COMPLEXITY MATTERS IN TV DIALOGUE AS LANGUAGE INPUT
A corpus-based description of clausal and phrasal patterns[1]

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Abstract – The spread of digital devices and new media has led to a proliferation of English-language audiovisual products and to a gradual shift in learning English as a second language (L2), which is increasingly occurring outside of the classroom. In fact, the extensive informal contact with English audiovisual dialogue as part of L2 learner-users' everyday leisure activities has been found to be potentially conducive to incidental learning and language acquisition (Kusyk 2020; Sockett 2014). This calls for a description of English-language media, the major source of language input to which L2 viewers are exposed (Pavesi, Ghia 2020). The present study aims to investigate grammatical complexity in fictional TV dialogue by drawing on the *Sydney Corpus of Television Dialogue* (SydTV; Bednarek 2018a). A register-functional (RF) approach (Biber 1988) is adopted for the quantitative and qualitative assessments of clausal and phrasal complexity features in TV series, with a focus on finite/nonfinite subordinate clauses and noun phrase premodification. The data are first interpreted in relation to the diegetic and extradiegetic functions served by complexity features onscreen and are then compared to previous corpus-based findings regarding the grammatical complexity of spontaneous face-to-face conversations (Biber 2015; Biber *et al.* 2021). The results show that TV dialogue closely approximates casual conversation in terms of the main patterns of phrasal and clausal complexity. Register-specific functions emerge in accordance with the audience-oriented narrative dimension of telecinematic products, the striving for realism and the expression of characters' stances. Such referential and communicative functions may increase the accessibility of TV narratives for L2 viewers, often in tandem with visuals in a multimodal fashion. Overall, by reproducing the complexity of conversational exchanges, TV dialogue qualifies as a rich, reliable source of input that learner-viewers can readily use as a model of spoken English.

Keywords: Informal learning; TV dialogue; grammatical complexity; subordinate clauses; phrasal premodification.

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1. Introduction

The spread of digital devices and new media has led to a proliferation of English-language audiovisual products being distributed across the globe, which has enabled learner-users of English as a second language (L2) to have extensive informal contact as part of their everyday leisure activities. This phenomenon has also been accompanied by a gradual shift in learning L2 English, which is increasingly occurring outside of the language classroom, since prolonged exposure to rich, authentic input such as audiovisual dialogue (Pavesi 2015) is potentially conducive to incidental learning and language acquisition (Arnbjörnsdóttir, Ingvarsdóttir 2018; Kusyk 2020; Pavesi, Ghia 2020; Sockett 2014). The description of audiovisual dialogue thus becomes essential to better understand the type of language that L2 English learner-users encounter while watching audiovisual products.

The present study attempts to accomplish this task by adopting a register-functional (RF) approach (Biber 1988) with a focus on the grammatical complexity of onscreen language, a major dimension of register variation that captures the structural and functional sophistication of texts at the clausal and phrasal levels (Biber *et al.* 2022). The study is a follow up of a recent investigation of the grammatical complexity of Anglophone film dialogue (Formentelli *et al*. forthcoming – see Section 2 below), which inspired the application of the methodology to the study of fictional TV dialogue.

TV series and sitcoms in English are watched by vast international audiences and are amongst the most appreciated types of popular culture (cf. Werner 2018). At present, fictional TV programmes are easily available in large quantities and in different genres via traditional cable TV, as well as via video-on-demand streaming platforms. L2 learner-users are exposed to copious amounts of spoken English input when watching TV series; such input is chosen autonomously, according to one's preferences and for extended periods given the delivery of these audiovisual products as episodes and seasons.

By drawing on a corpus of English-language TV series, we aim to provide quantitative and qualitative descriptions of clausal and phrasal complexity features occurring in TV dialogue, including the main types of finite and nonfinite dependent clauses and patterns of noun phrase premodification, which will be interpreted in relation to the communicative functions they serve in the register. As a second step in the analysis, the distribution of complexity features in TV dialogue will be discussed in comparison to corpus-based findings regarding the complexity of spontaneous face-to-face conversation to assess how and the extent to which the two registers of spoken language compare. The goal is to account for the frequency

Complexity matters in TV dialogue as language input. A corpus-based description
of clausal and phrasal patterns

269

and types of grammatical complexity features in TV dialogue, as these key language features may play a role in L2 development.

2. Complexity matters

The study of complexity has a long tradition in linguistics, and several definitions, theoretical frameworks and analytical approaches have been proposed for this multifaceted concept (see Arends 2001; Biber 1992; Biber *et al*. 2022, 2023; Bulté, Housen 2012; Miestamo *et al*. 2008; Nichols 2009; Pallotti 2015, amongst others). By adopting a strict linguistic focus, scholars have differentiated between complexity and the concept of processing difficulty – more cognitive in nature; complexity has been defined quantitatively in terms of the number of grammatical distinctions in a language system (Szmrecsanyi 2015) or the number of different components in a sentence/utterance and the interconnections amongst these components (Bulté, Housen 2012; Pallotti 2015). More linguistic material is often regarded as a sign of complexity: The longer the expression, the higher the degree of complexity. Similarly, clauses and phrases featuring the embedding of optional constituents are generally considered to be more complex compared to basic structures that only contain obligatory elements (Biber *et al*. 2023).

Along these lines, research in applied linguistics has employed omnibus measures to predict L2 proficiency and development by assessing complexity through a combination of multiple structural aspects computed as single quantitative variables, such as the mean length of sentences/utterances, the average number of clauses per sentence/utterance and coordination index (Bulté, Housen 2012, 2014; Norris, Ortega 2009). This view is based on the theoretical assumption that complexity is a unitary concept that is realised through patterns that are common to all texts and registers.

The RF approach to complexity is slightly different, as it aims to capture the internal variability of grammatical complexity strategies associated with changing communicative functions and production circumstances across registers (Biber *et al.* 2022). In RF research, grammatical complexity is conceived as a multidimensional construct that is manifested in the co-occurrence of phrasal and clausal features that "pattern together in texts and vary in systematic ways across registers" (Biber *et al.* 2023, p. 5). These quantitative dimensions reflect the rate of occurrence of groupings of phrasal/clausal elements and allow for a more detailed linguistic description of the system of complexity features of English, as they account for variation in structural types and syntactic functions within and across texts (Biber *et al.* 2020).

Numerous RF corpus-based studies have revealed systematic differences in the manifestation of grammatical complexity in spoken and written registers, prototypically represented by spontaneous conversation and academic writing

(see Biber *et al.* 2022). The complexity of speech is mainly due to the structural elaboration of the utterance and the addition of dependent clauses as clause constituents (adverbial clauses and verb-controlled complement clauses), in line with the property of intricacy of spoken language that Halliday (1989) described. Conversely, written texts mainly express grammatical complexity through the embedding of constituents at the phrasal level; that is, pre- and postmodification in noun phrases by means of attributive adjectives, premodifying nouns and postmodifying prepositional phrases (Biber *et al.* 2020, p. 8).

These distinctive realisations of grammatical complexity have been linked to the specific production circumstances and communicative functions of spoken and written registers. The real-time, unplanned production that is typical of most conversational exchanges favours the frequent use of structurally elaborate dependent clauses, which are also used to express personal stances and attitudinal meanings, as well as to establish common ground amongst interlocutors, which are central aspects of the interpersonal and involved character of face-to-face interactions (Biber 2015). Conversely, the written mode allows for careful planning, revision and editing, thus enabling the use of features of both clausal and phrasal complexity (Biber *et al.* 2022, p. 463). Phrasal complexity is particularly pervasive in written texts that have informational communicative purposes, as phrasal modifiers enable users to compress the informational content into expressions that are denser and more concise.

