



# **A Preliminary Approach to Linguistic Variation in the TV Series *Game of Thrones***

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SOLICITO a aprobación do seguinte título e resumo:

**Título:** A PRELIMINARY APPROACH TO LINGUISTIC VARIATION IN THE TV SERIES *GAME OF THRONES*.




**Resumo** [na lingua en que se vai redactar o TFG; entre 1000 e 2000 caracteres]:

One of the main features that defines a community is its language. Generally speaking, when TV series recreate the language of a specific community in a given period of time, their characters try to imitate that particular variety as closely as possible, not only in terms of pronunciation and accent, but also in terms of vocabulary, syntax and so on and so forth.

This research will focus on the varieties of English observed in the fictional TV show *Game of Thrones*, by concentrating, if possible, on features such dialectal diversity, register, jargon and idiolect(s).

The project will consist of two main parts: (i) an introductory section, in which I will present *Game of Thrones* from a linguistic point of view, along with a brief description of the varieties of English represented in the series; (ii) a practical section, in which I will study some of the linguistic features that characterize those varieties the way they are used in the fictional TV show. For this purpose, I will analyze a number of scenes where the characters reflect those linguistic features chosen for the analysis. Hopefully, the information gathered will allow me to draw some relevant conclusions on the linguistic singularities that characterize the language recreated in the series.

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## Table of Contents

<b>List of tables.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1. Linguistic variation.....	5
1.1.1. Regional variation.....	6
1.1.1.1. Variation in pronunciation.....	6
1.1.1.2. Grammatical and lexical variation.....	8
1.1.2. Social variation.....	9
1.1.2.1. Register.....	9
1.1.2.1.1. Formal and consultative.....	9
1.1.2.1.2. Casual and intimate.....	10
1.1.2.2. Jargon.....	10
1.1.2.3. Idiolect.....	10
1.2. <i>Game of Thrones</i> from a linguistic perspective.....	11
<b>2. A practical study of the language used in <i>Game of Thrones</i>.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1. Introduction.....	12
2.2. Connection between the sigils and the mottos of the Great Houses.....	12
2.2.1. “Fire and Blood”.....	14
2.2.2. “Winter is Coming”.....	15
2.2.3. “Hear me Roar”.....	17
2.2.4. “Family. Duty. Honour”.....	19
2.2.5. “We do not Sow”.....	21
2.2.6. “Ours is the Fury”.....	22
2.2.7. “Growing Strong”.....	23
2.2.8. “Unbowed. Unbent. Unbroken”.....	24
2.3. Dialect.....	25
2.3.1. A definition of dialect.....	25
2.3.2. Differences among dialects.....	26
2.4. Register.....	28
2.4.1. A definition of register.....	28
2.4.2. Registers in <i>Game of Thrones</i> .....	29

2.4.2.1. Formal and consultative.....	29
2.4.2.1.1. Formal.....	29
2.4.2.1.2. Consultative.....	32
2.4.2.2. Casual and intimate.....	34
2.4.2.2.1. Casual.....	34
2.4.2.2.2. Intimate.....	36
2.5. Jargon.....	37
2.5.1. A definition of jargon.....	37
2.5.2. Jargons in <i>Game of Thrones</i> .....	37
2.5.2.1. “Maesters of the Citadel” .....	37
2.5.2.2. “The Night’s Watch”.....	38
2.6. Idiolect.....	40
2.6.1. A definition of idiolect.....	40
2.6.2. Idiolects in <i>Game of Thrones</i> .....	40
2.6.2.1. Jon Snow.....	40
2.6.2.1.1. “I’m a bastard”.....	40
2.6.2.2. Daenerys Targaryen.....	42
2.6.2.2.1. “Mother of Dragons”.....	42
2.6.2.2.2. “Dracarys”.....	43
2.6.2.2.3. “Bend the knee”.....	44
2.6.2.3. The Lannisters.....	45
2.6.2.3.1. “The things I do for love”.....	45
2.6.2.3.2. “We don’t get to choose who we love”.....	46
2.6.2.3.3. “A Lannister always pays his/her debts”.....	47
2.6.2.4. Others.....	51
2.6.2.4.1. Joffrey Baratheon.....	52
2.6.2.4.2. Melisandre, The Red Woman.....	53
<b>3. Conclusions.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>4. List of references.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>I. Appendix.....</b>	<b>60</b>

**List of tables**

Table 1. Regional accent differences in England by Hughes and Trudgill (2003).....	6
Table 2. Grammatical variation (adapted from Hughes and Trudgill 2003: 15).....	8
Table 3. Lexical variation.....	8
Table 4. Examples of diachronic lexical variation (adapted from Hughes and Trudgill 2003: 11).....	9
Table 5. Connection between the mottos and the sigils of the Great Houses.....	13
Table 6. Features used to differentiate between modern dialects (J.C. Beal 2010: 12).....	25
Table 7. Regional accent variation in <i>Game of Thrones</i> (based on Hughes and Trudgill 2003: 5)...	27

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Linguistic variation

In his book *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society*, Peter Trudgill describes language as a matter of social interest rather than just merely linguistic. He explains his perspective through a common example that anyone could experience in their lives: two (English) men find themselves together in a railway compartment. Silence is not usually an option, or the situation would become awkward: “If no conversation takes place the atmosphere can become rather strained” (1974: 13). Speakers tend to resort to neutral topics (weather being one of the most common), as they do not imply long conversations, but one can still learn many aspects about the interlocutor(s). Our physical appearance can sometimes guide the speaker to guess about our background or our type of job. Moreover, language may provide more details such as the part of the country where the speaker is from, their social status, or even certain features and attitudes of their personality. These facts are very significant for people to be able to decide how to establish a social relationship with their interlocutors, e.g.:

these two aspects of language behavior are very important from a social point of view: first, the function of language in establishing social relationships; and, second, the role played by language in conveying information about the speaker. [...], but it is clear that both these aspects of linguistic behaviour are reflections of the fact that there is a close inter-relationship between language and society (1974: 14).

From a general standpoint, the term (linguistic) variation refers to the different ways a language is used regarding regional, social or contextual facts. As any other living language, English varies depending on the needs of the speakers to achieve successful communication. Their own identity or set of identities are a result of their background, or their vision and knowledge of the world; however, speakers are not free to use the language as they want (cf. Wardhaugh 2006).

There are many ways in which linguistic variation can be approached, but for the aim and structure of this dissertation, I considered it convenient to address variation in terms of **(i) regional variation**, e.g. the standardized word for trousers in Galician, *pantalóns*, is pronounced *pantalóns*, *pantalós* or *pantalois* depending on the area you are from; **(ii) social variation**, e.g. the preference of the conditional in formal questions over the simple present in Spanish: *¿Podría dejarme el bolígrafo?/ Could I borrow your pen?*, instead of *¿Puede(s) dejarme el bolígrafo?/ Can I borrow your pen?*, which shows register variation (formal vs. informal); the use of language by

professionals of different fields i.e. jargon; and a more personal use of the language, which can even be ascribed to individual speakers (e.g. “xusto Pepiño mazás coma puños”, a Galician idiom which is common in the village where I was born, but unusual among my friends in town; they therefore associate this expression to my own idiolect).

### 1.1.1. Regional variation

Regional variation refers to the particular characteristics of a language (usually presenting some differences from the standard) within a specific geographical part of a territory. There are several factors that dialectologists take into account when they want to analyze dialectal (regional) variation, among them variation in pronunciation (cf. Section 1.1.1.1) and grammatical and lexical variation (cf. Section 1.1.1.2).

#### 1.1.1.1. Variation in pronunciation

Distance from the standard language, or social class, are some of the reasons why we study accent differences. We can take, for example, the case of regional accent differences in England observed by Hughes and Trudgill (2003: 54). According to these authors, the term dialect will be used “to refer to varieties distinguished from each other by differences of vocabulary and grammar. ACCENT, on the other hand, will refer to varieties of pronunciation” (2003: 3).

	/ʌ/	/æ//ɑ:/	/ɪ/ /i:/	/r/	/h/	[ʔ]	/ŋ/	/j/ dropping
<b>Northern Region</b>	/ʊ/	/æ/	/ɪ/	Absent	Retain/ Does not retain /h/	Common	Absent	Mostly dropped
<b>Southern Region</b>	/ʌ/	/ɑ:/	/i:/	Absent	Retain /h/	Not common	Present	Mostly dropped

Table 1. Regional accent differences in England (Hughes and Trudgill 2003: 55-63)

- /ʌ/

This vowel, relatively new in English, has developed out of near-close back rounded vowel /ʊ/ in some regional southern accents; however, the vowel /ʊ/ has not changed its pronunciation in

northern accents, so words like *mother* have not acquired the new vowel /ʌ/ and their pronunciation has remained /ʊ/.

#### /æ/ - /ɑ:/

The original short vowel /æ/ was lengthened to /ɑ:/ in the south of England before the voiceless fricatives /f/, /θ/, /s/ (*half, path, or dance*), and before certain consonants or consonant clusters containing /n/ or /m/ (*palm, demand*).

