

A multimodal discourse analysis exploring how Katie Hopkins asserts power over Katie Waissel in their debate on the television programme 'This Morning'

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Through the employment of multimodal interaction analysis (Norris, 2004), this study seeks to show how Katie Hopkins asserts power over her opponent Katie Waissel on a televised interview on This Morning, through features of non-verbal communication such as interruption and floor holding devices, and posture and gesture. The results of my analysis show that Katie Hopkins dominates Katie Waissel through face-threatening acts in the forms of beat gesture, expansive posture, competitive interruptions and floor holding devices.

1. Introduction and literature review

Katie Hopkins is a self-nominated spokesperson for the people, who helps shape social views through being an 'outspoken columnist', 'controversial TV personality' and a 'motormouth' (Baker, 2015; Rutter, 2016). Many people find Hopkins to be a 'vile Tory troll' (Bussey, 2015) causing 'offence on an almost daily basis on her twitter account' due to her 'shocking and often insulting views' on topics such as immigration, mental illness, and even ginger babies (Baker, 2015).

This project seeks to explore how Katie Hopkins asserts power over Katie Waissel in their debate on the television programme 'This Morning' through both verbal and non-verbal communication. I conduct a multimodal discourse analysis of the debate between Katie Hopkins and Katie Waissel (a heavily tattooed former X Factor contestant), on the topic of whether tattooed celebrities are good role models for children. Unsurprisingly, Hopkins shares views that are controversial ('if you have a tattoo you will never be a high achiever' (spikeyroberto, 2013)) and her attempt to thwart Waissel's counterargument is emphasized through her dominating body language and performance of face threatening acts (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Many semiotic studies point to how 'postural-gestural expressions' are used in non-verbal communication to express emotions or as 'substitutive functions' in conversation (Rosenberg and Langer, 1965: 593). Other studies, such as Baxter, Winter and Hammer's (1968) research, show how gesture is used more in communication by those with a greater 'verbal facility' (Argyle, 1988: 201). Beattie's (2003:1) study on bodily communication also points to 'language

and non-verbal communication and how these two systems of communication fit together' and how 'the movements of the hands and arms that people make when speaking... are intimately connected' because they represent 'the human mind in action' (Beattie, 2003: 17). Moreover, Beattie (2003: 24) writes that it seems obvious to consider both verbal and non-verbal behaviour when studying power and control, 'especially with regard to the organization of turn taking in a discussion'. The previous studies highlight the importance of the relationship between verbal and non-verbal communication in social interaction, and I have therefore utilized multimodal discourse analysis to study how Katie Hopkins asserts power over Katie Waissel.

This study is also concerned with the ways in which Katie Hopkins attempts to assert dominance through verbal communication, specifically through *competitive interruption*, interruptions in which the listener 'attempts to seize the floor from the speaker and dominate conversation' (Rothwell, 2013: 143). This is defined in opposition to cooperative interruption, which is an 'attention-giving, cooperative effort by the listener to focus attention on the other person' (Rothwell, 2013:142). My multimodal analysis also considers the ways in which Katie Hopkins interrupts her opponent, and how these interruptions are used as floor holding devices (Jackson, 2007) to assert power.

Many of the non-verbal and verbal communications produced by Hopkins can be framed through face-threatening acts (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson (1987: 59-60) define 'face' as someone's public image, so to conduct a face-threatening act is to attempt to hurt the recipient's public image. Brown and Levinson (1987: 61) define two types of face: *negative face*, which is concerned with the claim to one's territory and self-preservation, and *positive face*, which relates to the want to be appreciated and approved by other members of society.

2. Methodology

The data for this study will be the video of the televised 'This Morning' debate, presented by Holly Willoughby and Philip Schofield, between Katie Hopkins and Katie Waissel, which aired on 23rd April 2013 (spikeyroberto, 2013). This particular video is the subject of analysis because the discussion was very heated and the topic of conversation controversial. In order to investigate the interaction between Hopkins and Waissel, I have transcribed three short instances from the video that are the most confrontational, the summation of which are 51 seconds long. To transcribe the video clips, I employed Jefferson's (2004) transcription system, a key of which can be found in the appendix. In order to give an accurate and comprehensive interaction analysis, I have accompanied the transcriptions with screenshots of the video.