Based on these observations, we adopted the RF approach to complexity to address Biber *et al.*'s (2022, p. 481) claim that "one major priority for future [...] research is more detailed studies of complexity characteristics in a wide range of spoken registers". In this regard, a very recent study has approached this task by assessing the linguistic expression of grammatical complexity in a corpus of Anglophone film dialogue (Formentelli *et al.* forthcoming). In the present contribution, we follow the same theoretical perspective and methodology to focus on another major type of audiovisual dialogue, namely fictional TV series, a register that also originates as written language, is devised to simulate spontaneous conversation and is ultimately processed aurally as spoken language.

3. Complexity in telecinematic dialogue

An examination of Bednarek and Zago's (2024) latest updated bibliography of linguistic research on fictional TV series and films reveals that telecinematic dialogue has been the subject of numerous studies that have explored a range of linguistic phenomena using various methods and from different perspectives. However, despite the wealth of studies in this area, little attention has been paid to assessing the complexity of the language used on the screen thus far.

The lexical complexity of film and TV dialogue has been described in terms of lexical density, frequency, variation and sophistication (Formentelli

Complexity matters in TV dialogue as language input. A corpus-based description
of clausal and phrasal patterns

271

2014; Jones 2017; Scheffler *et al.* 2020; Webb, Rodgers 2009a, 2009b). In particular, Webb and Rodgers (2009a, 2009b) found that the knowledge of the 3,000 most frequent English word families provided learner-viewers with 95% of the necessary lexical coverage to understand British and American films and TV programmes in various genres, while the knowledge of 6,000 to 7,000 word families was needed to attain 98% coverage. Similarly, by analysing a corpus of British animated TV series for preschool children, Scheffler *et al.* (2020) found that the 2,000 most common words in the spoken component of the *British National Corpus* covered more than 80% of the words in the dialogues in these series. These findings show a link between lexical complexity and language proficiency, and suggest that telecinematic dialogue can be an appropriate source of comprehensible L2 input for young learners (Scheffler *et al.* 2020) and adults (Webb, Rodgers 2009a, 2009b), potentially leading to incidental vocabulary learning.

Onscreen complexity has also been examined by Zago (2019), who illustrated how different combinations of lexicogrammatical features frequently occur in American film dialogue with register- and genre-specific functions. For instance, activity verbs, prepositions and progressive aspect are used to create the urgent, action-oriented quality that is typical of crime films. In particular, cinematic speech is complex in the sense that it follows two parallel paths: It constantly has to advance the storyline while simultaneously simulating real speech. Zago cited utterance launchers (such as *the thing is*) as an example of the latter type of complexity; in film dialogue, these linguistic features mimic casual conversation while simultaneously functioning as discursive cues of a character's intention to speak.

The language of contemporary American TV programmes has also been described by applying a multidimensional analysis framework (Biber 1988) to a corpus of 31 different TV registers, including films, drama series, sitcoms and soap operas (Berber Sardinha, Veirano Pinto 2019). The authors identified clusters of lexicogrammatical features that combined along four dimensions of register variation, namely 'Exposition and discussion versus Simplified interaction' (Dimension 1), 'Simulated conversation' (Dimension 2), 'Recount' (Dimension 3) and 'Engaging presentation' (Dimension 4). Dimensions 2 and 3 are particularly relevant for fictional TV programmes, as they reflect the striving for realism and the narrative needs that are typical of the genre, and confirm that "television is essentially an oral, involved, stance marked form of spoken language, close in some ways to but not exactly like face-to-face encounters" (Berber Sardinha, Veirano Pinto 2019, p. 26; see also Bednarek 2010; Quaglio 2009). Even though complexity was not mentioned explicitly in their study, the interplay of numerous syntactic constructions at the phrasal and clausal levels testifies to the structural elaboration and grammatical intricacy of telecinematic language.

More recently, Formentelli *et al*. (forthcoming) applied the RF approach to the study of the grammatical complexity of film language, as expressed in the occurrence of finite and nonfinite dependent clauses. By drawing on a corpus of 34 transcribed Anglophone films, the distribution of clausal complexity features was first assessed in relation to the situational characteristics and communicative functions of the filmic register and were then compared to the findings of previous research on complexity in spontaneous conversation; the goal was to describe film dialogue as relevant language input for L2 acquisition. The results corroborate the close similarity between film dialogue and spontaneous spoken language observed in previous research (Forchini 2012) by extending the evidence to clausal complexity. At the same time, the results also point to distinctive patterns of complexity in films linked to register-specific communicative functions and medium-related constraints. The authors conclude that film dialogue is a useful source for L2 English learners inside and outside of the classroom; these learners can expose themselves to realistic language patterns that would only otherwise be experienced when engaging in face-to-face exchanges (Pavesi 2012, 2015). In the present contribution, we adopted the same theoretical framework and methodology and applied it to the investigation of clausal and phrasal complexity in a corpus of TV series, as described in the following section.

4. Data and methodology

The present analysis of grammatical complexity was conducted based on *The Sydney Corpus of Television Dialogue* (Bednarek 2018a; henceforth SydTV). SydTV is a specialised and POS-tagged corpus of contemporary American TV dialogue (276,899 words; cf. Bednarek 2018b). It consists of one full episode from the first season of 66 American TV series that were broadcast between 2000 and 2012, a period that "was characterised by the global rise of American TV series [...] and has been labelled the new 'golden age of television'" (Bednarek 2018a, p. 82). The corpus contains a balanced combination of episodes occurring towards the beginning, the middle and the end of the respective seasons and consists of both quality series – based on Emmy or Golden Globe award nominations or wins, and mainstream series. The corpus is also balanced in terms of genres; approximately half of the series in SydTV can be labelled 'comedies' and the other half 'dramas', including hybrid combinations such as action/drama or comedy/crime.

The patterns of grammatical complexity considered in this study were selected following Biber *et al*.'s (2022, pp. 13-16) taxonomy of grammatical complexity features in English. We examined both clausal and phrasal complexity patterns. Clauses were categorised according to their syntactic

Complexity matters in TV dialogue as language input. A corpus-based description
of clausal and phrasal patterns

273

functions, namely complement clauses, adverbial clauses or relative clauses, as well as according to their finiteness, that is, finite versus nonfinite clauses. With regard to phrasal complexity, we examined both adjectival premodification with up to three attributive adjectives and noun premodification with up to three nouns, including genitives.

In the first stage of the analysis, which was conducted semi-automatically using the online version of SydTV[2], specific POS-tag queries were employed to identify all the occurrences of the aforementioned clausal and phrasal complexity features. For instance, the POS-tag sequence *_NN* *_NN* was used to capture the noun phrases that were premodified by one noun (*phone call*, *baseball fan*, *photo album*, *wine list*, *lunch break*, etc.). The occurrences thus obtained were checked manually to exclude tagging errors and duplicates and were then counted. Finally, illustrative examples of all the structural and syntactic patterns were selected from the concordance lists and were subjected to a qualitative analysis in context with a view to understanding the main register-specific functions that they served in SydTV. Samples of the data were first coded and interpreted individually by the two authors and were then discussed jointly to reach the necessary degree of agreement.

In the second stage of the analysis, the quantitative counts obtained from SydTV were compared to those reported for conversation in Biber *et al.* (2021) and Biber (2015) in order to assess the degree of similarity between TV dialogue and spontaneous, casual speech at the level of grammatical complexity.

5. The clausal and phrasal complexity of American TV dialogue

The main empirical findings are reported and discussed from quantitative, qualitative and comparative perspectives in this section. In particular, Subsections 5.1. and 5.2. first address the frequency of clausal complexity features in SydTV followed by the register-specific functions they serve, while Subsections 5.3. and 5.4. address phrasal complexity in the same manner. Finally, Subsection 5.5. presents a comparison of the frequency and types of clausal and phrasal complexity features that occurred in SydTV and in casual conversation.

