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Asset or liability: migrant portrayal case study in a deadly game

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Abstract: This research investigates how Ali Abdul is represented in Squid Game in order to demonstrate the extent to which stereotypes of migrant workers are reflected in the character. This study aims to broaden the possibility of imagological and media related research beyond the Western hemisphere in the field of Intercultural Communication. Furthermore, it hopes to open up a communicative space on the topic of migrant worker representation in Korea and beyond. The current study employs a qualitative case study for in depth exploration of the character, Ali Abdul. The results find that while the character itself is a major step forward to a more expansive narrative of race and ethnic diversity, it still reflects migrant workers stereotypes. The marginalisation and victimisation of the character in question reinforces and disseminates the existing stereotypes, which hinders empowerment.

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1. Introduction

As of 2021, 26 Korean words have been added to the Oxford dictionary (McCurry, 2021). One of them is hallyu; the definition in the Oxford dictionary is as follows: “The increase in international interest in South Korea (henceforth Korea) and its popular culture, represented by the global success of South Korean music, film, TV, fashion and food” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). Followed by the success of Squid Game on Netflix, Korean series are no longer a property of Koreans and K-culture fans. In fact, Netflix is investing \$500 million in Korea in 2021 (Choudhury, 2021). The popularity of the show also spurred interest in the Korean language. According to Duolingo, there has been a 40% increase in learning Korean in the United States since the release of Squid Game (MacMahon, 2021).

Korea is one of the most homogeneous countries in the world with high ethnocentrism (Kim, 2012, p.657). Due to its declining population and labour shortages, the Korean government introduced a new immigration policy called the Employment Permit System in 2004, along with other initiatives. As a result, the total foreign population grew from 180,000 in 1995 to 2.5 million in 2019 (Jung, 2021). As the number of immigrant population increased, so did the number of news items on immigration and immigrants (Lee & Choi, 2016, p.128). Previous research surrounding multiculturalism in South Korea is largely on multicultural families and marriage immigrants (mostly women). Furthermore, previous literature on the representation of migrants is based on news media discourse analysis, which is further elaborated in a later section. However, not much attention has been paid to representation of migrant workers in the entertainment industry in South Korea. Thus, this study aims to investigate how migrant workers are portrayed in the Korean entertainment industry through a character, Ali Abdul, from Squid Game.

This research consists of seven sections including introduction. The next section presents previous studies on multiculturalism in Korea in which the current research is situated. Then, it introduces the research question. In the next section, the theoretical framework is discussed in depth. The methodology of this research is explained in section 4, followed by the results in section 5. In section 6, the results are discussed in relation to theories discussed in section 3. Finally, the conclusion is drawn in the last section.

2. Contextualisation

2.1. Migrants Workers in Korea

One of the challenges that came with Korea's economic developments and prosperity since the 1980s was labour shortage. This also meant that fairly well-educated youth became less willing to perform certain types of labour, as known as the '3D professions'; dirty, dangerous, and demanding. Consequently, the industries that were affected by the shortage had to look beyond the national borders to fill the gap (Amnesty International, 2009). As of 2020, approximately 400,000 migrant workers were employed in unskilled labour markets, such as agriculture and construction (Ministry of Justice, 2020). The largest nationalities that make up this group are Chinese (including Korean-Chinese), Vietnamese, and Thais (Ministry of Justice, 2020). Despite the fact that the Korean government has legally recognised migrant workers' rights under Employment Permit System (EPS) since 2004, many of them still face discrimination, and verbal and physical abuse in the workplace (Amnesty International, 2009). The way in which migrant issues are problematized in Korean media is the problem attribution to Koreans (i.e. government and employers), not to migrants. Even in anti-immigrant frames, the government and the employers are to blame for the troubles migrants (are believed to) cause. At worst, migrants are described to become or lead to problems, not cause problems (Kim, 2012).

2.2. Multiculturalism Discourse in Korea

Discourse on multiculturalism in Korea greatly concerns low-skilled migrants and multicultural families (Yi & Jung, 2015). Mainstream media discourse surrounding migrant workers is consistent with victim rhetoric regardless of the political orientation, calling for public attention and support (Yi & Jung, 2015 ; Kim, 2012). While it can be interpreted as a social consensus on the proper and sensible attitude toward migrants, considering Korea's high ethnocentrism, the positive stance found in the two studies is somewhat counter-intuitive (Kim, 2012). However, the seemingly positive stance on migrants reaffirms negative stereotypes in a number of ways (Kim, 2012). First, by constantly portraying them as passive victims produces the image of inferior Other (Kim, 2012). Similarly, Yi & Jung (2015) also found that the mainstream media producers, who are an ethnically and ideologically homogeneous group, often presented migrants as passive victims. While this rhetoric calls for attention to discrimination and public discourse, this also prevents them from growing into

empowerment (Kim, 2012). Second, the favourable attitude is also attributed to the workforce they brought to the country (Kim, 2012). The common language used in this discourse, such as ‘imported’, ‘bought’, and ‘brought’ implies commodification and objectification of migrants (Kim, 2012, p.667). This undermines their agency as it suggests that their status in Korea is granted only because they serve a certain function in the country, not because of their right to move and choose a place to live (Kim, 2012).

Behind the victimhood discourse are the mainstream media producers, most of whom are societal elites (Yi & Jung, 2015). In such homogenous settings, opposing views are rarely discussed (Sunstein, 2009, as cited in Yi & Jung, 2015). In fact, the (elite) journalists disproportionately interviewed other highly educated members of the society, such as government officials, when reporting on multiculturalism related issues (Yi & Jung, 2015).

2.3. Migrant Workers in Korean Films

Mass media has become more significant than ever as it influences people in many aspects of life. The audio-visual nature of the media as a powerful tool, it plays a crucial role in shaping culture, discourse, the narratives in politics, and so on, virtually transforming the imaginary to real world practices. In traditional mainstream media, racial minorities are often underrepresented and/or misrepresented. The lack of diversity in media often leads to limited understanding of those groups and the social world (Castañeda, 2018). Thus, films as part of mass media, is an important source of studying minorities as they contribute and shape the discourse surrounding them.

Rhee’s (2016) study on how migrant workers and brides are portrayed demonstrates the above point well. For the relevance of this study, only the movies that concern migrant workers are discussed. Two Korean movies, ‘He is on Duty’ (2012) and ‘Where is Ronny’ (2009), are case in point of above discourses surrounding migrants. Both films were highly appraised for facilitating public dialogue on racial discrimination against migrant workers. However, this was not without the criticism of the sympathy and victimhood discourses that were found in the aforementioned studies, which dilute their agency. Another critique that came from portraying migrants as victims in those films is that it reinforces ethnic hierarchies and negative stereotypes. As these films demonstrate, the problematic representation of Other can create communicative space for dialogue and enhance intercultural understanding (Rhee, 2016).

2.3. Ali Abdul and Squid Game

A decade after the release of those two films, an Indian actor Anupam Tripathi appears in *Squid Game*, a Korean series which has become Netflix's biggest show ever (*Global Top 10*, 2022). He played Ali Abdul, a migrant worker from Pakistan (*Watch Squid Game*, 2021). He is known as the breakout actor who went against all the odds of landing a major role in the Korean drama industry, which is not very open to foreign actors (Cha, 2021). In fact, this role has been regarded as a massive win for minority representation in Korea (Chen, 2021). In one interview, Tripathi revealed that he's played many migrant worker roles in Korean series and films, but this was his first full-fledged character (Chen, 2021). He also added that he gained 6-7 kg for this role to better fit the description of this character who was supposed to be a big man with power (Lee, 2021).

Squid Game is known as a genre twisting survival drama that takes a pragmatic look into the real world (Kaushik, 2021). In the series, 456 cash-strapped players are invited to compete in children's games for 45.6 billion-won prize money (*Watch Squid Game*, 2021). The summary of the series is as follows:

The players are made to wear green tracksuits and are kept under watch at all times by masked guards in pink jumpsuits. The games are overseen by the Front Man, who wears a black mask and black uniform. The players soon discover that losing the games results in their death, with each death adding 100 million to the potential 45.6 billion grand prizes (Kaushik, 2021).

After the first round, the players realise that the result of losing a game would mean death. Despite the fact that they are given the option to discontinue, they eventually return to playing the rest of the games. In this era where having personal debts is increasingly common, the portrayal of harsh reality where people go as far as opting for playing death games to get out of misery is spectacularly shown throughout the series (Kaushik, 2021). In fact, *Squid Game* has become the most watched series on Netflix, staggering 1.65 billion hours of viewing in the first 28 days (*Global Top 10*, 2022). This is 2.6 times that of the platform's second biggest series, *Bridgerton* season 1 (Spangler & Wallenstein, 2021).

2.4. Gendered Terms of Addresses and Honorific Titles

In order to understand the relationship dynamics and hierarchy between two or more people in Korea, it is important to understand the concept of gendered terms of addresses (henceforth GTAs) and other honorific titles. According to Cho (1982), this is called *deixis*;

“lexical items and grammatical forms in a sentence by which the speaker, place, and time or utterance, and the speaker-addressee relationship can be identified” (p.14). First, Korean GTAs refer to unnie, oppa, noona, and hyung (Jung & Yu, 2021). Originally, those four GTAs refer to one’s older sister or brother (Yi & Jung, 2015). While the four terms are still used to address older siblings, they are also used to address older friends and romantic partners (Yi & Jung, 2015). However, it is important to know when it is appropriate to use the GTAs as these terms signify a close relationship between the speaker and the hearer. In formal situations where the interlocutors have no established relationship between them, the use of other honorific titles is more appropriate (Jung & Yu, 2021). In such cases, one can resort to pronominal forms such as sensaying-nim and sajang-nim, meaning teacher or older person and boss, respectively (Byon, 2000). In Korean, the elements of personal deictic are complex (Byon, 2000). One explanation is that because of the interactive nature of Korean language, every person's deictic element, be it personal pronouns and non-pronominal nouns, indexes the relative social status between interlocutors (Byon, 2000).

2.5. Societal Relevance and Research Question

It appears that Korean society is moving away from promoting mono-ethnicity toward ethnic diversity and combating discrimination against minority groups (Kim, 2009). Embedded in this, however, are “unequal social relations that produce and reinforce the marginality and isolation of minority communities in South Korea” (Kim, 2009, p.211).

Mass media virtually reaches every corner of life influencing how people view and understand themselves and others in the world (Castañeda, 2018). It is a powerful tool that shapes and transforms societies, discourses, and policies (Schiller, 2014, as cited in Castañeda, 2018). Although audiences are not merely on the passive receiving end of this, as multiple studies demonstrate, media certainly has cognitive and social impact on people (Dohnt & Tiggemann 2006; Rivadeneyra, Ward, & Gordon 2007; Greenberg & Mastro 2008). In ‘The Matter of Images’ (2002), the author Richard Dyer asserts that “representations here and now have real consequences for real people...in terms of the way representations delimit and enable what people can be in any given society” (p.3). Thus, investigating migrant representation in *Squid Game*, which has reached so many audiences worldwide, will enhance understanding of how such representation can be problematic. Additionally, it hopes to contribute to the development of more expansive narratives of minorities in Korean media and beyond. Following this, the main research question is formulated as below:

RQ: To what extent does the representation of Ali Abdul in Squid Game¹ reflect stereotypes of migrant workers in South Korean media?

¹ The version of Squid Game here is in its original form, Korean with English subtitles

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Imagology and Essentialism

Imagology concerns how a national character (the *spected*) is “silhouetted in the perspectival context of the representing text or discourse (the *spectant*)” (Leerssen & Beller, 2007, p.27). As such the dynamics between Other (*hetero-images*) and domestic identity (*self-images* or *auto-images*), of which are characterized in national terms, become important (Leerssen & Beller, 2007, p.27). The national stereotypes are products of textual records, which are not based on empirical reality or objective facts (Leerssen & Beller, 2007). Thus, the representation of national characters cannot be objectively evaluated, rather, should be understood as discursive objects (Leerssen, 2016). Despite calls for adjustments to the traditional sense of imagology in the light of shift in narrative medium (e.g. TV and films), the core business of imagology remains the same; “deconstructing discourse of national and ethnic essentialism” (Leerssen, 2016, p.13). According to Bucholtz (2003), essentialism is:

The position that the attributes and behaviour of socially defined groups can be determined and explained by reference to cultural and/or biological characteristics believed to be inherent to the group. As an ideology, essentialism rests on two assumptions: (1) that a group can be clearly delimited; and (2) group members are more or less alike (p.400).

Essentialist reasoning is subject to criticism that it attributes a certain set of characteristics to everyone in a group, reducing diversity (Phillips, 2010). It assumes that anyone’s membership is predetermined by categories that exist naturally, such as genes and origin (Grossberg et al., 1998).

3.2. Representation, Stereotypes, and Othering

In the history of literature, imagology was first established as the study of images and representation of foreigners (Leerssen, 2016). As the word representation suggests, it is concerned with representing something; “to take an original, mediate it, and play it back” (Grossberg et al., 1998, p.179). Representation is not the same as realism, rather, it is about making claims on and about reality (Grossberg et al., 1998).

Defining social representation is a complex matter as it is a rich domain and is closely related to other notions such as stereotypes and attitudes (Dervin, 2012). Nevertheless, the classic definition suggested by Moscovici (1961) is as follows:

Systems of values, ideas, and practices which enable communication to take place among the members of a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history. (as cited in Dervin, 2012, p.187).

As Jovchelovitch (2007) suggests, “the reality of the human world is in its entirety made of representation: in fact there is no sense of reality for our human world without the work of representation” (p.9). Representations enable people to construe their experiences, sociality, and the world, and to interact with other people. As such representations have a lot to do with self, Other, and object. Symbols are used in representation to make sense of the world and create it simultaneously, which is called the symbolic function of representation. Based on this function, many scholars are turning away from the old notion of representation that it is a copy of the world outside. Through the lens of symbolic function, people can begin to understand “the relationship between the representing system - an intersubjective structure between self and other - and the system being represented - objects in the material world or other people,” is multifaceted (Jovchelovitch, 2007, p.12). Thus, social context is fundamental to all representational phenomena (Jovchelovitch, 2007).

Similarly, Dyer (2002) emphasises the significance of representation in media fictions as it concerns social constructs. Many other scholars claim that the media plays a pivotal role in providing or creating stereotypes and reinforcing them, which are often about negative aspects of ethnic minorities (van Dijk, 1991 ; Grossberg et al., 1998).