#### - /ɪ/ - /i:/

The main difference regarding these two vowels, tense high front unrounded vowel /i:/ and lax high front unrounded vowel /ɪ/, is how they are pronounced in final position in words like *money* or *coffee*. Northern accents pronounce /ɪ/, whereas /i:/ is the preferred option pronounced in southern accents.

#### - /r/<sup>1</sup>

We can generally say that post-vocalic /r/ has been lost both in northern and southern areas, and that it is just merely present in the speech of older and working-class rural speakers.

#### - /h/

Differently from RP, most urban regional accents in England and Wales have not retained /h/ in words like *heart*, or *harm*, leading the speakers to pronounce the words *art* and *arm* the same way they pronounce *heart* and *harm*. However, there are some northern regions, e.g. Newcastle, Scotland or Ireland, where /h/ has been retained.

#### - [ʔ]

RP speakers do not use glottal stop on a daily basis. They may use it at the beginning of a word before vowels: *ant* [ʔænt] or before certain consonants or consonant clusters: *batch* [bæʔtʃ], *six* [sɪʔks], *simply* [sɪmʔplɪ] (cf. Brown 1977). The rest of the regional accents in the UK make use of glottal stop more often, particularly as an allophone of word-medial and word-final /t/, as in *football* or in *right*.

#### - /ŋ/

Most non-RP speakers do not pronounce /ŋ/ in final position (e.g. *working* or *talking*). The pronunciation of this sound is commonly associated with older members of the aristocracy.

#### - /j/ dropping

Semi-vowel /j/ is mostly dropped in England; in RP and many other English accents, however, /j/ can still be spotted merging with preceding alveolar plosives to form affricates in informal

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<sup>1</sup> Despite of the fact that post-vocalic /r/ does not show apparent differences between the north and the south, I decided to include it here because this consonant will be studied in Section 2.3.2.



language, e.g. what you need [wɒtʃni:d]. Moreover, j-coalescence can be found in words where the second syllable is unstressed, e.g. soldier [souljə].

### 1.1.1.2. Grammatical and lexical variation

Languages differ internally in terms of grammar and lexis. The structure of sentences, the way verbs are inflected, or the particular words used in a region can be different within the same language. Here are some examples of grammatical and lexical variation in Standard English, as illustrated by Hughes and Trudgill (2003: 15).

<b>Grammatical Variation</b>	<i>Tendency of contracted negative of the type:</i>	<i>Participle forms used after verbs such as need and want</i>	<i>Certain verb-particles constructions:</i>
Northern England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I've not got it</li> <li>- She'll not go</li> <li>- Does he not like it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I want it washing/It needs washing (Midlands and Northern England)</li> <li>- I want it washed/It needs washed (Scotland)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He turned out the light</li> <li>- Put on your coat</li> <li>- She took off her shoes</li> </ul>
Southern England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I haven't got it</li> <li>- She won't go</li> <li>- Doesn't he like it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I want it washed</li> <li>- It needs washing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He turned the light out</li> <li>- Put your coat on</li> <li>- She took her shoes off</li> </ul>

Table 2. Grammatical variation (adapted from Hughes and Trudgill 2003: 15)

<b>Lexical Variation</b>	<i>Evening meal</i>	<i>Footwear</i>	<i>Trousers</i>
Northern England	Tea	Pumps	Pants
Southern England	Dinner	Plimsolls	Trousers

Table 3. Lexical variation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <http://projects.alc.manchester.ac.uk/ukdialectmaps/lexical-variation/> [accessed 19 May 2019]

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Examples of diachronic lexical variation</b></p>	<p><i>Gramophone</i> displaced by <i>record player</i></p>	<p><i>Aggravate</i> no longer meaning “make worse”, but “irritate” instead.</p>	<p><i>Nice</i> word derived from Latin “nescious” (“ignorant”).</p>
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Table 4. Examples of diachronic lexical variation (adapted from Hughes and Trudgill 2003: 11)

### 1.1.2. Social variation

Generally speaking, social variation refers to factors such as (i) the relation between the speakers, and the situation in which their speech takes place; (ii) register (specific functions in particular situations).

To approach social variation in an appropriate way I will refer to register, jargon and idiolect in the sections that follow.

#### 1.1.2.1. Register

The main factor that seems to define register is the degree of formality of the language. Speakers will vary their use of the language depending on whether they find themselves in a formal or an informal situation.

Taking into account this definition of register and the aim of this project, we shall study register considering the degree of formality of the language. For this purpose, we shall pay attention to the speakers’ way of communicating themselves in the different contexts and situations they are involved. Among the ways register can be approached, we will concentrate on four types depending on whether speakers use language formally or informally: (i) formal, and (ii) consultative (the use of the language is formal); (iii) casual, and (iv) intimate (the use of the language is informal).

##### 1.1.2.1.1. Formal and consultative

These two types of register illustrate a more formal use of the language. The second part of this dissertation is a study about linguistic variation in the TV show Game of Thrones, and register is one of the main topics. Formal and consultative registers will be analyzed throughout the way characters reflect the different features that characterize formal language such as avoiding slang, or coarse words.

#### 1.1.2.1.2. *Casual and intimate*

Casual and intimate registers illustrate a more informal use of the language due to the fact that speakers usually have some type of relation with the interlocutors. Casual language is used among friends and relatives, whereas intimate language is used among speakers whose relationship is even closer, i.e. best friends, or lovers.

#### 1.1.2.2. *Jargon*

Jargon refers to the language used in particular fields or professions. Speakers within these groups use special vocabulary, or attach different meanings to words. The lexicon used is so specific that speakers who do not belong to those groups can easily misunderstand the information from their interlocutor.

Jargon can be studied through two different themes in *Game of Thrones*. Among the several *organizations, religions and orders* present in the TV show, two of them may call our attention: on the one hand, “The Night’s Watch”, a military order which holds and guards the Wall to keep the wildings and the White Walkers from crossing into the Seven Kingdoms; on the other hand, “Maesters of the Citadel”, also known as “The Knights of the Mind”, an order of scholars, healers, and learned men in the Seven Kingdoms.

#### 1.1.2.3. *Idiolect*

The term idiolect alludes to the way that an individual uses the language regarding vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Idiolect can also refer to the particular expressions that a speaker uses which may define their personality and way of thinking. We must clarify that this second definition of idiolect is the one we will take into account later on in this project.

David Wright explains his perspective as follows:<sup>3</sup>

A person’s idiolect is all encompassing in that it includes linguistic features related to dialect and sociolect, for example, while also being influenced by a wide range of other sources of variation, such as their life experiences;

In the TV series *Game of Thrones* some of the main characters have been assigned, by the producers, specific expressions (e.g. Jaime Lannister says “The things I do for love”; Daenerys

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199772810/obo-9780199772810-0225.xml> [accessed 18 June 2019]

Targaryen says “bend the knee”), which may turn out to be determinative in the course of events, and have a great impact on the characters and their fate.

### *1.2. Game of Thrones from a linguistic perspective*

*Game of Thrones* is an American fictional TV series based on the book series *A Song of Ice and Fire* by George R.R. Martin, created by David Benioff and D.B. Weiss, and whose first episode was aired in April 2011 under the title “Winter is Coming”. *Game of Thrones* is set between the two fictional continents Westeros and Essos, where different plots of the TV series take place simultaneously. On the one hand, Essos, where the last Targaryen (Daenerys Targaryen) plans on returning home to reclaim the Iron Throne, alleging she is the rightful Queen of Westeros by blood. On the other hand, Westeros, where some want to reach independence from the Throne (like the Stark Family), or where the Baratheons are on the Iron Throne and keep insisting that they are the rightful lineage to rule after Robert’s Baratheon rebellion against the Targaryen House.

Language plays a significant role in *Game of Thrones*, which includes exceptional speeches and remarkable lines that make the characters shine throughout the whole TV series. The differences among characters introduced in the show are clearly visible in the different contexts, social groups, individual situations or professional fields, from higher social classes represented by the Royal Family (the Baratheon Family), nobility (House Stark or House Lannister), to respected professions (e.g. Maester) or lower status positions (e.g. being part of the serfdom), from formal contexts like weddings and trials to informal ones, e.g. spontaneous conversations among members of different families.

This piece of research will focus on the language used in the fictional TV Series *Game of Thrones* so as to show how the way in which it is used by the different characters may determine their lifestyle and even their fate. In this dissertation, I will also try to support with evidence the connection(s) between language and society as claimed by Peter Trudgill. For this purpose, I will take into account different factors like dialectal variation, register, jargon, and idiolect in order to show how language can be used to study the different relationships established amongst the characters within the TV show.

