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Transcultural Journal for Humanities & Social Sciences (TJHSS)

Prof. Hussein Mahmoud
BUC, Cairo, Egypt
Email: houssein.hamouda@buc.edu.eg

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BUC, Cairo, Egypt
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Prof. Dr. Herbert Zeman
Neuere deutsche Literatur
Institut für Germanistik

Universitätsring 1
1010 Wien
E-Mail: herbert.zeman@univie.ac.at

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Montanari**
University of Hildesheim/
Germany
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Email: Serket@yahoo.com

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BUC, Cairo Egypt
Email: manar.moez@buc.edu.eg

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Universidad Complutense de
Madrid, Spain
Email: isabelhg@ucm.es

Elena Gómez

Universidad Europea de Madrid,
Spain
Email: elena.gomez@universidad-europea.es
Universidad de Alicante, Spain
Email: spc@ua.es

**Mohamed El-Madkouri
Maataoui**

Universidad Autónoma de
Madrid, Spain
Email: el-madkouri@uam.es

Carmen Cazorla

Universidad Complutense de
Madrid, Spain
Email: mccazorl@filol.ucm.es

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Arabic Language
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of Eastern Literatures studies
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Email: emirlin@pku.edu.cn

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School of Tongji University
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University
Email: genmingwang@xisu.cn

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University
Email: janeraon@hotmail.com

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Ebrahim**

Professor of Chinese Linguistics
Faculty of Alsun, Ain Shams
University
Email: ninette_b86@yahoo.com

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University
Email: gaalswn@gmail.com

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Email: prof.noor@live.com

Prof Alaa Alghamdi

Professor of English Literature
Taibah University, KSA
Email:

Visual Analysis: Representational and Interactive Meanings in The Remarried Empress

Ola Eid Ali

Faculty of Linguistics and Translation, Badr University in Cairo, BUC

Email: olaeidali94@gmail.com

Abstract:

Following the trendy visual designs, webtoons are a recent industry of arts that flourished as webcomics. They are broadly available with innovative stories in various genres. The visual elements in webtoons are vivid and prosperous in a way they can attract a linguist to shift away from interpreting the usual verbal content to the investigation of meanings beyond these non-verbal designs. For that purpose, this study aims to apply Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework to discover meanings beyond panels from *The Remarried Empress* webtoon. Six panels from the 1st episode of this webtoon are analyzed in two dimensions: representational and interaction. The paper discusses how are the main characters represented, and in what way they are interacting with the viewer in these panels. The findings show that *The Remarried Empress* webtoon is like any other literary story that intends to be dynamic through narrative representational processes. Moreover, it builds relations with the viewer through gazes and gestures drawn by the creator, framings, and angles within the panels and proves the reliability of these relations by indicating high values of modality markers.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background on the Topic

Meanings are embedded in everything around us. They are not supposed to be only in linguistic elements as the non-linguistic ones can deliver them too. Accordingly, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) asserted that "it is possible to pretend that the meaning carried in the image is there only in the eye of the beholder, something that it would not be possible to assert about verbally realized meanings" (p. 20). Consequently, images and pictures, as visual domains, tend to communicate messages with the viewers and imply meanings without the necessity for verbal content to be elaborated. For instance, webtoon is a recent digital type of comics nowadays that tends to communicate meanings through various artistic elements. The visual elements inside a webtoon imply ideas beyond the expressive and aesthetic representations of these items. They depict meanings through numerous aspects of representations and interactions. Their meanings are delivered visually and participate in the social interactions and communicative dimensions within society (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Thus, in this research paper, webtoon panels will be tackled as a domain to highlight their visual elements under two dimensions of Kress and van Leeuwen's framework of visual designs.

1.2 Aim

This research paper tends to apply Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) theory of visual designs to six panels from the first episode of *The Remarried Empress* webtoon. The visual elements of these panels will be analyzed under two visual dimensions. Then, the meanings of these elements would be discussed in representational and interactive aspects according to Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar.

1.3 Structure of the Study

This study will be conducted into four sections:

- The first section will introduce the topic of this research, its aim, and its structure.
- The second section will present Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework which will be used as a tool in the analysis of this paper, and it will review some previous studies that tackled the topic of this research in their discussions. Then, the research questions, upon which the study will be conducted, will be also included.
- The third section will describe the methodology of this paper by putting a description for the data used, identifying tools used in the data analysis, and highlighting the procedures followed from the starting point of collecting data from sources till the steps followed in stating these data in this research paper.
- The fourth section will discuss an inclusive analysis and its results for six panels from the first episode of *The Remarried Empress* under the representational and interactive dimensions of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) perspective.
- The fifth section will involve a conclusion summarizing the study of this research paper, showing its limitations and further implications for future research.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Background

Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) theory of visual designs is based on Halliday's (1978) three metafunctions of language: ideational, interpersonal, and textual of the social semiotic theory of communication. It is stated that visual domains have a grammar that describes how their elements and structures communicate intended messages through their representations in a visual design (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Therefore, intended meanings delivered by visual modes in a visual design are highlighted in three dimensions: representational, interactive, and compositional under Kress and van Leeuwen's framework.