The methodology used in this study is that of multimodal discourse analysis (Paltridge, 2012), specifically multimodal interaction analysis (Norris, 2004). Because this study is concerned with non-verbal and verbal communication, the units of analysis are concerned with the action of 'televised debate', the higher-level actions of speech, specifically interruption and floor holding devices, and the lower-level actions of the social actors, relating to modes of posture and gesture (Norris, 2004; McNeill, 1985). According to Norris (No Date):

in order to study the complexity of human interaction, we have to consider and analyse all the [communicative] modes that the participants are utilizing... to emphasize the constant tension between the system of representation and the real-time interaction

and this study employs this premise. My analysis will primarily focus on interruption, floor holding devices, posture, and gesture, as these are the non-verbal and verbal face-threatening communicative acts used throughout the interview.

3. Data

3.1 Section 1



Figure 1.0 (2:24)



Figure 2.0 (2:25)



Figure 3.0 (2:26)



Figure 4.0 (2:27)



Figure 5.0 (2:34)



Figure 6.0 (2:38)



Figure 7.0 (2:39)

3.1.1 Transcript 1 (correlates to figures 1-7)

1. (2:22) KH: of course of course a job comes down to how you look [and if you have] (.) tattoos yes it does
2. (2:25) HW: [does ↑it↑]
3. (2:27) KH: Holly and if you have tattoos you are clearly placing yourself at a disadvantage .hh um t- to
4. (2:32) compared to other people you know for me::: and for lots of people like me when you see
5. (2:37) tattoos you think of someone just looking for attention

3.2 Section 2



Figure 1.1 (4:43)



Figure 2.1 (4:44)



Figure 3.1 (4:45)



Figure 4.1 (4:46)



Figure 5.1 (4:47)



Figure 6.1 (4:48)



Figure 7.1 (4:49)



Figure 8.1 (4:50)



Figure 9.1 (4:51)



Figure 10.1 (4:52)



Figure 11.1 (4:53)



Figure 12.1 (4:55)



Figure 13.1 (4:56)



Figure 14.1 (4:58)

3.2.1 Transcript 2 (correlates to figures 1.1-14.1)

1. (4:43) KH: it's not something that I will support within my own home and I don't support [children] eighteen
2. (4:49) year olds >[I] appreciate you have to be<
3. (4:48) HW: [see you]
4. (4:49) HW: [right]
5. (4:50) KH: =going in to tattoo salons and getting these things put on their ↑ bodies ↑ >she said that this is<
6. (4:56) about her grandfather I mean I fail to see how a picture of a woman with half of her cleavage
7. (5:01) out [is about her granddad]
8. (5:02) KW: [laughter]
9. (5:03) PS: [you don't know the story]
10. (5:03) KH: I fail to see that Philip

3.3 Section 3



Figure 1.2 (5:55)



Figure 2.2 (5:56)



Figure 3.2 (5:57)



Figure 4.2 (5:58)



Figure 5.2 (5:59)



Figure 6.2 (6:00)



Figure 7.2 (6:01)



Figure 8.2 (6:02)



Figure 9.2 (6:03)



Figure 10.2 (6:04)

3.3.1 Transcript 3 (correlates to figures 1.2-10.2)

1. (5:50) KW: er:::m=
2. (5:51) KH: =>are you gonna get more done<
3. (5:52) KW: well me personally yes but [my sister]
4. (5:54) KH: [why]
5. (5:55) KW: because I (.) enjoy it [and er
6. (5:56) KH: [you enjoy] what about it though
7. (5:58) KW: the ↑art ↑ I'm a [big fan]
8. (5:59) KH: [the art]
9. (5:59) KW: of Kat Von D she's an amazing tattoo artist=
10. (6:02) KH: =most people [buy] art
11. (6:02) KW: [um]
12. (6:03) KH: [to put on their wall]
13. (6:03) HW: [Katie what about ↑your ↑] (1) wedding ring

