, swearing, repetition, interjections are significant components which contribute to the construal of strong character identities which are stable and sustainable throughout a television series.

2.3 Narrative Cohesion

Narration is a common tool in television series and an important linguistic method through which the story is presented and conveyed to the audience. *Narrative cohesion* means that the *narrative elements*, such as plot, theme and style, are cohesive within the narrative, which enables the viewer to follow the story and engage in the series. In a study by Hargood, Millard and Weal (2011), narrative cohesion is measured through identifying key variables. By investigating earlier studies on narrative cohesion, the authors of this study give account for five key variables: logical sense, theme, genre, narrator and style. Additionally, the study presents root features that may be used to identify the presence of each variable, as an approach to measuring narrative cohesion. Each variable includes *positive* and *negative features*: "the presence of a positive feature within a narrative can be considered evidence to suggest strength for the relevant variable whereas the presence of a negative variable could be considered weakness" (Hargood et al., 2011, p. 3). The theoretical approach includes a previous study on logical sense, where it is proposed that conjunctions, prepositional phrases and anaphoric references are typical features used to attain logical sense (Hudson, 1991). Another proposed positive feature of logical sense is that the story is chronologically presented. Negative features, that is, features that do not provide logical sense is when the content is confusing and contradictory (Hargood et al., 2011).

Narratives are given context by themes (Tomashevsky, 1965). Positive features of theme involve the core themes being identifiable and present throughout, while negative features include conflicts between core themes and sub-themes (Hargood et al., 2011).

Moreover, the genre of a narrative is based upon reoccurring features that give the narrative a cultural context. The story needs to fit “conventions of an identifiable genre” and follow “genre conventions throughout” (Hargood et al., 2011, p. 4). A negative feature would be if the story fits various genres.

It is important that the narrator is explicit, identifiable and present throughout the narrative. The presence of a storyteller and the strength of the narrative can affect the coherence in a story itself. The narrator has negative features if he or she changes personality or character throughout the narration (Hargood et al., 2011).

Lastly, the style of language used by the narrator can also have a significant effect on its coherence, and is defined by “the way narrative elements are presented within the discourse” (Hargood et al., 2011, p. 2). A positive feature of language style is when it is relevant to each scene’s content. If the style of language is not identifiable, it would be considered a negative feature (Hargood et al., 2011).

The studies that have been presented in this chapter indicate the significant role of different linguistic elements when construing characters and establishing patterns and structure in television series. Telecinematic discourse is compared to real speeches, where spontaneous speech markers are explored (Rossi, 2011). The studies suggest several purposes of using repetition, for instance that it facilitates the viewer’s comprehension (Toolan, 2011). Additionally, Bednarek’s studies explore the importance of expressivity in characterization, and the role of stability in characters’ linguistic performances, which is to sustain a whole television series and attain audience engagement. Lastly, an approach for measuring narrative cohesion is provided where the narrative variables logical sense, theme, genre, narrator and style are explored (Hargood et al., 2011). These studies emphasize the importance of narrations and dialogues in telecinematic discourse, through which characters are built and the story is conveyed, which is a central focus of this paper. This study continues to explore how narrative cohesion, linguistic patterns and character identities are achieved in a television series that has never been analyzed linguistically before. In *13 Reasons Why*, there are both narration and dialogues through which the story is told and through which the main characters are portrayed, which is why this paper includes previous studies on both linguistics means. One of this study’s aims is to analyze how *13 Reasons Why* is structured linguistically; however, previous research, except Hargood et al. (2011), does not connect telecinematic discourse to the narrative structure of the series/films. For instance, the article by Bednarek (2011b) analyzes how the characters in the series *Gilmore Girls* become associated with particular language usage, but the study does not specifically explore if the characters’ way of

speaking also contributes to or is related to the structure of the episodes. However, this study does not only analyze character-specific use of language, but also how certain language usage occurs at specific plot junctures, which creates linguistic patterns and lends the series a structure. Furthermore, the study by Rossi (2011) compares the speech in Italian films to real-life spontaneous speeches and analyzes the function of different linguistic components. However, the study does not explore how the characters are identified through those components. Similarly, the study by Toolan (2011) analyzes the incomprehensible language in *The Wire*, but does not comment on how it affects the characters' linguistic identities. This study combines different aspects considered in previous research and connects them in order to investigate how linguistic patterns are established in the series *13 Reasons Why*.

3. MATERIAL & METHODS

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first one describes the methodology for data collection: which narrations and dialogues from the television series *13 Reasons Why* are included and why, how transcriptions are systematically composed, and which characters are involved. The second section describes how the data is structured to enable an analysis of the language in the included scenes from the series, and how the linguistic elements work to establish narrative patterns and reflect variation, according to character and mode.

3.1 Method for Data Collection

The primary source for this study is data collected from the first season of the series *13 Reasons Why*, since it is proposed that a series' first season focuses on introducing characters and establishing their defining traits. The basic linguistic identities of a series' main characters are thus newly created and portrayed primarily in the first season. Therefore, the episodes of the first season of the series should lend themselves well to an analysis of linguistic patterning and variation.