5.1. Clausal complexity

The investigation of the patterns of subordination identified in SydTV provided a quantitative insight into the clausal complexity structures that are more frequent in American TV series and are more likely to be encountered by

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[2] https://cqpw-prod.vip.sydney.edu.au/CQPweb/index.php (15.3.2024).

English L2 learner-users in their informal contact with the language. Figure 1 presents the overall picture of the distribution of clauses across the three macrocategories of complement clauses, adverbial clauses and relative clauses in their finite and nonfinite realisations. Complement clauses are by far the most common subordinative structures in TV dialogue, accounting for slightly more than 60% of the occurrences, and are almost equally divided into finite and nonfinite clauses (1,252 versus 1,095 per 100,000 words). Adverbial clauses follow with 27% of occurrences and a preponderance of finite over nonfinite clauses (958 versus 87 per 100,000 words). The least frequent category is that of relative clauses, accounting for approximately 13% of the subordinative clauses, mainly with finite rather than nonfinite verbs (404 versus 81 per 100,000 words).

The frequencies that are summarised in Figure 1 indicate that grammatical complexity at the clausal level is typically realised through verbal attachment rather than through noun modification. Moreover, the preponderance of finite over nonfinite clauses shows a preference for explicit constructions to encode the meaning relations of propositions, thus producing discourse that is more accessible and easier for viewers to process, in line with the tendency to reduce vagueness that has been observed in TV dialogue (Quaglio 2009).
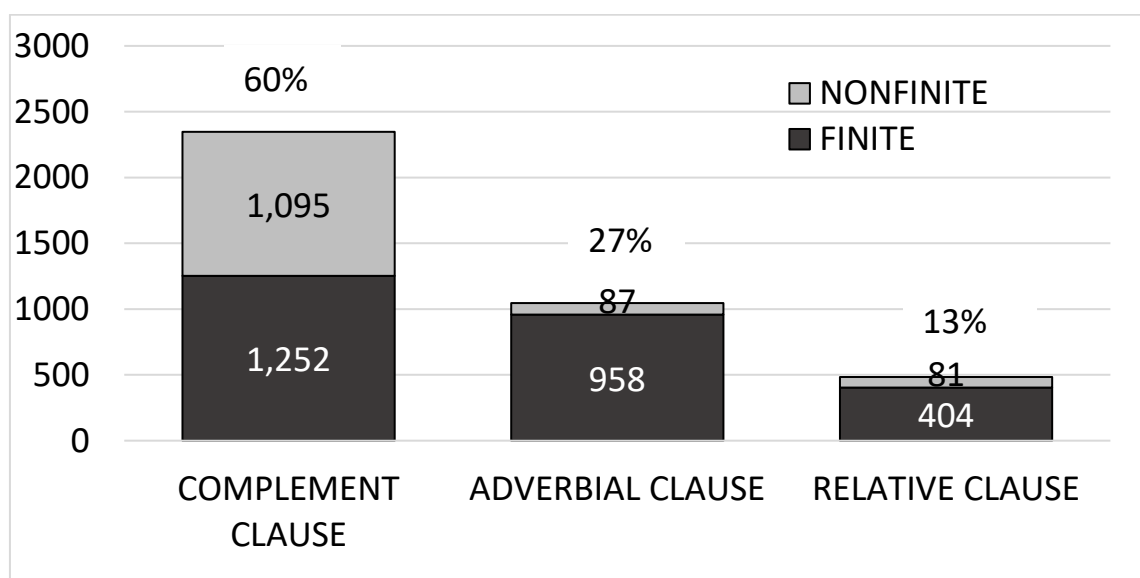

Figure 1
Finite and non-finite subordinate clauses in SydTV (frequency per 100,000 words).

The quantitative profile of the clausal complexity of TV dialogue is complemented by the frequencies of the structural/syntactic subtypes included in the three macrocategories of clauses, as shown in Figure 2.
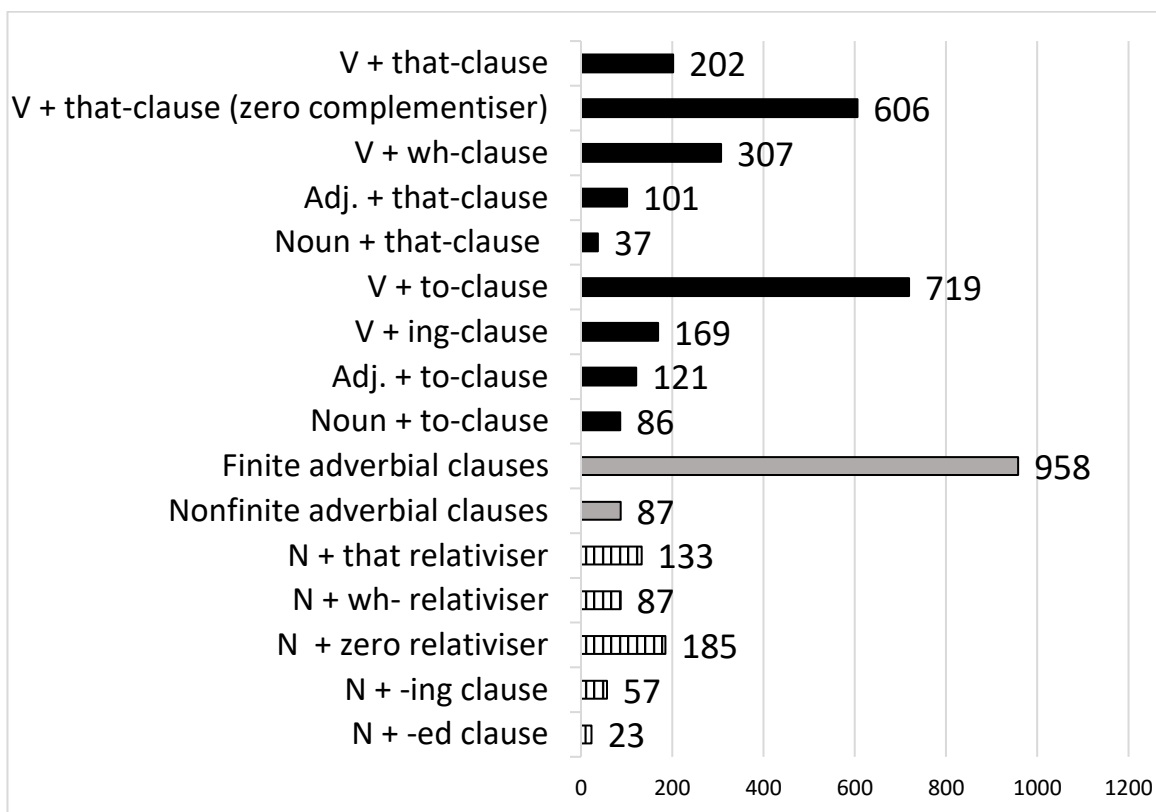
Structure	Frequency
V + that-clause	202
V + that-clause (zero complementiser)	606
V + wh-clause	307
Adj. + that-clause	101
Noun + that-clause	37
V + to-clause	719
V + ing-clause	169
Adj. + to-clause	121
Noun + to-clause	86
Finite adverbial clauses	958
Nonfinite adverbial clauses	87
N + that relativiser	133
N + wh- relativiser	87
N + zero relativiser	185
N + -ing clause	57
N + -ed clause	23

Figure 2
Structural/syntactic subtypes of clauses in SydTV (frequency per 100,000 words).