It was Walter Lippman (1965 / 1922) who coined the term stereotype, which was defined as “the pictures in our heads that govern the process of perception” (p. 4, 60). He explained that individuals define first then see as the world around them is too complex to understand (Lippman, 1965 /1922). The pictures that people pick out from the surroundings exist in the form of stereotypes which are defined culturally (Lippman, 1965 /1922). Stereotype was initially seen as a mechanism that people adopt to process complex information more easily (Ladegaard, 2020). Many scholars nonetheless warned against its implications that because of its pervasive nature, people can create and maintain stereotypes unless education teaches them to stay vigilant (Lippman, 1965 /1922; Ladegaard, 2020; Dyer, 2002). Moreover,

stereotypes are “something more” than an ordering process and shortcuts, as such they are not neutral in nature (Lippman, 1965 /1922, p.64). They refer to the world, and through them, people express their values and beliefs (Dyer, 2002). Consequently, it can have real consequences on the group of people who are stereotyped (Grossberg et al., 1998).

Othering, which is closely concerned with stereotypes, is a form of social representation (Dervin, 2012). Othering occurs when culture is used to explain views and behaviours of a group, which largely ignores subjectivity and complexity of the individual (Jackson, 2014; Dervin, 2012). The process of othering involves objectification of a person or a group, which often leads to essentialism (Jackson, 2014). In this light, a person becomes a mere representative of a culture they belong to and is associated with a rigid set of characteristics (Jackson, 2014). Similar to stereotyping, Othering works to affirm self identity by constructing sameness and differences of individuals (Dervin, 2012). Therefore, as much as Othering is about the Other, it is also about the self, which ultimately leads to differentiating self from Other to enhance and preserve self (Dervin, 2012).

3.3. Fiske - Character Reading: Realism vs. Structuralism

John Fiske (1939-2021) was a media scholar whose primary field of expertise was cultural studies. In his book *Television Culture*, he asserted that television ideologically promotes certain meanings rather than others and serves social interests better than others (Fiske, 2011).

“Television is centrally concerned with representation of people” (Fiske, 2011, p.150). As they live through one episode to another, they have a past, a present and a future which enables the viewers to relate to and build a relationship with the character, exceeding their textual existence. Their “nowness” and “liveness” set them apart from cinema characters (Fiske, 2011, p.151). One way to study a TV character is the realist approach which proposes that a character personifies a real person. This approach fits well with the ideology of individualism with its emphasis on the unified sense of the self. However, this approach is often criticised for depoliticizing social issues as it often suggests that there are individual solutions to social issues. On the contrary to realism is the structuralism and discourse theory that emphasise the modes and means of representation. In this approach, characters are constructed as a textual device that embodies discourses and ideologies. In this regard, a character does not exist on its own right, but “as a series of textual and intertextual relations,” such as relationships with other characters (Fiske, 2011, p.154). The idea of a character as a discursive and structural device focuses on the subject rather than self. Thus, characters have

a socio-political dimension that a female character's drinking problem could be interpreted as women's helplessness in patriarchy. Fiske (2011) argues that character reading can be done either way, or a combination of or an alternation between them depending on the political orientation of the viewer.

In the discursive reading strategy, characters become "relations of similarity, opposition, hierarchy, and disposition which they enter into" (Frow, 1986, p. 231). The elements that constitute the signified of character are not only "repetition, accumulation, and transformation", but also its "oppositional relation to other characters" (Frow, 1986, p.231). This is what makes establishing characteristics -the components of character- possible (Frow, 1986). Based on this, Fiske (2011) analysed three characters from Cagney & Lacey (1981) in *Television Culture*. In doing so, he devised what he called 'the value structure of characters' in which he used the following traits; 1) gender, 2) nation, 3) place, 4) time, 5) age, 6) social (race, class, home, money), 7) professional (type of job, job motivation, job reward), 8) socio-sexual (type of woman/man, marital status, love status, parental status), 9) physical (body, hair, face), 10) personal style (of dressing, of caring, interpersonal), and 11) name (Fiske, 2011, p.160). Those traits then were further divided by similarity and difference of the characters he analysed. He emphasised that the origin of those traits is derived from social, political, and/or economic aspects rather than from the nature of the individual (Fiske, 2011). The discursive reading strategy can reveal how a representation of social positions and values are embodied in TV characters. Fiske (2011) nonetheless warned against problems that can arise with any categorisation. Categories are neither self-evident nor is "the ascription of a defined unit to its appropriate category" (Fiske, 2011, p.159). However, categorising on its own does not help understanding the relationship among the categories, thus comprehending the whole meaning. Categories and their relationships present a certain trail of reasoning of a particular reader, they are not built-in in the text. Thus, a character does not mean nor represent the same across readers, it is not paradigmatic. Instead, social relations and discourses, as well as individual perception play the leading role in understanding the character. Characters become a set of values looked at through a lense of social discourse, comparisons to other characters known to readers as well as individual performance of actors playing their roles. They embody an ideology to grasp the world through relations of discourses and the ideology (Fiske, 2011).

3.4. Racial Minorities on Television

According to Mastro & Greenberg (2000), studying racial minorities on television is valuable for two reasons; 1) documentation of how minorities are portrayed and how the portrayals change over time bears importance on society, and 2) television has far-reaching influence over a large audience (as cited in Monk-Turner et al., 2010). Mastro & Greenberg (2000) investigated representation and depiction of different racial groups on American prime time television (as cited in Monk-Turner et al., 2010). In their work, the following coded variables were used; race, age, network, income level, gender, and role prominence (as cited in Monk-Turner et al., 2010, p.104). Additionally, they suggested four sets of variables on a five-point scale (bipolar adjective scale). They are as follows:

- 1) Physical characteristics: weight (thin-obese), height (short-tall), hair colour (blonde-dark), skin colour (fair-dark skin), and accent (no accent-heavy accent);
- 2) Behavioural characteristics: articulate-inarticulate, quiet-loud, passive-aggressive, lazy-motivated, ridiculed-respected, and dumb-smart;
- 3) Appearance difference: excessive makeup-no makeup, excessive accessories-no accessories, provocative attire-conservative attire, casual attire-professional attire, dishevelled-well-groomed, and dirty-clean;
- 4) Conversational characteristics: tense-relaxed and premeditated-spontaneous.

Metro & Greenberg (2000) argue that these variables are “the attributes that previous literature found as primary components of image formation and stereotyping” (p. 693).

3.5. Discourse

As the previous two sections elucidate, studying TV characters can shed light on social representation, stereotyping, and other similar notions that are embedded in them. In other words, by studying TV characters, the discourse surrounding them becomes evident as well.

The concept of discourse can be distinguished mainly in three ways, namely; (a) language use, (b) communicative events (e.g. communicate ideas and beliefs), and (c) Foucauldian discourse (Rigney, 2007; van Dijk, 1997). For the relevance of this thesis, discourse within the notion of (b) is discussed. Discourse as communicative events focuses on the ways in which language is used to talk about the world (Rigney, 2007). In this sense, discourse refers to social domains of language use, such as medical discourse (van Dijk, 1997). It posits that the pattern of individuals’ language use is influenced by semiotics, such as speech acts and earlier writings (Rigney, 2007). In this process people construct what is called a mental model

- events or actions the discourse is about - which serves as a starting point of the (re)production of discourse (van Dijk, 1997). Therefore, when people speak, they are not just expressing their minds, but it becomes a part of a specific discourse (Rigney, 2007). As such it greatly concerns representation (Rigney, 2007).

3.6. Sub-questions and Academic Relevance

Chapter 3 introduced imagology and (social) representation and their related notions such as essentialism and stereotypes. Subsequently, it introduced ways in which character reading can be done discursively, in which embodies representation and stereotypes are embedded. The character analysis is based on 3.3 and 3.4, which will be further elaborated in the next chapter. From this, the following sub-questions are derived:

SQ1: In what ways is Ali Abdul visually represented in Squid Game?

SQ2: In what ways is Ali Abdul linguistically represented in Squid Game?

SQ3: In what ways do the above representations contribute to social representation of Ali Abdul?

This study aims to add to previously done research on minority representation in South Korean media by investigating how Ali, as a discursive object in the series, is represented socially, linguistically, and visually, especially in the TV-series domain. Previous studies on minority representation, be it migrant workers or marriage migrants, were based on news discourse and film studies. As mentioned earlier, Ali is known as a breakout actor who landed a major role in Korean drama series. This also makes it more significant and meaningful.

4. Methodology

The aim of this research is to investigate the stereotypes of migrant workers in South Korean media reflected in Ali Abdul from *Squid Game*. Thus, the current study employs a qualitative case study method to allow a more indepth exploration of the series and characters (Dörnyei, 2007). By investigating how Ali Abdul is represented, it can shed more light on other similar cases, which will ultimately provide better understanding of the wider issue this paper is addressing; migrant worker representation in Korean films and series (Dörnyei, 2007).

4.1. Materials

4.1.1. Episodes

Currently, there is one season of *Squid Game* available on Netflix. From a total of 9 episodes, 6 are selected where Ali appears; episode 1 (Red Light, Green Light), episode 2 (Hell), episode 3 (The Man with the Umbrella), episode 4 (Stick to the Team), episode 5 (A Fair World), and episode 6 (Gganbu). The average duration of those episodes is approximately 57 minutes, slightly longer than the average duration of the entire season, 54 minutes.

Table 1. *Corpus of Episodes*

Episode	Episode Title	Duration
1	Red Light, Green Light	1 hour
2	Hell	1 hour 3 minutes
3	The Man with the Umbrella	54 minutes
4	Stick to the Team	55 minutes
5	Fair World	52 minutes
6	Gganbu	1 hour 2 minutes

4.1.2. Scenes

Only relevant scenes that contain Ali visually and/or acoustically are selected for the analysis. The visual scenes include where Ali gets solo shots and appears interacting with other characters. The acoustic scenes include where he does not appear on the screen but speaks to other characters or is spoken to and addressed by other characters. Scenes where Ali merely appears in the background and in episode 7 where the dead body of Ali is shown briefly are

excluded as they do not yield any significance. As the plot develops, Ali becomes an important member of a group and grows close to other characters as well. Thus, Ali's screen time also increases from as few as 2 scenes in episode 1 to 13 scenes in episode 6.

Table 2. *Corpus of Scenes of Ali*

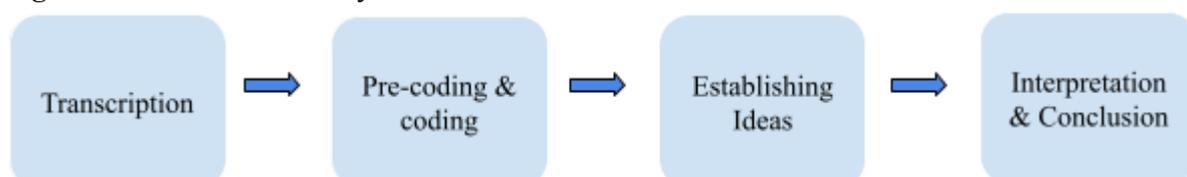
Episode	Number of Scenes	Screen Time per episode
1	2	37 seconds
2	5	307 seconds / 5 minutes 7 seconds
3	5	151 seconds / 2 minutes 31 seconds
4	7	123 seconds / 2 minutes 3 seconds
5	3	207 seconds / 3 minutes 27 seconds
6	13	556 seconds / 9 minutes 16 seconds
Total Episodes	Total number of scenes	Total Screen Time
6 episodes	35 scenes	23 minutes 30 seconds

4.2. Analysis

4.2.1. Qualitative Content Analysis

Due to its visual and textual data, the categories used in the content analysis were acquired inductively from the analysis (Dörnyei, 2007). The level of analysis is latent as analysing the underlying deeper meaning of the data concerns a second-level and interpretative analysis (Dörnyei, 2007). Dörnyei (2007) suggests four phases of analytical processes: (a) transcribing the data, (b) pre-coding and coding, (c) establishing ideas, and (d) interpreting the data and drawing conclusions (p.246).

Figure 1. Workflow of analysis



The selected scenes were transcribed in its original language, Korean, with English subtitles provided by Netflix. The transcription table consists of 4 columns; episode, Korean transcription, English subtitles, and scene background information and researcher’s notes. The transcription and subtitles include both verbal and non-verbal interactions and cues; such as facial expressions and actions. The transcription conventions are described in the table below.

Table 3. *Transcription Conventions*

Signs	Meanings
()	non-verbal descriptions (e.g. facial expressions and actions)
*	researcher’s note first time, pre-coding
**	researcher’s note second time, pre-coding
***	researcher’s note third time, coding
	mistranslation
	Possible categories

Next, as part of the pre-coding process, the researcher watched the selected scenes and read the transcription three times. Each time, the researcher wrote down notes under the fourth column. This process included writing down initial thoughts and possible categories, highlighting according to translation conventions, and reflecting on the materials. This allowed the researcher to determine the recurring themes and to categorise them accordingly. In accordance with the sub-questions, attention was paid to linguistic, visual, and social representation of Ali, along with the use of honorific titles and GTAs. For the scope of this study, only the mistranslation on the honorific title and GTAs is addressed. Based on the found features, more relevant theories were later added to the theoretical frame section.

As a result of the inductive approach, the following categories were created to investigate how Ali Abdul is represented socially, linguistically, and visually.

- 1) Social representation: character analysis, chronological order of events;
- 2) Linguistic representation: the honorific titles, strong vs.weak, self vs. Other;
- 3) Visual representation: strong vs.weak, socioeconomic status.

4.2.2 The Value Structure of Characters

In order to understand how Ali is socially represented and positioned, comparing and contrasting him against other characters was deemed necessary (Fiske, 2011). As Jovchelovitch (2007) suggests, self and Other are intrinsically related. Therefore, Ali Abdul, Sang-woo, and Gi-hun were selected as the units of analysis. The reason why Sang-woo and Gi-hun were selected was that they develop close relationships with Ali over the course of the series. Therefore, by analysing how they interact with one another and are (re)presented, Ali's social position becomes more evident. Furthermore, since they all are male characters, it yields a more fair comparison.

In order to complement and improve the character reading, this analysis combines earlier research of Mastro & Greenberg (2000) and Fiske (2011) presented in chapter 3. Each study proposed their own variables for character coding, of which the following overlaps in the variables were found: gender, age, and race. Then, similar variables were combined into one variable; job reward + income level = income level, body + weight = body, and caring style & interpersonal + behavioural characteristics = personal style. Next, variables that did not yield any significance for the study were excluded; place, time, job motivation, socio-sexual (type of woman/man, marital status, love status, parental status), hair, face, dressing, appearance difference (excessive makeup-no makeup, excessive accessories-no accessories, provocative attire-conservative attire, casual attire-professional attire, dishevelled-well-groomed, and dirty-clean), and conversational characteristics (tense-relaxed and premeditated-spontaneous). As a result, the following variables were selected and divided by similarities and differences among the characters:

- 1) Similarities: gender and money;
- 2) Differences: social (nation, class, profession, income level, accent, and age), physical (height and body), personal style, and role prominence.