## 2. A practical study of the English language used in *Game of Thrones*

### 2.1. Introduction

The second part of this dissertation presents how the English language is used in *Game of Thrones*. This section includes four different aspects of linguistic variation that can be analyzed considering the way the characters use the language: (i) dialects, where we study the distinct regional varieties, focusing on pronunciation, and illustrated by the use of the language in the North (Winterfell), the South (King's Landing and The Stormlands), Dorne, or The Reach; (ii) register, i.e. the degree of formality shown by the characters use depending on the contexts in which they appear such as trials (formal language), or conversations among friends (informal language); (iii) jargon, as illustrated by the language used by two different orders, "The Night's Watch" and "Maesters of the Citadel", two orders that often use specific language within their own fields; (iv) idiolect, which shows how the producers of *Game of Thrones* "design" particular linguistic expressions with specific meaning for the different characters. Some of these characters use these sentences, or phrases more than once through the entire TV show, defining therefore those characters and not others. Moreover, I intend to explain the relation between the sigils and the mottos that designate every Great House in order to reflect how the different expressions describe the characters and their personalities.

### 2.2. Connection between the sigils and the mottos of the Great Houses

Mottos play a relevant function in *Game of Thrones*, given that the members of the Houses frequently repeat words (mottos) for different purposes. They want to subdue, frighten, or threaten their enemies, or warn their loved ones against dangerous circumstances, but always causing a notable reaction in their interlocutor(s).

This part of the dissertation focuses on the connection existing between the mottos and the sigils of the Great Houses. Each sigil under this study represents extremely personal characteristics of the members of the Houses, as well as their mottos, so they are strongly linked.

Table 5 shows the connection between the mottos and the sigils of the Great Houses: <sup>4</sup>

Great House	Motto	Sigil	Connection
Targaryen	Fire and Blood	A dragon with three heads	Three dragons spewing fire and killing people.
Stark	Winter is Coming	A direwolf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loyalty and protection.</li> <li>- The wolf representing perseverance during long sieges.</li> </ul>
Lannister	Hear me Roar	A lion rampant	Courage, bravery, and leadership as lions have.
Tully	Family. Duty. Honour.	A leaping silver trout on a field of blue and red mud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dancette: representation of the place where they live, surrounded by water, which shows a strong sense of family because no one else is around.</li> <li>- The sense of family, duty and honour of the BlackFish who died defending his house.</li> </ul>
Greyjoy	We Do not Sow	A kraken	Living in poor lands and being forced to sail to survive, becoming great and strong sailors.
Baratheon	Ours is the Fury	A black stag rampant on a field of gold	The stag is “defiant and furious ready to attack”.
Tyrell	Growing Strong	A golden rose on a green field	Paradox between roses growing strong “enough to face other Houses”.
Martell	Unbowed. Unbent. Unbroken.	A red sun pierced by a golden spear on an orange field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spear: Honourable warrior.</li> <li>- Red Sun: glory in battle (never bowed, bent, and broken).</li> </ul>

*Table 5. Connection between the mottos and the sigils of the Great Houses*

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gliffy.com/blog/hidden-meanings-in-got> [accessed 7 January 2019]

### 2.2.1. "Fire and Blood"



House Targaryen is represented by an image that resembles a red dragon with three heads. We could associate this sigil to Daenerys' three dragons named Drogon, Viserion and Rhaegal to honour her husband Khal Drogo, and her brothers, Viserys and Rhaegar. The red colour represents (as suggested by the motto) both the fire, associated with the main characteristic of the dragons, and all the deaths they cause when they burn their enemies. The way the producers of *Game of Thrones* present the members of this Great House is as interesting as peculiar, because both Daenerys and Viserys consider themselves to be dragons. In S01E06, *A Crown for a King*,<sup>5</sup> Daenerys is threatened by her own brother Viserys. He is willing to kill his own unborn nephew if he does not get the army he was promised when he sold Daenerys to Khal Drogo. Drogo does not like such an action and he proceeds to hurl molten gold over Viserys' head to burn him alive. This is the scene:

- Viserys (after being subdued): No. No. He cannot touch me. **I am a dragon. I am a dragon.** I want my crown. (Screams)
- Jorah Mormont: Look away Khaleesi
- Daenerys Targaryen: No

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<sup>5</sup> S01E06, *A Crown for a King* makes reference to the specific *season* (season 1), *episode* (episode 6) and *title* from which the scenes and dialogues are taken.

*Afterwards Viserys is killed by being burnt with molten gold*

- Jorah: Khaleesi
- Daenerys: **He was no dragon. Fire cannot kill a dragon.**

### 2.2.2. “Winter is Coming”



A direwolf represents the image of House Stark. It is used to living in cold and snowy places, and it is known to be loyal to such an extent that it would die for its owner. This virtue is also recognized by the members of the Stark family. One example is Ned Stark's execution because of his loyalty to his king and friend Robert Baratheon. Ned Stark was sentenced to death after his attempt to prove that Joffrey Baratheon was not Robert's son but Jaime Lannister's son instead, hence a bastard.

House Stark rules in the North region of the continent. They want to reach independence from the South and from the Iron Throne, in order to get proper autonomy over their lands. Their motto is “Winter is coming”, a phrase that Ned Stark used to repeat, especially to his children to warn them and prepare them for the winter to come (usually referred as the Long Night). They also use this motto to frighten their enemies, as winter comes full of threatens. But there is a third meaning behind these words which seems to have been forgotten among the Starks and the rest of the Great Houses. It is believed that the army ruled by the Night King, coming from beyond the Wall, has been extinct for many years. In S01E01, *Winter is Coming*, there is a scene where Ned



Stark executes a deserter because he claims that he saw the White Walkers, and he is accused of being insane and lying. However, we will never know whether even after this first episode, Ned Stark was considering the idea that the deserter was right about the White Walkers, although he was morally forced to sentence the deserter to death to prevent the rumours from spreading across the continent. One see how Ned Stark wonders whether the story is true or not when Bran asks him. Here is the dialogue:

- Ned (to Bran): You did well. You understand why I did it?
- Bran: Jon said he was a deserter.
- N: But do you understand why I had to kill him?
- B: "Our way is the old way"?
- N: **The man who passes the sentence should swing the sword.**
- B: Is it true he saw the white walkers?
- N: The white walkers have been gone for thousands of years.
- B: So he was lying?
- N: A madman sees what he sees.

Nonetheless, "Winter is (really) Coming" with that army, the White Walkers. They could be referred to as "the army of ice", or "the army of the dead", as they say in the TV series. Their great ability is to convert corpses into creatures (wights) by reanimating them and putting them under their command. They look like zombies and the only way to destroy them is "by burning them and we can destroy them with dragonglass" (Jon Snow in S07E07, *The Dragon and The Wolf*, when he Cersei how to defeat the wights and the White Walkers).

### 2.2.3. “Hear me Roar”



House Lannister’s sigil is a lion, and how the members of this family believe they have a significant role in society can be seen in their motto, “Hear me Roar”. The Lannisters represent (in a figurative way) the characteristics of a lion. Lions are leaders, courageous, brave, and victorious par excellence. In S01E07, *You Win or You Die*, there is a scene where Tywin Lannister is talking to his son Jaime Lannister about the reason why Ned Stark, despite being captive, is still alive. Jaime tells his father that Ned Stark cannot be sentenced to death because the citizens would not be sure about the reasons for his execution. Lord Stark was accused of treason for questioning Joffrey Baratheon’s claim to the throne, affirming that Joffrey was Cersei and Jaime’s bastard son. The Lannisters, however, would not let such a (true) rumour be spread; therefore, people in King’s Landing would not know why he was imprisoned and later executed. Tywin asks Jaime where this honour comes from<sup>6</sup> after what he did to the “Mad King”,<sup>7</sup> when he killed him as a coward, stabbing him from behind. Tywin continues the dialogue with the phrase “A lion doesn’t concern himself with the opinions of the sheep”, in order to let Jaime see that lions, as the leaders they are, do not take into consideration what other animals think.

<sup>6</sup> [https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Aerys\\_II\\_Targaryen](https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Aerys_II_Targaryen) [accessed 12 April 2019]

<sup>7</sup> King Aerys II Targaryen, commonly called “the Mad King”, was infamously murdered by a member of his own Kingsguard, Ser Jaime Lannister, during Lord Tywin Lannister’s Sack of King’s Landing. This act earned Ser Jaime the nickname “Kingslayer” for slaying the king that he was sworn to protect as a member of the Kingsguard.

The following dialogues show Tywin Lannister acting and speaking according to “the features of a lion”:

S03E10, *Mhysa*

- Tyrion: I’m all for cheating, this is war. But to slaughter them at a wedding...
- Tywin: Explain to me why it is more noble to kill ten thousand men in battle than a dozen at dinner.
- Tyrion: So that’s why you did it? To save lives?
- Tywin: **To end the war. To protect the family.** Do you want to write a song for the dead Starks? Go ahead! Write one. **I’m in this world a little while longer, to defend the Lannisters, to defend my blood.**
- Tyrion:...The Northerners will never forget.