2.1.1 The Representational Dimension

This dimension is based on the ideational metafunction of the language which deals with the representations of things and their relations in the world around us (Halliday, 1978). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), elements and items in visual works and designs are introduced as "participants". These participants are divided into two groups: "represented participants" which are people, things, objects, or places that are placed in visual domains

(e.g., characters in comics), and “interactive participants” the ones who produce or create these domains or the ones who view these work of art (e.g., the creator of the comics and the viewers) (p. 47-48).

Moreover, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) highlighted another type of participants in representational processes as “Circumstances” the secondary participants connected to the main ones but not by vectors (p.72). Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) framework explained Circumstances as “participants which could be left out without affecting the basic proposition realized by the narrative pattern, even though their deletion would, of course, entail a loss of information” (p.72). But they will not be tackled in the analysis because the focus will be on the main characters; participants only. Henceforth, under this dimension, these participants have two types of representations: narrative and conceptual representations.

2.1.1.1 Narrative Representation

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) claimed that narrative representation is about the dynamic processes that involve unfolding actions and events in which participants are engaged in doing something to or for each other. It has various kinds of processes that differ in the kind of vector (e.g., the verb in the language) they have and the number of participants they involve. These narrative processes are action, reactional, speech, and mental process (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

First, the “action process” is a narrative process that involves the “Actor”; the represented participant who forms the “Vector;” the action that is received by the “Goal” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.59). In this process, Vector is represented as an act, or an action made by the Actor and received by the Goal, the receptor of the action. Action process can be represented in two different structures: “transactional structure;” when the goal is present and “non-transactional structure;” in which the actor only exists in the process (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 63). Further, the representation of an action process where the Goal only exists without any Actor is called an “Event” that indicates something is happening without identifying the initiator or the source that caused this thing to happen (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 64).

The second process is the “reactional process” in which Vector is represented as an “eyeline or a direction of a glance by a represented participant” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.67). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) tend to introduce the represented participants in this process as “Reacter”; the participant who glances or looks at, and “Phenomenon”; the participant who or which receives the gaze. Like the action process, the reactional process can be in a transactional structure where the Phenomenon exists or a non-transactional structure where only the Reacter is present (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Moreover, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) introduced “speech process and mental process” as types of narrative processes similar to the transactional reactional process where the phenomenon exists with a vector represented in “the content of the comic strips” (p.68). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the comic strip appears in form of a “thought bubble” connected to the viewer in the mental process. While, in a speech process, the

content of a “dialogue bubble” is connected to the viewer (p.68). Yet, the analysis of this paper will be only conducted on the visual modes inside the visual domains rather than the verbal ones. Participants in these two processes are the viewer who is connected by the content and the Reactor who becomes “Speaker” in terms of speech process. and “Senser” in terms of the mental process (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 68).

2.1.1.2 Conceptual Representation

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) introduced the second type of representation; conceptual representation as a static representation with no vectors which “represents participants class, structure or meaning” (p.59). In other words, participants in conceptual representation tend to act more stable instead of being dynamic like those of the narrative representation. Conceptual representation has three types of processes: classificational, analytical, and symbolic, but this paper will concern with the symbolic process in its analysis for the main characters of a fantasy webtoon instead of the classificational process which deals with taxonomies, and the analytical one which is preferable for maps and economic domains to be stated analytically.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), conceptual symbolic processes are represented by two participants: the “Carrier” who or which holds one or more symbolic values or attributes that define its meaning in the process, and the “Symbolic Attributes” the meaning given to the “Carrier” and the attributes that identify it (p.105). Symbolic attributes are mostly characterized by salient representations placed in the foreground as exaggerated size, delicate details, sharp focus, or glaring color and tone. They also seem somehow odd among the other participants in the same frame, have symbolic values, and are detected by a gesture (e.g., facial expressions) in the process of symbolization (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

2.1.2 The Interactive Dimension

The second dimension is based on the interpersonal metafunction of the language which deals with the interaction between the creator of the domain and its receptor (Halliday, 1978). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) introduce the interaction in the second dimension focusing on the relations between the creator of the visual domain, the viewer; the interactive participants, and participants depicted in the visual designs; represented participants. Therefore, this dimension discusses three types of relationships between the involved participants: relations between represented participants, relations between interactive and represented participants, and relations between interactive participants (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). These relations are illustrated by Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) framework and embedded within these four categories: gaze, social distance, angles, and modality.

2.1.2.1 Gaze

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) acknowledges that gaze implements an imaginary connection between the represented participant; the gazer and the interactive one; the viewer. This interactive relation between both participants becomes the vector that may be accompanied by a gesture in the same way as a further vector. Henceforth, images with gaze are called ‘images of an act’ in which the represented participants are demanding something from the viewer (e.g.to act in a certain way) in an imaginary relationship with him/ her performed by the gaze (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.116). Demanding relations between the represented participants and the interactive ones; the viewers depend on the vector between them represented as the gaze and gestures, if they are present, of the represented participants within the visual design (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The Demanding relations between represented and interactive participants differ based on the type of gesture performed as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Gestures and their Types of Demanding Relations

Gestures	Demanding Relations between represented participant and viewer
Smile	Asking the viewer to be in a social affinity relationship
Cold stare	Asking the viewer to consider the participant as an inferior where he/ she becomes superior.
Seductive pout	Asking the viewer to desire the participant.
Finger pointed at the viewer.	Asking the viewer attention to come closer
Defensive gesture	Asking the viewer to have a distance.

