



## Women's Strength in the Film: An Interpersonal Analysis

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### Abstract

In this study, a woman who strives to uphold her honor and emphasizes feminism is the main subject and is shown over the course of four acts. The acts are titled "Robbery" in the first act, "The Journey" in the second, "The Confession" in the third, and "The Birth" in the fourth. The study, which is classified as a case study, employs an interpersonal approach and the theory proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) in a qualitative descriptive technique. The results demonstrate that the visual modes complement one another, according to the researcher's findings and debate. Using an interpersonal perspective, Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) idea of drawing images can be used to describe Marlina's circumstance. The researchers also discover that the selection and use of these modes results in a piece of art that is visually striking and successfully conveys to the viewer the content contained in the movie. This is a result of their easy-to-understand design for the broader public. According to Kress and Leeuwen's hypothesis, the following elements are analyzed: shot, angle, position, eye contact, color meaning, multimodal, and salience.

**Keywords:** *Women's Strength, Critical Multimodality Discourse, Movie, Analysis*

### Introduction

Multimodality is practically ubiquitous in all facets of existence, beginning with animal primates and ending with digital media "as the central mode for representation" in the age of digital media. It is widely understood that this sort of communication involves simply spoken or written words. Kress (2000:189) takes a different stance, viewing written and spoken language as multimodal, stating that "[...] we have to rethink 'language' as a multimodal phenomenon," but he believes this approach may be perceived as "provocative" or "outrageous". Based on his critique of Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralism, which regards language as a system of meaning production consisting solely of signified and signifier, Foucault asserts that language (discourse) is a system of meaning production that teaches individuals how to see, think, and signify. Individuals' discursive practices are understood as the result of language, which is fundamentally tied to power relations (Sumarto, Tallapessy, & Diana, 2019).

Power is not always exercised by a single person. It is sometimes represented by a group of people, such as an organization or an institution. They have the ability to exert control on other members of society. People live in a society that is divided into social classes. This power is a component of discourse that occurs in the context of a group, institution, or organization (Van Dijk, 2005:354). Power in a single organization or institution is usually

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dispersed to a certain social domain, such as politics, the media, law and order, education, or corporate enterprise, and hence has multiple centers of power and elite groups that govern such centers (Sumarto, Tallapessy, & Diana, 2019). Nowadays, power and dominance may be seen in all spheres of human life. One of the true facts is that most people use religion to gain control of those who ruled in a certain community, and this phenomenon is still occurring now.

The researchers saw similar phenomena represent on *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts*. This is the researcher's reason to choose this movie. While, the most effective ways to illustrate is a media discourse and use language as a tool to convey a message. It is containing of scenes, acts, and language to illustrate a power and dominations which is understandable easier. Therefore, movie is chosen as a main data of this analysis. The title of the chosen movie is *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* and released in 2017. This movie tells the story of the journey of a widow in the interior of Sumba named Marlina to seek justice for the rape that happened to her. The story presented in *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* is filled with social criticism. Broadly speaking, this movie raises the theme of women who are often only the objects of men. Even their voices are often not heard, especially women in rural areas. Women in this movie are told that it is difficult to get justice. The figure of Marlina in this movie seems to be a representation of how difficult it is for women to get rights over themselves and their bodies. In addition to social criticism about women, this movie also includes social criticism about the social inequality that occurs in the interior of Indonesia.

There is an interesting mythology about the movie story which is about power and domination between two different genders. The issue represents through language in movie's characters conversation and images of *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* movie. Multimodality is also used to analyze the movie scene that consists of the sign. Others supporting theories are Language and Power by Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF MDA) by Kress and Leeuwen (2006).

## Literature Review

The study from (Tallapessy, Wahyuningsih, & Anjasari, 2020) purpose to uncover and investigate the existence of societal difficulties related to Bhabha's concept of postcolonialism as reflected by visual and linguistic aspects in the film *Black Panther*. The study's findings indicate that postcolonial discourse is represented in the film. The investigation of meta-functions at the textual level allows us to reveal the message based on how language functions in the film. At the level of discursive practice, Bhabha's concept of Postcolonialism reveals the postcolonial representation in one of Coogler's most popular films. At the level of social practice, the scenes address colonialization, the struggle of the African diaspora, blacks' struggle to present their voice in the midst of dominated culture, the issue of dictatorship as a result of the complexities of postcolonialism, and even the issue of globalization versus isolation. The discovery implies that the portrayal of postcolonial discourse reflects the postcolonial subject's ambivalence about his identity. Empirically, *Black Panther* shows that American films still choose to present the hierarchical position of black citizens in order for them to continue volunteering to contribute what they have to the world civilization. The film nevertheless wishes to demonstrate the existence of non-democratic social behaviors among black citizens, who are highly likely to be rewarded for being uncivilized. This representation is not good because it maintains the notion that Wakanda, no matter how powerful the country, cannot be removed from uncivilized behaviors.