4.3. Researcher's Stance

The researcher was born and raised in South Korea. She then moved to Canada at the age of 14 where she attended high school and first year of university. She is now pursuing her master's degree in Intercultural Communication at Utrecht University, in the Netherlands. Having lived abroad, she has experienced instances of discrimination, Othering, and similar practices. While this helps her stay vigilant to such cases both in real life and in the media, it also works to bias her views in certain ways. She is aware of this from the beginning and also has been made aware of this during the weekly discussions with her supervisor and fellow

students. As such the findings reflect her own subjective stance. Nevertheless, her background allows her to switch between two perspectives; Korean vs. outsider (whichever people name it).

5. Result

5.1. Visual representation

In this section, sub-question 1 will be answered.

SQ1: In what ways is Ali Abdul visually represented in Squid Game?

5.1.1. Contradicting Images of Ali Abdul: Strong vs. Weak

The study found a pattern of visual contradiction, namely strong vs. weak images of Ali Abdul. This is also closely linked to a similar pattern found in the linguistic representation, which will be elaborated in the next section.

There were instances of Ali being portrayed as a big, strong guy, whereas his handicap made him look as a weak figure. To illustrate each case chronologically, a scene from episode 1 is presented first. This scene had no dialogues and solely relied on visuals where Ali saved Gi-hun from falling to the ground by grabbing him by the neck. The camera then went on to zoom in on Ali's grunting face. See the below image from episode 1 where this happened.



Image 1. Ali protecting Gi-hun (Kapoor, 2021)

It is not easy to sustain the weight of a grown man even though that person is rather light weighted, by one hand. This was the first scene where Ali's physical strength was introduced. This scene would be mentioned again in later episodes as a point of reference to his physical

attributes. Furthermore, in episode 2, Ali visited the factory where he used to work to confront his boss to pay him his salary. The boss insisted that he did not have money to pay him. Ali argued that he needed the money to go back home and to treat his lost fingers which had happened at work. This was the first scene where his lost fingers became known to the audience. As the boss continued to refuse Ali's request and left, they got into a fight. Even though the boss slapped Ali first, when Ali started fighting back, it became clear that the boss was no match to Ali. As the boss lost his balance, he fell toward a machine. His hand got jammed into it, sputtering blood everywhere; presumably in a similar fashion to how Ali had lost his fingers. See below image for the incident.



Image 2. A struggle between Ali and his boss (Chen, 2021)

Lastly, in episode 4, where they played tug of war, Il-nam, the oldest member, suggested strategies for winning. One of them was that there would be someone dependable at the end of the rope. This scene also highly relied on the visual as it went on to show Ali standing at the end of the rope looking determined. Please see below the description of the scene.

Table 4. *Scene Description*

Episode	Narration	Scene description
4	Il-nam: Then at the end of the rope, you'll need someone dependable to act like the anchor of a ship.	As Il-nam narrates this line, the camera shows Ali at the end of the rope looking determined. In front of him is the other foreigner Ali recruited earlier.

The three examples above demonstrate instances where Ali was visually portrayed as a big, strong man. However, the result also found oppositions where Ali was visually depicted as a weak figure. For instance, in episode 4 before they played tug of war, they decided that each of them would recruit another person to the team. Sang-woo asked Ali to hide his left hand as it would make him look weak. Then in the next scene when Ali was searching for someone, the camera focused on showing Ali's hand hidden in the jacket pocket. Finally, Ali managed to recruit another person who also happened to be a foreigner with a dark skin colour. (Hwang, 2021).

5.1.2 Socioeconomic Status of Ali

The study found occasions where Ali's socioeconomic status was visually represented. In episode 2, Ali and Sang-woo were released in Yeouido, the financial district of Korea with many skyscrapers. Ali did not even know where he was as his life did not revolve around such areas. In fact, it was later revealed that Ali lived in Ansan, a city southwest of Seoul which is known as an industrial city that hosts many migrant workers. Ali's shabby clothes as shown in image 2 against the skyscrapers, the visual contrast seemed to be maximised. Sang-woo, on the other hand, was dressed in suits. As an investment broker, Sang-woo would presumably be very much familiar with the area. From the beginning, Sang-woo and Ali's socioeconomic difference was made clear. Moreover, Ali's workplace was also another visual example of his socioeconomic status. It was a small factory where a lot of migrant workers were working in the background. The environment did not seem safe as Ali had lost his fingers there, and the boss also got into such an accident himself. After the accident, Ali snatched the envelope from the boss that had blood stains on and ran to his wife at home. From the outside, the audience could see that the house was not an actual house, rather a container box that was transformed into accommodation. Inside was not much better than the

outside; a very old refrigerator, a ripped off teddy bear, a temporary curtain made of a big piece of cloth hanging on a string attached to the wall by tapes, and a messy background. All these minor details added to visualising his socioeconomic status. (Hwang, 2021).

In order to answer the sub-question 1, the result found contradicting images of Ali Adul as well as how his socioeconomic status was visually manifested. He was sometimes portrayed as a strong man and sometimes as a weak figure. Moreover, visual cues were used to indicate Ali’s socioeconomic status as a migrant worker in Korea.

5.2. Linguistic Representation

In this section, sub-question 2 will be answered.

SQ2: In what ways is Ali Abdul is linguistically represented in Squid Game?

5.2.1. The honorific titles

From Ali’s very first interaction with Sang-woo, Ali called him ‘sajangnim’. Ali addressed other contestants by this honorific title as well. Sajangnim means boss in Korean which was not translated correctly in English subtitles; this was translated to ‘sir’ in the subtitles. In fact, Sang-woo explicitly asked Ali not to call him by that title as he was not his boss, expressing his discomfort. Please see table 5 below for the instances.

Table 5. *Sang-woo asks Ali not to call him by ‘sajangnim’*

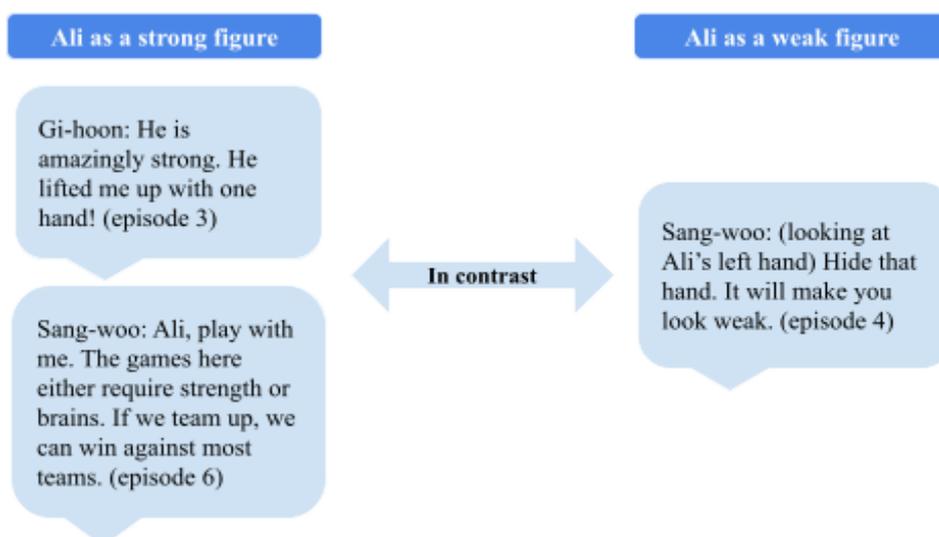
Episode	Korean Transcription	Literal Translation	English Subtitles
2	Ali: (몇 번을 고개숙이며) 감사합니다. 감사합니다, 사장님. Sang-woo: 나 사장님 아니니까 사장님 소리좀 그만 하고.	Ali: Thank you. Thank you, boss. Sang-woo: I am not your boss, so please stop calling me that.	Ali: (bowing several times) Thank you. Thank you, sir. Sang-woo: I am not your sir, so please stop calling me that.
3	Ali: (기훈에게 고개숙여 인사하며) 감사합니다 사장님. Sang-woo: 그 사장님 소리는 빼고.	Ali: Thank you, boss. Sang-woo: Drop the “boss”.	Ali: (bowing to Gi-hun) Thank you, sir. Sang-woo: You can drop the “Sir”.

In fact, Sang-woo was the only person in the show who did not feel comfortable being called *sajangnim*. Other characters, such as Gi-hun and Il-nam who were also addressed by this title, never expressed their discomfort. Eventually, later in the episode 5, Sang-woo asked Ali to call him ‘*hyung*’ instead, one of the four GTAs explained earlier in section 2.4., meaning one’s older brother. This was not translated correctly either; it was simply translated to ‘Sang-woo’ in English subtitles. (Hwang, 2021).

5.2.2. Strong vs. Weak

Similar to the pattern found in the visual section, it was observed again that what other characters said about Ali was somewhat contradictory. There were instances where Ali was described as a big, strong guy whereas his lost fingers were also described as a sign of weakness. See figure 2 below for the examples.

Figure 2. Contradicting linguistic images of Ali



In episode 3, Gi-hun thanked Ali for saving his life. If Ali did not save Gi-hun from falling, he would have been eliminated from the games. Gi-hun then continued to praise Ali for his strength saying, “He is amazingly strong. He lifted me up with one hand” (Hwang, 2021). To that end, he suggested they work together like in the military. He then proposed that he would be the sergeant, Sang-woo would be the corporal, and Ali would be the private, ‘a new lackey’. This suggestion is somewhat ironic for two reasons. First, Gi-hun just thanked Ali for saving his life. Second, Gi-hun is neither strategic like Sang-woo nor strong like Ali.

This makes his suggestion somewhat ironic as it implies an underlying hierarchy among them from the early stage. Ali's physical strength is crucial for winning, however, his qualities were treated inferior to whichever qualities of other characters could contribute to the team. Please see the table below for the excerpt from episode 3 where Ali is initially invited to the team.

Table 6. *Excerpt from episode 3*

Episode	Excerpt from the scene
3	<p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) Listen. Why don't you join us? (to Sang-woo) He's amazingly strong. You saw it, right? He lifted me up with one hand.</p> <p>Ali: (pleasantly surprised) Can I really join you two?</p> <p>Gi-hun: Yes, sure. You're the private, a new lackey. (pointing to Sang-woo) He's the competent corporal, and I'm the sergeant on my way out.</p> <p>Ali: (bowing to Gi-hun) Thank you, sir.</p>

This excerpt indicates that Ali was invited based on what he could bring to the group. When he got invited, he was surprised and asked back for confirmation. This is also another indication that he had not had much meaningful involvement with Korean people prior to this. Furthermore, it suggests that Ali must be 'proven' to be valuable to become a part of the team. One counter argument could be that because he was not born and raised in Korea, he was not familiar with most of the games in the show as they were children's games that kids play growing up in the country. This also made him disadvantaged in addition to his physical handicap. Thus, he must bring something extra to the team to compensate for such disadvantages. As Ali was deemed someone much needed for the team, he was 'invited' to become a part of the team, not because he 'wanted' or 'chose' to.

On the other hand, in episode 4, as mentioned in 5.1.1, Sang-woo asked Ali to hide his hand as it would make him look weak to other contestants. Despite his handicap, Ali continued to prove himself as a crucial member of the group with his formidable strength. The contradicting images of Ali can be found all throughout the show which will be further elaborated in later sections. (Hwang, 2021).

5.2.3 Self vs. Other

Furthermore, the study found instances where Ali continued to be Othered and excluded despite having been invited to the team. Please see table 7 below for such cases.

Table 7. *Inclusion and Exclusion/Othering*

Episode	Inclusion	Episode	Exclusion/Othering
3	<p>Gi-hun: Listen. Why don't you join us? He's amazingly strong. You saw it, right? He lifted me up with one hand.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Don't worry. Children's games have simple rules. We'll help if you don't know.</p>	3	<p>Gi-hun: Don't kids in your country play these games?</p>
4	<p>Sang-woo: If anyone attacks, we have to stick together and fight. (patting Ali's shoulder) Come over to our side if anything happens.</p>	4	<p>Gi-hun: Which country are you from?</p> <p>Gi-hun: Pakistan? Where is that?</p>
6	<p>Sang-woo: Ali, play with me. The games here either require strength or brains. If we team up, we can win against most teams. (Sang-woo holds out his hand to Ali.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Yes, let's win and get out of here. We'll take the money and go back to our families.</p>	5	<p>Mi-nyeo: (looking down on Ali) So, you slacked off at work and just watched movies in Korea?</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: Hey! Which country are you from? Do you even have a visa? You're an illegal alien, right? Gosh. Look, boys. Should we really let this strange foreign guy stay on our team?</p>

The cases of inclusion were predominantly from Sang-woo with whom Ali developed a close relationship. Nevertheless, the cases of inclusion were closely related to when Ali was seen as an added value to the team or to Sang-woo himself. On the contrary, instances of exclusion and Othering were mostly based on his origin and status in Korea. Even worse, Ali was discriminated against by another contestant, Minyeo, who explicitly called him ‘an illegal alien’. Minyeo is one of the most cunning characters in the series who was not wanted by any other teams. So, she moved from one team to another. In fact, she invited herself to the team in episode 4 after being kicked out from another team. Nevertheless, her comments toward Ali shows that she tried to position herself above him and create a line between us and them. The above juxtaposition of inclusion and exclusion/Othering instances illustrates that Ali was neither fully part of the self nor Other in the series. (Hwang, 2021).

To answer the sub-question 2, the study found that the use of honorific titles indicated Ali's social status. Furthermore, Ali's linguistic description was contradictory as found in visual representation. Lastly, instances of inclusion and exclusion & Othering were observed.

5.3. Social Representation

In this section, sub-question 3 will be answered.

SQ3: In what ways do the above representations contribute to social representation of Ali Abdul?

5.3.1. Analysis of Characters

To evaluate the three characters, Sang-woo, Gi-hun, and Ali, juxtaposed to one another a character analysis was performed.

The result found two occasions of similarity among the three characters, which were gender and money. They were all men who joined the games for the obvious reason, money. Other than these two aspects, they did not have much in common. To begin with, Ali was a factory worker from Pakistan who came to Korea with his wife and son to make money. He was relatively young compared to Sang-woo and Gi-hun who were in their 40s. He spoke fluent Korean with an accent albeit with some difficulties at times. Despite the fact that Ali was consistently described as a strong guy, he was shorter than the other two. However, he seemed a bit heavier. Throughout the series he took a rather passive role in the team following orders from other members, mostly from Sang-woo and to a lesser extent, Gi-hun. There were, however, a couple of exceptions where Ali took initiatives or fought back which will be elaborated in a later section. He had a warm personality as he looked after other members in the team and knew how to share, be it food or life experiences. His role in the show was a supporting actor. Moving on to Sang-woo, Gi-hun mentioned several times in the show that he had graduated from the most prestigious university in Korea (Seoul National University) and worked as an investment broker. However, he had been involved in embezzling which is why he was in desperate need of money. He was quite tall for a Korean and had an average build. He was warm as he took pity on Ali and helped him throughout the series until he betrayed him in the end. With his cleverness and strategies, he became someone whom the team members relied on the most. He was also a supporting actor. Lastly, Gi-hun was an unemployed man with a gambling addiction. He was also quite tall and slender. He took an active role in the team as he initially formed the group. He was a warm hearted person who always helped those who were in need or danger. However, there were

few scenes in the series that painted him as an uneducated person such as not knowing where Pakistan is. He was the main character as well as the sole survivor of the series. Please see below table 8 for the value structure of characters.