Adopted from (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 118)

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) asserted that represented participants may have no connections with viewers. Instead, they have “offer relations”, where the represented participants in a visual domain tend to introduce information, detached from any relations with the viewer, and present important parts within the visual design (p.11

9). These demanding and offer relations play a crucial role whether in bringing the viewer closer to the represented participant or keeping a distance between them (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

2.1.2.2 Social Distance and Framings

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), social distance is associated with the frame size within the analysis of the interactive meanings of the represented participants in visual designs. This category indicates relations between the represented participants and the viewer in terms of allowing the viewer to be engaged or detached from the participants socially (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Further, the engagement and the detachment relations between participants are represented through different framings pointed out by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) as:

- “Close-ups” where only the head and the shoulder appear.
- “Big/extreme close-up” where anything less than the shoulder and the head of the subject appears.
- “Medium close shot” where the subject is cut off at the waist.
- “Medium shot” where the subject is cut off at knees.
- “Medium long shot” where the full subject is shown.
- “Long shot” where the subject occupies half the height of the frame with space around it.
- “Very long shot” anything wider than that of the “Long” one (p.124).

These various framings depict distinct kinds of social distance represented in; “Close personal distance,” “Far personal distance,” “Close social distance,” “Far social distance,” and “Public distance,” as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Framings, Social Distances, and Social Relations

Framings	Social Distances	Social Relations
Close-ups	Close personal distance	Participants have intimate relations with each other and communicate physically.
Medium-close shots	Far personal distance	Participants discuss personal interests without any physical contact.
Medium-long shots	Close social distance	Participants discuss impersonal issues and business.
Long shots	Far social distance	Participants discuss business in a more formal and impersonal way than that of the close social distance.
Very long shots	Public distance	Participants behave like strangers.

Adopted from (Hall, 1964, as cited in Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 124-125)

2.1.2.3 Angle (point of view)

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) defined angle as the point of view or the perspective which creates relations between the represented participants and the viewer. These interactive relations between participants are achieved by two types of angles; the horizontal angle relates to relations of involvement or disengagement between represented participants and the viewer and the vertical one indicates relations of power between them (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), horizontal angle depicts “the relation between the frontal plane of the image-producer and the frontal plane of the

represented participants” (p.134). The relation between the frontal planes of both the creator and the represented participants has two perspectives:

- A horizontal frontal angle: in which the frontal planes of the creator are parallel and aligned with that of the represented participants to indicate involvement relations.
- An oblique angle: in which the frontal planes are not aligned and not faced with the ones of the represented participants to form detachment relations (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) identify the vertical angle as the relations of power between represented and the interactive participants. From a vertical angle, the represented participants are viewed from three different perspectives. First, the represented participants are viewed from a high angle to be depicted as inferiors while the interactive participant; the viewer are superiors to them and have power over them. Second, represented participants are viewed from a low angle to be depicted as superiors for the interactive ones and in turn have power over them. Third, represented participants are viewed at the same eye-level angle as that of the interactive participants where they are equal and no power relation is involved (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

2.1.2.4 Modality

Modality is the final category in this dimension. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), modality questions the creditability of messages in which people, places, and things, represented in a visual design, communicate and it detects their degree of reliability. Their value of truth is judged and marked by eight represented cues. These cues are introduced as ‘modality markers’ and represented as color saturation, color modulation, color differentiation, brightness, contextualization, representation, illumination, and depth that indicate the modality value of messages in the visual domain (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.160). Further, the degree of reality of the depicted messages is indicated in terms of a continuum; a scale running from the higher modality value to the lower one as in (e.g., color saturation) continuum in which high modality is indicated with the representation of full and saturated colors, and lower modality is indicated with the abstraction of the represented colors. Therefore, the greater value is indicated by a modality marker, its high modality value is achieved and vice versa as shown in Table 3 (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Table 3

Modality Markers with High and Low Modality

Modality Markers	High Modality	Low Modality
Color saturation	Full saturation (Various and intensive colors)	Low saturation (only black and white)
Color differentiation	A maximum diverse range of colors	Monochrome (displays only one color)
Color modulation	A shaded color	A plain color
Contextualization	A crowded and detailed	A plain background or an

	background	abstract setting
Representation	Detailed representation of foreground participants	Abstract representation for the foreground participants and reducing them to a minimal degree.
Depth	Deep perspectives of strong convergence of vertical lines e.g., fish-eye perspective	Absence of depth
Illumination	Full representation of bright and shade	Absence representation of bright and shade
Brightness	Maximum degrees of brightness	Two degrees of brightness of the same color e.g., dark grey and lighter grey

Adopted from (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.160-162)

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the degree of realism of the same modality marker may differ from one visual domain to another based on some values and beliefs coded by specific social groups. For instance, contextualization; detailed background in photographs depicts high modality where photography tends to achieve naturalism. On the other hand, in scientific blueprints and labels, contextualization depicts a low modality value where labels and diagrams tend to be easily read (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Henceforth, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) argued that there are sets of reality principles called “Coding orientations are sets of abstract principles which inform how texts are coded by specific social groups, or within specific institutional contexts and they are distinguished as the following: technological as in blueprints, sensory as in food magazines, abstract as in academic contexts, and naturalistic as in photographs” (p.165). Moreover, it is stated that one visual domain can have more than one type of coding orientation principle which means that the same visual domain can be ‘sensory’ in terms of one modality marker and ‘abstract’ in terms of another. Therefore, the assessment of reality in the visual domain will depend on the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 165).

