Paul Flanagan & Harry Parkin (University of Chester, UK)

"Love no-one but your children"
An analysis of multimodal meaning-making in the construction of powerful female characters in HBO's *Game of Thrones*

This paper reports on an analysis of multi-modal meaning-making in a 3-minute scene from Season 2 of HBO's *Game of Thrones*. Analysis focuses on performed language (Queen 2015) by two central female characters in this TV series and takes a sociolinguistic approach to investigating the link between the characters' identities and their accent use, following the framework established by Lippi-Green (1997). Language is also analysed from a critical discourse analytical perspective, identifying performances of power through the analysis of syntactic structures, modality, presupposition, and the strategic use of pronouns and terms of address. The manipulation of polarity within utterances is also shown to be a marker of character power and is found to be a recurring feature across the *Game of Thrones* series.

Analysis of meaning-making is further considered from a multimodal perspective, with a focus on how language operates in coordination with other semiotic modes, including cinematographic features such as gaze, eye contact, proxemics, background music, and camera angles and framing. Such multi-dimensional analysis offers a valuable opportunity to reflect on methodological issues, such as transcription methods, coverage, and interdisciplinarity.

The multimodal CDA approach follows the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2020) and builds on the developing canon of work in the area of telecinematic language studies (McIntyre 2008 & 2012; Bednarek 2010, 2015 & 2018; Richardson 2010; Piazza et al. 2011; Queen 2015; Beers-Fägersten 2016; Werner 2018) by providing a detailed close reading of an extended scene from a major TV series, unravelling the combination of linguistic and extralinguistic features which underpins *Game of Thrones'* reputation for constructing powerful female characters.

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