The category of complement clauses encompasses the largest number of structural/syntactic subtypes, including clauses controlled by verbs, adjectives and nouns. In SydTV, the vast majority of both finite and nonfinite complement clauses are introduced by verbs of cognition and communication (*think*, *say*, *know*, *find*, *believe*), while the frequency of adjective-controlled (*sure*, *glad*, *afraid*) and noun-controlled (*fact*, *idea*, *chance*) complement clauses is much lower. These distributional patterns reflect those identified for the register of spontaneous conversation (Biber *et al.* 2021, p. 668). Verb-controlled *that*-clauses (808 occurrences per 100,000 words) are particularly frequent, and are commonly used to report the speaker's or a third party's speech, thoughts, attitudes or emotions (see Section 5.2 below). In TV series, *that*-clauses are preferably realised with the omission of the *that* complementiser to simulate the online production of spontaneous speech and its involved and interpersonal nature (Biber *et al.* 2021, p. 674). Moreover, *that*-clauses with zero complementiser are associated with reduced discourse complexity at the structural level (Biber *et al.* 2022, pp. 54-55) and promote the economy of speech required by the storytelling constraints of TV dialogue.

Postpredicate infinitive clauses controlled by verbs (V + *to*-clause) are the second most frequent type of complement clauses found in SydTV, with 719 occurrences per 100,000 words. In spontaneous conversation, these

clauses are introduced by verbs expressing the speaker's personal desires, intentions and efforts (*want*, *like*, *try*) and, to a more limited extent, aspectual verbs (*begin*, *continue*) and verbs of probability (*seem*). The high frequency of *to*-clauses in TV series is not surprising, as these verbal combinations may play key roles at the narrative level, adding dynamicity to the dialogue and advancing the plot (see Section 5.2 below).

Another relevant type of complement clause in the data is that of *wh*-clauses introduced by verbs of cognition (*know*, *wonder*), communication (*tell*, *say*) and perception (*see*). These constructions are strategic for the contextualisation of an event by conveying information about the participants, the spatial and temporal setting, the reasons and manners in the form of indirect questions, exclamations and nominal clauses. This finding confirms the strategic narrative function of *wh*-complement clauses that was recently identified in Anglophone film dialogue (Formentelli *et al.* forthcoming).

The category of finite adverbial clauses comprises a wide variety of subordinate clauses that, combined, account for 958 occurrences per 100,000 words. Conditional, causal, temporal and result clauses are particularly frequent in SydTV, as shown by the occurrences of subordinatiors summarised in Table 1, in line with the distribution of adverbial clauses in spontaneous conversation (Biber *et al.* 2021, p. 814).

Subordinator	Raw frequency	Normed frequency (per 100,000 words)
(Even) If	797	288
Because/Cause	532	192
When/whenever	423	153
So (that)	193	70
As	98	35
Before	92	33
Until	91	33
While	63	23
Since	60	22
Than	54	20
After	45	16
Unless	36	13
Like	32	11

Table 1
Most frequent subordinators in SydTV.[3]

These types of clauses provide the interlocutor with the necessary circumstantial information to fully understand the unfolding interaction; in TV dialogue, they are particularly important to provide the viewing audience with background knowledge about the characters and events that are represented onscreen (Formentelli *et al.* forthcoming). Relevant, yet far less frequent, are

[3] Only subordinators with a frequency > 10 forms per 100,000 words are included in Table 1.

Complexity matters in TV dialogue as language input. A corpus-based description
of clausal and phrasal patterns

277

nonfinite clauses (87 per 100,000 words), which mainly codify *to*-infinitive purpose clauses.

Finally, relative clauses show overall low frequencies in the TV series included in SydTV. Amongst them, finite clauses with zero relativiser and *that*-relative clauses account for most of the occurrences in this category (185 and 133 occurrences per 100,000 words, respectively), hinting at the informal and colloquial nature of the interactions represented onscreen. The marked preference for the omission of the relative pronoun is consistent with the high frequency of zero complement clauses observed above.

5.2. The functions of clausal complexity features in TV dialogue

Several types of subordinate clauses that contribute to grammatical complexity in TV dialogue were found in SydTV. The following qualitative analysis complements the quantitative findings and enriches the picture by describing the communicative functions served by different clauses at the diegetic and extradiegetic levels.

One main function of the subordinate clauses in the data is the expression of the speakers' personal stances, which is central to the interpersonal character of face-to-face conversation and the onscreen reproductions. Complement clauses are the preferred devices to encode epistemic evaluations and attitudinal meanings in English (Biber 2015), establishing a link between syntactic complexity at the clausal level and this communicative function. The high frequency of both finite and nonfinite complement clauses in SydTV is in line with the findings of previous studies of American films and television registers, which identified these types of clauses as a major source of the naturalness of onscreen dialogue, scene dramatisation and audience entertainment (Berber Sardinha, Veirano Pinto 2019; Formentelli *et al*. forthcoming; Veirano Pinto 2014; see also Bednarek 2011). The brief excerpts of TV dialogue in Examples 1 and 2 show a series of complement clauses that resonate across characters, foregrounding their points of view by means of the first person pronoun *I* and verbs that convey various degrees of epistemic certainty (*I think*, *I had no idea*), as well as strong positive and negative attitudes (*I love*, *I'd love*, *I hate*). The quick exchanges of ideas about events and states of affairs contribute to the spontaneity of the fictional interactions and simultaneously engage the viewing audience, prompting their interpersonal (dis)alignment and emotive participation.

1) Suits_std_1_10 I **think** it'd be nice to be in nature, don't you Mike? <THERESE> Well I **love** that you're a lawyer. In fact, I 'd **love** to see where you work some time.[4]

2) Gossip_Girl_std_1_17 but I **had no idea** their standards were so low. <DAN> I **hate** that I have to ask you this, but have you seen Serena?

In addition to the expression of stance, nonfinite complement clauses are used in TV series to add dynamicity to the dialogue through the concise combination of verbs in modal, aspectual and temporal lexico-syntactic constructions. In Examples 3 and 4, the deontic verbal expressions *Do you want*, *I want* and *I need you* introduce the subordinate clauses by expressing the characters' strong desires and needs, thus projecting the actions encoded in the propositional content into the future and advancing the plot.

3) How_I_Met_Your_Mother_std_1_12 <LILY> Okay, okay, sweetie, we, just calm down. **Do you want** to go somewhere and talk? <CLAUDIA> **I want** to go somewhere and drink. <LILY> Okay, meet me at MacLaren's. I I'll see you there.

4) Fringe_std_1_13 **I need you** to go to the passengers, **I need you** to collect as many sedatives or tranquilizers as you can. <MELISSA> Okay, Sir, **I need you** to take a deep breath.

Similarly, nonfinite complement clauses often combine with imperative forms in directive face-threatening acts and amplify their pragmatic force, particularly in the conflictual situations that abound in fictional TV series (Bednarek 2012). The use of the swearword *the hell* in Example 5 and the dramatic climax in Example 6, achieved through Kate's aggressive repetition of the verb *stop* followed by two complement clauses, charge the dialogue with a wave of negative emotions that impact on the fictional interlocutors and the spectators alike. This strong, concurrent orientation towards onscreen characters and viewers contributes to heightening the involvement of the latter, who are the ultimate addressees in the mediatised communicative event (Dynel 2011).

5) Lost_std_1_17 <LOCKE> Should I be writing this down? <SHANNON> Just, just **tell him** to stay the hell out of my business. <LOCKE> Do you like him ? <SHANNON> What?

6) United_States_of_Tara_std_1_08 <KATE> Okay , stop it. <GENE> Stop what, Kitty Kate? <KATE> **Stop** with the name. **Stop** singling me out at your little crab updates. **Stop** blabbing to people. Just **stop** it.