Since the analysis of this research paper would be on a fantasy webtoon which is neither photographs nor scientific labels and blueprints, modality markers in this webtoon will be distinguished according to the sensory coding orientation principles. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) stated that these types of principles are led by the pleasure principle in their domains. According to this principle, modality markers achieve their greater degree of modality when colors depict sensual and emotive meanings, and everything in the picture contributes to delivering senses (e.g., touching, tasting, smelling, and feeling). Thus, the more appealing to the sensory qualities, the higher modality is achieved (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006)

2.1.3 The Compositional Dimension

This dimension is based on Halliday's (1978) textual metafunction of the language. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) focus, in this dimension, on the "integral meaning of the whole text" (p.177). This dimension tackles participants in a different aspect to show their contributions to the whole and integral meaning of the visual design. Therefore, elements of the representational and interactive meanings are analyzed according to different systems of evaluation: information value, salience, and framing (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This dimension and its systems will not be discussed in this paper, since the analysis in this paper would tackle the representational and interactive meanings in the various parts and structures of the visual design rather than the meanings of these parts and structures in the compositional system.

2.2 Previous Studies

Ly and Jung (2015) followed Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework to explore how advertisements contribute their meanings representationally and interactively. Their research paper discussed the advertisements' sociological and multilevel meanings delivered by the representation of image elements in different narrative and conceptual processes. It also found that the advertiser demand of the advertisement quality determined the relationships developed between the viewer and the different modes of the visual designs (Ly & Jung, 2015).

Another research paper by Guijarro and Sanz (2008) combined Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) theory in correspondence with Halliday's (1978) SFA to present how both verbal and non-verbal elements in a children's story contribute to the integral meaning compositionally. According to Guijarro and Sanz (2008), the representational, interpersonal, compositional, and textual perspectives compose to make the plot of that children's story be easily and simply narrated without any complexities.

Moreover, some researchers have recently applied webtoon to their studies. For instance, webtoon has been used in the analysis of a recent case study held by Norin (2018) to show how the characteristics of webtoons can help in their media conversion into television series and films. This case study reached that the functions of elements of webtoons as telling a story and attracting the viewers should be the main points of evaluation that make any specific webtoon be adapted or not (Norin, 2018).

Another case study, held by Pratama (2017), investigates politeness strategies in the speeches of the main character in *My Pre-wedding* webtoon to see how they affect fan translation. The discourse analysis found that the existence and the omission of these strategies contribute to the main character's traits and influence her personality. Thus, a fan translator should transfer this impact on the cultural values that are attached to the personality of the main character (Pratama, 2017).

Finally, webtoon has been also applied to a study by Prabasari et al. (2018) aimed at distinguishing between both signifiers and the signified in both the visual and the linguistic modes. It explored their roles in the event of the first episode of the *Orange Marmalade* webtoon. The results of the analysis showed that verbal and non-verbal signs work together

to integrate meanings through various relationships and convey the ideas of the event in the first episode (Prabasari et al., 2018).

2.3 Research Questions

This research paper will use the framework of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* in the analysis of the first episode of *The Remarried Empress* webtoon based on the following research questions:

1. How are the main participants represented altogether in the first episode of *The Remarried Empress* webtoon?
2. What kind of relations are between the main participants of *The Remarried Empress* webtoon and its viewer?

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Description

According to Wikipedia (2021), webtoons are recent digital comics originally launched in South Korea in 2003, by Daum. They have been published in suitable applications for smartphones and computers. They are in vertical strips which can be easily read by scrolling down the screen. Also, they have recently become exceedingly popular for their free access serial episodes which are now translated into various languages (e.g., Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian, English) (Wikipedia, 2021).

The Remarried Empress webtoon used in the analysis of this research paper is an adaptation from a Korean web novel titled *재혼 황후* (*Jaehon hwanghu*) was created, by Alphatart and Chirun, in 2018 and published on Naver web. The English version of the adapted webtoon made by Alphatart and Sumpul (2020) has been released on the 5th of September 2020 and it is updated every Sunday and Wednesday ("The Remarried Empress", 2020). The version used in this paper is the English one published on the Line Webtoon app.

The Remarried Empress is a serial webtoon with genres of fantasy, drama, and romance. The first episode portrays Navier (the Empress of the Eastern Empire) who accepts divorce from her unfaithful husband Sovieshu (the Emperor of the Eastern Empire) who cheated on her, despite their love story since childhood (Alphatart & Sumpul, 2020). The first episode is to be the climax of the whole story. The chosen panels from the 1st episode, in this paper, involve innocence of childhood and friendship, love of youth, and imperial marriage faces an end. These panels indicate an evolution in the relationship between its main characters. Further, they support the explosion of the upcoming events and impact their progress along with the plot of the story. Therefore, the following section would illustrate tools in Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework to be applied to six panels from the 1st episode of *The Remarried Empress*.