Another research (Kasni, Asrofil, & Asfar, 2022). The result found the text and image components are used to know and identify the meaning contained in the *Aquaman* movie, which aims to provide information to readers and viewers through the modes displayed in the *Aquaman* movie. The *Aquaman* movie has been analyzed using other theories such in

Nurul Dewi Prabawaningrum's research in "Representation of Masculinity in the Aquaman Movie", In this study, she analyzes Aquaman from the aspects of his masculinity based on Roland Barthes' Semiotics theory, to find out the meaning of the sign of masculinity visualized in the Aquaman movie, in her research, she aims to describe the depiction of male masculinity. Meanwhile, in this research, the researchers attempts to define the Aquaman movie by using texts (Ideational: written texts) and images (Gestures, Facial Expressions, and Clothing Colors) visualized in the movie because the researchers sees that there are still a sense of the texts and the meaning of the images that have not been exposed in the Aquaman movie, in particular by using Kress & Van Leeuwen's multimodal discourse analysis approach.

Studies by (Sumarto, Tallapessy, & Diana, 2019) in "The Representation of Power and Domination in Assassin's Creed: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis" find the pictures and utterances shown in the selected data that illustrate the movie's characters' power and dominance. The data also illustrate how power is distributed between the majority and minority groups of individuals. The film's setting is based on a true historical story from The Knights Templar in 1492. It was a fight between the Knights Templar and the people of Granada, which had a Muslim majority. However, as the findings suggest, the representation of power and domination shows Templar as the dominant group who has more power above the Assassin's. It means that Templar has more army, network and supporting facilities.

## Method

The goal of this study is to investigate how women's strength is portrayed both verbally and visually in the movie "Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts." The researchers shows that the intent of the movie "Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts" was determined using image components. Using an interpersonal approach and the idea put forth by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), create illustrations in order to address the study's topic. The research, which is regarded as a case study, uses a qualitative descriptive methodology. A qualitative case study method is a way of doing research that concentrates on describing and interpreting specific events in a sample of cases that are examined in order to derive insights and conclusions. A qualitative case study, according to Baxter and Jack (2008), enables researchers to examine complicated occurrences in their surroundings. This latest study intends to analyze verbal and visual data as the textual evidence; thus, this research design is appropriate to be used.

## Results and Discussion

The research analysis of the film Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts will focus on Marlina, a woman who tries to defend her honor. This film also focuses on feminism, which is depicted in four acts. The first act is entitled "Robbery", the second act is entitled "The Journey", the third act is entitled "The Confession", and the final act is entitled "The Birth". Marlina is grieving as a widow. She puts a lot of effort into saving money each day so that she may afford her recently dead husband's burial. The embalmed body of her spouse was placed in her living room, awaiting her final resting place. A large, burly man named Markus knocked on her house and said he would rob her in thirty minutes. That's what happened: Marlina seduces Markus till his passion awakens while poisoning thieves. Marlina decapitated Markus after a sexual encounter, and then took his cloth-wrapped skull to the police station. In West Sumba, houses might be anywhere from ten to twenty kilometers apart, thus Marlina's journey feels like a figurative journey on which she discovers self- strength and a fresh beginning. The research will be divided into chapters, where the images that will be included are images that show Marlina's exploration of events in each round. The analysis uses theoretical references from Kress and Leeuwen (2006).

### The First Act: The Robbery

In act one, the story focuses on Markus who suddenly comes and wants to rob Marlina's house. Not only that, Markus will also call his friends to harass Marlina. In this round, Marlina's rights and honor as a woman are taken away and the growing patriarchal system assumes that women feel happy when they are teased by men. Marlina also tried to take back her honor and freedom to have full rights to her body by giving poison to the man.



Figure 1. data 1, data 2 & data 3

Table 1. Image Interpretation data 1

Image Interpretation	
Shot	The data's social separation is shown in close-up because Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 124) state that close shot shows head and shoulders of the subject.
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	Picture is in side of margin.
Eye contact	The eye contact using offer contact.
Color meaning	Marlina using clothes with color blue. The color blue is associated with depth, loyalty, trust, knowledge, confidence, stability, faith, and intellect.
Multimodal	Because there is minimal participant information in the color depiction, the modality is minimally multimodal.
Saliency	The saliency is maximum saliency because the focus of the image only highlights Marlina while the background is left blurred.