Table 8. *The Value Structure of Characters*

Character trait	Ali	Sang-woo	Gi-hun
Similarities			
Gender	Male	Male	Male
Money	Tight	Tight	Tight
Differences			
Social			
Nation	Pakistan	South Korea	South Korea
Class	Lowest	Middle	Low
Profession	Factory worker	Investment broker	Unemployed
Income level	Low	Middle to High	Unknown
Accent	Accented	Standard Korean	Standard Korean
Age ²	33	46	47
Physical			
Height	Middle (173cm)	Tall (181cm)	Tall (180cm)
Body	Pudgy	Average build	Slender
Personal style	Passive Warm Naive	Active/Aggressive Warm/cold-hearted Clever, strategic	Active Warm Addicted, uneducated
Role prominence	Support	Support	Main

Despite the fact that Sang-woo and Gi-hun were childhood friends, their lives embarked on very different paths. Unlike Sang-woo who was considered an elite of society, Gi-hun was a gambling addict without a job. Frankly speaking, he was not much of added value to the team. Sang-woo was smart and strategic and Ali was strong; they both had merits.

² Age is as of 2021 at the time of the launch of the series

Nevertheless, from the social character trait point, Ali was positioned lower than both of them. Moreover, the analysis revealed that the three characters only share two similarities out of twelve traits used. However, if the analysis was done on Sang-woo and Gi-hun, they would have a lot more in common. In fact, they would have seven similarities; gender, money, nation, accent, age, height, to some extent, personal style (active). (Hwang, 2021).

5.3.2 Social representation

As many examples have already been presented in the previous chapters, the best way to present the findings in social representation would be to chronologically showcase them. See Figure 3 below for the chronological order of the events in constructing Ali's social position.

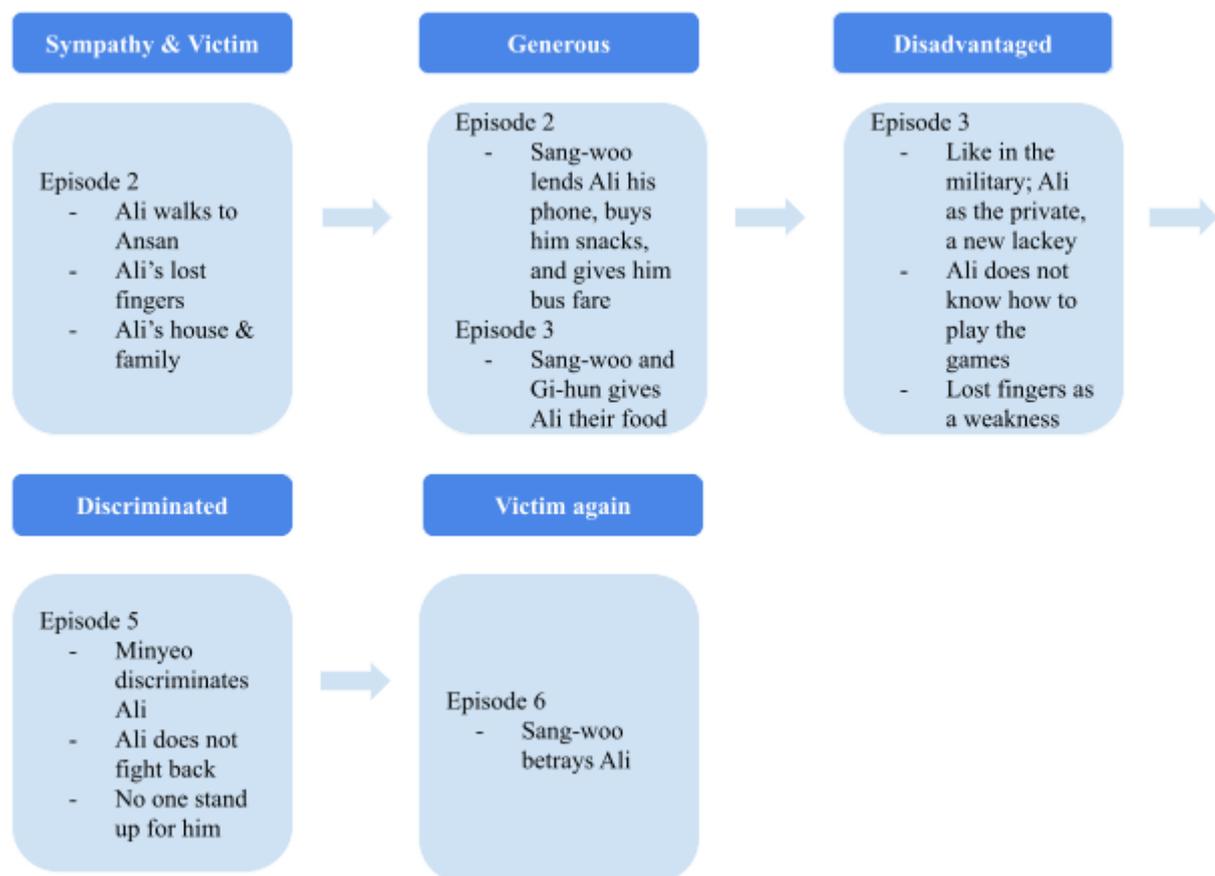


Figure 3. Chronological order of events in constructing Ali's social position

In the beginning, there were many scenes that paint Ali as a victim and spark sympathy for him; such as walking from Seoul to Ansan³ as he could not afford a bus fare, losing his fingers in an industrial accident, and showing Ali's poor living circumstances and his family.

³ From Seoul to Ansan is approximately 30km

Next, the series moved on to show that Sang-woo and Gi-hun were extremely generous to Ali. Even though they all were cash strapped and deprived of food, they did not hesitate to share theirs with him. Then, Ali's social position among the others was implicitly introduced when Gi-hun suggested working together like in the military where Ali would be the subordinate. Furthermore, his disadvantages were made clear, such as his lost fingers and him not being familiar with the games. His lost fingers which were used to arouse sympathy also worked against him as a weakness. Then, Ali was discriminated against by another contestant, Minyeo, who explicitly called him "an illegal alien". Ali was earlier depicted as someone who could stand up for himself in case of injustice (e.g. his fight with the boss). However, in this case, he did not fight back nor did other people, including Sang-woo, stand up for him. As much as this scene is about demarcation between self and Other, it also implies how pervasive discrimination against migrant workers is in Korea. Eventually, in episode 6 where Ali and Sang-woo played against each other, Sang-woo tricked Ali to win, eliminating him. Their intention was to play as a team only to realise that this time they actually had to compete against each other. Again, Ali not knowing how to play the game put him at a disadvantage. In the beginning, Sang-woo explained to him how to play the game. However, as the game unfolded, Ali was winning. Sang-woo lost his mind and tried to frame him for cheating. However, the rule of the game was to take all the marbles from the other one without using force or violence. Sang-woo then decided to trick Ali. Ali, being naive and oblivious to this, did as Sang-woo told him only to meet his tragic fate in the end. This is also an example of Ali's disadvantage working against him. (Hwang, 2021).

To answer sub-question 3, the examples from visual and linguistic representation of Ali Abdul work together to construct Ali's social position amongst other characters.

6. Discussion

This study set out to investigate to what extent the representation of Ali Abdul in *Squid Game* reflects stereotypes of migrant workers in South Korean media. First of all, from the visual representation point, contradicting visual images of Ali were found, namely strong versus weak. It also found that visual cues were utilised to indicate Ali's socioeconomic status in Korea as a migrant worker. In the linguistic representation section, similar observations were made. Ali was sometimes verbally described as a big, strong man and at other times as a weak figure with handicap and/or disadvantages. The contradicting visual and linguistic representation of Ali is related to self and Other or auto-image and hetero-image (Leerssen & Beller, 2007). When Ali was needed in the team, he was invited to be part of self, when not, he was Othered largely due to his origin and status. Othering, which is closely related to stereotypes, constructs sameness and differences to distinguish self from Other and to reinforce or maintain positive self image (Dervin, 2012). Thus, this contradictory representation of Ali can be interpreted as including him when he can be added value to auto-image and excluding when not, creating a clear demarcation between self and Other. Furthermore, the fact that he was 'invited' to join the team, not because he chose to, resembles rhetoric found in previous studies on migrant discourse in Korea introduced in section 2.2 (Kim, 2012; Yi & Jung, 2015). One of the common findings was the language of commodification and objectification of migrants that they were 'brought' or 'imported' to fill the labour shortage, which greatly diminishes their agency (Kim, 2012).

In addition, the use of *sajangnim* implies his socioeconomic status in Korea. As explained in 2.4., in case there is no established relationship between the interlocutors, one can resort to other pronominal forms including *sajangnim* but not limited to (Byon, 2000). Therefore, the use of *sajangnim* reiterates Ali's social position as a migrant worker, which is both imposed by him and society at large. The relationship dynamics and (implicit) hierarchy between Ali and other characters are expressed through the use of the honorific title, *sajangnim*. Moreover, the shift in *dexis*, from *sajangnim* to *hyung*, one of the GTAs explained in section 2.4, was not correctly translated either. GTAs can also be used for older friends or partners who are close (Yi & Jung, 2015). Therefore, when Sang-woo asked Ali to call him *hyung* instead, it denotes a close relationship between the two; trust and loyalty they built over the course of the series. Thus, the mistranslation of *sajangnim* and *hyung* causes non-Korean speaking viewers to miss out on the cultural nuances.

Next, based on the value structure of characters suggested by Fiske (2011), a representation of social positions of the three characters, - Ali, Sang-woo, and Gi-hun - was revealed. It was observed that the three characters only shared two similarities out of twelve traits used. Sang-woo and Gi-hun on the other hand, shared seven, creating a homogeneous setting. To reiterate, what makes a character is not only “repetition, accumulation, and transformation”, but also “oppositional relation to other characters” (Frow, 1986, p.231). Against this homogeneity, the demarcation between Ali and them, self and Other became evident.

Furthermore, looking through a lens of social discourse, in this case, migrant discourse in Korea, and oppositional relations to one another, Ali’s social position became clear. The examples of visual and linguistic representation together, work to construct his social representation in the series. To begin with, the sympathy and victim rhetoric of Ali reinforces stereotypes of migrant workers in Korea. Depicting migrant workers as victims creates stereotypes of inferior Other and prevents them from empowerment (Kim, 2012). Moreover, Sang-woo and Gi-hun being extremely generous to Ali also reflects the consensus on the proper behaviour toward migrant workers (Kim, 2012). Embedded in this, however, is the sympathy toward migrant workers and the desire to enhance the positive self image (Dervin, 2012). Nonetheless, the positive attitude reaffirms negative stereotypes of migrant workers as it is related to victim rhetoric (Kim, 2012).

In discursive reading strategy, a character does not exist on its own, it is rather a textual device that embodies social relations, discourse, and ideologies (Fiske, 2011). Therefore, how Ali is represented in *Squid Game* reflects how migrant workers are regarded and treated in Korea. Perhaps to a larger extent, how migrant workers are treated in a broad sense. In addition, Sang-woo’s betrayal in the end, making Ali the ultimate victim, does not only concern two individuals, but also exploitation migrant workers often face in Korea (Amnesty International, 2009). As Rigney (2007) suggests, the language use is influenced by semiotics that serve as a point of reference to (re)production of discourse. In this sense, his representation also becomes a part of migrant discourse as well. Through representation people conceive their experiences with people and the world around them (Jovchelovitch, 2007). That is why representation in media often plays a leading role in creating and reinforcing stereotypes (van Dijk, 1997; Grossberg et al., 1998). As many scholars have warned, stereotypes are pervasive in nature (Dyer, 2002; Ladegaard, 2020; Lippman, 1965/1922). As values and beliefs are reflected in stereotypes, it can have lasting influence on the group of people who are stereotyped (Grossberg et al., 1998). Therefore, the marginalised

representation of Ali Abdul bears influence on the material, social, and political world (Castañeda, 2018).

Ali Abdul as a full-fledged character in Korean TV drama in itself is a step forward given high ethnocentrism in Korea (Kim, 2012). The contradictory images of Ali makes him a complicated and three-dimensional character, rather than being underrepresented, which occurs to racial minorities in mainstream media (Castañeda, 2018). However, the study concludes that there are still aspects of migrant worker stereotypes reflected in the character as elaborated above in this section.

What this study hopes to contribute to the academic development of Intercultural Communication is to open up the entryway to the research possibility outside the realm of the West or the Western media. It also hopes to facilitate public dialogue on migrant (worker) representation in the media in Korea and beyond. After all, the aim of Intercultural Communication master is to facilitate linguistic and cultural diversity in various settings.

7. Conclusion

The current study looked into how Ali Abdul as a national character is represented in *Squid Game* (2021) by means of qualitative content analysis. To conduct this research, the following research question was proposed:

RQ: To what extent does the representation of Ali Abdul in *Squid Game* reflect stereotypes of migrant workers in South Korean media?

To answer the research question: the research concludes that despite the fact that Ali's character, its presence in *Squid Game* is a step forward to a more inclusive narrative of diversity in Korean TV drama, much improvement is needed. The way Ali is represented in the series still largely reflects stereotypes, which works to reaffirm and disseminate them.

The study found that many visual and linguistic devices were used to index Ali's socioeconomic status as a migrant worker in Korea, such as honorific titles, lost fingers, and material surroundings. Furthermore, contradicting depiction of Ali both visually and linguistically demonstrates that he was neither fully self nor Other. He was invited to become part of self when he was useful. When not, he then was excluded and Othered, also due to his origin and status. Despite being proven valuable, he was constantly placed at the bottom of the hierarchy amongst other characters. The marginalisation and victimisation of Ali Abdul reflects the migrant discourse that is widespread in Korea. This rhetoric does not empower their agency nor does it help society move forward to race and ethnic diversity in the media.

7.1. Shortcomings and Future Research Recommendations

The current study comes with a few shortcomings. First, as acknowledged earlier, this research reflects the researcher's subjectivity. To compensate for this, the researcher accommodated established models developed by other scholars, such as the value structure of characters. Second, as Fiske (2011) suggested, there are two ways of reading characters, namely, realist approach and structuralist approach. This study adopted the latter approach to evaluate characters. However, as Fiske (2011) claimed, character reading can be done either way or in combination of both, depending on the orientation of the viewer. Thus, there is a possibility of reading characters as individuals, not as social constructs.

Furthermore, this is a case study done on one character. Therefore, future studies could be done on multiple characters to get a fuller picture. On this note, it is worthwhile to mention that the methodology used in this study could be implemented to other similar studies to confirm the validity of it. Another course of action would be to study time-based evolution of

portrayal of migrant workers in Korean media, for example by analysing evolution of various roles played by the same actor.

