

De-Queering Proxemics in the Screen Adaptation of Camorra Male Dyads: A Multimodal Prosody Analysis

Giuseppe Balirano

University of Naples "L'Orientale"

gbalirano@unior.it

Abstract

The recent TV screening of the Neapolitan camorra seems to be spreading a somewhat incorrect interpretation of 'queer masculinity' in dyadic nonverbal interactions occurring between televised camorra mobsters. Such faux constructions of camorristi might result from the fact that cross-cultural differences in non-verbal forms of communication, realised in subtitled texts, are a major constraint for audio-visual translators in their task of adapting a complex multimodal product into other cultures/languages. Despite the significant attention scholars have recently devoted to the effect of TV coverage on viewers, very little attention has been paid to the ways in which male social actors involved in the Neapolitan crime syndicate have been discursively re-semiotised in English-speaking contexts. When non-verbal communication crosses national, cultural and linguistic boundaries via subtitling, some context-bound references and differences on non-verbal behavioural dimensions may prevent the full appreciation of the source text. In particular, the manner in which personal space is interpreted crossculturally, remains an unreadable culture-bound factor for the target audiences. This study seeks to confirm previous anthropological and linguistic research on personal space, an interesting academic field that has remained somewhat silent for a long period, and incorporates some of its insights into the analysis of audiovisual translation. With this in mind, this paper provides a multimodal integrated investigation of the perception of the TV drama series Gomorrah (produced in Italy and subtitled in English) outside the boundaries of Italy, looking at data from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The study, which is a theoretical contribution to cross-cultural adaptation, employs "multimodal prosody" analysis in order to disambiguate the interpretation of camorristi proxemics and haptics as a queer representation.

Keywords

multimodal prosody, Gomorrah, queer representation, proxemics, audiovisual, translation, queer masculinity, queer camorrista