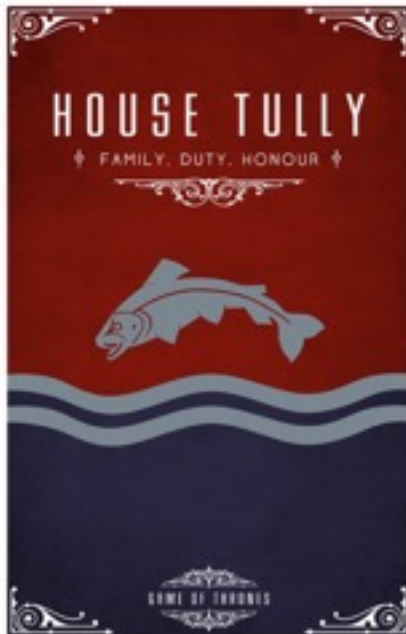
[dialogue continues]

- Tyrion: When have you ever done something that wasn’t in your interest, but solely for **the benefit of the family?!**
- Tywin Lannister: (with controlled fury) **The day that you were born.** I wanted to carry you into the sea and let the waves wash you away. Instead, I let you live, and **I’ve brought you up as my son. Because you’re a Lannister!**

S03E05, *Kissed by Fire*

- Tywin Lannister: **Tyrion will do as he’s bid. As will you.**
- Cersei Lannister: What do you mean?
- T: **You’ll marry** Ser Loras.
- C: I will not.
- T: The boy is heir to Highgarden. **Tyrion will** secure the North, **you will** secure the Reach.
- C: No, I won’t do it.
- T: **Yes, you will.** You’re still fertile. **You need to marry again** and breed.
- C: [furious] I am Queen Regent, not some broodmare!
- T: [shouting, clearly claiming his power] **You’re my daughter! You will do as I command** and **you will** marry Loras Tyrell and put an end to the disgusting rumors about you once and for all.
- C: **Father, don’t make me do it again,** please.
- T: **Not another word.** My children. You’ve disgraced the Lannister name for far too long.

#### 2.2.4. “Family. Duty. Honour”



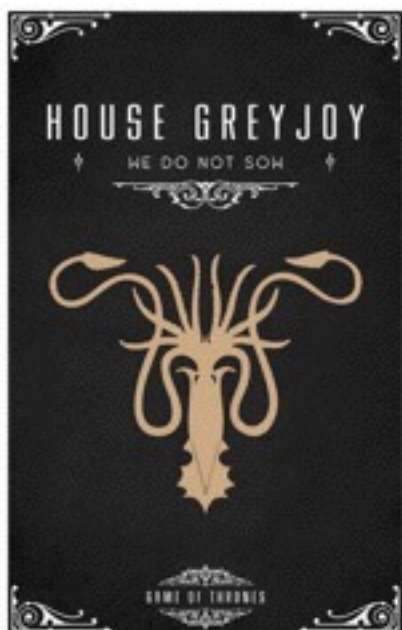
House Tully is where Catelyn Stark comes from (formerly Catelyn Tully). The sigil consists of a leaping silver trout on a field of blue and red mud, since their House is located in the Riverlands, a rich, fertile and populous region around the three forks of the Trident and the northern Blackwater Rush in the central part of Westeros. I consider the motto of this house one of the most consistent of all in terms of how one of its members alludes to their slogan throughout the whole first three seasons. This character is Catelyn Stark, and her family words (*Family. Duty. Honour*) are considerably “dishonoured” when her husband Ned Stark comes with a new son from another woman. His name is Jon Snow, whose last name, Snow, refers to how bastard sons are named in the North. Ned could not leave a son behind even if he was not legitimate. Catelyn considers she was deeply betrayed by her husband but she forgives him and they continue with their lives together. But there is something she does not know. Jon Snow is not Ned Stark’s bastard but his nephew (Aegon Targaryen), whom Ned needs to hide from the world or Robert Baratheon would kill him for being a Targaryen. There is an interesting scene in S01E09, *Baelor*, where Jon Snow and Maester Aegon Targaryen, the Maester belonging to House Stark, are talking about Jon Snow leaving Winterfell to join the Night’s Watch (a military order which holds and guards the Wall, the immense ice structure which separates the northern border of the Seven Kingdoms from the lands beyond). This dialogue refers to the day when Ned Stark had to choose between his honour as Lord of Winterfell and his honour and loyalty to his wife Catelyn Stark, or his love for his sister, Lyanna

Stark, who had given birth to a boy, Aegon Targaryen (son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark), brought to Winterfell as a bastard under the name of Jon Snow:

- Aemon Targaryen: Tell me, did you ever wonder why the men of the Night's Watch take no wives and father no children?
- Jon Snow: No.
- A.T.: So they will not love. **Love is the death of duty. If the day should ever come when your lord father was forced to choose between honour on the one hand and those he loves on the other, what would he do?**
- J.S.: He would do whatever was right. No matter what.
- A.T.: Then Lord Stark is one man in 10,000. Most of us are not so strong. **What is honour compared to a woman's love? And what is duty against the feel of a newborn son in your arms? Or a brother's smile?**
- J.S.: Sam told you.
- A.T.: We're all human. Oh, we all do our duty when there's no cost to it. Honour comes easy then. Yet sooner or later in every man's life there comes a day when it is not easy. A day when he must choose.

During the three seasons that Catelyn Stark appears in the show, we can see how she feels betrayed by her own husband and how she believes that anything bad happening to her family is because she could not love that child. Her family words "Family. Duty. Honour" were smirched since that day. In her heart, she would never forgive her husband, and blames herself for not being able to treat Jon Snow as her own son.

### 2.2.5. “We do not Sow”



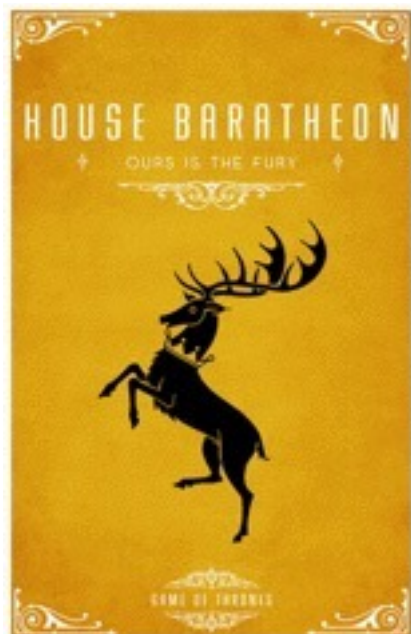
The sigil of House Greyjoy is a kraken, and the motto is “We do not Sow”. The kraken represents the sea all around and “We do not Sow” the type of their lands. Due to the fact that their lands are really poor in terms of harvesting, the Greyjoys do not sow but reap instead in other parts of the continent outside the Iron Islands, where the members of this House live. In a world where serfdom and farming are controlled in some way by the Iron Throne, not sowing makes them feel superior to other people. The kraken resembles the relation they have with the sea when they need to sail in order to survive. They feel they are superior as they got chosen to live in such a poor place. They were chosen to be strong to sail and rule over inferior men wherever they go. The Greyjoys do not sow, but still get things.

In S02E03, *What Is Dead May Never Die*, there is a conversation between the head of House Greyjoy, Balon Greyjoy, and his son Theon Greyjoy during which we can see what their words mean to them. They are planning to attack the North which they consider belongs to them “by right of conquest” (Theon at Winterfell S02E06, *The Old Gods and the New*). These are the lines:

- Balon Greyjoy: What are our words? Our words?
- Theon Greyjoy: We do not sow.

- Balon Greyjoy: **We do not sow. We are ironborn. We're not subjects, we're not slaves. We do not plow the field or toil in the mine.** We take what is ours.

### 2.2.6. "Ours is the Fury"

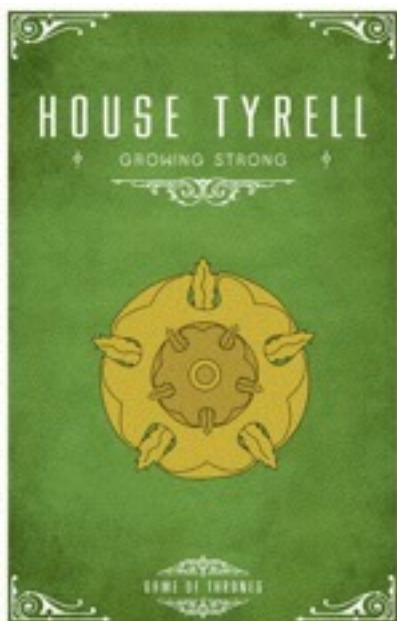


The sigil of House Baratheon is a black stag on a field of gold. Both the sigil and the slogan do not belong to them as they are a relative newcomer House that took the motto and the symbol from a previous House in that region. They belong to Storm's End, a place in the area called the Stormlands. Due to the fact that the weather is very rainy there and storms are usual, there are plenty of forests. Since stags are common in their fields, they therefore associate their lands with this animal. The stag is wearing a crown that shows they are part of the Royal Family, the family ruling the Seven Kingdoms after Robert's Baratheon rebellion against the Targaryens. Theirs is the fury and goal of conquering the whole land across Westeros. Theirs is the fury of killing every single Targaryen on the whole continent. House Baratheon is now extinct, although the audience knows that Gendry<sup>8</sup> is a bastard that no one got to kill when Cersei Lannister, Robert Baratheon's wife, discovered that her husband had a lot of bastard sons and she ordered to murder them all.

