

Character speech patterns

For a radio drama, it's important that every character's voice is distinct, both in timbre and the content of their lines. Here are guidelines for us to follow so that we can bring out each character's unique voice and personality.

I've developed four criteria to help guide each character's speech patterns:

Simple vs. Complex: Does the character speak in simple words, or display a larger vocabulary?

Succinct vs. Colorful: How many words does it take for the character to make their point?

Slang vs. Conventional: How frequently does the character use contractions, technically incorrect grammar, or slang?

Straightforward vs. Clever: Does the character take time to be witty, or are they more to-the-point?

Character	Speech patterns	Personality/Considerations	Example dialogue
Maria Sharpe Fugitive of the Empire	Simple Succinct Conventional Straightforward	Constantly surprised by her own resilience.	—“Queen Eleanor. Give me your hand. Hold still.” —“I don't know anything about it. I just wanted to help.” —“Are you afraid of me now?”
Hamal Former General for the Empire	Complex Succinct Convention Clever	Melancholic. Just wants to do the right thing.	—“I have no concern anymore for my own safety. But please, save the people of Madora. Lord Itzhak will kill whoever is in his way—man, woman, or child.”

<p>Zayd Amer Master Thief</p>	<p>Simple Succinct Slang Clever</p>	<p>Optimistic.</p> <p>Harbors guilt over a past error, so he may sound hypervigilant at times.</p>	<p>—“Look. If we want to be out of here before they realize, we need to leave now.”</p> <p>—“No clue. Couldn’t be General Rehm though. He’s the nicest fascist I’ve ever met.”</p>
<p>Eleanor Queen of Cicero</p>	<p>Complex Colorful Conventional Clever</p>	<p>Constantly trying to impress people.</p> <p>Graceful; elegant.</p> <p>A bit of a nerd. When a subject comes up that interests her, she’ll talk for days.</p>	<p>—“Come now, Maria; a lady must never apologize for her own popularity.”</p> <p>—“If you intend to continue making these baseless accusations, it would behoove you to learn my <i>name</i>. If there’s but one thing in this world that can move me to hatred, it’s a man lacking manners.”</p>
<p>Sabine The Queen’s Sister</p>	<p>Simple Succinct Slang Straightforward</p>	<p>Calm. Laid-back.</p> <p>A little bit insecure about herself. Purposefully prickly with her sister the Queen.</p>	<p>—“That little thing? Of course I knew. Dad gave me one too, you know.”</p> <p>—“Me? I’m, uh...also going that way. Yep.”</p>
<p>Lord Itzhak Imperial Commander</p>	<p>Complex Colorful Conventional Clever</p>	<p>Frenetic.</p> <p>Since he’s mentally unwell, we may want to make his cadence a little off-kelter;</p>	<p>—“Spear-carrier: By letting me in, you have failed your queen and country. To make matters worse—as if <i>anything</i> could get worse in this miserable country of dust and barbarians—I’ve scuffed my boots.”</p>

		make his language harsher.	
Illan Storbek Honored Knight to the Madoran King	Complex Succinct Conventional Clever	Proud. A little intense.	—“I am Illan Storbek, Knight of Madora. Aye, the kingdom has fallen. It matters not. I am Illan Storbek, Knight of Madora. Until the enemy pulls the blade from my hand and casts it down upon my neck, I am Illan Storbek. Until the day I am slain, a knight of Madora I shall remain.”