With regard to the narrative dimension of TV dialogue, both *wh*-complement clauses and adverbial clauses are used to make relations between facts and people explicit, and facilitate the audience's task of reconstructing the storyworld and understanding the plot that is unfolding onscreen. Examples 7 and 8 illustrate how *wh*-complement clauses can indicate that relevant

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[4] Each example is introduced by a codified string with metadata on the TV series from which the extract of dialogue is taken: TV series name_standardised transcription_season number_episode number (e.g., Suits_std_1_10)

Complexity matters in TV dialogue as language input. A corpus-based description
of clausal and phrasal patterns

279

contextual information is being delivered by the characters in the on-going interaction, such as Jess' whereabouts, professional status or the details of a criminal investigation.

7) Girls_std_1_03 me change here Shoshanna. **Do you know** <u>where Jess is</u>? **Do you know** <u>when she'll be home</u>? <SHOSHANNA> Umm, probably not until late. She has a job now.

8) Human_Target_std_1_11 <WINSTON> It **explains** <u>why they wanted to keep Tony alive</u>. Plant the murder weapon in his hand. All these love letters in the ambulance make him look like a stalker.

Similarly, in Example 9, the hypothetical clauses that the two characters ironically exchange concerning the theme 'killing the partner' allow the viewers to frame Gabrielle and Carlos' romantic relationship, while the causal and the purpose clauses uttered by Charlie in Example 10 express the speaker's annoyance with Ed's behaviour and simultaneously describe an aspect of his personality.

9) Desperate_Housewives_std_1_19 <GABRIELLE> One more thing. <u>If you ever hurt me again</u>, I will kill you. <CARLOS> <u>If you ever leave me for another man</u>, I'll kill you. <GABRIELLE> Boy, with all this passion isn't it a shame that we're not having sex?

10) Anger_Management_std_1_01 as hell. <CHARLIE> You know Ed, you make jokes like that <u>because you're insecure</u> so you denigrate others <u>to feel better about yourself</u>.

As can be seen in the examples above, *wh*-clauses condense contextual information through verbal arguments, thus promoting the economy of speech that is typical of telecinematic products. Conversely, adverbial clauses are structurally less integrated in the clause complex and can occur in both initial and final positions with respect to the main clause. The position of adverbial clauses has been associated with different pragmatic functions in spoken English (Diessel 2005) and film (Formentelli *et al*. forthcoming), with initial clauses serving as the thematic basis for the remainder of the utterance and final clauses mainly adding new information and facilitating processing.

One last point to be made about the narrative function of subordinate clauses in TV dialogue concerns relative clauses. Even though relative clauses occur less frequently compared to the other types of clauses in SydTV, they are still (extra)diegetically important to identify and further define people and places.

11) Human_Target_std_1_11 Down! Gerard, we need the evidence. <GERARD> Belfast. Remember **the man** <u>we hunted together?</u> <CHANCE> Really? <GERARD> He's here in New York.

12) Dollhouse_std_1_06 those movies never end well. <PAUL> It's **the part** <u>where I run down to Tiki Port and grab us dinner and we go over my files and you give me your perspective on some stuff</u>.

Relative clauses can be employed effectively as postmodifiers to pinpoint referents introduced by general nouns, such as *man* in Example 11, or to add details about hypothetical situations that cannot be represented visually onscreen, such as the series of actions that Paul describes in Example 12 as potential scenes in a film.

Overall, the different types of subordinate clauses identified in SydTV serve a variety of register-specific communicative purposes at the diegetic and extradiegetic levels, including the realistic simulation of spontaneous interactions, narration, characterisation, and the promotion of viewers' emotional involvement and entertainment. The multifaceted realisations of clausal complexity combine with several strategic audience-oriented functions in TV series to make the fictional stories more accessible, particularly for L2 learner-viewers, who can benefit from examples of rich and sophisticated English use.

5.3. Phrasal complexity

The aspect of phrasal complexity considered in this study is premodification, as mentioned in Section 4. More specifically, the study examines premodification involving up to three attributive adjectives, premodification involving up to three nouns and premodification involving genitives. The frequencies of these phrasal complexity features in SydTV are provided in Table 2.

Premodifying nouns		
Patterns	Raw frequency	Normed frequency (per 100,000 words)
Three premodifying nouns	33	11
Two premodifying nouns	294	106
One premodifying noun	2,480	895
Genitives	651	235
Total (premodifying nouns)	3,458	1,248
Premodifying adjectives		
Patterns	Raw frequency	Normed frequency (per 100,000 words)
Three premodifying adjectives	33	11
Two premodifying adjectives	520	187
One premodifying adjective	4,663	1,684
Total (premodifying adjectives)	5,216	1,883
Grand total	8,674	3,132

Table 2
Phrasal complexity – Premodification patterns in SydTV.

The frequency counts presented in Table 2 reflect two main tendencies in SydTV. The first is that adjectival premodification is more frequent than is nominal premodification (1,883 versus 1,248 occurrences per 100,000 words). The second is a preference for light forms of premodification, while heavy premodification via multiple premodifiers is much less common, particularly when it involves more than two modifiers[5]. In other words, when a noun is premodified in SydTV, this usually involves one adjective or – albeit less frequently – one noun.

TV dialogue aligns with spontaneous conversation in terms of its reliance on succinct premodification (Biber *et al.* 2021, pp. 591-592). By contrast, it differs from expository written registers, particularly newspaper prose and academic writing, in which heavier forms of premodification are attested (Biber *et al.* 2021, pp. 591-592; Zago 2024). In both casual conversation and fictional TV dialogue, the moderate use of premodification is a recipient-friendly tendency that is in keeping with the synchronous and auditory mode of reception of these spoken registers.

5.4. The functions of phrasal complexity features in TV dialogue

Complementing the discussion of clausal complexity in 5.2, this Subsection approaches the findings obtained for phrasal complexity from a functional perspective. The aim is to illustrate what phrasal complexity features typically do for L1 and L2 viewers or, in other words, to highlight the main register-specific communicative functions of phrasal complexity features in fictional TV dialogue.

A distinct trend in SydTV is that premodifiers serve to identify or qualify characters in various ways. There are cases in which characters use premodifiers to describe and evaluate themselves (Example 13), their interlocutor or a third party (Example 14). In other cases, premodifiers clarify the characters' identities, introduce another character or specify inter-character relationships (Example 15); all these functions assist viewers to understand the narrative. This is particularly the case for L2 viewers, for whom the explicitness and specification afforded by premodifiers may be especially beneficial and advantageous.

13) How_I_Met_Your_Mother_std_1_12 am. I'm not a **commitment guy**, I'm a **single guy**. \<TED\> Stuart, you don't have to be one or the

14) Breaking_Bad_std_1_03 news flash. That partner of yours? He's got a **big mouth**. Walter, I don't know what you think you're

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[5] Multiple premodification may involve combinations of the premodifiers shown in Table 2. The most common type is when attributive adjectives combine with noun premodifiers (*bad car accident*). A search for the adjective + noun + noun cluster returned 352 matches in SydTV.

15) Parks_and_Recreation_std_1_06 wife. <WENDY> Hi, I'm Lindy Haverford. <MARK> Hi you're **Tom's wife**. <WENDY> Don't hold it against me. <TOM> Look at how

When utilised as in Examples 13 to 15, premodifiers contribute to the anchorage between the characters and the viewers, as well as to character revelation and characterisation, which are essential communicative functions in TV dialogue (Bednarek 2018a; Kozloff 2000). In such cases, TV language constructs the characters for the audience at different levels.

In addition to providing the audience with information about the characters, premodifiers are used to identify or describe the general context (Example 16) or specific parts (Example 17). This facilitates another type of anchorage, namely that between the audience and the physical spaces represented on the screen (Bednarek 2018a; Kozloff 2000).