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<sup>8</sup> Gendry is the last living bastard son of King Robert Baratheon, who, throughout his childhood, was unaware of his lineage. Gendry did not receive the bastard surname used in the Crownlands (Waters) because, like the rest of his half-siblings, he was not openly acknowledged by Robert.

### 2.2.7. “Growing Strong”



House Tyrell sigil is a golden rose on a green field, and “Growing Strong” their motto. They ruled (House Tyrell is now extinct) over The Reach after taking control of the region from House Gardener during the Targaryen Conquest.

Roses grow strong, and so did Tyrell’s Family. Within time they became one of the strongest Noble Houses in The Reach through marriages (even royal ones) and great strategies. House Tyrell is known for being loyal and trustful. Loyal as the Starks, but rude as the Lannisters. They act with diplomacy, but never forgetting to defend themselves. Olenna Tyrell is one of the main members of this House. Here are some memorable words that reflect her personality:

- “War is war, but killing a man at a wedding? Horrid. What sort of monster would do such a thing? As if men needed more reasons to fear marriage”.

These sentences are remarkable because they happen to occur while Olenna is talking to Sansa, minutes before poisoning the groom, King Joffrey Baratheon, at his own wedding.

- “Tell Cersei, I want her to know it was me”.

This line in S07E03, *The Queen’s Justice*, leads the audience to know that Olenna Tyrell was the one murdering Joffrey Baratheon. As I said before, she acts with diplomacy and great skills to confuse everyone. No one knew that she was the guilty character behind Joffrey’s death (S04E02, *The Lion and the Rose*).



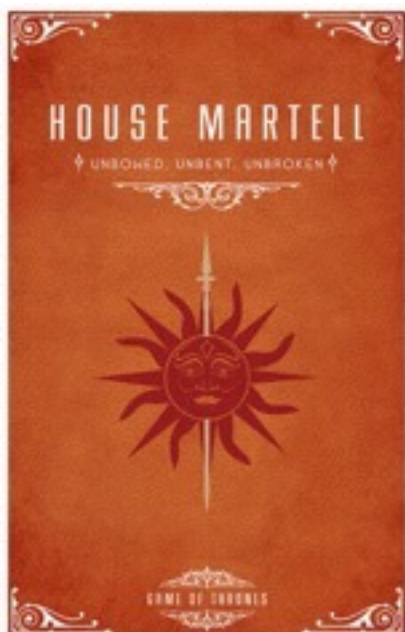
- “Margaery is the Queen. You are not the Queen because you are not married to the King. I do appreciate these things can get a bit confusing in your family”.

Her wit was one of her best features. These are the phrases that Olenna uses to remind Cersei that she is not the Queen.

- “Growing Strong ha! The dullest words of any House. Winter is coming. Now that’s memorable. We do not sow. Strong, Strong, those are Houses you watch out for. Direwolves and krakens, fierce beasts... but a golden rose growing strong? ha! That strikes fear in the heart”.

This short monologue is one of the most important in this section because it shows the meaning behind the sigil and the motto. Golden roses can actually grow strong. According to Olenna, they even strike fear in the heart, and they can become more frightening than the other “powerful” Houses.

#### 2.2.8. “Unbowed. Unbent. Unbroken”



House Martell of Sunspear is a legally extinct Great House in the continent. It ruled the peninsula of Dorne in the far South of the continent from their castle Sunspear. Their logo is a red sun pierced by a golden spear on an orange field. The image is a combination of the original Martell sigil (a yellow spear) and the emblem of Princess Nymeria (a red sun) used to symbolize the marriage of the warrior-queen to Mors Martell. Moreover, the spear symbolizes how honorable the warriors from House Martell were, and the red sun, glory in battle. Their motto “Unbowed. Unbent. Unbroken”

refers to the fact that they were never conquered, they were always unbowed, they never bent the knee and they were never defeated by their enemies.

### 2.3. Dialect

#### 2.3.1. A definition of dialect

The term dialect can be associated to the different varieties a language has. Dialects are usually ascribed to that region where they are spoken. For the purpose of this piece of research we may mention some differences between the dialects from the north and the dialects from the south (in terms of accents). Joan C. Beal releases a compilation of dialects and accents differences from various authors (*An Introduction to Regional Englishes*. 2010: 12). One of the most relevant for this dissertation is Trudgill's research about the features used to differentiate between modern dialects (1999a: 52):

	<i>but</i>	<i>arm</i>	<i>singer</i>	<i>few</i>	<i>coffee</i>	<i>gate</i>	<i>milk</i>
<b>North</b>	/ bʊt /	/ a:rm /	/ sɪŋgə /	/ fju: /	/ kɒfi	geɪt	/ mɪl̩k /
<b>South</b>	/ bʌt /	/ a:m /	/ sɪŋə /	/ fu: /	/ kɒfi /	ge:t	/ mɪl̩k /

Table 6. Features used to differentiate between modern dialects (J.C. Beal 2010: 12)

### 2.3.2. Differences among dialects



There are two important geographical dialects in the TV series: on the one hand, the dialect from the North as illustrated by Ned Stark (Sean Bean, the actor who plays Lord Stark, has a Yorkshire accent himself) and his family, who live in Winterfell, the North region of Westeros; on the other hand, the southern dialect, present in some words from the Lannisters, who live in King's Landing, or Stannis Baratheon, from the Stormlands, both from the South part of Westeros.

Apart from the two dialects mentioned above, there are many other characters in the TV series who introduce variation in their speech.

As we mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, dialects study differences regarding pronunciation, grammar and lexis. In this section, I am going to concentrate on some pronunciation features that characterize some of the protagonists as being from the north or from the south.

Hughes and Trudgill (2003: 54) account for regional accent differences through vocalic and consonants sounds, as represented in Table 7, which also includes specific examples from the TV series illustrative of these differences:

	/ʌ/ /ʊ/	/æ/ /ɑ:/	/ɪ/ /i:/	/r/	/ŋ/
<b>Northern</b> (Illustrated by Winterfell)	/ʊ/ instead of /ʌ/ Ned Stark and King Robert Baratheon (raised in the North): <b>blood</b> Jon Snow and Ned Stark: <b>mother</b>	/æ/ Arya and Ned Stark: <b>Stark</b> Ned Stark: /lænd/	/ɪ/ Ned Stark: city - /s'ɪtɪ/	/r/ ( <b>pronounced</b> ) Ned Stark: brother, Stark - pronunciation of /r/	/ŋ/ ( <b>not pronounced</b> ) Arya Stark: “Winter is Coming”
<b>Southern</b> (Illustrated by King’s Landing and The Stormlands)	/ʌ/ Stannis Baratheon: <b>blood</b> Myrcella Baratheon, and Jaime Lannister: <b>mother</b>	/ɑ:/ Cersei Lannister: <b>Stark</b>	/i:/ Tyrion Lannister: city - /s'ɪti:/	/r/ ( <b>not pronounced</b> ) Cersei Lannister: brother - /ə/ Stark - /sta:k/	/ŋ/ ( <b>pronounced</b> ) Cersei Lannister: “I am opening it again”, “I was sitting ...”
<b>Variation in Dorne</b> (Illustrated by Dorne)	/ʌ/ Oberyn Martell: <b>blood</b>	/æ/ Ellaria Sand: /pært/	/i:/ Oberyn Martell: /s'ɪti:/	<b>Noticeable pronunciation of /e /and /r/</b> Oberyn Martell: brothers Ellaria Sand: sisters Ellaria Sand: lord	/ŋ/ ( <b>pronounced</b> ) Oberyn Martell: - <b>stunning</b> - <b>anything</b> - <b>nothing</b> - <b>bring</b>
<b>Others</b> (Illustrated by Essos, The Reach, and Beyond the Wall)	/ʌ/ Tycho Nestoris in Braavos: <b>blood</b>		/ɪ/ and /i:/ Olenna Tyrell city - /s'ɪtɪ/ talking to Varys who pronounces city - /s'ɪti:/	Beyond the Wall - Ygritte - matters - <b>no pronunciation of /r/, but /e/</b>	/ŋ/ ( <b>not pronounced</b> ) Olenna Tyrell - The Reach “Winter is Coming”

Table 7. Regional accent variation in Game of Thrones (based on Hughes and Trudgill 2003: 54)

## 2.4. Register

### 2.4.1. A definition of register

One of the main factors to take into account when studying register is the degree of formality of the language. The degree of formality can be measured in terms of parameters such as social context, the relationship among speakers, or professions, among others.

A person does not use the same language when talking to a member of a jury in Court, a member of their own family, or someone from work “Language, in other words, varies [...] also according to the social context in which he (the speaker) finds himself. The same speaker uses different linguistic varieties in different situations for different purposes” (Trudgill 1983: 100).