Each episode of *13 Reasons Why* focuses on one of Hannah's thirteen audiotapes, which all include an introduction of a person in her life and an explanation of how her relationship or interaction with that person had an impact on both her life and her decision to commit suicide. In this way, Hannah's audiotapes represent a recurring and consistent linguistic feature in the series, and thus comprise valuable material in an analysis of established narrative patterns that provide cohesion and structure to the individual episodes and to the series overall. The present study does not, however, feature analyses of the audiotapes in their

entirety. Instead, I transcribed only the first and last three utterances of each tape and three utterances in each tape where Hannah introduces the person whom the tape is about. The reason for focusing on three utterances of each part (the tape intro, outro, and focus character) is to identify and characterize overt patterning via a systematic method for data collection. The character presentations always take place at the end of Hannah's intros, except for in episode twelve, where Hannah introduces the character Bryce in the outro of her tape. This means that the data collection resulted in transcriptions of one hundred fourteen of Hannah's utterances.

Another recurring feature in the first season of *13 Reasons Why* is the second main character, Clay, interacting during each episode with the person Hannah is speaking about in each tape. The viewer follows Clay as he listens to each one of Hannah's tapes and confronts each person so he can come to terms with what happened to Hannah. For this reason, the data also includes transcriptions of the three first turns between Clay and the episode's focus character, since this interaction, too, is a recurring feature and therefore a patterning element. Once again, to be consistent in my data collection and to narrow down the material, only the three first turns were included in the transcriptions. Three exceptions are episode two, where there is only one turn between Clay and the character Jessica; episode eight, where there is no interaction between Clay and the character Ryan; and episode eleven, where Clay himself is the subject of the tape. Data collection thus comprised eleven interactions in total, where thirty-one turns are transcribed.

These transcriptions allow for an analysis of variation and characterization integrated in dialogue. Accordingly, the two data sets consist of narrative utterances and dialogue turns: the narrative utterances, which can be single words, phrases or complete sentences, are spoken by one specific character, Hannah, who delivers the narration in the first season of the series. In contrast, dialogue turns occur between two characters interacting and speaking to one another, where each turn can include one or several utterances. Both narrative utterances and dialogue turns are used to convey the story and portray the main characters, which is why they are applicable data that enable an analysis of how linguistic patterns and distinct character identities are achieved through different modes, that is, Hannah's audiotapes or Clay's interactions.

Furthermore, only the necessary parts in each episode were collected as data for this study. Since the focus of this study is on patterning achieved via recurring lexical items, syntactic structures, or conversational strategies, transcriptions do not indicate phonetic features or other aural phenomena. All collected utterances were transcribed orthographically,

using the standard spelling of words and standard punctuation. A few editorial comments were added in some of the transcriptions of Clay's interactions, to facilitate comprehension of the context and setting of the scene. Example (1) below illustrates this kind of editorial addition:

Ex. 1 Clay and Justin (Justin's apartment)

(98) Clay (knocks on door, Justin opens): He can't be prosecuted, okay?

(99) Justin: What the fuck are you doing here?

(100) Clay: I know it was Bryce, alright?

3.2 Method for Data Analysis

As a theoretical framework, the approach to measuring narrative cohesion presented by Hargood et al. (2011) is applied to Hannah's narrations to analyze the linguistic elements. The five variables (logical sense, theme, genre, narrator and style) and their features are used to investigate whether the transcribed utterances of Hannah's narration confirm cohesion throughout the first season's episodes. Moreover, the analytical approach used by Rossi (2011) is used in this study to evaluate spontaneous speech markers in Hannah's speech and Clay's dialogues with the different characters, so a comparison can be drawn between the different styles of language and modes of talk. Finally, to enable easy reference, the utterances exemplified in this study are numbered according to the order in which they occur in the transcripts, which can be found in the appendix.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I present and discuss how language use in *13 Reasons Why* reveals lexical, syntactic, and discursive patterning, which provides the series with structure and cohesion, and how characterization is achieved. Firstly, I analyze the first and last three utterances and the three utterances where Hannah presents her 'target person' in each one of her tapes, discussing different features that are persistent throughout the season and which establish narrative cohesion. Secondly, I analyze features in the first three dialogue turns between Clay and the person whom each episode is focused on. Lastly, I discuss how the language used by Hannah and Clay differ due to their different modes of speech (tape or interaction), and how characterization is achieved through linguistic means.

4.1 Patterns in Hannah's Narrative

The narration by the main character, Hannah, is one of the most crucial tools in *13 Reasons Why* for allowing the viewer to follow the story of her life and her tragic death. Hannah's narrative is present and identifiable throughout the first season of the series, which makes it a positive feature of narrative cohesion (Hargood et al., 2011). The fact that it is the main character herself who explains and reflects on her experiences, makes the viewer more emotionally engaged and attached to her. Hannah's voice is the first thing the viewer is acquainted with in the series, as the first episode starts with:

- Ex. 2** (1) Hey, it's Hannah, Hannah Baker.
(2) That's right, don't adjust your... whatever device you're hearing this on.
(3) It's me, live and in stereo.