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Appendices

Appendix A.

Transcription Conventions

() non-verbal descriptions (e.g. facial expressions and actions)

* researcher's note first time

** researcher's note second time

*** researcher's note third time

 Mistranslation

 Possible categories

Please read the last column first in order to understand the context in which the scene is happening.

Episode	Korean Transcription	English Subtitles	Scene Background information & Researcher's notes
1	<p>Scene 1</p> <p>Ali: 우리 무슨 게임 합니까?</p>	<p>Scene 1</p> <p>Ali: What kind of games are we playing?</p>	<p>Scene 1</p> <p>The contestants are all gathered in a big room and are given a chance to ask questions about the games.</p>
	<p>Scene 2</p> <p>(알리가 온힘을 다해 넘어질뻔한 기훈의 목덜미를 잡는다. 그리고 나서 죽을힘을 다해 결승선으로 달린 후 타임아웃이 되기 전 가까스로 몸을</p>	<p>Scene 2</p> <p>(Ali grabs Gi-hun's jumper, preventing him from falling to the ground. Both Ali and Gi-hun grunt. Then they run frantically and throw themselves to the finish line just before the time is out.)</p>	<p>Scene 2</p> <p>The contestants are playing the first game where they get shot at if they move during a red light. Ali grabs Gi-hun so that he does not fall to the ground and gets</p>

	내던진다.)		shot. *First scene where they show how strong Ali is. **Ali's physical attribute is emphasised. Ali's masculinity . *** visual representation, masculinity
2	<p>Scene 1</p> <p>Gi-hun: (알리에게) 고마워요. 두 사람덕에 살았어요.</p> <p>Ali: 살아서 다행입니다.</p>	<p>Scene 1</p> <p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) Thank you. You two saved my life.</p> <p>Ali: I'm glad you're alive.</p>	<p>Scene 1</p> <p>Back in the room, Gi-hun thanks Ali for saving his life in the previous episode.</p>
	<p>Scene 2</p> <p>Ali: (주변을 살피며)</p>	<p>Scene 2</p> <p>Ali: (looking around) Sir,</p>	<p>Scene 2</p> <p>After the first game, the contestants realise that losing the game means death. They decide that they want to be released. People are released somewhere in the country while they are unconscious so that they cannot trace back to the location where they play games.</p> <p>**This is one of the few</p>

<p>사장님, 여기 어디예요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: (역시 주변을 살피며) 여의도.</p> <p>Ali: 여의도가 어디예요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 서울 한가운데야.</p> <p>Ali: 사장님. 전화 있어요? 전화 한번만 하고싶어요. 딱 한번만요.</p>	<p>where are we?</p> <p>Sang-woo: (also looking around) Yeouido.</p> <p>Ali: Where exactly is Yeouido?</p> <p>Sang-woo: In the centre of Seoul.</p> <p>Ali: Sir. Do you have a phone? I want to make one call. Just one call</p>	<p>scenes where the characters wear their own clothes. Sang-woo, being a white collar man, is wearing a suit, whereas Ali is dressed in shabby clothes. Ali does not know where he is, which is the centre of Seoul. This also shows that Ali has nothing to do with such a neighbourhood. Ali also does not even have a phone.</p> <p>***visual/social representation</p>
<p>Scene 3 (상우가 알리에게 핸드폰을 건네준다.)</p> <p>Ali: (고개숙여 인사하며) 감사합니다. (알리가 뒤쪽으로 가서 모국어로 통화 한다.)</p> <p>Ali: (핸드폰을 돌려주며 다시 고개숙여 인사한다) 사장님. 감사합니다. 안녕히 계세요.</p>	<p>Scene 3 (Sang-woo hands his phone to Ali.)</p> <p>Ali: (bowing) Thank you. (Ali goes to the back and talks on the phone in his mother tongue).</p> <p>Ali: (returning the phone and bowing) Sir, thank you. Goodbye.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Wait. Do you have money for the bus?</p>	<p>Scene 3 At a convenience store where Sang-woo charges his phone and buys Ali some snacks.</p> <p>**Sang-woo is very generous to Ali. He buys Ali some snacks, lends him his phone, and even offers Ali some money for the bus.</p>

<p>Sang-woo: 저기요. 차비는 있어요?</p> <p>Ali: 네?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 집이 안산 이라면서요. 사발면 값도 없는데 집에 갈 돈은 있냐구요. 돈.</p> <p>Ali: 돈 없어요. 걸어가요.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 여기서 안산까지 걸어서?</p> <p>Ali: (고개를 끄덕인다)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (알리에게 만원을 건넨다) 기다렸다가 버스 타고 가요.</p> <p>Ali: (고개를 저으며) 안돼요. 나 돈 없어요. 돈 못갚아요.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 갚으라고 안할테니까 그냥 가지고 가요.</p> <p>Ali: (몇 번을 고개숙이며)</p>	<p>Ali: Sorry?</p> <p>Sang-woo: You said you live in Ansan. You couldn't even pay for the ramyeon. Do you have money for a ride? Money.</p> <p>Ali: I don't have money. I walk.</p> <p>Sang-woo: You are going to walk all the way to Ansan from here?</p> <p>Ali: (nodding)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (giving Ali 10,000won) Wait a bit, then take the bus.</p> <p>Ali: (shaking his head) I can't. I have no money. I can't pay you back.</p> <p>Sang-woo: I won't ask you to. Just take it.</p> <p>Ali: (bowing several times) Thank you. Thank you, sir.</p> <p>Sang-woo: I am not your sir,</p>	<p>Here Ali says he will walk to Ansan. The distance between Seoul and Ansan is roughly 30km. Is this to arouse sympathy from the viewers? ***social representation</p> <p>*Here it would have</p>
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<p>감사합니다. 감사합니다, 사장님.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 나 사장님 아니니까 사장님 소리좀 그만 하고.</p> <p>Ali: (계속 고개 숙여 인사하며) 미안합니다. 감사합니다. 감사합니다.</p>	<p>so please stop calling me that.</p> <p>Ali: (keeps bowing) I am sorry. Thank you. Thank you.</p>	<p>made more sense if the translation had been: “I am not your boss, so please stop calling me that.” Also, this is the first time where Sang-woo asks Ali not to call him boss, subtly expressing his discomfort.</p> <p>***linguistic representation</p>
<p>Scene 4 (알리가 성난채로 공장으로 들어와 사장 사무실로 향한다.)</p> <p>Boss: 오, 알리.</p> <p>Ali: 왜 전화 안받아요?</p> <p>Boss: 전화 했어? 몰랐네. 왜 무슨일 있어?</p> <p>Ali: 사장님. 밀린 월급 주세요.</p> <p>Boss: 야 내가 그거 몇번 말하냐. 지금 돈이 없어. 너도 알다시피 회사 사정이-</p>	<p>Scene 4 (Ali angrily walks in to the factory storming into the boss’s office)</p> <p>Boss: Hey, Ali.</p> <p>Ali: Why are you dodging my calls?</p> <p>Boss: You called? I had no idea. Why? Is something wrong?</p> <p>Ali: Sir, pay me all the money you owe me.</p> <p>Boss: Hey, how many times do I have to tell you? I don’t have any money right now.</p>	<p>Scene 4 Ali visits the factory where he used to work to ask his boss to pay him his salary. At the factory, other migrant workers are working in the background.</p> <p>** This is one of the very few scenes where Ali is assertive. His sentences are imperatives.</p> <p>Masculinity.</p>

	<p>Ali: (손가락을 보여주며) 저 손가락 치료 잘 못받았어요. 병원비 제대로 잘 못받았어요. 나 이제 고향 갈 거예요. 제발요. 돈 주세요.</p> <p>Boss: 야, 이 씨. 밖에 있는 애들한테 물어봐. 개들은 월급 받았는가. 수금이 되야 돈을 주지 새끼야. 야 나도 아픈데가 한두군데가 아니야. 근데 병원예를 못가. 돈이 없어서.</p> <p>Ali: 사장님 돈 준다고 했잖아요. 제발요. 돈 주세요. 육달도 더 지났잖아요.</p> <p>Boss: 아 이새끼가 진짜. (책상위에 돈봉투를 바라본다.)</p> <p>Boss: (돈봉투를 자켓 주머니 안에 집어넣으면서 나간다) 야 다음에 얘기해. 내가 좀 바쁘다.</p>	<p>Our business isn't doing well, so—</p> <p>Ali: (showing him his lost fingers) I couldn't get my fingers treated. You didn't give me the hospital fee. I'm going back home now. Please, give me my money.</p> <p>Boss: Damn it. Go ask the other guys if they got paid. I can't pay you until I collect my bills! Hey, I have all sorts of aches too. But I can't go see a doctor because I have no money.</p> <p>Ali: You said you'd pay me. Please pay me. It's been over six months.</p> <p>Boss: Damn it, what's with you? (They look at the money in the envelope on the table.)</p> <p>Boss: (putting the envelope in his jacket pocket and leaving the office.) Hey, we'll talk later. I'm a little busy right now.</p>	<p>**This is the first time Ali's lost fingers are shown in the series. Indeed, migrant workers in Korea are more exposed to such industrial accidents and these kinds of stories are often in the news.</p> <p>Victim rhetoric.</p> <p>***visual/social representation</p>
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<p>Ali: (사장을 뒤쫓아가며 앞으로 가로막는다.) 사장님 돈 주세요. 사장님 제발 돈 주세요.</p> <p>Boss: (알리를 격하게 밀치며) 어딜 만져 개새끼야!</p> <p>Ali: (사장을 격하게 잡으며 소리친다) 나한테 욕하지마!</p> <p>Boss: (알리의 뺨을 거칠게 치고 밀친다) 이런 씨발새끼가!</p> <p>Ali: (사장의 자켓을 벗기려고 하며) 여기 돈 있잖아! (격한 몸싸움을 한다.)</p> <p>Boss: 안봐, 이새끼야? (계속해서 밀치며 싸운다. 사장이 중심을 잃고 넘어지며 손이 기계안으로 말려들어간다.)</p> <p>Ali: 내 돈 줘! (사장이 괴로움에 울부짖는다. 피가</p>	<p>Ali: (going after the boss and blocking his way). Sir, give me my money. Sir, please give me my money.</p> <p>Boss: (Shoving Ali aggressively) How dare you touch me, you son of a bitch!</p> <p>Ali: (grabbing the boss aggressively and shouting) Don't swear at me!</p> <p>Boss: (Hitting Ali's face hard and pushing him) You fucking son of a bitch!</p> <p>Ali: (trying to grab the envelope in the jacket pocket) My money! (They engage in a physical fight)</p> <p>Boss: Let me go, you fucker! (They continue fighting until the boss loses his balance and falls. While falling his hand gets jammed in an industrial machine.)</p> <p>Ali: Give me my money! (The boss screams in pain.</p>	<p>**Probably the first and the last time Ali fights for himself and stands up for himself.</p> <p>Masculinity.</p> <p>*Karma scene.</p>
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<p>사방에 튄다. 알리와 다른 외국인 노동자들이 놀라서 바라본다. 그 사이 알리가 땅에 떨어진 돈봉투를 가지고 도망간다.)</p>	<p>Blood sputters everywhere. Ali and other migrant workers look in shock. Ali quickly snatches the envelope on the ground and runs away.)</p>	
<p>Scene 5 (알리의 집. 알리가 잔뜩 긴장한채로 창문을 열고 사방을 살핀다.)</p> <p>Ali's wife (in a foreign language): 알리. 이 돈 어디서 났어?</p> <p>Ali: 잘 들어. 고향으로 가는 제일 빠른 티켓 사서 애랑 먼저 가있어.</p> <p>Ali's wife: 당신은? Ali: 둘이 먼저 가있어. 나는 여기 일이 끝나는대로 갈게.</p> <p>Ali's wife: 무슨일 있는거지?</p> <p>Ali: 지금은 아무것도 묻지마. 지금 짐싸서 당장 가. 제발 나 좀 이해해줘. 당신과</p>	<p>Scene 5 (In Ali's house. Ali is checking outside the window looking anxious.)</p> <p>Ali's wife (in a foreign language): Ali. Where did you get this money?</p> <p>Ali: Listen carefully. Buy tickets for the earliest flight for you and our kid, and go home first.</p> <p>Ali's wife: What about you?</p> <p>Ali: You two should go first. I will be there as soon as my job here is done.</p> <p>Ali's wife: Something is going on with you, right?</p> <p>Ali: Don't ask anything for now. You need to pack up</p>	<p>Scene 5 Ali is back in his house with the money in the envelope. The envelope's got blood on it.</p> <p>*One of the few scenes where Ali is assertive. Ali's masculinity here is expressed differently without using his physical strength.</p>

	<p>아이를 사랑해. (둘이 부둥켜안고 운다. 알리가 아이의 이마에 입맞춤 한다.)</p>	<p>and leave right away. Please understand what I have to do. I love you. You and our child. (They hold each other tight and cry. Ali kisses the baby's forehead.)</p>	
3	<p>Scene 1 (참가자들이 다시 방에 모였다.)</p> <p>Ali: (기훈과 상우에게 달려오며) 사장님들!</p> <p>Gi-hun: 오 생명의 은인!</p> <p>Ali: 사장님들 다시 만나서 반갑습니다. (상우에게 다시 고개숙여 인사하며) 그날 차비줘서 정말 감사합니다.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 니가 이 친구 차비를 줬어?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 여의도에서 안산까지 걸어간다길래.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (웃으며) 훈훈하구만. 우리 이거</p>	<p>Scene 1 (Contestants are back in the common room.)</p> <p>Ali: (running toward Gi-hun and Sang-woo) Good sirs!</p> <p>Gi-hun: Oh, my saviour!</p> <p>Ali: I'm glad to see you again, sir. (bowing to Sang-woo again) Thank you so much for the bus fare that day.</p> <p>Gi-hun: You gave him money for the bus?</p> <p>Sang-woo: He said he'd walk from Yeouido to Ansan.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (smiling) That is heartwarming. Comrades from boot camp, is that it?</p>	<p>Scene 1 After people got released, they again faced the cash strapped reality and one by one decided to come back to playing games again.</p> <p>*In South Korea, all men between the age of</p>