In data 1, scene tells of Marlina who is shocked by Markus' statement that Markus is going to rob and he will bring several other friends to rob and harass Marlina. The shot was taken using close up, close-ups of subjects displaying their emotions (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 126). Marlina expressed this because she was surprised by Markus' narrative and took photos to capture Marlina's emotions using close-up. The angle is horizontal because the represented participant is one in which the interacting participant has influence over the represented participant (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 140). According to Kriss and Leeuwen (2006: 250), provide contact state means portrayed participants as 'information' to be taken in by the spectator. Marlina then made it obvious that she did not want to mingle with the crowd. The picture in the side of margin or not in the center means that it is presented as something the audience is already familiar with, as a familiar and agreed- upon starting place for the message (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 181. Marlina's position is not in the middle, this is also

because this scene wants to show Marlina's husband being preserved. This also connects to maximum salience. It highlights Marlina's misery but it seems as if her husband is in the background cheering Marlina on.

Table 2. Image Interpretation data 2

	Image Interpretation
Shot	In this scene taken using long-shot. A long shot is one in which the subject of the picture is roughly half as tall as the frame (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 124).
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	It is evident from the photograph that the participants are positioned in the center, with their margin location in the middle. Regarding reading images, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006, p. 181) state that viewers or readers are used in this posture to allow viewers to concentrate on a single topic.
Eye contact	The eye contact using demand contact.
Color meaning	The background there has a warm tone vibe which tend in yellow. It stands for dynamism, optimism, pleasure, happiness, and camaraderie. It might also represent intelligence.
Multimodal	The modality indicates maximum. This is because all participants are clearly visible.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the participant as the primary character, who is distinguished by the contrast in color and sharpness of focus.

In data two, the scene shows Marlina smiling because she succeeded in killing Markus' henchmen. The scene was shot using a long shot, because the characters are visible and most of the background is also highlighted. Based on Kress and Leeuwen (2006:140) Horizontal angle is determined by the relationship between the image-producer's frontal plane and the frontal planes of the portrayed participants. So in the frame there is the character Marlina who is smiling and is seen holding a poison behind her back. The participants in the photograph may be seen in the center, which is positioned in it, with their margin location in the middle. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006, p. 181), in this position, viewers or readers are used so that viewers can focus on one point. Maximum modality is visible because Marlina and the robbers are clearly visible in the frame. Salience is also maximum because Marlina seems to be the main focus. Eye contact uses fever contact which means represented participants address the viewer directly with their gaze and 'want something from the viewer' (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 250). By using fever contact, Marlina seems to be telling the audience that she has succeeded in killing the robbers.

Table 3. Image Interpretation data 3

	Image Interpretation
Shot	In this scene taken using long-shot. A long shot is one in which the subject of the picture is roughly half as tall as

	the frame (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 124).
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	Center has information value since the participant is visible in the image's center, where it is situated.
Eye contact	-
Color meaning	The atmosphere in the room tends to have colors that are not too bright, depicting a tense atmosphere.
Multimodal	The modality indicates maximum. This is because all participants are clearly visible.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the participant as the primary character, who is distinguished by the contrast in color and sharpness of focus.

In this scene is the scene where Marlina beheads Markus after being raped. Angel's angle uses a long shot where many elements are visible in the frame. The participants in the photograph may be seen in the center, which is positioned in it, with their margin location in the middle. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006, p. 181), in this position, viewers or readers are used so that viewers can focus on one point. Where the center of this scene shows the resistance given by Marlina to Markus who raped her. This scene has maximum modality where the entire atmosphere there is very clearly visible and maximum salience because Marlina and her resistance are clearly visible.

### The Second Act: The Journey

This round tells the story of Marlina's journey to the police station after killing the robbers. Marlina met her friend, Novi, a young woman who was 10 months pregnant and they traveled by truck. Marlina came with a sickle and Markus' body parts as a form of confiscation. All the men in the truck moved aside, only one old woman remained to receive Marlina. When a group of robbers returned looking for Marlina, Novi and the woman were the ones who covered up Marlina's whereabouts so that Marlina could be free from threats.



Figure 4. data 4 & data 5

Table 4. Image Interpretation data 4

Image Interpretation	
Shot	This scene using very close-up. Based on Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 124) anything less than the subject's head and shoulders is seen in the close shot, also known as a "close-up," and anything less than that is considered a "extreme close-up" or "big close-up."
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).