16) The_Shield_std_1_04 's with me. <DANNY> Back off, okay. This is a **private party**. <LEMONHEAD> Look back off of them. You can't be

17) Weeds_std_1_01 <SILAS> Here. <QUINN> Oh, look, Silas, look at that **cute stuffed bear** on the table. We used to have one just like it[6]

Another significant function of premodifiers in TV dialogue is that of conveying the characters' viewpoints, attitudes, emotions and feelings (Examples 18 and 19), thus acting as markers of stance and expressivity (Bednarek 2018a, p. 140-144; Quaglio 2009, p. 87-105). When they have this function, they tend to be accompanied by a variety of other expressive items, such as interjections and intensifiers (*God* and *really* in Example 18), in such a way that reproduces and even amplifies the dynamics of spontaneous colloquial conversation, in which emphasis and emotionality abound when stance is presented.

18) Girls_std_1_03 because you both already have HPV. <HANNAH> God that's a really **good point**. <JULIAN> Marnie, I think one of these paintings is up crooked

19) Desperate_Housewives_std_1_19 <REX> I don't know. I think we may be making a **huge mistake**. <BREE> We made our decision, let's just stick to it

Apart from fulfilling the broad purposes described thus far, premodifiers have genre-related uses, as is evident in TV series that are set in specialised contexts. For instance, the audiences of medical TV series often listen to discussions concerning technical matters that necessitate complex noun phrases in order to be explained (Examples 20 and 21). Both the head nouns and the premodifiers that occur in such exchanges are notably more formal than those used to perform the general communicative functions that were illustrated previously.

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[6] While not examined quantitatively, phrasal complexity via postmodification (the prepositional phrase 'on the table' in Example 17) was taken into consideration in the qualitative stage of this study.

20) House_std_1_18 <FOREMAN> The three miscarriages make me think it's an **underlying physiology**. <HOUSE> **Pregnancy-related autoimmunity**. Too bad that Cameron quit, I could use an immunologist

21) Greys_Anatomy_std_1_09 to know the cause of death? <BAILEY> It's going down as **cardiopulmonary arrest** complicated by **liver disease**. <IZZIE> But an autopsy would...

Similar occurrences can be seen in legal TV series, in which formal and technical premodifiers are utilised in complex noun phrases by lawyers, judges and police officers when discussing specialised, genre-defining topics, as shown in Examples 22 and 23.

22) Southland_std_1_02 <SALINGER> Just stay there. <RUSSELL> This guy's got a uh, **ten-page rap sheet**. **Spousal abuse**, **drug possession**, two eleven.

23) Suits_std_1_10 know who you are. You said that if I accepted the **severance agreement** there wouldn't be a lawsuit . <JESSICA> Well, there

The pronounced phrasal complexity observed in the medical and legal TV series of SydTV mirrors what takes place in real medical and legal English, two registers that are known for their extensive use of heavily modified noun phrases to ensure referential precision (Gotti 2011). In other words, phrasal complexity is a requirement that scriptwriters have to satisfy for the sake of realism in these genres. While realism often entails scriptwriters simulating the lexicogrammar of colloquial spoken English, the type addressed here involves presenting the audience with a credible reproduction of specialised discourses, in line with Bednarek's (2018a, p. 71) observation that "realism/authenticity can […] be produced by successful representations of particular language varieties (associated with professional or ethnic groups)".

When a TV series portrays specialised contexts, the accessibility of its dialogue may decrease for many lay L1 and L2 viewers, particularly the latter, as a result of the phrasal intricacy as well as the degree of technicality of the language in such contexts. However, this replicates or approximates what the same viewers are likely to experience in their daily lives when they encounter medical or legal English, with the result being that the dialogue gains credibility. Ultimately, in scenes such as those in Examples 20 to 23, the aim of constructing believable specialised discourse is of such importance for scriptwriters that it may even be pursued at the expense of a certain degree of comprehensibility. L1 and L2 viewers may not know precisely what Dr House means when he says *pregnancy-related autoimmunity* (Example 20); nevertheless, they have the impression of listening to true-to-life medical discourse. The other side of the coin is that the phrasal complexity and technicality of medical and legal TV genres only affect those viewers who do not belong to the legal and medical fields. For learner-users of English who are studying law or medicine, watching TV series such as *Grey's Anatomy* or *Suits*

is an opportunity – 'disguised' as entertainment – to improve their specialised L2 competence extramurally, in addition to being a practice that has been shown to be well suited to teaching English for specific purposes (Bonsignori 2018; Dang 2020; Forchini 2018; Franceschi 2021).

5.5. Comparison with spontaneous conversation

As a final step in the analysis, the quantitative findings regarding clausal and phrasal complexity in SydTV are compared here to corpus-based data pertaining to grammatical complexity in spontaneous speech. The results of Biber's (2015) research on the interplay between grammatical complexity and the expression of stance in face-to-face conversation, based on the spoken component of the *Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus*, are particularly relevant with regard to clausal complexity. Comparative data with TV dialogue are available for the three major categories of subordinate clauses considered in the present study, namely complement, adverbial and relative clauses, with the exception of nonfinite adverbial clauses. The partial lack of data is not expected to impact on the general trend displayed by the distribution of complexity features in the two registers, as nonfinite adverbial clauses are infrequent in conversation (Biber *et al.* 2021, p. 760). The frequencies of clausal complexity features in TV dialogue and spontaneous conversation normalised per 100,000 words are plotted in Figure 3.
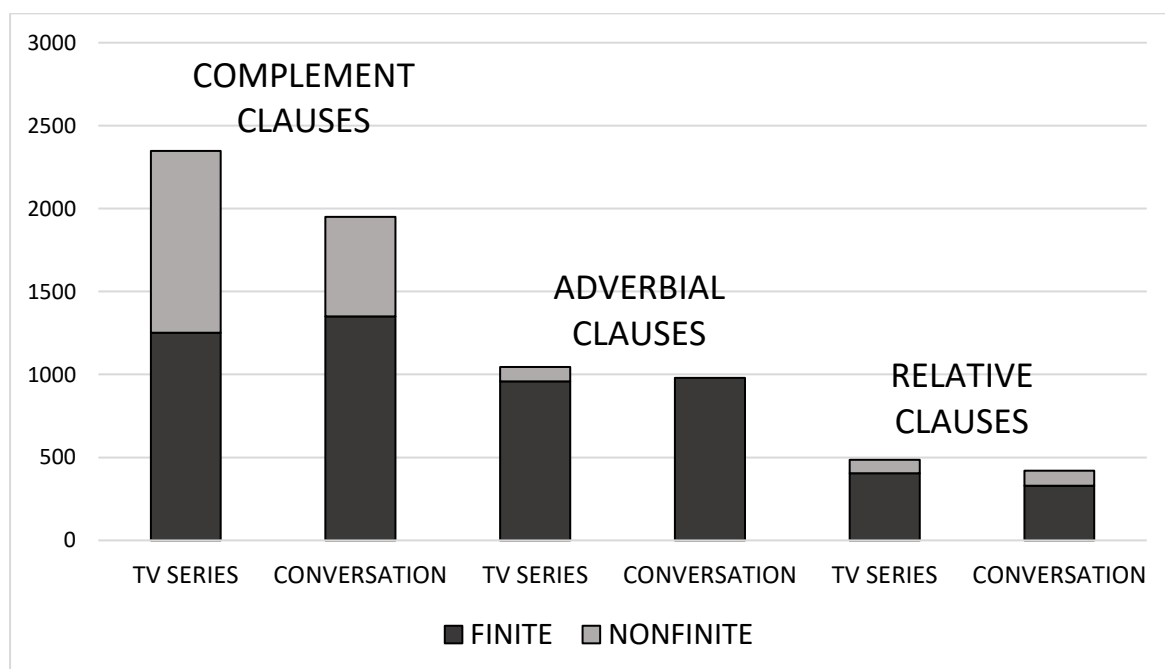

Figure 3
Frequencies of clausal complexity features in TV dialogue and spontaneous conversation (per 100,000 words).