	<p>훈련소 동기들 그런 느낌인가?</p> <p>Ali: 훈련소가 뭐예요?</p> <p>Gi-hun: 군대 알아요, 군대? 총 쏘고 막 훈련 하는데?</p> <p>Ali: 아, 군인들 같이 사는 곳?</p> <p>Gi-hun: 그래요. 아 잠깐만. 말이 나왔으니까 말인데 군대처럼 우리끼리 한번 뭉쳐서 해보는 건 어때?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 맞아. 앞으로 무슨 게임을 하게 될지도 모르고 여러가지 경우를 대비해서 그룹을 형성 하는 게 유리할 거야.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (알리에게) 그쪽도 같이 합시다. 아 힘이 장난이 아니더라고. (상우에게) 너도 봤지? 이 친구가 나를 완전히 한손으로 들던데.</p>	<p>Ali: What is a boot camp?</p> <p>Gi-hun: You know the military? Where you shoot guns and go through training.</p> <p>Ali: Oh, where soldiers live together?</p> <p>Gi-hun: That's right. Wait. Now that we're on the subject, why don't we team up like we're in the military?</p> <p>Sang-woo: You're right. We don't even know what we'll have to play. It's better to form a group and be prepared for everything.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) Listen. Why don't you join us? He's amazingly strong. You saw it, right? He lifted me up with one hand.</p> <p>Ali: Can I really join you two?</p> <p>Gi-hun: Yes, sure. You're the private, a new lackey.</p>	<p>18 to 28 serve in the military for 18 months.</p> <p>*formation of the group.</p> <p>*emphasis on how strong Ali is. ***linguistic representation</p>
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	<p>Ali: 정말 나도 같이 해요?</p> <p>Gi-hun: 아 그래요. 그쪽이 이등병 쫄따구. (상우를 가르키며) 애는 일 잘하는 상병. 나는 말년병장.</p> <p>Ali: (기훈에게 고개숙여 인사하며) 감사합니다 사장님.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그 사장님 소리는 빼고.</p>	<p>(pointing to Sang-woo) He's the competent corporal, and I'm the sergeant on my way out.</p> <p>Ali: (bowing to Gi-hun) Thank you, sir.</p> <p>Sang-woo: You can drop the "Sir."</p>	<p>*The hierarchy among them is expressed here subtly.</p> <p>***linguistic/social representation</p> <p>*Sang-woo asks Ali for the second time not to call him boss, expressing his discomfort again. Other characters seem fine with that title as they never express anything to Ali.</p> <p>***The fact that other contestants never ask Ali not to call them boss shows implicit social hierarchy. Social representation</p>
<p>Scene 2</p>	<p>Scene 2</p>	<p>Scene 2</p>	<p>Ali, Sang-woo, Gi-hun and Il-nam are having lunch together. They are discussing what games they will be playing trying to strategise.</p>

	<p>Ali: 나 그런거 할줄 몰라요.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 거기 애들은 이런 게임 안하나? (알리가 걱정된 표정으로 고개를 젓는다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 걱정 하지마. 애들 게임 단순해. 모르면 우리가 도와줄게.</p> <p>Ali: (환히 웃으며) 감사합니다.</p>	<p>Ali: I don't know how to play any of those.</p> <p>Gi-hun: Don't kids in your country play these games? (Ali shakes his head looking worried.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Don't worry. Children's games have simple rules. We'll help if you don't know.</p> <p>Ali: (smiling brightly) Thank you.</p>	<p>***Ali is at a disadvantage. Not only in the games but also in Korean society at large. Social representation.</p> <p>*soft othering ***linguistic representation/othering</p> <p>*Sang-woo & Ali building relationship moment.</p>
	<p>Scene 3 Ali: 사장님 그거 왜 안먹어요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: (알리에게 빵 건네며) 너 먹어.</p> <p>Ali: 정말요?</p>	<p>Scene 3 Ali: Sir. Why aren't you eating that?</p> <p>Sang-woo: (handing his pastry to Ali) You can have it.</p>	<p>Scene 3 The next morning, they are having breakfast.</p> <p>**Sang-woo and Gi-hun are generous to Ali. They share their food while they don't even</p>

<p>Sang-woo: 나 원래 아침 안먹어.</p> <p>Ali: 감사합니다. 사장님.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 원래 공부 잘하는 애들이 입이 짧아. (기훈이 알리에게 우유를 건넨다.) 이것도 마셔.</p> <p>Ali: 감사합니다, 사장님.</p>	<p>Ali: Really?</p> <p>Sang-woo: I usually don't eat breakfast.</p> <p>Ali: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>Gi-hun: The smart ones never eat much, you know. (giving his milk to Ali) Have this too.</p> <p>Ali: Thank you, sir.</p>	<p>get enough for themselves. Those instances are related to victim rhetoric of migrant workers and Koreans should be nice to them.</p> <p>***social representation/sympathy discourse</p>
<p>Scene 4</p> <p>Gi-hun: (알리에게) 거기는?</p> <p>Ali: (모국어로 허공에 원을 그리며) Dayira. Dayira.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (당황스런 표정으로) 아, 동그라미?</p> <p>Ali: 네. 우리 고향 달처럼 생겼어요.</p>	<p>Scene 4</p> <p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) What about you?</p> <p>Ali: (in his mother tongue, drawing a circle in the air) Dayira. Dayira.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (looking puzzled) You mean, circle?</p> <p>Ali: Yes. It looks like the moon from my hometown.</p>	<p>Scene 4</p> <p>They are about to play another game. They first have to choose a shape from a circle, triangle, star, and umbrella.</p>
<p>Scene 5</p> <p>Ali: (눈을 휘둥그레 뜨며) 동그라미!</p>	<p>Scene 5</p> <p>Ali: (his eyes are wide open with joy) I did it! The circle.</p>	<p>Scene 5</p> <p>Ali is delicately trying to carve out the circle</p>

	<p>동그라미!</p>	<p>Circle!</p>	<p>shape he chose from flat, brittle candy. In the end, he manages to carve it out perfectly.</p>
4	<p>Scene 1 (기훈과 일남이 들어온다)</p> <p>Ali: (손을 흔들며) 사장님들! (기훈과 일남에게 달려가며) 다 살았습니까? 걱정했습니다.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 내가 그렇게 죽을줄 알았어? 나 쌍문동 성기훈이야.</p> <p>Ali: (영남에게) 늙은 사장님, 괜찮습니까?</p> <p>Il-nam: (알리의 팔을 만지며) 응, 괜찮아. (기훈을 바라보며) 이 친구 덕분에.</p>	<p>Scene 1 (Gi-hun and Il-nam walking into the room)</p> <p>Ali: (waving his hand) Sirs! (running toward Gi-hun and Il-nam) You are alive! I was so worried.</p> <p>Gi-hun: Did you think I would die that easily? I'm Gi-hun from Ssangmun-dong.</p> <p>Ali: (turning to Il-nam) Old sir, are you all right?</p> <p>Il-nam: (patting Ali's arm) I am fine. (turning to Gi-hun) Thanks to him.</p>	<p>Scene 1 Ali and Sang-woo are waiting for Gi-hun and Il-nam in the common room. They look somewhat anxious as they are not sure if Gi-hun and Il-nam have made it.</p>
	<p>Scene 2 Sang-woo: 혹시라도 공격이 시작되면 다 같이 뭉쳐서 싸워야돼. (알리의 어깨를 치며) 거기도 일 생기면 이쪽으로 와요.</p>	<p>Scene 2 Sang-woo: If anyone attacks, we have to stick together and fight. (patting Ali's shoulder) Come over to our side if anything happens</p>	<p>Scene 2 The contestants realise that killing amongst themselves has no consequences. Gi-hun, Sang-woo, and Ali and sitting in the common</p>

	<p>Ali: 알겠습니다.</p>	<p>Ali: All right.</p>	<p>room and observing other groups if they are plotting something.</p> <p>**Sang-woo & Ali building relationship.</p>
	<p>Scene 3</p> <p>Ali: (일남에게) 늡은 사장님 없어져서 걱정했습니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 아무도 크게 안다쳐서 다행이야.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 우리 이참에 통성명이나 하죠? 생각해보니까 서로 이름도 잘 모르더라구요.</p> <p>Ali: 나 사장님 이름 알아요. 쌍문동.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (웃으며) 쌍문동은 사는 동네고. 이름은 성기훈. 쌍문동의 성기훈.</p> <p>(알리게 멋쩍게 웃는다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (알리 쪽으로</p>	<p>Scene 3</p> <p>Ali: (to Il-nam) We were worried because we couldn't find you.</p> <p>Sang-woo: It is a relief none of us are badly hurt.</p> <p>Gi-hun: Why don't we take this opportunity to exchange names? Come to think of it, we don't even know each other's names.</p> <p>Ali: I know your name. Ssangmun-dong.</p> <p>Gi-hun: (laughing) Ssangmun-dong is the town I live in. My name is Gi-hun Seong. Gi-hun Seong from Ssangmun-dong.</p> <p>(Ali smiles awkwardly.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (turning to Ali</p>	<p>Scene 3</p> <p>As Sang-woo was worried, the other group started attacking other contestants. The guards came in to break the fight. After the fight, Sang-woo, Gi-hun, Il-nam, and Ali are sitting together in the common room.</p> <p>*soft ridicule.</p> <p>**Ssangmun-dong is obviously the name of a town, as dong means town in Korean.</p> <p>***linguistic representation/othering</p>

<p>돌리며 어깨를 친다) 거기는 이름이 뭐야?</p> <p>Ali: 알리. 알리 압둘.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 어느 나라에서 왔어?</p> <p>Ali: 파키스탄.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 파키스탄? 어디 있는 나라지?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 인도 위에.</p> <p>Ali: 맞습니다.</p> <p>Gi-hun: 역시. (상우의 어깨를 치며) 여기는 서울대 경영...</p> <p>Sang-woo: 조상우야.</p> <p>Ali: (영남에게) 늙은 사장님 이름이 뭐니까?</p>	<p>and tapping Ali's shoulder) What's your name?</p> <p>Ali: Ali. Ali Abdul.</p> <p>Gi-hun: Which country are you from?</p> <p>Ali: Pakistan.</p> <p>Gi-hun: Pakistan? Where is that?</p> <p>Sang-woo: Right above India.</p> <p>Ali: That's right.</p> <p>Gi-hun: Of course. (patting Sang-woo's shoulder) This guy here graduated from Seoul University...</p> <p>Sang-woo: I'm Sang-woo Cho.</p> <p>Ali: (to Il-nam) Old sir, what's your name?</p>	<p>*soft othering. **soft othering and Gi-hun is not well educated. ***linguistic representation/othering</p> <p>**Sang-woo is elite.</p>
<p>Scene 4 (상우가 뒤돌아서서 알리를 잡는다.)</p>	<p>Scene 4 (Ali is about to leave when Sang-woo takes Ali's arm.)</p>	<p>Scene 4 For the next games, they decide that each of them would recruit one</p>

	<p>Sang-woo: (알리의 손을 보며) 이 손 감춰. (카메라가 알리의 세손가락만 남아있는 손을 줌인한다.) 약해보이니까.</p> <p>(알리가 고개를 끄덕인다.)</p>	<p>Sang-woo: (looking at Ali's left hand) Hide that hand. (The camera zooms in Ali's hand with three fingers.) It will make you look weak.</p> <p>(Ali nods his head.)</p>	<p>person to make the group larger.</p> <p>**Sang-woo looks after Ali. Also the first time it was mentioned that Ali's lost fingers are a sign of weakness. This is ironic because all along the series, Ali is described as someone strong, yet there are instances like this one where Ali is pictured as a victim or someone at disadvantage. ***visual representation, physically disadvantaged. Othering. Irony.</p>
	<p>Scene 5 (알리가 무리 사이를 돌아다닌다. 그의 왼손은 주머니에 넣은채로. 카메라가 이것을 줌인한다.)</p>	<p>Scene 5 (Ali walks amongst the crowd with his left hand in the pocket. The camera zooms into this.)</p>	<p>Scene 5 Ali goes through the crowds to look for a possible recruit.</p> <p>**Ali listens to Sang-woo. He almost always does what Sang-woo says. ***visual</p>

		representation. othering.
<p>Scene 6 (알리가 뒤 돌아 보고 있는 남자 어깨를 치자 그 남자가 뒤를 돌아본다. 다른 어두운 피부색의 외국인이다. 알리가 네 손가락을 이마에 갖다대자 그 남자도 같은 행동을 취한다.)</p>	<p>Scene 6 (Ali taps on the shoulder of a man who is facing the other way. Then the man turns around. He is a dark skin colored foreigner. Ali puts four fingers on his forehead and the guy does the same.)</p>	<p>Scene 6 Ali finds another recruit. **Ali recruits another foreigner whose skin colour is similar to his. Soft othering. Also, what does the hand gesture mean?</p>
<p>Scene 7 Il-nam: 그리고 제일 뒤에는 마치 배의 닻 처럼 든직한 사람이 맡아줘야돼. (영남이 이 대사를 읊는동안 카메라는 줄 끝에있는 비장한 알리의 모습을 비춘다. 그 앞에는 다른 외국인이 있다.)</p>	<p>Scene 7 Il-nam: Then at the end of the rope, you'll need someone dependable to act like the anchor of a ship. (As Il-nam narrates this line, the camera shows Ali at the end of the rope looking determined. In front of him is the other foreigner Ali recruited earlier.)</p>	<p>Scene 7 In this scene, the contestants play tug-of-war as a group. Ali's group is a bit worried because they have two women in the team. Il-nam, as the oldest member of the group, takes on a leader role and tells the members about his strategy to win despite their disadvantage. **Ali's physical attribute is again emphasised. He is</p>

			strong. Masculinity *** visual representation
5	<p>Scene 1 (그룹앞에 서있는 미녀)</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: 나 진짜 우리 바로 다 뒤질줄 알았거든. 근데 진짜 이렇게 딱 누우니까 막 힘이 딱 생기는데, 어, 이게 뭐야, 이게 되네? (영남에게) 영감님 그거 어떻게 된거야?</p> <p>Il-nam: 그냥 어릴때...</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: 그거 영화보고 따라한거지? 아 그 영화 뭐야, 그거? 그거 있잖아 (매트릭스 총알 피하는 씬 따라하며) 막 이렇게 이렇게 하는거.</p> <p>Ali: 매트릭스.</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: (알리를 깔보며) 너는 한국와서 일은 안하고 영화만 봤니?</p> <p>(알리가 언짢은 표정을 짓는다.)</p>	<p>Scene 1 (Mi-nyeo stands in front of the whole group.)</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: I seriously thought we were all going to die. But once I laid back, I really felt so much stronger. (to Il-nam) Sir, how did you come up with that?</p> <p>Il-nam: When I was young, I just...</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: You copied that from a movie, right? What's that movie? (imitating the famous bullet dodge scene from the Matrix) You know, the one that goes like this.</p> <p>Ali: The Matrix.</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: (looking down on Ali) So, you slacked off at work and just watched movies in Korea?</p> <p>(Ali puts on an unpleasant face)</p>	<p>Scene 1 After winning the tug-of-war, Ali and the group members are back in the common room. Mi-nyeo, one of the cunning characters in the show, babbles about what a fantastic win it was.</p> <p>*Ali is verbally and explicitly discriminated against here and he does not fight back. And no one stands up for him either. **There were some</p>