Position	Center has information value since the participant is visible in the image's center, where it is situated.
Eye contact	-
Color meaning	The background there has a warm tone vibe which tend in yellow. It stands for dynamism, optimism, pleasure, happiness, and camaraderie. It might also represent intelligence.
Multimodal	The modality indicates maximum. This is because all participants are clearly visible.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the head as the primary character.

The depiction of the situation in this scene is when Marlina brings Markus' head which she will take with her to the police station. The picture was taken using a close-up which only shows Markus' head and a little of Marlina's feet. The horizontal means determined by the relationship between the image- producer's frontal plane and the frontal planes of the portrayed participants (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006:140). At this horizontal angle, the focus is only on Markus' head and Marlina's feet. The position taken is also placed at the center, so the depiction in this scene really focuses on Marlina who succeeds in beheading Markus. The background there has a warm tone vibe which tend in yellow. It stands for dynamism, optimism. The optimistic depiction here is because Marlina will fight for her rights at the police station, where she hopes to find justice. The use of maximum modality and salience also aims to clarify the atmosphere taken.

Table 5. Image Interpretation data 5

Image Interpretation	
Shot	The data's social separation is shown in close-up because Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 124) state that close shot shows head and shoulders of the subject.
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	Center has information value since the participant is visible in the image's center, where it is situated.
Eye contact	The eye contact using offer contact.
Color meaning	Marlina dressed in pink. Pink conjures us sentiments of coziness, warmth, optimism, and wellbeing.
Multimodal	The modality indicates maximum. This is because all participants are clearly visible.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the participant as the primary character, who is distinguished by the contrast in color and sharpness of focus.

The image in data 5 shows a situation where Marlina forces the truck driver to take her to the police station. Then there were two other women, namely a grandmother and Novi. The shot was taken using close up, close-ups of subjects displaying their emotions (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 126). This is because even though there are many participants in this frame, the shot does not focus much on the background so the audience is made to focus on the four figures in the truck. Each character also uses a contact offer. Even though the grandmother and Novi were standing behind them and looking straight, they were both looking at

Marlina, who had been holding a machete to the driver's neck. The entire image is also clearly visible and all participants are visible so that modality and salience are maximum.

### The Third Act: The Confession

Act three tells the story of when Marlina arrived at the police station. Instead of getting protection, Marlina actually got stupid questions like why she wanted to be raped by old guy. Then, the confession of sin referred to in the title of this round is an illustration of the societal stigma that women who are victims of sexual violence are very sinful and also despicable.



Figure 6. data 6 & data 7

Table 6. Image Interpretation data 6

Image Interpretation	
Shot	In this scene taken using long-shot. A long shot is one in which the subject of the picture is roughly half as tall as the frame (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 124).
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	Center has information value since the participant is visible in the image's center, where it is situated.
Eye contact	-
Color meaning	The background there has a warm tone vibe which tend in yellow. It stands for dynamism, optimism, pleasure, happiness, and camaraderie. It might also represent intelligence.
Multimodal	Because the backdrop color does not provide a maximal depiction of the participant's details, the modality is minimal.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the participant as the primary character, who is distinguished by the contrast in color and sharpness of focus.

After boarding the truck, the truck that Marlina was riding in was discovered by the two remaining robbers. So, Marlina used a horse to take him to the police station. The headless person is Markus who is in Marlina's shadow because Marlina is traumatized. In this scene taken using long-shot. A long shot is one in which the subject of the picture is roughly half as tall as the frame (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 124). In the long shot, there is Marlina riding a horse, the headless spirit of Markus, and a scenic background. In this frame, it only focuses on Marlina who has walked quite far and does not focus on Markus' corpse, so it is called



minimum modality. Even though it's not that far away, the focus of the frame remains on Marlina so the salience used is maximum.

Table 7. Image Interpretation data 7

Image Interpretation	
Shot	In this scene taken using long-shot. A long shot is one in which the subject of the picture is roughly half as tall as the frame (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 124).
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	Center has information value since the participant is visible in the image's center, where it is situated.
Eye contact	Using offer contact.
Color meaning	The background there tend in grey. Grey indicates neutrality and balance in color psychology. Its color connotation is most likely derived from its being a shade between white and black. Grey, on the other hand, has certain negative associations, particularly when it comes to depression and loss.
Multimodal	The modality indicates maximum. This is because all participants are clearly visible.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the participant as the primary character, who is distinguished by the contrast in color and sharpness of focus.