3.2 Tools

Panels from the first episode of *The Remarried Empress* would be analyzed only under two dimensions in Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework of visual grammar. The first dimension would highlight the representational meanings of the represented participants in two aspects. First, the narrative aspect would investigate if the chosen represented participants are dynamic and implying actions or reactions. Then, the conceptual aspect would check meanings behind the static states for both represented participants and circumstances to highlight their symbols (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Secondly, the interactive dimension would take place to figure out the relationships between the represented participants and their viewers that are implied by the author or the creator through different gazes, framing with varied sizes, angles and points of view, and modality makers (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

3.3 Procedures

This research paper was first held to derive away from the traditional linguistic disciplines to investigate innovative approaches in the linguistics field. Henceforth, meaning-making signs were the main target for searching about theories that can be applied in this field which involves types of modes that compose meaning in a certain culture and among individuals of a certain society. Thus, searching for the two variables of the topic of this research was about reading in different visual theories and finding a domain to apply on.

The first goal was achieved through different prolonged readings in various websites and databases to find out a recent study held by Ly and Jung (2015) which conducted a visual design analysis using the theory of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and applying it to two advertisements. This recent study became the inspiration for this current study which aims to apply the same framework of visual grammar to a new different domain that has not been mentioned in the context of visual analysis. In finding this new domain to be discussed, webtoons came to be the first suggestion for being a fan of drama series.

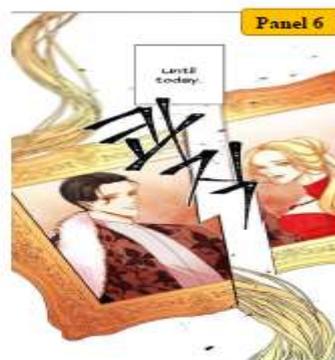
Then, an exhaustive search was held to distinguish if this domain has been used before in visual studies, in general. The answer was supported by a recent case study by Norin (2018) stated that webtoon is a recent type of media that still does not have much focus on it. Additionally, in searching for previous studies in the EKB database, the ELSEVIER database was the only one that provided few research articles on the framework only while there was nothing about the second variable; webtoons.

For the data itself, it was chosen at the first trial to be a webtoon for its success as an entertainment industry. It is a recent digital literary work made to suit modern visual readers nowadays. It is created to be read everywhere and anytime. Thus, it does not consume money or time from its viewers. *The Remarried Empress* was selected for rendering the climax of the whole story in its first episode. Therefore, impacting the plot of the story and attracting many viewers to follow up its unfolding events.

The analysis of this research paper would be conducted on six panels from the first episode of *The Remarried Empress*. The analysis is held based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework. The visual items in the six panels will be discussed under two dimensions:

representational and interactive. These dimensions would be followed in the analysis of panels that are entailing the two main characters altogether, Empress and Emperor, in the events of the first episode in *The Remarried Empress* webtoon.

4. Analysis, Representational Dimension



How are the main participants represented altogether in the first episode of The Remarried Empress webtoon?

This research question is going to be discussed in two parts under the representational dimension. The first part will deal with the participants depicted in the above panels. Then the second part is going to investigate processes depicted in these panels under the representational dimension.

4.1.1 Participants

4.1.1.1 Represented participants:

- The Prince and the Princess in panels 1, 2&3
- The Emperor and the Empress in panels 4, 5&6

The two main characters in the above panels are to be introduced as represented participants which are placed to represent some information and play important roles in the plot. Each panel has the same represented participants, but they differ in the representation of their age, appearance, and the shape of their relationship. For instance, panel 1 represents the participants at their childhood stage showing their pure soul and innocence. Panels 2&3 represent their youth and their intimate relationship. Panel 4&5 represent their luxurious appearance in a photo framing their marriage relationship. Then, this photo, in panel 6, has a crack leading to the end of that marriage.

4.1.2 Representational processes

4.1.2.1 Narrative processes

Process	P 1	P 2	P 3	P 4	P 5	P 6
Action process	Actor: Prince Vector: Putting the wreath of flowers Goal: Princess' head (Transactional action process)			Actor: Eperor Vector: Holding the Empress' back with a hand Goal: Empress (Transactional action process)		
Reaction-	Reacter:		Reacters:	Reacter1:	Reacter1:	Reacters:

al process	Prince Vector: Eye-line (Gaze with a smile) Phenomenon: Princess (Transactional reactional process)		Both Prince and Princess Vectors: A gaze with a smile Phenomenon: Both Prince and Princess (Transactional process)	Emperor Vector: Gaze Phenomenon: Empress (Transactional) Reacter2: Empress Vector: starring at an unknown object (non-transactional process)	Emperor Vector: Gaze Phenomenon: Empress (Transactional) Reacter2: Empress Vector: starring at an unknown object (non-transactional process)	Both Emperor and Empress Vector: gazing at something unknown for the viewer (non-transactional process)
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The represented participants are depicted into two narrative representational processes; action and reactional processes. In panel 1, the action process depicted, is composed of the prince; the Actor, who is putting a wreath of flowers on the princess's head; the Goal that receives the action. Then, the action done by the Actor; putting the wreath of flowers, is to be the Vector. Like panel 1, the action process in panel 4 entails both of the spouses where the emperor is the Actor, the empress is the Goal and the action of holding the empress' back gently by the emperor is the Vector. Both of the action processes in panels 1&4 are transactional action processes where Goal; the princess or the empress exists.