In the first case, a speaker is more likely to talk formally since a judge is figure of authority, and there is no familiarity between them; in the second case, a speaker is likely to be more casual and informal since both speaker and interlocutor are friends, lovers, or parents and children: “a further important feature of social context is the ‘context’ of the person spoken to, and in particular the role relationships and relative statuses of the participants in a discourse” (Trudgill 1983: 102); In addition, coworkers, or professionals in different fields are likely to talk in a formal way, and use specific vocabulary :“ for example, if a speaker is talking to the people he works with about their work, his language is likely to be rather different from that he will use, say, at home with his family. The register of law, for example, is different from the register of medicine, which in turn is different from the language of engineering - and so on” (Trudgill 1983:100-101). For the object of my study, I will concentrate on four types of register: formal, consultative, casual and intimate.

I chose to analyse those four types<sup>9</sup> through two different sections because they use the same degree of formality: (i) formal and consultative (they use a more formal language); (ii) casual and intimate (more informal language).

This is a very general definition of register, where I am only considering spoken English for this study, since written English is not present in many ways in this piece of research.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://drsaraheaton.wordpress.com/2012/05/22/language-register-and-why-it-matters-or-why-you-cant-write-an-academic-paper-in-gangsta-slang/> [accessed 11 November 2018]

## 2.4.2. Registers in *Game of Thrones*

### 2.4.2.1. Formal and consultative

Both formal and consultative registers illustrate formal uses of the language. However, there is a slight difference regarding the groups of speakers that use these two registers. On the one hand, formal language is used in contexts where the communication needs to be polite, e.g. academic or legal situations, and colloquialisms and slang are avoided. On the other hand, consultative register, which is also formal, is used by groups of speakers who usually give assistance, or instruct someone in different fields.

#### 2.4.2.1.1. Formal

This type of register is used in situations where the language is expected to be more respectful, delicate, and uninterrupted. Speakers in formal contexts avoid using slang, contractions or coarse words. This is the kind of register one would expect in professional, academic, or legal settings. Speakers often use complex sentence structures, they are objective in their speeches, do not use colloquialisms, focus on word choice, and use specific vocabulary.

In S04E06, *The Laws of Gods and Men*, there is a scene where we can see clear differences between formal and casual (or vulgar) register. The scene is led by 3 main characters: the accused, Tyrion Lannister; the judge, Tywin Lannister, and a witness, Shae. Shae is a woman whose profession is being an escort, i.e. a woman who provides sexual services. Due to her background, her register is not formal. She uses a lot of contractions, slang, and words considered vulgar and rude in the situation she is at that moment, appearing in Court at Tyrion's trial. The trial occurs among nobility people, who find her expressions unrefined as can be seen through the scene. The other two characters, Tyrion and Tywin, belong to one of the richest families in the kingdom; therefore, their speech is more restrained and delicate. When Shae is asked about the relationship she had with the accused, Tyrion Lannister, she replies she was not only his wife's maid through the following statement:

- “I **wasn't** just her maid”
- “I was his **whore**”.

She answers using the word *whore* twice, leaving the rest of the people attending the trial in awe.

The scene continues with Tywin (from a Noble House) asking her in a very formal way this time, “how did you come to be in his service?”, hence avoiding the word *whore*. In a context where communication is supposed to be polite, elegant and cultivated, the room where the trial runs is full

of laughter, clearly mocking the witness whose speech is being coarse, forcing Tywin, the judge, to intercede with the attendees, “Silence, silence”.

Shae keeps telling her part of the story and reveals that Tyrion and herself had a phrase to refer to each other, an intimate phrase: “I am yours and you are mine”. This is the only time we can see Shae using a more formal kind of register. She is not using contractions, as we could expect from someone from her background, because she is reporting what Tyrion said formally, since it is the way he talks, as he comes from a wealthy and powerful family.

This trial in S04E06, *The Laws of Gods and Men*, constitutes an excellent setting within the show to illustrate a large amount of examples of different types of register. The following sentences exemplify formal language, where the characters use features such as the conditional to form questions, no contractions, and modal verbs and formal vocabulary are used:

- Tywin: How **would** you say he died, then?
- Tywin: The crown **may** call its first witness.
- Tywin: Silence! You **will not** speak unless called **upon**.
- Tywin: Grand Maester, you examined King Joffrey’s corpse. Was it without question poison that killed him?
- Cersei: I asked him to **confine** his **salacious** acts to the brothel where such behaviour belongs.
- Mace Tyrell: Thank you, **Your Grace, for the courage** of your testimony.
- Mace Tyrell: Do you remember the **precise nature** of this threat?
- Tyrion: Father, **may** I ask the witness one question?
- Mace Tyrell: **I beg your pardon?**
- Tywin: **You are not** on trial for being a dwarf.
- Tywin: **Have you nothing to say** in your defense?

In S04E02, *The Lion and the Rose*, Tyrion is falsely accused of poisoning King Joffrey Baratheon (his own nephew, Cersei’s son) and he is imprisoned. In S04E06, *The Laws of Gods and Men*, his father, Tywin Lannister, runs a trial where Tyrion is sentenced to die. The *dialogue* between Tywin and Tyrion defines one of the most exceptional scenes of *Game of Thrones*. Tyrion is treacherously accused of poisoning Joffrey, and in his trial he finally lets all his lifetime rage against his father go. As the trial continues, Tyrion changes his language from formal to informal when he becomes enraged:

- Tyrion Lannister : Father, I **wish** to confess. I **wish** to confess!
- Tywin Lannister : You wish to confess?
- Tyrion: [to the crowd] I saved you. I saved this city. All your worthless lives. **I should have** let Stannis kill you all.
- Tywin: Tyrion, do you wish to confess?
- Tyrion: Yes, father. **I'm** guilty. Guilty. Is that what you want to hear?
- Tywin: You admit you poisoned the king?
- Tyrion: No. Of that, **I'm** innocent. **I'm** guilty of a far more monstrous crime. **I'm** guilty of being a dwarf.
- Tywin: You are not on trial for being a dwarf.
- Tyrion: Oh, yes I am. **I've** been on trial for that my entire life.
- Tywin: Have you nothing to say in your defense?
- Tyrion: Nothing but this: I **did not** do it. [to Cersei] I **did not** kill Joffrey, but I wish that I had! Watching your **vicious bastard** die gave me more relief than **a thousand lying whores**. [to the crowd] I wish I was the monster you think I am! **I wish I had enough poison for the whole pack of you! I would gladly give my life to watch you all swallow it!**
- Tywin: Ser Meryn! Ser Meryn, escort the prisoner back to his cell!
- Tyrion: **I will not** give my life for Joffrey's murder and I know **I'll** get no justice here, so I will let the gods decide my fate. I demand a trial by combat.

Peter Trudgill (1974: 102) describes how social context and forms of address are strongly linked:

[...] Speech between individuals of unequal rank (due to status in an organization, social class, age, or some other factor) is likely to be less relaxed and more formal than that between equals, and in certain languages definite rules may exist as to which linguistic forms may or may not be used. A good example of this is the different forms of *address* that are produced by different degrees of status difference or intimacy. Different degrees of politeness and deference may be required, and these are signalled linguistically. The connotations of English address forms such as *sir*, *Mr Smith*, *Smith*, *Frederick*, *Fred*, *mate* and so on, are all different. Each has different stylistic implications, and the rules for their usage, as well as frequency of their usage, are quite complex. These rules often vary from class to class, age-group, and place .

In what follows, Tywin corrects Arya to make her understand that language defines social classes. In linguistics, this segregation of groups (e.g. social class) by means of language is called shibboleth. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, we may refer to shibboleth as: a use of language regarded as distinctive of a particular group.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/shibboleth> [accessed 18 June 2019]



In S02E07, *A Man Without Honour*, Arya Stark is pretending to be part of the serfdom and she gets stuck in a conversation with Tywin Lannister. During the conversation she allows her highborn position (“potentially” being a member of nobility) to be glimpsed by mistake by using formal language which makes Tywin realize that she is not as illiterate as other members of the serfdom, and suspect that she is only acting as if she was from a lower social class. Tywin tells her how she should speak to him, since they are not of the same social rank.

- Tywyn: Is that mutton?
- Arya: Yes, **my** Lord.

- Arya: Have you met many stonemasons, **my** lord?
- Tywin: Careful now, girl. I enjoy you, but be careful. Take that back to the kitchen. Eat what you want. And, girl. **“M’lord”. Lowborn girls say “m’lord”, not “my lord”. If you are going to pose as a commoner, you should do it properly.**
- Arya: My mother served Lady Dustin for many years, **my** lord. She taught me how to speak proper. Properly.

In S03E05, *Kissed by Fire*, Cersei meets her father Tywin and her brother Tyrion. Tywin is telling them the plans he has: arranged marriages. As the scene goes by one can see how angry Cersei becomes and how she changes her register from formal to informal:

- Tywin :You’ll marry Ser Loras.
- Cersei: **I will not.**
- T: The boy is heir to Highgarden [...].
- C: No, I **won’t** do it.