4. Analysis

4.1 Interruption and floor holding devices

According to Lee, Lee and Narayanan (2008), interruption is a deviation from simple turn-taking discourses that frequently occurs in spontaneous speech. Interruption is an 'important element in identifying points of interest in human conversation and interaction' (Lee, Lee and Narayanan, 2008). Indeed, interruptions can be seen in this exchange as deviating from simple turn taking. Katie Hopkins interrupts Katie Waissel six times, which is every time Waissel tries to take the floor (see Section 3, Transcript 3, lines 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12). This suggests Hopkins is attempting to control the floor. Chen (2008: 128) describes having control of the floor as 'when participant A is talking to participant B and B is listening without attempting to break in, then A clearly has 'control of the floor'. By interrupting Waissel, Hopkins 'self-selects' herself to yield the floor when she 'challenges' her opponent by disrupting the flow of conversation (Chen, 2008: 128-130). This type of interruption can be thought of as competitive interrupting; it is self-orientated because it focuses on the needs of the individual, not the needs of the group. Moreover, competitive interruption creates 'antagonism' and 'rivalry' Rothwell (2013:143). As much as these are typical components in the action of debate, antagonism and rivalry work to create a dichotomy between the interlocutors in which one is performing dominance over the other.

An overlap in speech can be found in transcript 2, when both Waissel and presenter Schofield overlap Hopkins (see Section 2, Transcript 2, lines 7-9). This could be seen as an attempt to regain the floor off of Hopkins, as neither overlap is cooperative of the speaker's floor rights. Schofield's utterance ('you don't know the story', line 9) and Waissel's laughter (line 8) appear to be competitive overlaps because they are 'disruptive and pose threats to the current speaker's territory' (Truong, 2013: 1). However, Hopkins does not let this silence her as she comes back in an attempt to regain the floor on line 10 ('I fail to see that Philip'). Furthermore, in line 2 (Section 3, Transcript 3) Hopkins quickens her speech when interrupting Waissel ('>are you gonna get more done<'). According to Jackson (2007), speaker's speed up the rate of speaking as a floor-holding device to ensure they are able to keep talking and have control of the conversation. Here, Hopkins is using this device to change the topic of conversation so is therefore in control of the floor. Additionally, interrupting Waissel to ask her a somewhat accusatory question threatens Waissel's negative face (Brown and Levinson, 1987) because it challenges Waissel and reinforces Hopkins' dominance.

4.2 Posture and gesture

When Hopkins interrupts Waissel with questions ('you enjoy what about it though' (Section 3, Transcript 3, line 6) she temporarily leans into Waissel. This lower level action affects their interpersonal distance (see figures 2.2 and 3.2) (Beattie, 2003: 11). Being physically intrusive, standing too close to someone, or being insensitive to personal space may also increase aggression. Although leaning towards someone could also be interpreted as an open, friendly posture to adopt, due to the nature of this interaction (a televised debate between two people with opposing views), the lean towards Waissel seems invasive and confrontational, and could therefore be seen as a face-threatening act. This particular face-threatening act would threaten Waissel's negative face because it shows Hopkins is challenging Waissel (particularly when paired with an interruption) and therefore hinders her ability to speak without being impeded on (Goffman, 1955). Although traditionally face-threatening acts are associated with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, Bousfield (2008) and Culpeper's (2008) definitions of impoliteness can be applied to face-threatening acts in non-verbal communication. For example, Bousfield (2008: 132) takes 'impoliteness as constituting the issuing of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive face-threatening acts... that are purposefully performed', and Culpeper (2008: 36) defines impoliteness as involving 'communicative behaviour *intending* to cause the 'face loss' of a target or perceived by the target to be so'. Taking these definitions into account, it is fair to say that Hopkins is employing techniques that threaten Waissel's face through non-verbal communicative acts.