For the reactional processes, they are represented in panels 1, 3, 4 &5 in which the prince in panels 1&3 or the emperor in panels 4 &5 is the Reacter while his princess or the empress is the Phenomenon. The act of gazing or the eye-line that comes from the prince's or the emperor's side towards his princess or empress is the Vector in these reactional processes. Moreover, the structure of these reactional processes is a transactional one in which the Phenomenon is present. On the other hand, the reactional processes in panels 4, 5&6 are non-transactional ones where the empress is looking at something unknown for the viewer; the Phenomenon does not exist. As well as, in panel 6, the emperor is a Reacter looking at an unknown object.

4.1.2.2 Conceptual processes

Process	Panel 1	Panel 2	Panel 3	Panel 4	Panel 5	Panel 6
Symbolic conceptual processes					Carrier: Empress Symbolic Attributes: exaggerated	Carriers: Emperor and Empress Symbolic Attributes:

					size, sharp focus on her face, and intense colors and tone.	exaggerated size, crack, and blurred details in the photo.
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Symbolization is a conceptual process that exists in these panels. It helps in giving significance to the participant within the visual design and highlights things around it. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the symbolic conceptual process consists of the Carrier; the participant tended to be signified with values or attributes and the Symbolic Attributes; traits, values, or features given to the Carrier to be identified. For instance, panel 5 represents a symbolic conceptual process where the empress is the Carrier, and the Symbolic attributes that highlight and signify the empress are the exaggerated size, sharp focus on her face, and the intense colors and tone of her representation. They give her traits of suitability, adequacy, convenience, pride, and a source of admiration to demonstrate her role as an empress.

While in panel 6, there are two Carriers for the symbolic process; the emperor and his empress, and their Symbolic Attributes that develop negative meanings to their marriage relationship. Their Symbolic Attributes are placed in an exaggerated size focusing on the crack in the photo to suggest the idea of their break-up. They, also, represented in blurred details to depict how sad the atmosphere is between the spouses and to show that their marriage relationship is diminishing and coming to an end.

All that has been presented in this section answers the first research question that intended to discover how the main participants are represented altogether in the six panels of *The Remarried Empress*. The above analysis and its discussion shows that the six panels have represented the main participants in both narrative and conceptual processes. However, the narrative processes are, in these panels, more than that of the conceptual ones. The participants are shown in five reactional processes while they only achieve two action ones to support the idea within these panels. On the other hand, only one conceptual process is entailed in the representation of two panels. The symbolization conceptual process is only used twice. Therefore, these panels tend to be narrative, rather than, conceptual which helps in communicating more meanings in the dynamic representations of its characters. Henceforth, the represented characters work on supporting and highlighting the main purpose of these panels which is a story shaped in a webtoon form for the audience.

4.1 Interactive Dimension

What kind of relations are between the main participants of The Remarried Empress webtoon and its viewer?

The above research question is going to be investigated in four categories under the interactive dimension in which the relationship between the viewer and the creator of the

visual domain through the represented participants will be tackled. These four categories are gaze, social distance and framing, angle, as well as modality of the above six panels in the 1st episode of *The Remarried Empress*.

4.2.1 Gaze

Gaze	Panel 1	Panel 2	Panel 3	Panel 4	Panel 5	Panel 6
Relationships with Viewer	Offer		Offer	Offer	Offer	Offer
Gestures accompanied the gaze	The Prince's and Princess' smiling, laughing, and blushing facial expressions		The Princess' opened mouth and pointing finger & the Prince's gentle smile	The Emperor's gentle smile & the Empress' neutral facial expressions	The Emperor's gentle smile & the Empress' neutral facial expressions	The Empress' neutral facial expressions & the Emperor's lowered eyebrows and tightly pulled lips

In the above panels, there is no direct contact between the represented participants and the viewer. Thus, these panels are offer ones. Offer images are introduced by Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework as they represent the participants to the viewer as a source of information. Every panel represents a message that tends to inform the viewer of the evolving relationship between the two main characters; therefore, the evolution in the unfolding events of the plot. The viewer can receive these meanings through his or her interaction with the reactional representational processes that are found in the above panels.

These reactional processes play a vital role in shaping the relationship, as a sequence of events, between the two main characters from childhood till the present. The reactional process depicted in panel 1 reveals the primitive and pure love that the prince and the princess have for each other and that is represented by their gestures of smiling, laughing, and blushing. For panel 3, it is clear that they have reached the stage of youth and maturity; thus, their love relationship pumped up with trust and self-confidence which are shared and

reflected in their eyes' contact with one another. Then, their photo on the wallpaper, which has different representations in panels 4& 5, shows a decline in the reaction of the empress and her gestures towards the emperor. Finally, in panel 6, both of them show a dull face and a sad one with no reactional processes towards one another, instead, both of them gaze at nowhere indicating that their relationship is to have an end and that they would have a break-up.