#### 2.4.2.1.2. Consultative<sup>11</sup>

In general terms, consultative register refers to that type of language often used to give assistance or advice to someone who is not as familiarized with the content of a specific field. It can also be studied as the register used to instruct someone in different disciplines. The language is usually formal and speakers avoid using slang, vulgar words, or colloquialisms.

The scene in S07E02, *Stormborn*, introduces Archmaester Ebrose (a professional in the field of Medicine) talking to a former student in the Citadel, Samwell Tarly. They are talking about the

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.thoughtco.com/register-language-style-1692038> [accessed 11 November 2018]

cure for greyscale, trying to find a solution for Ser Jorah Mormont. The sentences in bold refer to the training that Samwell Tarly is receiving from the Archmaester. Questions and assumptions (e.g. “Isn’t there some way?”, “I wondered”, “I wanted to ask you”, “I may have found a way to treat Ser Jorah”) made by Samwell, the former student, make this scene relate to this type of register if we take into account the definition we gave of consultative register. In addition, we can see how Archmaester Ebrose teaches Sam the reality of the disease, and why the possibilities of a cure are so poor (e.g. “This is quite advanced”, “Shall I tell you how he died? From greyscale”, “The procedure’s far too dangerous”).

As a specialist in Medicine, Archmaester is “nurturing Sam’s knowledge” with all the previous studies about the disease:

- Samwell Tarly: Um Pardon, Archmaester. I met Stannis Baratheon's daughter at Castle Black. She had the greyscale as a baby and was cured. **Isn't there some way...**
  - A: Does this look like a baby to you?
  - S: No.
  - A: **Have you studied the varying rates of greyscale progression in infants and fully grown men?**
  - S: **No.**
  - A: Maester Cressen discovered Shireen Baratheon's affliction immediately. This is quite **advanced**. And **beyond our skills**, ser. [...]
- 
- A: Might be useful. Ch'Vyalthan was a dreadful writer, but an excellent researcher.
  - S: Archmaester, I **wondered** if I ...
  - A: And this one. Maester Faull was quite the opposite a brilliant stylist who invented half the stories he tells.
  - S: Um, I **wanted to ask you...**
  - A: **If you're going to write histories, Tarly, you have to do the research. If you want people to read your histories, you need a bit of style.** I'm not writing "A Chronicle of the Wars Following the Death of King Robert I" so it can sit on a shelf unread. What? You don't like the title? What would you call it, then?
  - S: Mm, possibly something a bit more poetic?
  - A: We're not poets, Tarly.

- S: Um, Archmaester, if I could just have a moment.
- A: This is your moment. Use it wisely.
- S: **I may have found a way to treat Ser Jorah. There are two recorded cases of advanced greyscale being cured. I found the procedure in the study of rare diseases by Archmaester Pylos.**
- A: **I'm familiar with Archmaester Pylos and his study of rare diseases.**
- S: Oh, you are?
- A: Yes. **And shall I tell you how he died? From greyscale.**
- S: **Oh.**
- A: **The procedure's far too dangerous**, which is why it's now forbidden.

#### 2.4.2.2.. *Casual and intimate*<sup>12</sup>

Casual and intimate registers illustrate an informal use of the language. Here, the main difference between these two ways of using the language is the relation between the speakers. Casual register is used among family and friends, whereas intimate register is used by speakers whose relationship is closer, and often the language is not shown in public.

##### 2.4.2.2.1. *Casual*

Casual register is the type of register speakers use when they are with friends, family, or acquaintances in everyday situations. Speakers who find themselves in a casual context use slang, contractions, rude or impolite vocabulary, as illustrated below:

In S03E02, *Dark Wings, Dark Words*, Arya Stark, Gendry and Hot Pie are heading North. These are the lines showing a very informal and casual language:

- Gendry: **I'm** just trying to understand.
- Arya: Would you please **shut up** about it?
- Gendry: All you had to do was giving the names. You **could've** picked King Joffrey... anyone.
- Arya: **Shut up.**

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<sup>12</sup> <https://drsaraheaton.wordpress.com/2012/05/22/language-register-and-why-it-matters-or-why-you-cant-write-an-academic-paper-in-gangsta-slang/> [accessed 11 November 2018]

- 
- Hot Pie: Could be a minstrel.
  - Arya: **Shut up.**

The way Arya repeats all the time “shut up” indicates the casual register expected among friends, when one feels comfortable enough to be in a bad mood to ask them to shut up so many times.

In S04E10, *The Children*, Tyrion approaches his father, Tywin, when he is in the bathroom. Tyrion is carrying a crossbow, decided to kill him. We saw examples of Tywin using a more formal register before, when he was using more complex phrases and no contractions, and when he avoided the word *whore* to address Shae, whereas in this scene he does not hesitate to say it twice. This time Tywin is talking to his son in an informal and very casual way, hence his language is not as refined and polite:

- Tywin: Tyrion. Put down the crossbow. Who released you? Your brother, I expect. He always had a soft spot for you. Come, **we’ll** go and talk in my chambers. This is how you want to speak to me, hmm? Shaming your father has always given you pleasure.
- Tyrion: All my life **you’ve** wanted me dead.
- Tywin: Yes. But you refused to die. I respect that. Even admire it. You fight for **what’s** yours. **I’d** never let them execute you. Is that what you fear? **I’ll** never let Ilyn Payne take your head. **You’re** a Lannister. **You’re** my son.
- Tyrion: I loved her.
- Tywin: Who?
- Tyrion: Shae.
- Tywin: **Oh**, Tyrion. Put down that crossbow.
- Tyrion: I murdered her. With my own hands.
- Tywin: It **doesn’t** matter.
- Tyrion: **Doesn’t** matter?
- Tywin: She was a **whore**.
- Tyrion: Say that word again...
- Tywin: **And what? You’ll** kill your own father in the privy? No. **You’re** my son. Now, enough of this nonsense.

- Tyrion: I am your son and you sentenced me to die. You knew I **didn't** poison Joffrey, but you sentenced me all the same. Why?
- Tywin: Enough. **We'll** go back to my chambers and speak with some dignity.
- Tyrion: I **can't** go back there. **She's** in there.
- Tywin: **You're** afraid of a dead **whore**? ... You shot me. **You're** no son of mine.
- Tyrion: I am your son. I have always been your son.

#### 2.4.2.2.2. *Intimate*

This kind of register is used among speakers who have a very close relationship, i.e. lovers. Expressions are usually said in private to preserve the intimacy of their relation. Intimate register can be just a simple joke between best friends, or words of love to the partner. There are some lines through the series that show this type of register:

- “I am yours and you are mine” (This is how Tyrion and Shae demonstrate their mutual love).

- “The things I do for love”

Jaime Lannister addresses Cersei Lannister to let her know he would do anything for her. This sentence is very significant for the audience. Jaime and Cersei commit incest, and Bran,<sup>13</sup> who loves to climb up the walls of the castle, finds them having sexual intercourse at the top of a tower in Winterfell. Jaime and Cersei are in love, but they are aware that all their world will fall if someone finds out that they are lovers. They catch Bran out of the window and when Jaime and Cersei are discussing what to do about it, Jaime pronounces this famous line and throws Bran to the floor, leaving him paralysed and amnesiac.

- “You know nothing Jon Snow”

This line is repeatedly pronounced by Ygritte, Jon Snow's wildling lover. She refers to his sexual inability, since Jon is a member of the Night's Watch and his oath prevents him from having any type of romantic relationship, although later she will start to use this expression as a sign of love.

- “Yer Jalan Atthirari Anni” (“Moon of My Life” in Dothraki) by Khal Drogo.
- “Shekh Ma Shieraki Anni” (“My Sun and Stars” in Dothraki) by Daenerys.

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<sup>13</sup> Brandon Stark, also called Bran, is the second son of Lord Eddard Stark and Lady Catelyn Tully. He has a fascination with climbing and exploring along the walls and ramparts of the castle.

“Moon of My Life” and “My Sun and Stars” are two expressions used by Daenerys Targaryen and Khal Drogo used to express how much they love each other.

## 2.5. Jargon

### 2.5.1. A definition of jargon

Jargon is a specific term to define the use of certain words, phrases, or expressions by members of a particular field. The vocabulary used may be misunderstood or may become unintelligible to people who do not belong to the same group. The use of different jargons is visible in *Game of Thrones*, where different organizations have their own precise language. The jargons selected for this study were “The Maesters of the Citadel” (professionals in the fields of History or Medicine) and the military order “The Night’s Watch”.

### 2.5.2. Jargons in *Game of Thrones*

#### 2.5.2.1. “Maesters of The Citadel”

Maesters and Archmaesters in the TV series *Game of Thrones* are wise old men who know quite a lot about most things happening in their world. They live in the Citadel, and the large amount of books they own makes them have a wide range of knowledge about law, science, history or medicine.

The following examples show (1) Archmaester Ebrose talking to Ser Jorah Mormont about greyscale; (2) Maester Pycelle reporting (at Tyrion’s trial) the types of poison he was missing from his chambers; and (3) the recipe used to prepare an ointment for Jorah Mormont, who suffers from greyscale.