Data 7 shows Marlina reporting the robbery and rape incident to the police on duty. However, the police did not take Marlina's report seriously. The scene was shot using a long shot, because the characters are visible and most of the background is also highlighted. Based on Kress and Leeuwen (2006:140) Horizontal angle is determined by the relationship between the image- producer's frontal plane and the frontal planes of the portrayed participants. The background there tend in grey. Grey indicates neutrality and balance in color psychology. Its color connotation is most likely derived from its being a shade between white and black. Grey, on the other hand, has certain negative associations, particularly when it comes to depression and loss.

### The Third Act: The Confession

When she felt she couldn't get justice, Marlina finally returned home. Marlina was forced to return home, which traumatized her because Novi was apparently being held by Markus' group of robbers who were still alive. However, this time Marlina and Novi dared to fight back. This birth chapter ends with Novi finally giving birth to her child in the kitchen of Marlina's house. This birth is also a symbol of a new, free beginning for Marlina.

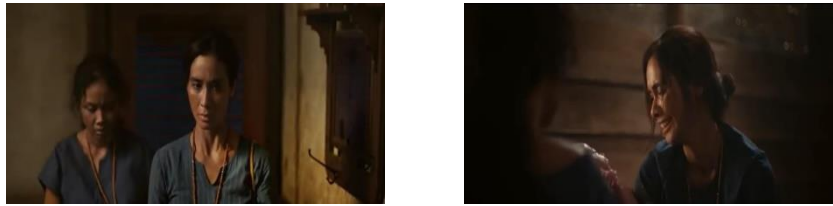


Figure 8. data 8 &amp; data 9

Table 8. Image Interpretation data 8

Image Interpretation	
Shot	The data's social separation is shown in close-up because Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 124) state that close shot shows head and shoulders of the subject.
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	Center has information value since the participant is visible in the image's center, where it is situated.
Eye contact	The eye contact using offer contact.
Color meaning	Marlina and Novi using clothes with color blue. The color blue is associated with depth, loyalty, trust, knowledge, confidence, stability, faith, and intellect.
Multimodal	The modality indicates maximum. This is because all participants are clearly visible.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the participant as the primary character, who is distinguished by the contrast in color and sharpness of focus.

Data 8 shows Novi and Marlina talking with one of the remaining robbers. Close-up illustrate the social division in the data because, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 124), they highlight the subject's head and shoulders. The close-up here shows Novi and Marlina's mixed feelings, because the robber asked Novi to cook while leaving Marlina to stay with the robber. Marlina made eye contact with the robber because she was surprised. Meanwhile, Novi lowered her head, avoiding the gaze of the robber and Marlina because she felt confused and afraid. Marlina also wore blue again, Novi also wore blue. One of the meanings of the color blue is loyalty and self- confidence.

Table 9. Image Interpretation data 9

Image Interpretation	
Shot	The data's social separation is shown in close-up because Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 124) state that close shot shows head and shoulders of the subject.
Angle	The angle is using horizontal (frontal angle).
Position	Center has information value since the participant is visible in the image's center, where it is situated.
Eye contact	The eye contact using offer contact.
Color meaning	The background is usually black. Black represents protection, power, elegance, and sophistication.

Multimodal	Minimum modality.
Salience	It has the maximum salience because it highlights the participant as the primary character, who is distinguished by the contrast in color and sharpness of focus.

In data 9 is the moment when Novi successfully gave birth to the baby she had been carrying for 10 months. Novi's birth process was assisted by Marlina and when the baby was born there was a happy expression on Marlina's face. Close-up illustrate the social division in the data because, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 124), they highlight the subject's head and shoulders which here highlights Novi and Marlina. The angle is horizontal because the represented participant is one in which the interacting participant has influence over the represented participant (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006: 140). Minimum modality because there is un-focus and unclearness in several parts. However, data 9 has maximum silence because it highlights Marlina who looks happy after the birth of Novi.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussions carried out above, it was found that the image components were used to identify the meaning in the film " Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts". Based on the researcher's results and discussion, it can be said that the visual modes complement one another. Nine pictures taken as data show Marlina's exploration in obtaining justice. Where from round 1 when the problems started to round 4 where Marlina chose to turn over a new leaf. Drawing images using the theory of Kress and Leeuwen (2006) can describe the situation experienced by Marlina through an interpersonal approach. In addition, the researchers finds that the choice and application of these modes serve to both produce a work that is aesthetically stunning and effectively communicate to the audience the meaning that is included in the film. This is because they are designed to be easily comprehended by the general population. The parts that are dialyzed using the Kress and Leeuwen theory include: shot, angle, position, eye contact, color meaning, multimodal, and salience.

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