Figures 5.0 through to 7.0 (Section 1) also show Hopkins displaying non-verbal communicative acts that could be interpreted as face threatening. Here, Hopkins gestures towards Waissel three times as she says each word in her utterance (see Section 1, Transcript 1, line 5). In this interaction, Hopkins' higher-level action is uttering the phrase 'looking for attention', and her lower-level action of gesturing with both hands towards Waissel suggests that she is insinuating that Waissel is an attention seeker. This can be seen as threatening Waissel's positive face because Hopkins is not in the business of preserving, or creating, a positive image of Waissel. This also works to undermine and delegitimize Waissel's views and opinions. More examples of these intrusive gestures can be found in Section 2 (figures 12.1-14.1). Again, these three gestures seem particularly invasive because of how expansive they are. Hopkins also uses expansive beat gestures in figures 1.1-5.1 (Section 2) that correlate to her emphatic speech ('it's not something that I will support within my own home' (line 1)). Speakers often use these rhythmic movements to highlight the content of their speech (Poggi, D'Errico, Vincze and Vinciarelli, 2013). According to Smith and Tague-Busler (2012: 51) men tend to use larger gestures than women, often because they view 'confined gesturing as a sign of being timid or passive'. Moreover, men 'expand into space' in an attempt to show power and assert authority. Here, Hopkins' may be utilizing these typically masculine non-verbal communicative acts as a device in which to assert power over Waissel.

Additionally, as shown in Section 3 (figures 1.2-3.2, 9. 2 and 10.2), Hopkins is sitting in an erect, closed posture with her legs and arms tightly together suggesting a lack of receptiveness towards Waissel (Ford, Byrt & Dooher, 2010). Müller, Ladewig, Cienki, Fricke, Bressemer, and McNeill (2014) suggest that an erect posture indicates a discursively higher position, and that those interacting with people of an inferior social status often adopt an asymmetrical position with their arms and legs. Asymmetry in posture can be seen in figures 1.2-3.2, 9.2 and 10.2 (Section 3), where Hopkins' arms are both on her left side, and figures 3.1-8.1 (Section 2), where Hopkins' arms are both on her right side. Furthermore, in figures 4.0 and 5.0 (Section 1) Hopkins has a raised chin when speaking to Waissel. According to Caswell and Neill (2003) this head position implies the social actor is literally and figuratively 'looking down their nose' at someone, which is a dominant posture to employ. This is condescending, and reinforces Hopkins' opposition to Waissel, and again delegitimizes her views because she is discursively positioned as less than, or below, Hopkins.

5. Conclusion

By analyzing interruption, floor holding devices, posture and gesture it is fair to conclude that Katie Hopkins asserts power over Katie Waissel through numerous techniques. Verbally,

Hopkins produces competitive interruptions and floor holding devices to gain control of the floor, control the conversation, and threaten her opponent's negative face (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Through non-verbal communication, Hopkins employs an expansive and confrontational posture, uses beat gestures, literally and figuratively looks down her nose at Waissel, and threatens her positive face (Brown and Levinson, 1987). By my analysis, I surmise that Katie Hopkins successfully asserts dominance over Katie Waissel in their debate on This Morning.

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Appendix

Name transcription key:

KH	Katie Hopkins
KW	Katie Waissel
HW	Holly Willoughby (television presenter on 'This Morning' interviewing Katie Hopkins and Katie Waissel)
PS	Phillip Schofield (television presenter on 'This Morning' interviewing Katie Hopkins and Katie Waissel)

Jefferson's (2004) transcription key:

['A left bracket indicates the point of overlap onset'
]	'A right bracket indicates the point at which two overlapping utterances end, if they end simultaneously, or the point at which one of them ends in the course of the other'
=	'Equal signs indicate no break or gap. A pair of equal signs, one at the end of one line and one

	at the beginning of a next, indicate no break between the two lines'
(1.0)	'Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time by tenths of seconds', so (1.0) is equal to one second
(.)	'A dot in parentheses indicates a brief interval (\pm a tenth of a second) within or between utterances)
::	'Colons indicate prolongation of the immediately prior sounds. The longer the colon row, the longer the prolongation'
↑	'Arrows indicate shifts into especially high or low pitch', so an arrow pointing up has been used to indicate a rise in pitch
><	'Right/left carats bracketing an utterance or utterance-part indicate that the bracketed material is speeded up, compared to surrounding talk'
—	'Underscoring indicates some form of stress, via pitch and/or amplitude'

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