As these few utterances of Hannah introducing herself are pronounced, a picture of her and flowers on her locker are being shown on the screen. Shortly after, the second main character, Clay, is introduced, as he stands and looks sadly at Hannah's locker. A few more scenes after that, Clay comes home and finds a box outside his door. He opens the box and finds audiotapes in it. He finds his family's old boom box and plays the first tape, where the same introduction from the beginning of the episode is repeated: "Hey, it's Hannah, Hannah Baker." This time, more narration is included, and the viewer quickly understands that Hannah recorded the tapes before she committed suicide. Hannah's introduction makes the viewer expect a story, where Hannah is the one who will be giving out information. The viewer receives this information alongside Clay, as he listens to the thirteen tapes throughout the season. Each episode of the series starts with Hannah narrating in the past tense, while events of the present are being shown on the screen, which means that multimodality is integrated in the storytelling (Toolan, 2011). In other words, the viewer follows the storyline through Hannah's narration and the visual settings which include flashbacks and present interactions between Clay and the other characters. Repetition of a tape introduction also happens in episodes three and four. At the end of episode three, Clay puts on his headphones and starts playing the next tape, where Hannah starts with:

- Ex. 3** (35) Shhh, for this next one, you need to be very, very quiet.
(36) Because you're about to do something very wrong.
(37) Be careful, and don't get caught.

Clay climbs out his bedroom window and that is the end of episode three; leaving a cliffhanger to draw the viewer to the upcoming episode. Episode four starts with the same scene of Clay climbing out his window while listening to Hannah's instructions. Every episode starts with Hannah introducing the next tape. Her familiar voice is the first thing the viewer encounters during each episode. The presence and consistency of her narration throughout the first season provides narrative cohesion (Hargood et al., 2011), which in turn provides the viewer the comfort of familiarity. In some tapes, Hannah starts by welcoming the listener, as illustrated in the example 4 below:

- Ex. 4** (13) Welcome back! (Episode two)
 (125) Here we are, tape twelve. (Episode twelve)

Each episode focuses on a theme or topic, which Hannah normally introduces in the first utterances of her tape, as illustrated in the examples below:

- Ex. 5** (23) You've heard of the butterfly effect, right? (Episode three)
 (47) Boys are assholes: some are assholes all of the time; all are assholes some of the time. (Episode five)
 (71) You're going to tell me this one is no big deal, but let me tell you about being lonely. (Episode seven)
 (83) Some girls know all the lyrics to each other's songs. (Episode eight)

Core themes in the utterances exemplified above include "the butterfly effect", boys, loneliness and girls. As Hannah tells a story in each tape, she intermittently returns to the core theme. For instance, episode three starts with:

- (23) You've heard of the butterfly effect, right?

In the outro of the tape, Hannah returns to the "the butterfly effect" in the utterance:

- (33) Everything effects everything.

Accordingly, the measurement method by Hargood et al. (2011) implies that the themes present in Hannah's narration throughout the season are positive features which suggest narrative cohesion.

Hannah's introductions are also characterized by some rhetorical musings: in some tapes, she starts by asking her listeners a question. She does this merely to produce an effect without expecting an answer, as illustrated in the utterances of example 6:

- Ex. 6** (23) You've heard of the butterfly effect, right? (Episode three)
(59) How many of you remember the Oh my Darling Valentines? (Episode six)

After the theme and story introduction in each tape, Hannah proceeds to introduce the person whom the tape is about. Hannah always mentions the name of the person whom she is talking about, except for the last tape. In the last episode, Hannah's tape does not include an introduction about the last person who let her down; instead, she includes a recording of the conversation with that person: her school counselor. Otherwise, the part of each tape where she introduces her 'target person', is very similar in each episode, as she often uses similar wordings:

- Ex. 7** (38) Welcome to your tape, Tyler Down. (Episode four)
(64) Marcus, welcome to your tape. (Episode six)
(75) Well, welcome to your tape Zach. (Episode seven)
(97) Welcome to your second tape Justin Foley. (Episode nine)

This recurring and recognizable linguistic pattern across the episodes offers the series a structure which the viewer becomes familiar with, which in turn allows the viewer to receive and process new information.

A discursive method used in *13 Reasons Why* to achieve narrative cohesion is through Hannah's tape outros, in that five of the thirteen tape outros are forward-looking. Hannah also uses similar wordings, as several tapes end with "turn the tape over for more", as demonstrated in the utterances of example 8 below:

- Ex. 8** (12) In fact, most of you listening probably had no idea what you were truly doing; but you'll find out. (Episode one)
(34) Turn the tape over for more. (Episode three)
(58) Turn the tape over for more. (Episode five)
(82) Turn the tape over for more. (Episode seven)
(103) Turn the tape over for more. (Episode nine)

Moreover, Hannah's style of language is characterized by directives, as she gives instructions to the listener of the tape and uses second person pronouns, which can be observed in the different examples above. Hannah's speech in the tapes is fluent, with a lack

of spontaneous speech markers, such as hedges (Rossi, 2011). However, the fact that her speech is not similar to realistic, spontaneous conversation could be based on the fact that she is recording herself and therefore speaking thoroughly and steadily as she makes sure to include everything and everyone she wants to talk about in a chronological order. This is noticeable in the way nearly each tape starts and finishes: she starts by introducing the topic/story of the tape; then she introduces the person whom it is about; finally, she ends the tape by stating her perspective and includes a forward-looking utterance. Hannah is the one with all the information and doles it out almost pedantically.