<p>Mi-nyeo: (상우에게) 그리고 오빠.앞으로 딱 세발만 가는거야. 뭐야, 완전 멧짐 터져. 아니 어떻게 거기서 그런 생각을 다했어?</p> <p>Ali: 아까는 개소리 라고 했잖아요.</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: 내가? 너 무슨 개소리야?</p> <p>Ali: 막 울면서 (미너 흥내를 낸다) 미쳤어 개소리 하지마. 했잖아요.</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: 야! 너 어느나라에서 왔어? 너 비자는 있어? 너 불법체류지? 야 이봐요 오빠들. 아니 이런 족보도 모르는 외국애들 우리팀에 끼워줘도 되는거야? 어?</p> <p>(알리는 고개를 숙이며 대꾸를 못한다.)</p>	<p>Mi-nyeo: (to Sang-woo) And you, babe. “Just take three steps forward!” I mean, that was way too cool. How did you come up with that in that situation?</p> <p>Ali: You said that was bullshit.</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: I did? What are you bullshitting about?</p> <p>Ali: You were crying, (imitating Mi-nyeo) “are you crazy? That’s bullshit!”. That’s what you said.</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: Hey! Which country are you from? Do you even have a visa? You’re an illegal alien, right? Gosh. Look, boys. Should we really let this strange foreign guy stay on our team?</p> <p>(Ali looks down and does not talk back.)</p>	<p>scenes earlier where Ali was assertive and fought back for himself. Here, he also could do that but he did not. Victim rhetoric. ***linguistic, social representation/discrimin ation.</p> <p>*Ali is discriminated against again. This time even worse with derogatory terms, yet he still does not fight back. No one stands up for him either. **victim rhetoric. ***linguistic/social representation/discrimin ation</p>
<p>Scene 2</p>	<p>Scene 2</p>	<p>Scene 2</p>

<p>Sang-woo: 내가 먼저 할게요.</p> <p>Ali: (손을 들며) 나도 같이 할게요. 나 지금 안졸려요.</p> <p>(알리와 상우 서로 바라보며 고개를 끄덕인다.)</p> <p>Gi-hun: (알리에게) 그럼 다음엔 내가 할게. 피곤해지면 바로 깨워줘.</p> <p>(알리가 고개를 끄덕인다.)</p>	<p>Sang-woo: I will go first.</p> <p>Ali: (raising his hand) I'll join you. I'm not sleepy right now.</p> <p>(Ali and Sang-woo look at each other and nod.)</p> <p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) Then I will go next. Wake me up when you get tired.</p> <p>(Ali nods.)</p>	<p>Ali's group is still fearing that other groups might attack them again. So, they decide to take turns keeping watch at night.</p>
<p>Scene 3 (알리가 상우에게 그의 옥수수를 준다.)</p> <p>Ali: 이거 먹어요. 아까 식사시간에 안먹고 아껴둔겁니다. 사장님 주려고.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 이걸 왜 안먹고 날 줘?</p> <p>Ali: 오늘 사장님 덕분에 살았습니다. 감사하고</p>	<p>Scene 3 (Ali gives Sang-woo his corn.)</p> <p>Ali: Have this. I saved it from dinner earlier. To give it to you, sir.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Why would you do that?</p> <p>Ali: You saved my life today, sir. I wanted to thank you.</p>	<p>Scene 3 Ali and Sang-woo are on the watch together.</p> <p>**This is the most significant scene between Sang-woo and Ali where they become really close.</p> <p>*The translation would have made more sense if</p>

<p>싶었습니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 감사할거 없어. 내가 살자고 한일이야.</p> <p>Ali: 사장님 차비도 줬습니다. 받으면 돌려줘야 합니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: (옥수수를 받아 반으로 갈라 나머지 반을 알리에게 준다) 됐지?</p> <p>(알리가 옥수수를 받아 먹기 시작한다)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 알리라고 했지? 몇살이야?</p> <p>Ali: 알리는 33살 입니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그럼 그냥 형이라고 해.</p> <p>Ali: 그래도 됩니까, 형?</p> <p>(상우가 미소지으며 고개를 끄덕인다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 여긴 어떻게</p>	<p>Sang-woo: There's no need to thank me. I did it to save myself.</p> <p>Ali: You gave me the bus fare too. I should return the favour.</p> <p>Sang-woo: (takes the corn and breaks it in half and hands the other half to Ali) Happy?</p> <p>(Ali takes the corn and starts eating.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Your name is Ali, right? How old are you?</p> <p>Ali: Ali is 33 years old.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Then just call me Sang-woo.</p> <p>Ali: May I do that, Sang-woo?</p> <p>(Sang-woo smiles and nods.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: How did you end up here?</p>	<p>it had been: just call me big bro (hyung). **Because calling someone hyung signifies a close relationship, Sang-woo's betrayal to Ali later becomes more hurtful possibly to Korean speakers than to non-Korean speakers.</p>
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	<p>왔어?</p> <p>Ali: 한국에 돈 벌러 왔습니다. 형.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 아니 한국 말고. 여기. 이 게임.</p> <p>Ali: 돈이 없어서..왔습니다. 형.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 가족은?</p> <p>Ali: 파키스탄에 엄마 아빠 동생들 있습니다. 그리고 한국에 와이프랑 베이비 있습니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 애가 있어? 몇살인데?</p> <p>Ali: 한살 아들입니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 보고싶겠네.</p> <p>Ali: 네. 형은 왜 왔습니까?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 돈 없어서. 돈 벌러.</p>	<p>Ali: I came to Korea to make money, Sang-woo.</p> <p>Sang-woo: No, I don't mean Korea. Here, This game.</p> <p>Ali: I came because I had no money.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Any family?</p> <p>Ali: My mom, dad, and younger siblings are in Pakistan. And I have a wife and baby in Korea.</p> <p>Sang-woo: You have a kid? How old?</p> <p>Ali: One-year-old son.</p> <p>Sang-woo: You must miss them.</p> <p>Ali: I do. How did you end up here?</p> <p>Sang-woo: Because I had no money. To make money.</p>	
6	Scene 1	Scene 1	Scene 1

<p>Gi-hun: 상우야 나랑 같이..</p> <p>Sang-woo: 알리. 나랑 같이하자. 여기서 하는 게임들 결국 힘쓰는거 아니면 머리 쓰는거야. 너랑 나랑 둘이 같이하면 웬만한 상대는 다 이길수 있어. (상우 손을 내민다.)</p> <p>(알리가 기훈의 눈치를 본다.)</p> <p>Gi-hun: (손사래를 치며) 아 아니야 아니야. 아 팬찮아, 팬찮아. 야 너희 둘이 정말 잘 맞겠다. 난 또 다른 사람이랑 하면 되지.</p> <p>(알리가 상우의 손을 잡는다.)</p>	<p>Gi-hun: Sang-woo, play with...</p> <p>Sang-woo: Ali, play with me. The games here either require strength or brains. If we team up, we can win against most teams. (Sang-woo holds out his hand to Ali.)</p> <p>(Ali is checking Gi-hun's face.)</p> <p>Gi-hun: (waving no multiple times) No, don't mind me. It's okay. Really. It's okay. You two will make a great team. I'll find someone else. (Ali takes Sang-woo's hand.)</p>	<p>To play the next game, they are asked to pair up. Gi-hun is just about to ask Sang-woo to team up with him, but Sang-woo asks Ali instead.</p> <p>**Here Sang-woo implicitly means that he is the smart person and Ali is the strong one, which makes them a perfect team. Also, Gi-hun and Sang-woo grew up together, so Sang-woo's choice here means a lot. It can simply mean that Sang-woo is choosing what is best for himself. It can also mean that Sang-woo and Ali have built a strong relationship over time.</p> <p>***linguistic representation.</p>
<p>Scene 2 (상우가 알리의 어깨에 손을 얹는다.)</p>	<p>Scene 2 (Sang-woo puts his arm on Ali's shoulder.)</p>	<p>Scene 2 Sang-woo and Ali are on their way to the next</p>

	<p>Sang-woo: 알리. 긴장하지마. 우리 둘 조합이면 무조건 이겨.</p> <p>Ali: 나도 형이랑 하니까 이길것 같습니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그래, 이겨서 같이 나가자. 돈 가지고 가족한테 돌아가는거야.</p> <p>Ali: 네, 형.</p>	<p>Sang-woo: Ali, don't be nervous. The two of us together will win for sure.</p> <p>Ali: Now that I'm with you, I think we can win.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Yes, let's win and get out of here. We'll take the money and go back to our families.</p> <p>Ali: Okay, Sang-woo.</p>	<p>game site.</p>
	<p>Scene 3 (상우와 알리가 서로를 향해있다. 알리는 고개숙여 땅을 쳐다본다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 하자.</p> <p>Ali: 그럼 형이랑 나랑 한명 죽어요.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그럼 이렇게 넌놓고 있다가 둘이 같이 죽을까? 아니면 니가 내 대신 죽어주기라도 할거야? (구슬을 꺼내며) 알리</p>	<p>Scene 3 (Sang-woo and Ali face each other. Ali looks down on the ground.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Let's do this.</p> <p>Ali: That means one of us will die.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Then you want to just stand around and die together? Or you'll die on my behalf? (takes the marbles out from a pouch) You've never played this, right?</p>	<p>Scene 3 Sang-woo and Ali realise that they are not playing the game as a team, but against each other. This means that one of them will die. They are playing a game with marbles.</p> <p>**Ali is clearly at disadvantage from the very beginning as he does not know how to play all those Korean children games.</p> <p>***linguistic/social</p>

<p>너 이런거 안해봤지?</p> <p>(알리가 고개를 젓는다.)</p>	<p>(Ali shakes his head.)</p>	<p>representation/othering</p>
<p>Scene 4</p> <p>Sang-woo: 내 손안에 있는 구슬의 숫자가 홀수냐 짝수냐 이것만 맞추면 돼.</p> <p>Ali: 홀수 짝수? 뭔데요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 홀수는 일,삼, 오. 짝수는 이, 사, 육. 알아들어?</p> <p>(알리가 끄덕인다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 잘 생각해서 둘 중 하나에 니 구슬 걸어.</p>	<p>Scene 4</p> <p>Sang-woo: You just have to guess if the number of marbles in my fist is odd or even.</p> <p>Ali: Odd or even? What is it?</p> <p>Sang-woo: Odd numbers like one, three, and five. Even numbers are two, four, and six. Do you get it?</p> <p>(Ali nods.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Give it some thought and bet your marbles on either one.</p>	<p>Scene 4</p> <p>Sang-woo explains to Ali how to play the game.</p> <p>**Ali is again at disadvantage because of the language barrier.</p> <p>***linguistic representation/othering</p>
<p>Scene 5</p> <p>Ali: 짝이요.</p> <p>(상우가 손을 펴자 구슬 두개가 보인다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 몇개 걸었어?</p> <p>(알리가 손을 펴자 구슬</p>	<p>Scene 5</p> <p>Ali: Even.</p> <p>(Sang-woo opens his fist and there are two marbles in his hand.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: How many did you bet?</p>	<p>Scene 5</p> <p>Sang-woo and Ali are playing the game.</p>

<p>두개가 보인다.)</p> <p>Ali: 두개요.</p> <p>(상우가 한숨을 쉬며 구슬 두개를 알리에게 준다. 알리의 손에 구슬이 한가득 있다. 반면 상우는 구슬이 몇개 안남았다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 니가 잡아.</p> <p>Ali: 저 형이랑 하기 싫어요. (안전요원에게) 선생님, 저 다른 사람이랑 하고 싶어요.</p> <p>Sang-woo: (화내며) 쓸데없는 소리 하지 말고 빨리 잡아.</p>	<p>(Ali opens his fist and there are two marbles in his hand.)</p> <p>Ali: two.</p> <p>(Sang-woo sighs and gives his two marbles to Ali. Ali's hand is full of marbles while Sang-woo is running out of his marbles.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Your turn.</p> <p>Ali: I don't want to do this with you. (to the guard) Sir. I want to play with someone else.</p> <p>Sang-woo: (angrily) Stop talking nonsense and take the marbles.</p>	<p>**Sang-woo starts to become frustrated.</p>
<p>Scene 6</p> <p>Sang-woo: 짹. 뭐해? 손 펴.</p> <p>(알리가 손을 펴자 구슬이 세개가 있다. 상우가 자신의 구슬 두개를 알리에게 건넌다. 상우가 한숨을 쉬다. 구슬이 한개밖에</p>	<p>Scene 6</p> <p>Sang-wo: Even. What are you doing? Open your hand.</p> <p>(Ali opens his hand and there are three marbles. Sang-woo reluctantly gives his two marbles to Ali. Sang-woo sighs. He only has one marble left.)</p>	<p>Scene 6</p> <p>Sang-woo and Ali continue to play the game.</p>

<p>남지 않았다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 새끼 너. 너 속임수 쓰지?</p> <p>Ali: 형. 왜 그래요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 니가 어떻게 계속 이길수 있어? 이 게임 확률이 반반인데. (알리를 밀치며) 야 새끼가 말이 안되잖아, 지금 이 상황이!</p> <p>Ali: (겁에 질려) 아니에요. 제가 아무것도 안했어요.</p> <p>(둘 다 일어선다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (알리의 멱살을 잡으며) 이 새끼가 아무것도 모르는척 하면서 날 속인거지? 너 이런거 해본적 없다며! 어떻게 속였어? 말해!</p> <p>(안전요원이 상우에게 총을 들이민다.)</p>	<p>Sang-woo: You bastard. You're cheating, aren't you?</p> <p>Ali: Sang-woo, what are you talking about?</p> <p>Sang-woo: How come you keep winning? You only have a 50-50 chance of winning. (shoving Ali) This doesn't make any fucking sense!</p> <p>Ali: (frightened) No, I didn't do anything.</p> <p>(They both stand up.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (grabbin Ali by his collar) You jerk. You played innocent all this time, tricking me! You said you've never done this before! What did you do? Tell me!</p> <p>(The guard takes the gun out and points it at Sang-woo)</p>	<p>**Sang-woo starts becoming aggressive toward Ali.</p> <p>**Ali can clearly stand up for himself. There is no need to fear Sang-woo as Ali is a strong person. However, Ali does not fight back.</p> <p>***social representation, irony</p>
<p>Scene 7 (상우가 무릎을</p>	<p>Scene 7 (Sang-woo kneels before</p>	<p>Scene 7 Sang-woo begs Ali.</p>