Complexity matters in TV dialogue as language input. A corpus-based description
of clausal and phrasal patterns

285

The distribution of clauses in the two registers reveals that TV dialogue closely approximates spontaneous conversation. Both varieties of spoken English favour the production of complement clauses over adverbial clauses and relative clauses in interactions. The clear preference for complement clauses in both TV dialogue and face-to-face conversation indicates the relevance of stance expression in spoken registers that have an interactive and interpersonal dimension, as these constructions are specialised in the codification of the speakers' attitudes, emotions and evaluations (Biber 2015, p. 12). The frequencies of each structural/syntactic subtype are also very similar in the two corpora, with the exception of nonfinite complement clauses, which are markedly more numerous onscreen. This difference might be explained by recalling a distinctive syntactic property of nonfinite clauses, namely the absence of a subject and tense marking, which allows for the expression of propositional content in a more compressed and economical way compared to finite subordinate clauses (Biber, Gray 2016), in line with the language constraints and requirements of the audiovisual medium. The pervasiveness of nonfinite complement clauses onscreen may also result in an enhanced dynamicity of exchanges amongst characters and a foregrounding of emotionality through dialogue.

Adverbial clauses occur to the same extent in TV dialogue and spontaneous conversation and are the second most frequent category of clausal complexity features. In face-to-face interactions and the onscreen representations, adverbial clauses enable the contextualisation of events and the development of common knowledge between real and fictional interactants.

The least frequent clausal subtype in the two corpora is relative clause. This finding may reflect the fact that most relative clauses serve as postmodifiers of head nouns and qualify as noun phrase constituents rather than as clausal constituents. While finite relative clauses have been found to be "relatively common in both written and spoken registers" (Biber *et al.* 2020, p. 8), it has also been found that noun postmodification is a more functional strategy in written registers than in spoken ones, as it allows for the compression of information into a few words (Biber *et al.* 2022, pp. 462-465).

Finally, TV dialogue and conversation share a preference for the explicit codification of new information through finite clause constructions, which may ease the decoding of the message for face-to-face interlocutors and comprehension for the viewing audience. Concurrently, less explicit nonfinite clausal combinations are used more frequently onscreen, where they arguably serve as time-saving strategies. In sum, the frequency and distribution of all types of clausal complexity features are comparable in the two registers with few exceptions, which is in line with recent findings concerning the complexity of Anglophone film dialogue (Formentelli *et al.* forthcoming). These results

provide additional evidence for the orientation of fictional TV dialogue towards real-life conversation, as pointed out in previous studies (Bednarek 2018a; Berber Sardinha, Veirano Pinto 2019; Quaglio 2009).

With regard to phrasal complexity in TV dialogue versus conversation, the frequencies of premodifiers in SydTV are compared here to those reported for spontaneous conversation in the *Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (GSWE) (Biber *et al.* 2021). The results of the comparison are plotted in Figure 4.

As can be seen in Figure 4, premodifiers – especially nouns – are more frequent in SydTV than in the conversation subcorpus of the GSWE. However, the difference is not marked, particularly when adjectives are considered, and therefore does not appear to indicate a substantial dissimilarity in the register profile of conversation and TV dialogue as far as premodification is concerned.
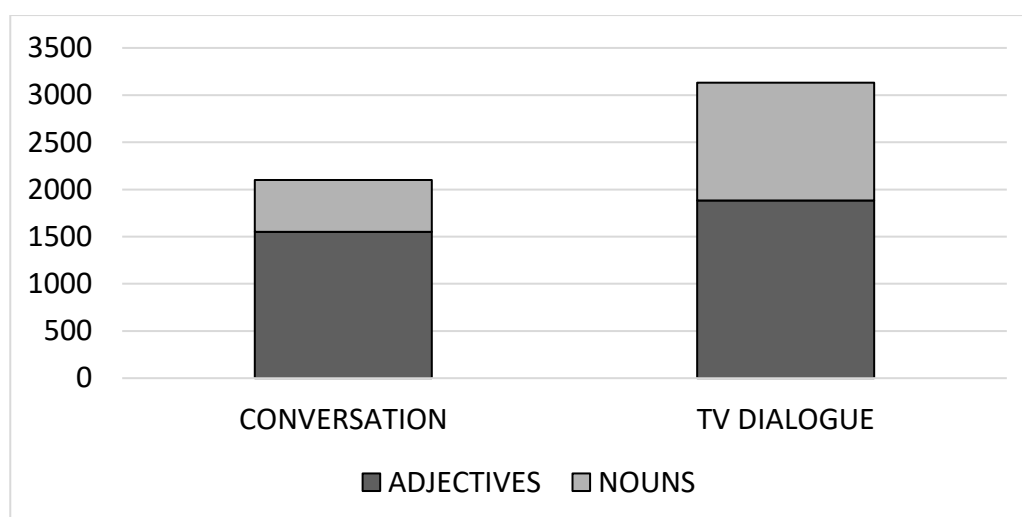

Figure 4
Phrasal complexity: premodifiers in conversation (adapted from Biber *et al.* 2021, p. 583, figure 8.7) vs. TV dialogue (frequencies normalised per 100,000 words).

As informational devices, premodifiers are ideally suited to the overarching goal of TV dialogue, namely that of narrating – a goal that is comparatively less important in conversation. This may be the main reason why premodifiers are more frequent in TV dialogue than in conversation. Given the association between phrasal modification and preplanning found in informational written registers (Biber *et al.* 2022), the slightly higher phrasal complexity observed in TV series may likewise result from the scripted nature of televisual language. In spontaneous conversation, by contrast, the left periphery of the noun phrase represents a more cognitively demanding, hence less frequently used, slot for speakers due to the online planning pressure they experience.

The moderately higher frequency of premodifiers in TV series arguably also stems from genre-related factors. For example, crime/legal and medical TV series regularly feature autopsies, police reports, investigations, legal

actions, diagnoses and surgical operations; these are activities that inevitably involve complex noun phrases and noun premodifiers by analogy with the real-world specialised varieties of English that these genres seek to imitate (Gotti 2011, p. 55-58). Another genre that deserves to be mentioned here is fantasy, as it features characters, settings and events whose extraordinary distance from reality 'calls for' description and illustration. Finally, in sitcoms, phrasal complexity also appears to be involved in the construction of humour. For instance, one of the reasons why viewers laugh when they watch *The Big Bang Theory* is that the awkward, nerdy characters in this series use a variety of English that is constantly complex and overly formal (cf. Bednarek 2023).

In summary, the comparison between the conversation subcorpus of the GSWE and SydTV suggests that TV dialogue is generally similar to casual conversation in terms of phrasal complexity. The former register relies on the referential function somewhat more extensively than does the latter, but the extent of the difference does not appear such that it 'compromises' TV dialogue as a model of spoken English for learner-users. Instead, the moderately higher presence of premodifiers in TV dialogue results in greater explicitness (in delineating a character, in contextualising, etc.), a feature that may help L1 and L2 viewers to orient themselves as they follow the storyline.

6. Concluding remarks

The quantitative findings of this study highlight some of the main types of grammatical complexity that occur in TV dialogue. With regard to the clausal dimension, complement and adverbial clauses are the preferred means of expressing complexity as opposed to relative clauses, with finite clauses being far more frequent compared to nonfinite ones. This distribution promotes narration and realism, and explicitly conveys background information about characters and events for the benefit of the audience. With regard to the phrasal dimension, attributive adjectives are more frequent than nouns as premodifiers, and single adjective/noun premodification is preferred to the use of multiple premodifiers.