The transcriptions of Hannah's narration do, however, include around twenty-five utterances with discourse markers, which can be seen as spontaneous speech markers (Rossi, 2011). However, Hannah's use of discourse markers does not disrupt the fluency in her speech; instead, it gives the impression that she is having a genuine conversation with the listener, expressing how much she was emotionally hurt. Utterances with the discourse markers "I mean", "so" and "now" are exemplified below:

- Ex. 9** (57) I mean, we were in this together, weren't we?
(89) So, you bury your heart to one person and everybody ends up laughing.
(108) Now, I wonder if we would've both been better off staying at the party.

In these examples, discourse markers are not used to show dialogue turns (Rossi, 2011), but rather to initiate an argument or opinion in the following utterance. Additionally, to express her feelings, Hannah's language consists occasionally of some metaphors. For instance, in episode three, Hannah explains "the butterfly effect" in the beginning of her tape, saying:

(24) That if a butterfly flaps its wings at just the right time in just the right place, it can cause a hurricane, thousands of miles away.

Hannah continues to introduce the subject of her tape, Alex Standall. She uses figurative speech to intensify the way Alex hurt her, referring back to the "hurricane", as illustrated in example 10 below:

- Ex. 10** (28) Little did I know you would be my hurricane.

Hannah's tone, attitude and mood of narrative is peculiar and identifiable in her tapes: she frequently uses discursive elements such as directives, discourse markers, questions, similar wordings, metaphors and forward-looking utterances. Based on the measurement

method by Hargood et al. (2011), Hannah's style can be perceived as a feature of positive narrative cohesion.

The logical sense in Hannah's narration is also a positive feature suggesting narrative cohesion, since the usage of conjunctions, prepositions and anaphoric references is present, which provide the story cohesion (Hargood et al., 2011). Hannah often begins an utterance with the conjunctions "and", "but" and "or", as demonstrated in the utterances of example 11 below:

- Ex. 11** (10) And stick around Justin, I'm not through with you yet. (Episode one)
(85) But what if I can't hum on key? (Episode eight)
(127) Or maybe, you don't have any idea. (Episode twelve)

There are also a few anaphoric references and prepositions in Hannah's utterances, which according to Hargood et al. (2011) provides logical sense and contributes with narrative cohesion. However, Hannah's use of prepositions and anaphoric references are limited, and are not significant components in providing patterns or characterization; instead, they are simply necessary in the grammatical structure of the utterances to make them logical and cohesive. Lastly, the whole season in general does not follow a chronological structure: the story varies between flashbacks of when Hannah was alive, and the present time where Clay listens to her tapes. Accordingly, there is no logical sense to the show in its entirety (Hargood et al., 2011). However, Hannah's narration by itself does contain logical sense, in that she presents her stories in a chronological order through her tapes: from the first tape on to the last, she explains everything that happened to her following a timeline.

The television series *13 Reasons Why* in general could be perceived as consisting of several genres; on Netflix, the genres listed under the series include: crime TV drama, TV shows based on books, Teen TV show and TV mysteries. Some scenes in *13 Reasons Why* could also be perceived as comical. However, the series conforms mostly to the genre of drama, since the plot deals with serious mental issues, emotional struggles, and conflicts between friends, teachers, and family. Hannah's narration through her tapes put focus on the importance of relationships and human contact, as she talks about loneliness and friendship, among other topics. The example below with Hannah's utterances include serious subjects, inner conflicts and emotions, which are typical conventions of drama. Since the genre is identifiable, it constitutes a positive feature of a cohesive narrative (Hargood et al., 2011).

Ex. 13 (114) There's so much wrong in the world, there's so much hurt.

(134) One last try, I'm giving life one last try.

(141) None of you cared enough, and neither did I, and I'm sorry.

To summarize, the analysis of Hannah's language indicates that her tapes provide linguistic patterns and narrative cohesion throughout the first season of *13 Reasons Why*. Hannah is the one giving out information through her tapes, and it is through her that the viewer follows the story of her life and death. The transcriptions of the different sections in each tape indicate that there are some patterns across the episodes. Each tape introduces a topic/theme and a person who had a significant impact on Hannah's life. A specific pattern can be found in the part where Hannah introduces a person in each tape, where there are specific word choices, which she repeats across several episodes: "welcome to your tape". Another pattern is found in Hannah's tape outros, which are almost all forward-looking, and where Hannah repeats the utterance "turn the tape over for more" across several episodes. Other patterns are found, that are not of specific word choices, but of the way Hannah delivers her narration. For instance, Hannah often begins her narration with rhetorical musings where she asks the listener a question, or, through the introduction of a core theme. Moreover, narrative cohesion is achieved through Hannah's tapes, where her style includes using directives and discourse markers; where her utterances include typical conventions of drama, and where logical sense is achieved through the use of grammatical elements such as conjunctions, and through a chronological structure to her story-telling.