4.2.2 Social Distance & Framings

Distances and Framings	Panel 1	Panel 2	Panel 3	Panel 4	Panel 5	Panel 6
Social Distance	Far social distance	Close personal distance	Far personal distance	Far social distance	Close personal distance	Close personal distance
Framings	Long shot	Close-up	Medium-close shot	Long shot	Close-up	Close-up
Relationships bet. Viewer & participants	Formal & Impersonal	Intimate & Demand	Personal	Formal & Impersonal	Intimate & Demand	Intimate & Demand

The size of the frames in which the main characters of the above panels are represented suggests the social distance between the represented participant and the viewer. Therefore, it is another way of communication between the viewer and the creator of the represented participants. This interactive channel between the viewer and the represented participants used by the creator to conduct meanings that support the arrangement of events in these panels and the main idea of the plot of this *webtoon*.

Therefore, panels 1& 4 are represented with long shots to depict a far social distance between the viewer and the participants. These panels demand the viewer to have a formal and impersonal relationship with the participants. They indicate and maintain their state of supremacy and royalty from a young age as depicted in panel 1. They, as well, put them in the highest ranking in society as they are the emperor and the empress as represented in panel 4.

On the other hand, panels 2& 5 are represented with close-up frames to implicate a close personal distance between the viewer and the represented participants. Both of these panels 2&5 demand the viewer to closely view and investigate the relationship between the emperor and the empress and to compare it now and then. Thus, the close-up, in panel 2, implies an explicit intimate relationship in which the participants are too close to each other while falling in a deep sleep together, yet in panel 5, the close-up frame is represented paradoxically, not for its real purpose, to induce the viewer to investigate and consider the change in their relationship along with the unfolding events.

As well panel 6 is represented with a close-up which does not imply any intimate meaning for its participants' relationship. It puts the spot on what happens between them; the break-up and the crack in their marriage. Moreover, panel 3 is the only panel represented with a medium-close shot to indicate a far personal distance between the viewer and the participants. It is represented as a far distance to remind the viewer of the limitations between him/ her and the participants; therefore, supporting the idea of the high state of these participants. It also indicates a personal one to encourage the viewer to engage with their relationship that entails love, trust, and respect and to share mood and atmosphere of harmony, admiration, and adore with the viewer.

4.2.3 Angle

Type of angle	Panel 1	Panel 2	Panel 3	Panel 4	Panel 5	Panel 6
Horizontal angle	Frontal	Oblique	Frontal	Oblique	Frontal	Frontal

All panels are represented in horizontal angles either oblique or frontal plane. Panels 1, 3, 5&6 are represented in a frontal plane horizontal angle which reflects the creator's intention to interact with the viewer and involve and engage him/ her with the represented participants. Hence, the viewer has to investigate the relationship between the participants and their evolution within the events. On the other hand, panels 2&4 are represented in oblique horizontal angles which tend to make the represented participants away from reach, detached, and prefer disengagement from others. It serves as another evidence for supporting the identity of the two main characters within the plot; it introduces their higher hierarchy social state. Therefore, horizontal angles are represented as offer entities in the interaction dimension. They help in proceeding with the events within the plot and provide the viewer the important information supporting the main characters.

4.2.4 Modality

Modality Markers	Panel 1	Panel 2	Panel 3	Panel 4	Panel 5	Panel 6
Color saturation	Full	Full	Full	Full	Full	Full
Color differentiation	A diverse range of colors	Diverse (Warm Palette)	A diverse range of colors	Diverse (Warm Palette)	Diverse (Warm Palette)	Diverse (Warm Palette)
Color modulation	Modulated	Modulated	Modulated	Modulated	Modulated	Modulated
Representation	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum
Contextualization	Minimum	Absence of background	Minimum	Detailed background	Absence of background	Minimum

Brightness	Maximal value					
Illumination	Low value	Low value	Low value	High value	Low value	Low value
Depth	eye-level point of view					

In these panels, modality is tackled from a sensory point of view as mentioned above in the theoretical background section. All panels are represented in intense colors with full saturation that appears to be pure and real for the viewer. They indicate reliability for the existence and the role of the represented participants. As well, the choice of differentiated warm color palettes (red, orange, and yellow) depicts emotions of harmony, respect, and love between the two main characters in these panels. Also, the representation of modulated colors with different shades supports meaning delivered within the colors and the represented participants altogether. Therefore, these saturated, differentiated, and modulated colors support the atmosphere, in these panels, and depict respect, trust, love, and admiration. They also achieve a high modality value that emphasizes the reality of these themes in the context of these panels.

Moreover, the foreground representation of the represented participants almost has the same high value in the six panels. All panels provide details about the way the participants are dressed in each panel and focus on their facial expressions and gestures that contribute greatly to delivering the representational meanings by the two main characters; henceforth, the plot of the story. Thus, every panel succeeds in representing details for its foreground participants. Therefore, representation, as a modality marker, achieves a high value of creditability for the roles of the represented participants in these panels.

Supporting the representation of the foreground participants, contextualization achieves minimum values in all panels to give the credit to the representational meanings delivered to the viewer through these participants. For instance, panel 1 is contextualized with a pinky and glowing representation for the background to support the lovely childhood memory of the two characters, yet the representation of a clear sky in panel 3 depicts the characters' youth as active, energetic, ambitious, compassionate, and determined. While panels 2, 5&6 are contextualized with plain backgrounds, panel 4 is represented with a fine-detailed wallpaper background. This wallpaper plays a vital role in demonstrating how sophisticated and luxurious the life of the two characters is; considering their high-ranking status in society. Moreover, panels 4, 5& 6 are sharing the same golden frame in their background, but, in panel 6, it is explicitly represented to be cracked, in an exaggerated size, by the empress's hair on the background too. The hair reveals that the empress is the one who ends this relationship; henceforth, it is a supporting detail in the plot.