<p>끓는다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (울며) 내가 잘못했어, 알리야. 내가 너 오해했어. 근데 나 이렇게 죽을 수 없어. 내가 여기서 죽으면 우리 식구 다 죽어.</p> <p>Ali: 미안해요, 형. 미안합니다. (울음 터뜨리며) 나도 가족 있습니다.</p> <p>Sang-woo: (알리의 손을 잡으며) 야 알리야, 야. 너만 나 도와주면 우리 둘 다 살수 있는 방법이 있어. 너도 내 덕분에 여기까지 왔잖아. 내가 너한테 차비도 줬고 줄다리기도 내 작전 때문에 산거고 밤새 같이 불침번도 서고. 우리 조금전까지 같이 여기서 나가기로 했잖아, 아니야?</p> <p>(알리가 울며 고개를 끄덕인다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 야 그러니까 제발. 제발 내 말 한번만</p>	<p>Ali.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (sobbing) I'm sorry, Ali. I mistook you. But I can't die like this.If I die here, my entire family will die too.</p> <p>Ali: I'm sorry, Sang-woo. I'm so sorry. (bursting into tears) I have a family too.</p> <p>Sang-woo: (grabbing Ali's hands) Hey, Ali. If you help me, there's a way both of us can make it out alive. You got this far because of me. I gave you the bus fare, my strategy helped you survive tug-of-war, we kept watch at night together, and just before the game, we promised to leave here together, didn't we?</p> <p>(Ali crying and nodding)</p> <p>Sang-woo: So, please. Please trust me this once and help me. Please?</p> <p>Ali: What's your plan?</p>	
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<p>믿고 도와줘. 어?</p> <p>Ali: 어떻게 할건데요?</p>		
<p>Scene 8</p> <p>Sang-woo: 내가 생각하기에 이 안에서 몇팀은 끝까지 승부가 안나게 될거야.</p> <p>Ali: 왜요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 이 게임 룰이 뭐였어? 30분 안에 한명이 다른 사람 구슬을 모두 따면 통과. 근데 생각해봐. 30분 안에 한쪽이 꼭 구슬을 다 따라는 법은 없잖아. 이기고 지고 왔다 갔다 하다 보면 시간내에 승부가 안나는 팀이 분명 생길거야. 그럼 어떻게 할거야? 그 사람들 탈락시켜? 말이 안되지않아, 승부가 안났는데. 그치?</p> <p>Ali: 네.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그럼 그때는 팀대결로 가게 될거야. 한팀이 서로 구슬을</p>	<p>Scene 8</p> <p>Sang-woo: My guess is that some of the teams won't be able to decide the winner in time.</p> <p>Ali: Why not?</p> <p>Sang-woo: Do you remember the rule?The person who takes their partner's marbles in 30 minutes wins. But think about it. Neither player might win all the marbles in 30 minutes. They win, lose, go back and forth. I'm sure there will be teams without any winners. What will they do then? Eliminate all those people? That makes no sense. They must decide the winner. Right?</p> <p>Ali: Yes.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Then, I'm sure they'll make us compete in teams. Each team will add</p>	<p>Scene 8</p> <p>Sang-woo explains to Ali what his plan is.</p> <p>**Sang-woo is plotting against Ali.</p> <p>***Sang-woo's plan is not explicit yet.</p> <p>However, viewers can sense that Sang-woo is plotting something against Ali. Yet, Ali is being naive and does not notice this at all.</p> <p>Social representation.</p>

<p>합쳐서 다른 팀이랑 스무개를 걸고 승부하는거지. (알리 어깨를 치며) 원래 우리 계획대로 다시 너랑 나랑 한팀으로 승부할 수 있어. 우리 둘다 같이 나갈수 있어.</p> <p>(그 순간 옆팀 사람이 안전요원이 쏜 총에 맞아 탈락하며 죽는다. 알리와 상우 둘 다 겁에 질린다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 니 손으로 나 저렇게 만들고 싶어?</p>	<p>up their marbles, and play against another team with 20 marbles. (Patting Ali's shoulder) We'll get to play as a team as we'd originally planned. We can leave this place together.</p> <p>(At that moment, someone from another team gets shot and killed as he loses the game. Ali and Sang-woo become frightened.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Do you want to do that to me?</p>	
<p>Scene 9</p> <p>Ali: 정말 우리 같이 이길수 있어요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 응.</p> <p>Ali: 정말요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 내 계획을 들어보고 아니다 싶으면 거절해도 돼. 그럼 내가 그때는 남은 구슬 한개를 그냥 너한테 줄게. 니가 나 죽였다는 죄책감</p>	<p>Scene 9</p> <p>Ali: Are you sure we can both win?</p> <p>Sure.</p> <p>Ali: Really?</p> <p>Sang-woo: Hear me out first and turn me down if you don't like the plan. If you do that, I'll just give you my last marble. So you won't feel guilty about killing me.</p>	<p>Scene 9</p> <p>Sang-woo continues to try to convince Ali.</p>

<p>안들게.</p> <p>Ali: 계획 뭔데요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그건 게임 상대가 누구냐에 따라 달라. 일단 어떤 팀이 남게될지 그것부터 알아야돼. 지금 시간 없으니까 빨리 흠어져서 다른 팀들 상황을 좀 살펴보자. 아직 승부가 안 난 팀들 중에서 나이가 어린팀이랑 나이가 많은 팀을 찾아봐.</p> <p>Ali: 나이요?</p> <p>Sang-woo: 응. 그게 중요해. 너처럼 젊은 사람들인지 아니면 50살 이상 된 사람들 인지.</p> <p>(알리 확신에 찬 표정으로 고개를 끄덕인다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (알리의 어깨를 치며) 넌 반대편 골목으로 가봐. 난 다른 팀들을 살펴볼게.</p>	<p>Ali: What's the plan?</p> <p>Sang-woo: It depends on who we'll be up against. We have to find out which teams will remain. We don't have much time, so let's split up and see how other teams are doing. From teams that are still playing, find ones that are very young and very old.</p> <p>Ali: The age?</p> <p>Sang-woo: Yes, that's what's important. Find out if they're young like you or if they're over 50.</p> <p>(Ali nods, looking determined.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (Patting Ali's shoulder) You take the alley across the street. I'll go the other way.</p> <p>Ali: Okay, Sang-woo.</p> <p>(Ali starts walking to the other side.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Ali.</p>	
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<p>Ali: 네, 형.</p> <p>(알리가 반대편으로 떠난다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 알리야.</p> <p>(알리가 뒤를 돌아본다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그 주머니. 그렇게 들고 다니면 위험해. 다들 막판에 미친놈들처럼 변할텐데 무슨일이 벌어질지 몰라. 우리 이거 잃어버리면 끝이야. 알지? 내가 가지고 다니기 안전하게 해줄게.</p> <p>(알리가 구슬이 든 주머니를 상우에게 건넨다. 상우가 자켓을 벗어 구슬주머니를 덮고 티셔츠를 벗어 찢기 시작한다.)</p>	<p>(Ali looks back.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Your pouch. It's dangerous carrying it like that. Everyone will go crazy at the last minute. Who knows what'll happen? We're doomed if you lose this. You know that, right? I'll make it safe for you to carry.</p> <p>(Ali hands the pouch to Sang-woo. Sang-woo takes off his jacket and covers the pouch with it. Then he takes off his t-shirt and starts ripping it.)</p>	
<p>Scene 10 (상우가 티셔츠를 찢는동안 총성이 들린다. 알리가</p>	<p>Scene 10 (While Sang-woo is ripping his t-shirt, there is a gunshot sound in the background. Ali</p>	<p>Scene 10 Sang-woo tricks Ali. **Sang-woo is carrying</p>

<p>다른쪽을 바라본다. 그 틈을 타 상우가 구슬 주머니를 바꿔치기 한다. 상우가 찢은 티셔츠로 목걸이를 만들어 구슬주머니에 이어 알리에게 건넨다.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (알리 목에 걸어주며) 자. 어때? 이러니까 훨씬 더 안전하겠죠?</p> <p>Ali: (구슬 주머니를 흔들며) 네.</p> <p>Sang-woo: 그럼 타이머가 3분 남았을때 다시 여기서 만나자. 그때 작전 알려줄게.</p>	<p>looks where the sound is coming from. Sang-woo takes advantage of that moment to swap the pouches. He makes a necklace out of the t-shirt and attaches it to the pouch and gives it to Ali.)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (Putting it on his neck) Here. What do you think? Doesn't it seem much safer?</p> <p>Ali: (shaking the pouch) Yes.</p> <p>Sang-woo: Then we'll meet here again when the timer hits three minutes. I'll tell you the plan then.</p>	<p>out his plan to betray Ali.</p>
<p>Scene 11 (카메라가 알리의 주머니를 줌인 한다.)</p> <p>Ali: (모국어로) 늙은팀. (계속해서 다른 팀을 체크한다. 뒤쪽에서 계속 총성이 들린다.)</p>	<p>Scene 11 (The camera zooms in on Ali's pouch.)</p> <p>Ali: (in his mother tongue) a team of older people. (He continues to check on other teams. Gunshots are heard in the background.)</p>	<p>Scene 11 Ali goes on to check on other teams as Sang-woo says.</p>

<p>Ali: (모국어로) 세 젊은 사람들. 늙은 사람 두명.</p>	<p>Ali: (in his mother tongue) three youngsters. Two old people.</p>	
<p>Scene 12 (알리는 계속해서 미친듯이 다른팀을 체크한다. 그때 안내방송이 나온다. 게임 종료까지 3분 남았다고.)</p>	<p>Scene 12 (Ali continues to check on other teams. Then there is an announcement coming that there are 3 minutes left until the end of the game.)</p>	<p>Scene 12 Ali continues to check on other teams.</p>
<p>Scene 13 (알리가 만나기로 한 장소로 돌아온다.)</p> <p>Ali: 형. 형 어디있어?</p> <p>(아무도 없다. 알리는 계속 두리번 거린다.)</p> <p>Ali: 형, 상우형! 나 보고 왔어요. 형! 상우형!</p> <p>(상우가 게임 현장을 떠나는데 알리가 상우형 소리치는것을 듣는다.)</p> <p>(그때 알리가 뭔가 알아챈듯 하며 주머니를 체크한다. 주머니를 열자</p>	<p>Scene 13 (Ali comes back to where they are supposed to meet again.)</p> <p>Ali: Sang-woo. Sang-woo! Where are you?</p> <p>(No one is there. Ali keeps looking around.)</p> <p>Ali: Sang-woo! Sang-woo! I have checked everyone. Sang-woo!</p> <p>(Sang-woo is leaving the game site. He hears Ali shouting his name.)</p> <p>(Ali, sensing something is wrong, checks his pouch. He</p>	<p>Scene 13 Ali's final scene.</p> <p>**Ali is ultimately taken advantage of and</p>

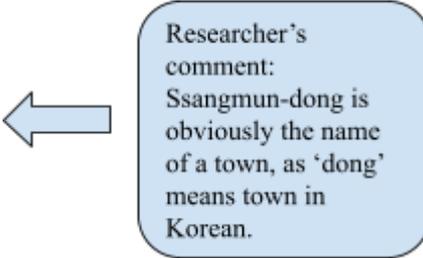
	<p>구슬대신 돌맹이가 가득하다. 알리가 믿을수 없다는듯 주변을 두리번 거린다. 아까 상우가 찢은 티셔츠 옆으로 돌맹이가 가득한 화단이 보인다. 알리가 조용히 눈물을 흘린다. 알리 뒤로 안전요원이 총을 겨눈다. 총성이 들리고 상우 얼굴이 보인다. 방송에서 199번 (알리번호)가 탈락했다고 나온다. 상우는 몸을 떨며 안으로 들어간다.)</p>	<p>opens the pouch only to find out that it is full of pebbles. In disbelief, he looks around and notices flower pots full of pebbles next to Sang-woo’s ripped t-shirt. Ali quietly starts crying. Behind Ail is the guard pointing the gun at him. The gunshot is heard and the camera zooms in on Sang-woo’s face. The announcement goes in the background: 199 (Ali’s number) is eliminated. Sang-woo is shaking and leaving the site.)</p>	<p>betrayed by Sang-woo whom he trusts. Victim rhetoric. ***social representation</p>
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Appendix B.

Initial table for Inclusion and Exclusion & Othering

Table 5. Ali is othered and discriminated against

Due to...	Ali is linguistically othered	Ali is discriminated against
his origin	<p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) Don’t kids in your country play these games? (episode 3)</p> <p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) Pakistan? Where is that? (episode 4)</p>	
his status in Korea		<p>Mi-nyeo: (looking down on Ali) So, you slacked off at work and just watched movies in Korea? (episode 5)</p> <p>Mi-nyeo: (to Ali) Hey! Which country are you from? Do you even have a visa? You’re an illegal alien, right? Gosh. Look, boys. Should we really let</p>

		this strange foreign guy stay on our team? (episode 5)
his physical attributes	<p>Gi-hun: (to Ali) Listen. Why don't you join us? He's amazingly strong. You saw it, right? He lifted me up with one hand. (episode 3)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (looking at Ali's left hand) Hide that hand. (The camera zooms in Ali's hand with three fingers.) It will make you look weak. (episode 4)</p> <p>Sang-woo: Ali, play with me. The games here either require strength or brains. If we team up, we can win against most teams. (episode 6) **Development episode 6 is not othered. subcategories. inclusive vs. exclusive relevant categories. break down general impressions. identify building blocks.</p>	
his language barrier	<p>Gi-hun: Why don't we take this opportunity to exchange names? Come to think of it, we don't even know each other's names. Ali: I know your name. Ssangmun-dong. Gi-hun: (laughing) Ssangmun-dong is the town I live in. My name is Gi-hun Seong. Gi-hun Seong from Ssangmun-dong. (episode 4)</p> <p>Sang-woo: (to Ali) You just have to guess if the number of marbles in my fist is odd or even. Ali: Odd or even? What is it? Sang-woo: Odd numbers like one, three, and five. Even numbers are two, four, and six. Do you get it? (episode 6)</p>	 <p>Researcher's comment: Ssangmun-dong is obviously the name of a town, as 'dong' means town in Korean.</p>

Appendix c. Pilot Study

From the first time Ali meets Sang-woo, he calls him sajangnim, which means boss in Korean. He also calls other contestants sajangnim, however, in English translation, this is translated to sir8 (Hwang, 2021). Despite the fact that there are other honorific titles, the use of sajangnim implies Ali's social status in Korea, which is both imposed by him and society at large. Therefore, the mistranslation of sajangnim does not reflect the cultural nuance in English. Also, as the relationship between Ali and Sang-woo becomes closer, Sang-woo asks Ali to call him hyung (Hwang, 2021). Hyung means one's older brother, and a male person

refers to this term to address his older brother or an older male person who is close (Jung & Yu, 2021, p.830). The translation of hyung in English is omitted where Ali says Sang-woo hyung is translated to just Sang-woo. Therefore, the significance of their close relationship is not accurately described, which makes the betrayal of Sang-woo even more hurtful.

Mistranslation of GTA Example

Sang-woo: 몇살이야?

Netflix translation: How old are you?

Ali: 알리는 33살 입니다.

Netflix translation: Ali is 33 years old.

Sang-woo: 그럼 그냥 형 (hyung) 이라고 해.

Netflix translation: Then just call me

Sang-woo (hyung is mistranslated).

Ali: 그래도 됩니까....형?

Netflix translation: May I do that...Sang-woo (hyung)?

Direct lines and translations from Episode 5 (15:40-15:48)