4.2 Patterns in Clay's Interactions

Patterns are established in the television series *13 Reasons Why* not only through Hannah's narrative, but also through the second main character, Clay. In each episode, the viewer follows Clay and his struggle to listen to Hannah's stories. He spends a long time getting through each tape, as he wants to learn the truth about what happened to his friend. In each episode, there is an interaction between Clay and the person whom Hannah is speaking of in the tape. Clay confronts nearly all of the target characters, mostly with the intention of making them feel bad about how they treated Hannah. However, there is usually another side to the story, which Clay realizes as he interacts with the different characters. The first "Clay interaction scene" in each episode sometimes comes before Hannah introduces the person in her tape; in most episodes, however, the interaction scene comes after Hannah's introduction. Two exceptions are episode eight, where there is no interaction between Clay and the

character Ryan, and episode eleven, where Clay himself is the subject of Hannah's tape. Otherwise, Clay's dialogues with the different characters are recurrent and similar across the different episodes and can therefore be considered a linguistic pattern in the series. One pattern found in the first dialogue turns between Clay and the different interlocutors across episodes is that ten of the eleven interactions include at least one question asked by either Clay or the other characters. In total, nineteen out of the thirty-one turns include questions, which is more than half of the transcribed dialogue turns and can therefore be considered a pattern. Examples 14 below illustrates the composition of questions in the first three turns between Clay and the character Sheri in episode ten:

Ex. 14 Clay and Sheri (courtyard)

(110) Clay: Sheri, uh, do you have a minute?

(111) Sheri: Aren't you suspended?

(112) Clay: Yeah, so, could we go somewhere not in the middle of courtyard, to uh, talk?

Compared to Hannah's tapes, Clay's interactions with the different characters include more unsure language, including more *hedges* (that is, mitigating words that soften the intensity of an utterance) and stuttering. The fluency of Clay's speech is often disrupted by him stuttering. In episode twelve, for instance, Clay is very nervous as he goes home to the character Bryce to confront him and accuse him of raping Hannah. He wants to start the conversation casually and pretends to want to buy weed from Bryce:

Ex. 15 (129) Clay: Hey Bryce, um... listen, I was wondering if... I, I, I mean, I was hoping you wouldn't mind... Look, I know it's weird, but I was hoping to maybe buy some weed? It's kind of an emergency.

In example 15 above, Clay uses the hedges and mitigations "I mean", "maybe", and "kind of". In six of eleven interactions, there is one turn in each dialogue where Clay uses hedges or mitigating language. Additionally, he frequently stutters, repeating the word "I" multiple times, until he succeeds in uttering the rest of the sentence. In total, the transcriptions of Clay's interactions include sixteen of his own dialogue turns, of which seven include mitigating language, and five include stuttering. Furthermore, it is typical of the character Clay to approach the other characters in a friendly way at first, for instance by asking them if

they could go somewhere and talk, as demonstrated in the dialogue turns of example 16 from episode five:

Ex. 16 Clay and Courtney (school hallway)

(53) Clay: Courtney, hey!

(54) Courtney: Hey Clay, what's up?

(55) Clay: Listen, what you said the other day... I haven't been doing so well, and I wonder if we could go somewhere and talk.

Later during each episode, Clay proceeds to confront the character, accusing them for what they did to Hannah and asking them about their side of the story. The examples above also illustrate Clay's use of discourse markers, such as, "listen" and "so". Comparing the transcriptions of Hannah's narration and Clay's dialogues, it is clear that there are several differences in the characters' speech due to their mode of talk. For instance, the questions in Clay's interactions across episodes are used to carry a conversation between two people, whereas in Hannah's narration, questions are used as rhetorical musings to involve the listener, without expecting an answer. Moreover, the consisting questions, hedging, stuttering and discourse markers imply that Clay's language resembles realistic spontaneous conversations, in contrast to Hannah's language, which is more fluent with lack of spontaneous-speech markers (Rossi, 2011).

Television characters are construed and portrayed through their speech. In *13 Reasons Why*, Hannah is represented mostly through her tapes; in other words, it is through her narration that the viewer makes acquaintance with Hannah's character and her story. Clay, on the other hand, is represented through dialogues with other characters, where the speech is spontaneous. As demonstrated in the examples above, Clay's dialogue turns include more unsure, insecure language compared to Hannah's narrative utterances, which include a more instructive and informative style of speech. The style of speech thus varies according to character and mode. The linguistic patterns within Hannah's narration and Clay's interactions throughout the season imply nevertheless that there is low occurrence of linguistic variation, which means that there is stability to each character's linguistic performances (Bednarek, 2011b). Moreover, since the plot is represented through two different characters and two different modes of speech, the viewer gets to follow the story of the series from different perspectives.