For the rest of the modality markers, brightness indicates a high modality value in which maximum brightness degrees are applied on the panels by their creator. Yet, panel 6 seems to have the lowest value of brightness among them. On the other hand, the value of illumination achieves low values in all of the six panels, except for panel 4 which has the highest value of representation of shade and light. Moreover, depth in all panels is represented in a high modality value where these panels are created from a central perspective. The viewer looks at these panels from an eye-level point of view. This perspective depicts a high degree of reality for the representations of the two participants and their attached meanings within the context of panels that is guided by the plot of the first episode of *The Remarried Empress* webtoon.

The above analysis and its discussion in this section answer the second research question which investigates what kind of relations exist between the represented participants and their viewers. Therefore, all of the six panels succeeded in presenting the interactions between the viewer and the represented participants in four categories. First, the Gaze between the participants and the viewer constructed Offer relations throughout five panels and claimed panels to be informative. Second, social distances and framings approached the viewer and made him/ her closer to the meanings in these panels. Hence, close-personal distances are achieved with close-ups in three panels, far-social distances are also represented with long shots in two panels, and a far-personal distance is presented in one panel with a medium-close shot. Third, the Horizontal angles were represented in both frontal and oblique perspectives for the viewer. Within the six panels, the viewer feels involved with the represented participants four times and detached only twice.

Finally, Modality markers came to emphasize the truth of the information which was interacted between the participants and the viewer. The creditability of such information and meanings was proved in high values of color saturation, color modulation, color differentiation, representation, brightness, and low values of contextualization and illumination, along with, the eye-level perspective as the depth of the six panels. Therefore, in these panels, the first three categories established relations with the viewer to contact him/ her with the participants, inform and approach him/ her to the intended meanings. On the other hand, the fourth one was represented to investigate how far this communicated information can be true and support the plot within the story of these panels of the 1st episode of *The Remarried Empress* webtoon.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary of the study

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have stated that non-linguistic visual items can deliver meanings, as well as, linguistic ones. Consequently, the visual grammar framework is applied on six panels from *The Remarried Empress* webtoon. The aim was to discover how visual items of a webtoon can communicate meanings under Kress and van Leeuwen's representational and interactive dimensions. Then, the research questions came to investigate in what way the main participants are represented, and how they are associated with the

viewer. Consequently, the findings showed that the two main characters were represented in the narrative processes more than that of the conceptual one for the main purpose of this type of webtoon which intends to narrate its story to the viewer. Moreover, it was found that these characters were represented with four categories under the interactive dimension that made the viewer got involved, informed, and engaged in a creditable way with the impeded meanings delivered along the plot of the six panels.

5.2 Limitations of the study

Both the theory used and the data are limited within this research paper. First, the data is a serial webtoon and the 1st episode happened to be more than 50 panels. Each panel entails numerous visual elements, yet it is difficult to tackle every single detail due to time restraints. Thus, the data was limited to six panels to be chosen and analyzed. As well, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework was limited into two dimensions to be used in this study as each dimension has various aspects that need wider time to be applied on every visual item of each panel. Thus, only representational and interactive dimensions were directed to be covered in the analysis of the six panels not letting a chance for the compositional dimension to be engaged. Therefore, conducting a research paper by using a broader linguistic approach, as the visual grammar, and inclusive data, as a webtoon, can limit the points covered in the context of the framework and the data used due to time restrictions.

5.3 Implications for future research

The above limitations show that there are lots of details still uncovered in this research paper. For instance, panels of secondary characters were not mentioned in this paper. Thus, continuing a further investigation about the characteristics of all the visual elements in *The Remarried Empress* webtoon is recommended. Furthermore, bearing in mind the previous limitations would recommend choosing a webtoon character to be tackled extensively under the three dimensions of Kress and van Leeuwen's framework. Otherwise, it would be recommended to choose one point from Kress and van Leeuwen's dimensions, for instance, color as a modality marker, to be applied concisely on the whole episode of *The Remarried Empress* webtoon.

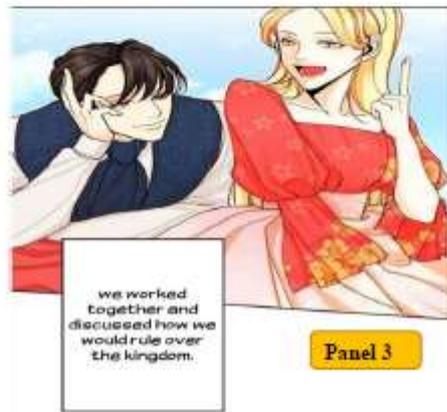
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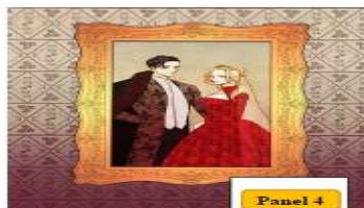
Appendix



Panel 2



Panel 3



Panel 4



Panel 5



Panel 6