The (extra)diegetic functions served by complexity features in televisual language were identified and documented through the qualitative analysis of concordances in SydTV. Many of these functions were observed across different TV series and can therefore be regarded as being typical of fictional TV dialogue in general. They include the identification and description of referents, the presentation of circumstantial information, the establishment and clarification of the relationships amongst characters and events, the marking of the characters' stance and expressivity. Other functions, such as the simulation and reproduction of the phrasal complexity of specialised discourses, are more common in TV series that depict legal activities, investigations of criminal

cases, and medical professions. This aspect emphasises the role of TV genres in generating variation within the register as a whole.

From a comparative perspective, TV dialogue was found to approximate spontaneous conversation with regard to major patterns of grammatical complexity, as is particularly evident in the occurrences of most of the types of subordinate clauses and in the rates of adjectival premodification. These findings reflect the mimetic aim of onscreen language with respect to naturally occurring spoken exchanges. At the same time, some quantitative patterns that partly distance fictional TV dialogue from face-to-face conversation were detected, such as the greater frequency of nonfinite complement clauses and of nominal premodifiers in TV series. The strong reliance on nonfinite complement clauses may reflect the medium-related need for economy of speech, whereas the difference in nominal premodification may be explained as an attempt to reproduce specialised discourse onscreen through domain-specific vocabulary in more elaborate noun phrases. Narrative exigencies, together with the scripted nature of TV dialogue, may also be proposed to account for the slightly higher phrasal complexity found in SydTV, as phrasal complexity is closely associated with the preplanned nature of informational written texts (Biber *et al.* 2022). More evidence about this aspect may be obtained by assessing the degree of phrasal postmodification through prepositional phrases as part of a future development of the present investigation.

When considered from an informal learning perspective, the results of this investigation allow us to describe TV dialogue as a rich and reliable source of input for L2 learner-users. TV dialogue qualifies as a source of realistic conversational language that learner-viewers have at their disposal and can readily use as a model of spoken English. Phrasal and clausal complexity features perform several referential and communicative functions onscreen, and the specification and contextualisation they afford can increase the accessibility of TV narratives for L2 viewers, often in tandem with visuals in a multimodal fashion. In conclusion, it should be noted that, while TV dialogue is a unidirectional, screen-to-face register, the wide availability of audiovisual products on numerous streaming platforms considerably increases the opportunities for many learner-users to access English, and probably provides more opportunities compared to bidirectional, face-to-face interactions with native speakers. This makes TV series a valuable tool for learning English outside of the classroom.

Bionotes

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Complexity matters in TV dialogue as language input. A corpus-based description
of clausal and phrasal patterns

291

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Biderman A. (Creator) (2009), *Mozambique* (Season 1 Episode 2) [TV series episode], in Biderman A., Chulack C., Wells J. (Executive Producers), *Southland*, John Wells Productions, Warner Bros. Television.

Cherry M. (Creator) (2004), *Live alone and like it* (Season 1 Episode 19) [TV series episode], in Cherry M., Spezialy T., Edelstein M. (Executive Producers), *Desperate Housewives*, Cherry Productions, Touchstone Television.

Cody D. (Creator) (2009), *Abundance* (Season 1 Episode 8) [TV series episode], in Spielberg S., Cody D., Junge A., Frank D., Falvey J. (Executive Producers), *United States of Tara*, DreamWorks Television, Showtime Networks.

Daniels G., Schur M. (Creators) (2009), *Rock show* (Season 1 Episode 6) [TV series episode], in Daniels G., Schur M., Klein H., Miner D., Sackett M., Holland D., Goor D. (Executive

Producers), *Parks and Recreation*, Open 4 Business Productions, Deedle-Dee Productions, Fremulon, 3 Arts Entertainment, Universal Television.

Dunham L. (Creator) (2012), *All adventurous women do* (Season 1 Episode 3) [TV series episode], in Dunham L., Apatow J., Konner J., Landress I.S., Kaplan B.E. (Executive Producers), *Girls*, Apatow Productions, I Am Jenni Konner Productions, HBO Entertainment.

Gilligan V. (Creator) (2008), *And the bag's in the river* (Season 1 Episode 3) [TV series episode], in Gilligan V., Johnson M., MacLaren M. (Executive Producers), *Breaking Bad*, High Bridge Entertainment, Gran Via Productions, Sony Pictures Television.

Helford B. (Creator) (2012), *Charlie goes back to therapy* (Season 1, Episode 1) [TV series episode], in Helford B., Estevez R., Sheen C., Caplan D., Burg M., Totino V., Roth J., Kushell B., Maron R. (Executive Producers), *Anger Management*, Mohawk Productions, Revolution Studios, Estevez/Sheen Productions, Twisted Television, Debmar-Mercury, Lionsgate Television.

Kohan J. (Creator) (2005), *You can't miss the bear* (Season 1 Episode 1) [TV series episode], in Kohan J. (Executive Producers), *Weeds*, Tilted Productions, Lionsgate Television, Showtime Networks.

Korsh A. (Creator) (2011), *The shelf life* (Season 1 Episode 11) [TV series episode], in Korsh A., Liman D., Bartis D. (Executive Producers), *Suits*, Untitled Korsh Company, Hypnotic Films & Television, Universal Cable Productions, Open 4 Business Productions.

Lieber J., Abrams J.J., Lindelof D. (Creators) (2004), *... in translation* (Season 1 Episode 17) [TV series episode], in Abrams J.J., Lindelof D., Burk B., Cuse C., Bender J., Pinkner J., Williams S., Kitsis E., Horowitz A., Higgins J., Sarnoff E. (Executive Producers), *Lost*, Grass Skirt Productions, Bad Robot, Touchstone Television.

Rhimes S. (Creator) (2005), *Who's zoomin' who?* (Season 1 Episode 9) [TV series episode], in Rhimes S., Pompeo E., Heinberg A., Reaser A., Beers B., Allen D., Parriott J.D., Renshaw J., Rafner J., Rater J., Hodder K., Vernoff K., Gordon M., Wilding M., Noxon M., Marinis M., Horton P., Corn R., McKee S., Mulholland S., Phelan T., Harper W., Clack Z., Dumont O. (Executive Producers), *Gray's Anatomy*. Shondaland, Lionsgate Television, 20th Television.

Ryan S. (Creator) (2002), *Dawg days* (Season 1 Episode 4) [TV series episode], in Ryan S., Brazil S., Mazzara G., Eglee C.H., Sutter K., Rosenbaum S., Fierro A. (Executive Producers), *The Shield*, The Barn Productions, MiddKid Productions, Columbia TriStar Domestic Television, Fox Television Studios.

Schwartz J., Savage S. (Creators) (2007), *Woman on the verge* (Season 1 Episode 17) [TV series episode], in Schwartz J., Savage S., Levy B., Morgenstein L., Stephens J. (Executive Producers), *Gossip Girl*, Warner Bros. Television, Alloy Entertainment, College Hill Pictures, Inc.

Shore D. (Creator) (2004), *Babies and birthwater* (Season 1 Episode 18) [TV series episode], in Attanasio P., Jacobs K., Shore D., Singer B., Moran T.L., Friend R., Lerner G., Yaitanes G., Laurie H. (Executive Producers), *House*, Heel and Toe Films, Shore Z Productions, Bad Hat Harry Productions, NBC Universal Television Studio.

Steinberg J.E. (Creator) (2010), *Victoria* (Season 1 Episode 11) [TV series episode], in Steinberg J.E., Kern B., Hooks K., McG, Johnson P., Miller M. (Executive Producers), *Human Target*, Wonderland Sound and Vision, DC Entertainment, Bonanza Productions, Warner Bros. Television.

Whedon J. (Creator) (2009), *Man on the street* (Season 1 Episode 6) [TV series episode], in Whedon J., Solomon D., Minear T. (Executive Producers), *Dollhouse*, Mutant Enemy Productions, 20th Century Fox Television.