4.3 Characterization and Variation

Once a pattern and structure are established through the characters' language, variation can take place, according to character and setting/mode (tape recording or face-to-face interaction). As this study shows, the language in Hannah's narrative and the language in Clay's interactions differ from each other in various aspects. The language used by the two characters is mostly influenced by their mode of talk: Clay speaks in spontaneous conversations, where he confronts different characters, while Hannah's speech is displayed through recorded tapes, where she speaks for herself without interacting with anyone. The fact that Clay is confronting the different characters explains why he stutters and uses mitigating language, since he is nervous and speaking spontaneously. In contrast, Hannah's language use can be considered to reflect more planning thanks to the mode of self-recording; she speaks more fluently with no disruptions, and her texts are more instructive and informative. The uncertainty in Clay's dialogue turns suggests that he is unsure how to proceed, which could be perceived from his use of hedges and his stuttering (see example 15). Hannah's narrative utterances, on the contrary, do not include any instances of stuttering and only three utterances with mitigating language, further establishing the tapes as pre-planned speech with specific intentions. This is noticeable, for instance, in eleven of Hannah's utterances which include directives, of which some are illustrated in example 8.

All in all, the different styles of language used by Hannah and Clay are due to their mode of talk, but also due to how the writers of the series wish to portray their fictional characters through their language. The language displayed through the different modes of speech contributes to characterization: the viewer gets to know Hannah through her tapes and through the language that this mode elicits. The viewer gets to know Clay through his interactions and the way he adapts to the mode and the mission. This means that the mode of speech and language usage are interconnected, working in tandem to establish characterization. While there is no rulebook to construing characters, language is undoubtedly a crucial part in creating distinct and expressive character identities (Bednarek, 2011a).

To summarize, this study has found linguistic patterns both in Hannah's narrative utterances and Clay's dialogue turns. Lexical patterning includes similar wordings in Hannah's narration across episodes, where she frequently uses the same or similar utterances, such as "welcome to your tape" and "turn the tape over for more". Syntactical patterning is created through the use of questions: both in Hannah's tape introductions, where she asks the listener a question to create an effect, and in Clay's interactions, where he and the different

interlocutors use questions as conversation strategies. Lastly, discursive patterning is achieved in that several of Hannah's tape outros include forward-looking utterances.

In addition to finding linguistic patterns in Hannah's and Clay's language, this study compares the two different modes of speech through which the main characters are represented, which cause their styles of language to be different, using the analytical approach provided by Rossi (2011): Clay speaks in spontaneous conversations, therefore, he uses more unsure language with stuttering and hedging. In contrast, Hannah speaks alone as she records her tapes, and therefore uses more confident, instructive language, which is more fluent with lack of spontaneous-speech markers (Rossi, 2011). The distinct styles of language used by Hannah and Clay contribute in creating distinct character identities which are stable and recognizable throughout the season. This way, the audience is provided comfort of familiarity and stays engaged with the series (Bednarek 2011b), while preparing to receive and process continuous reveals of Hannah's distressing stories and variation in plot.

Furthermore, this study contributes to the field of televisual linguistic research since it connects telecinematic discourse to the narrative structure of a series, and reveals how certain language usage occurs in specific plot junctures, that is, how the characters' way of speaking contributes to the structure of the episodes. The study proves that there is cohesion to the narration in the first season of *13 Reasons Why*, using the approach to measuring narrative cohesion presented by Hargood et al. (2011). The theoretical framework is beneficial and suitable in analyzing which linguistic features provide both structure and cohesion in *13 Reasons Why*, which is one of the main research questions of this study. The presence of the narrator and logical sense, and the identifiable theme, genre, and style in Hannah's narration provide narrative cohesion, which enables the viewer to follow the story and engage in the series.

A series such as *13 Reasons Why* can have a great impact on its viewers, since it displays real-life issues many teenagers experience and can relate to. Language plays a significant role in creating fictional characters that the viewers can identify themselves with (Bednarek, 2011b). Additionally, it is beneficial to conduct a linguistic analysis on this series, since it explores how a structure with recurring recognizable linguistic features provides the viewer comfort of familiarity and amenability, which allows for the continuous portrayal of real mental health issues.

5. CONCLUSION

This essay set out to examine how televisual characterization and narrative cohesion are achieved through the language used by the main characters in the Netflix series *13 Reasons Why*. Transcriptions were made of the main character Hannah's tape intros, outros, and the parts where she names the person whom each tape is about. Additionally, transcriptions were made of the second main character Clay's initial dialogue turns with each tape's subject in each episode. These transcriptions from the first season of the series were the primary material used to determine how the series is structured linguistically and how the language usage varies according to character and mode (tape or interaction).

As a theoretical framework, the approach to measuring narrative cohesion presented by Hargood et al. (2011) was applied in the analysis of the linguistic elements in Hannah's narration through her tapes. The five variables logical sense, theme, genre, narrator and style were investigated in Hannah's narration, which proved to consist of positive features of a cohesive narrative (Hargood et al., 2011). Additionally, the transcriptions demonstrated that the interactions between Clay and the different characters are spontaneous due to the mode of speech, while Hannah's tapes are planned with a lack of spontaneous speech markers (Rossi, 2011). Moreover, linguistic patterns were found across episodes in both Hannah's narration and in Clay's dialogues, which provide a structure to the series that the viewers can recognize and become familiar with throughout the season. To conclude, this study has combined several aspects analyzed in previous research, connecting telecinematic discourse to the narrative structure of a series, as well as examining how the style of language used by television characters differ according to their mode of speech.

It is hoped that this study will prove useful to further research of telecinematic discourse: of how televisual characterization and narrative cohesion are established through different linguistic means. Future work could conduct similar analyses on other television series, where for instance expressive character identity (Bednarek, 2011a) comprises the focus.

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7. APPENDIX - transcriptions of Hannah's tapes and Clay's interactions

EPISODE 1

Tape intro

- (1) Hey, it's Hannah, Hannah Baker.
- (2) That's right, don't adjust your... whatever device you're hearing this on.
- (3) It's me, live and in stereo.

Clay and Justin (Hannah's locker)

- (4) Justin: What the hell are you doing?
- (5) Clay: Nothing, I was just...
- (6) Justin: Looking for something?

Tape: Hannah introducing Justin

- (7) You've arrived at my first house in this shitty town; where I threw my first and only party and where I met Justin Foley: the subject of our first tape.
- (8) It was just a party.
- (9) I didn't know it was the beginning of the end.

Tape outro

- (10) And stick around Justin, I'm not through with you yet.
- (11) I know you probably didn't mean to let me down.
- (12) In fact, most of you listening probably had no idea what you were truly doing; but you'll find out.

EPISODE 2

Tape intro

- (13) Welcome back!
- (14) So glad you're still listening.
- (15) Are you having fun?

Tape: Hannah introducing Jessica

- (16) Okay, enough with the small talk!
- (17) It's time to meet the star of tape 1 side B.
- (18) So, without further ado, let me introduce my former friend: step up, Jessica Davis, you're next.

Jessica to Clay (classroom)

- (19) Jessica: What you listening to Clay?
- (Clay looks at Jessica)

Tape outro

- (20) Friendship; it's complicated.

(21) Losing a good friend is never easy, especially when you don't understand why you lost them in the first place.

(22) Like I said, it's complicated.

EPISODE 3

Tape intro

(23) You've heard of the butterfly effect, right?

(24) That if a butterfly flaps its' wings at just the right time in just the right place, it can cause a hurricane, thousands of miles away.

(25) It's chaos theory; see, chaos theory isn't exactly about chaos.

Tape: Hannah introducing Alex

(26) Alex Standall, you caused the hurricane.

(27) Little did I know that you would F my L forever.

(28) Little did I know you would be my hurricane.

Clay and Alex (courtyard)

(29) Clay: Is Gloomy Sunday really a song?

(30) Alex: Yeah, google "Hungarian suicide song"

(31) Clay: I'll take your word for it.

Tape outro

(32) Who knows?

(33) Everything effects everything.

(34) Turn the tape over for more.

(Start of new tape)

(35) Shhh, for this next one, you need to be very, very quiet.

(36) Because you're about to do something very wrong.

(37) Be careful, and don't get caught.

EPISODE 4

Tape intro

(35) Shhh, for this next one, you need to be very, very quiet.

(36) Because you're about to do something very wrong.

(37) Be careful, and don't get caught.

Tape: Hannah introducing Tyler

(38) Welcome to your tape, Tyler Down.

(39) So tell me, when did it start?

(40) How long were you watching me Tyler?

Clay and Tyler (photo room)

(41) Clay: You got a real eye!

(42) Tyler: Jesus, Clay, what are you doing in here?

(43) Clay: Just uh... seeing what our prizewinning photographer's working on.

Tape outro

(44) That's why I'm outside your window, Tyler.

(45) And after people hear this, I bet I won't be the only one.

(46) Knock knock, Tyler.

EPISODE 5

Tape intro

(47) Boys are assholes: some are assholes all of the time; all are assholes some of the time.

(48) It's just how boys are.

(49) Well... maybe not all boys.

Tape: Hannah introducing Courtney

(50) Courtney Crimson: what a pretty name; what a pretty girl.

(51) With her perfect family, coffee together every morning.

(52) And you're also very nice Courtney, everyone says so.

Clay and Courtney (school hallway)

(53) Clay: Courtney, hey!

(54) Courtney: Hey Clay, what's up?

(55) Clay: Listen, what you said the other day... I haven't been doing so well, and I wonder if we could go somewhere and talk?

Tape outro

(56) I wanted to talk to you.

(57) I mean, we were in this together, weren't we?

(58) Turn the tape over for more.

EPISODE 6

Tape intro

(59) How many of you remember the Oh my Darling Valentines?

(60) Those were fun, weren't they?

(61) You fill out a survey, and for just a buck, you get the name and the number of your one true soul mate, and hey!

Tape: Hannah introducing Marcus

(62) I always kind of like Marcus, he always seemed like a good guy.

(63) Then again, they almost always do.

(64) Marcus, welcome to your tape.

Clay and Marcus (library)

(65) Marcus: What the hell was that?

(66) Clay: You tell me, Alex started that fight.

(67) Marcus: This isn't the time for any of us to start stirring shit up!

Tape outro

(68) The best one I could find was made by this writer called Henry Charles Bukowski Junior.

(69) On his tombstone he has engraved a picture of a boxer, and beneath the boxer, two simple words: Don't Try

(70) I wonder what will be on mine.

EPISODE 7

Tape intro

(71) You're going to tell me this one is no big deal, but let me tell you about being lonely.

(72) Humans are social species.

(73) We rely on connections to survive.

Tape: Hannah introducing Zach

(74) You were so sweet just like Kat said once upon a time, so sweet.

(75) Well, welcome to your tape Zach.

(76) For those of you who aren't Zach, you can relax for now, at least.

Clay and Zach (outside Clay's house)

(77) Zach: Look, I, I told her to forget about it. I didn't want to come here or anything like that.

(78) Clay: I'm glad you did! Let's go inside and explain to your mom why I keyed your car!

(79) Zach: No, Clay, please, don't!

Tape outro

(80) No one knows what's really going on in another person's life; and you never know how what you do will effect someone else.

(81) And if that goes for me, it must go everyone; even cheerleaders.

(82) Turn the tape over for more.

EPISODE 8

Tape intro

(83) Some girls know all the lyrics to each other's songs.

(84) They find harmonies in their laughter, their linked elbows echo in tune.

(85) But what if I can't hum on key?

Tape: Hannah introducing Ryan

(86) I saw no one within decades of my age, until I saw you.

(87) You were the only other high school kid in the room.

(88) Ryan Shaver: Liberty High's resident intellectual, editor of lost and found, general selfish snob.

There is no scene of Clay and Ryan.

Tape outro

- (89) So, you bury your heart to one person and everybody ends up laughing.
(90) Sometimes the future doesn't unfold the way you think it will; shit happens and people suck.
(91) Maybe that's why I stopped writing and eventually started making tapes.

EPISODE 9

Tape intro

- (92) I've got a question for you Justin; not the one you think, not yet.
(93) What's the best part of high school?
(94) The great friends you make?

Tape: Hannah introducing Justin (again)

- (95) She didn't.
(96) And people don't really change.
(97) Welcome to your second tape Justin Foley.

Clay and Justin (Justin's apartment)

- (98) Clay (knocks on door, Justin opens): He can't be prosecuted, okay?
(99) Justin: What the fuck are you doing here?
(100) Clay: I know it was Bryce, alright?

Tape outro

- (101) How do you, Justin?
(102) How does she live with what happened?
(103) Turn the tape over for more.

EPISODE 10

Tape intro

- (104) Sometimes, things just happen to you.
(105) They just happen; you can't help it.
(106) But it's what you do next that counts.

Tape: Hannah introducing Sheri

- (107) Then, an unlikely hero came my way.
(108) Now, I wonder if we would've both been better off staying at the party.
(109) Sheri this one's for you.

Clay and Sheri (courtyard)

- (110) Clay: Sheri, uh, do you have a minute?
(111) Sheri: Aren't you suspended?
(112) Clay: Yeah, so, could we go somewhere not in the middle of courtyard, to uh, talk?

Tape outro

(113) That's another sad and stupid story.

(114) There's so much wrong in the world, there's so much hurt.

(115) I couldn't take knowing I made it worse, and I couldn't take knowing it would never get any better.

EPISODE 11**Tape intro**

(116) I've told you about two of the worst decisions I ever made, and the damage left behind; and the people who got hurt.

(117) There is one more story to tell, one more bad decision.

(118) And this one's all on me.

Tape: Hannah introducing Clay

(119) Remember that story I was saving for later?

(120) Well, this is it.

(121) And it's all about you, Clay.

Tape outro

(122) I would've ruined you.

(123) It wasn't you.

(124) It was me and everything that's happened to me.

EPISODE 12**Tape intro**

(125) Here we are, tape 12.

(126) If you've listened this far and you haven't heard your name, well, I bet you know exactly what's coming now.

(127) Or maybe, you don't have any idea.

Clay and Bryce (Bryce's house)

(128) Bryce (opens door for Clay): Jensen, the fuck do you want?

(129) Clay: Hey Bryce, um... listen, I was wondering if... I, I, I mean, I was hoping you wouldn't mind... Look, I know it's weird, but I was hoping to maybe buy some weed? It's kind of an emergency.

(130) Bryce (surprised): You want to buy some weed, from me!?

Tape outro, introducing Bryce

(131) I thought maybe I could forget about what happened.

(132) But thanks to you, Bryce, I'd finally live up to my reputation.

(133) And I knew there was no way I could ever live that back down.

EPISODE 13

Tape intro

(134) One last try, I'm giving life one last try.

(135) I recorded twelve tapes.

(136) I started with Justin and then Jessica who each broke my heart.

Clay and Mr. Porter (outside counselor's office)

(137) Clay: Mr. Porter!

(138) Mr. Porter: Clay! What happened? Are you all right?

(139) Clay: Yeah, no I'm fine, it's just... I know I'm still on suspension, but I needed to talk. Is that okay?

Tape: Hannah introducing school counselor (recording of meeting)

(138) Mr. Porter: I was glad to see you on my calendar!

(139) Hannah: Why?

(140) Mr. Porter: I'm just glad you made an appointment to come talk.

Tape outro

(141) None of you cared enough, and neither did I, and I'm sorry.

(142) So, it's the end of tape thirteen.

(143) There's nothing more to say.