#### 1

In this scene in S07E02, *Stormborn*, Archmaester Ebrose is talking to Ser Jorah about his disease. Archmaester Ebrose has a wide knowledge about medicine, and he informs Ser Jorah what he should have done, and how the disease will develop onwards.

- Archmaester Ebrose: **The infection has spread too far. You should have cut off your arm the moment you were touched.**

- Jorah Mormont: How long?
- Archmaester: **It'll be years before it kills you. Could be 10. Could be 20.**
- J: But how long until?
- A: **Your mind? Six months, maybe fewer.**

2

- Maester Pycelle: **Basilisk venom, widow's blood, wolfsbane, essence of nightshade, sweetsleep, tears of Lys, demon's dance blind eye.**
- Maester Pycelle: **It was. The Strangler.**

3

Ingredients for a salve to help the healing of greyscale:

- I. **Pine Resin** - Historically used as a topical salve to draw out impurities or poisons, stem blood flow, and is both antibacterial and antifungal.
- II. **Elder Bark** - Reduces inflammation.
- III. **Beeswax** - Anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antiviral, and moisturizing. Offers mild pain relief and acts as a barrier against infection, while still allowing the skin to breathe.
- IV. **Olive Oil** - Antioxidant that restores damaged skin cells, moisturizes and clears pores.

#### 2.5.2.2. *"The Night's Watch"*

The Night's Watch is a military order located at the northern border of Westeros (The Wall) whose members are meant to watch out for possible threats from Beyond the Wall. They are forced to swear an oath and keep their vows until the end of their service at the Wall, which is the day they die; then, their watch will be ended. I found this oath interesting to study as part of their jargon because they use specific sentences that we do not hear anywhere else in the entire TV show. Every time someone says a phrase from this oath, they are referring to the military order.

These are the vows that the members of the Night's Watch are obliged to keep:

Night gathers, and now my watch begins. It shall not end until my death. I shall take no wife, hold no lands, father no children. I shall wear no crowns and win no glory. I shall live and die at my post. I am the sword in the darkness. I am the watcher on the walls. I am the shield that guards the realms of men. I pledge my life and honour to the Night's Watch, for this night and all the nights to come.

Furthermore, we have two additional examples in the show where Jon Snow talks about the Night's Watch. In the first case, he asks his Uncle Benjen (a member of the Night's Watch) to go to the Wall, but his uncle tries to make him understand that the meaning of the Night's Watch Oath is not something easy to keep, or easy to understand from the outside. It means no love, and no possibility of having a family. In the second case, Jon Snow talks to Maester Aemon Targaryen about leaving for Castle Black to join the Night's Watch.

## 1

- Jon Snow: Lady Stark thought it might insult the Royal Family to seat a bastard in their midst.
- Uncle Benjen: Well, you're always welcome on the Wall. No bastard was ever refused a seat there.
- JS: So take me with you when you go back. Father will let me if you ask him. I know he will.
- UB: The Wall isn't going anywhere.
- JS: **I'm ready to swear your oath.**
- UB: **You don't understand what you'd be giving up. We have no families. None of us will ever father sons.**
- JS: **I don't care about that.**
- UB: **You might, if you knew what it meant.** I'd better get inside, rescue your father from his guests.

## 2

- Aemon Targaryen: **Tell me, did you ever wonder why the men of the Night's Watch take no wives and father no children?**
- Jon Snow: **No.**
- A.T. : **So they will not love. Love is the death of duty. If the day should ever come when your lord father was forced to choose between honour on the one hand and those he loves on the other, what would he do?**
- J.S. : He... He would do whatever was right. No matter what.



- A.T. : **Then Lord Stark is one man in 10,000. Most of us are not so strong. What is honour compared to a woman's love? And what is duty against the feel of a newborn son in your arms? Or a brother's smile?**

## 2.6. *Idiolect*

### 2.6.1. *A definition of idiolect*

The term idiolect can be defined as the particular language that a speaker uses in different contexts. Every individual has their own idiolect since everyone has a distinctive way of expressing the information they want to communicate with an interlocutor. Following Labov's *Social Stratification of English in New York City* (1966), Trudgill (1986: 39) reports that "the speech of a single speaker (his idiolect) may differ considerably from those of other like him. Moreover, it may also be internally inconsistent."

In this section I study idiolects focusing on words and sentences that are representative of the language used by certain characters. All of the sentences and words are usually said more than once, which makes the audience relate these expressions to the specific characters.

### 2.6.2. *Idiolects in Game of Thrones*

#### 2.6.2.1. *Jon Snow*

##### 2.6.2.1.1. *"I'm a bastard"*

One of the most typical and repeated lines associated with Jon Snow is "I'm a bastard". The fact of being a bastard has played a significant role in his life to the extent that he has always let "the bastard name" take control of his personality. He suffers from some sort of anxiety every time he reminds someone that he is a bastard, or any time someone tells him that he is Ned Stark's son but not Catelyn's Stark, making him a bastard. Fortunately, we can see through the whole series how he gradually gains self-confidence so he does not allow his own reality to hurt him anymore. In S01E01, *Winter is Coming*, Jon Snow has a conversation with his uncle Benjen and another one with Tyrion Lannister.

In both conversations the topic of being a bastard is on the table:

- Uncle Benjen: Is he dead yet?
- Jon Snow: Uncle Benjen.
- UB: You got bigger. Rode all day. Didn't want to leave you alone with the Lannisters. Why aren't you at the feast?
- JS: Lady Stark thought it might **insult** the royal family to seat **a bastard** in their midst.
- UB: Well, you're always welcome on the Wall. No **bastard** was ever refused a seat there.
- JS: So take me with you when you go back. Father will let me if you ask him. I know he will.

- Jon Snow: What are you doing back there?
- Tyrion Lannister: Preparing for a night with your family. I've always wanted to see the Wall.

- TL: [...] Did I offend you? Sorry. You are the **bastard**, though.

- JS: Lord Eddard Stark is my father.
- TL: And Lady Stark is not your mother, making you the **bastard**. Let me give you some advice, **bastard. Never forget what you are.** The rest of the world will not. Wear it like armor and it can never be used to hurt you.
- JS: What the hell do you know about **being a bastard**?

In S01E04, *Cripples, Bastards, and Broken Things*, Jon and Sam are talking about women. They are very different in terms of physical appearance (Jon has an athletic body, whereas Sam is heavier) which makes Sam think that Jon is having sexual intercourse with many women. However, his bastard name Snow prevents him morally from seducing women. Here are the dialogues:

- S: Oh, no. So why exactly did you not make love to Ros with the perfect?
- J: What's my name?
- S: Jon **Snow**.
- J: And why is my surname **Snow**?
- S: Because you're **a bastard from the North**.
- J: I never met my mother. [...] Because all I could think was what if I got her pregnant and she had a child, **another bastard named Snow? It's not a good life for a child.**

Jon Snow is no longer ashamed of who he is and his confidence is stronger than ever. In S07E04, *The Spoils of War*, Jon is talking to Missandei of Naath<sup>14</sup> who asks him why his last name is Snow when his father's is Stark. Jon tries to explain this, as she is not familiarized with the term bastard:

- Missandei: Ser Davos, Lord **Snow**.
- Ser Davos: King **Snow**, isn't it? No, that doesn't sound right. King Jon?
- Jon: **It doesn't matter.**
- M: Forgive me, but may I ask a question?
- J: Of course.
- M: **Your name is Jon Snow, but your father's name was Ned Stark?**
- J: **I'm a bastard. My mother and father weren't married.**
- SD: Is the custom different in Naath?
- M: We don't have marriage in Naath, so the concept of a bastard doesn't exist.

#### 2.6.2.2. *Daenerys Targaryen*

##### 2.6.2.2.1. *"Mother of Dragons"*

One of most salient phrases of Daenerys Targaryen is "I'm the Mother of Dragons". She is indeed, and she likes to show everyone how powerful and strong she is with her three dragons, which she calls her children. Every time someone upsets some of her dragons she gets pretty angry. She always looks defiant when she pronounces this famous expression, to which the other characters usually react in worry and fear. People in Essos and Westeros know that she is capable of anything to keep her children safe. Visual communication through body language is really important as shown in the way characters' faces reflect their feelings when Daenerys Targaryen appears.

- "When my dragons are grown, we will take back what was stolen from me and destroy those who have wronged me. We will lay waste to armies and burn cities to the ground. Turn us away and we will burn you first."
- "They have my dragons. A mother does not flee without her children."

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<sup>14</sup> Missandei of Naath was originally a slave who served as an interpreter to Kraznys mo Nakloz of Astapor, until she was freed by Daenerys Targaryen. Missandei now serves Daenerys as her trusted advisor and handmaiden.

#### 2.6.2.2.2. “Dracarys”

Another relevant expression from Daenerys Targaryen is “dracarys”. The word means dragon fire in Valyrian, and she uses it every time she wants her dragons to burn something or someone. There are several scenes where “dracarys” is pronounced, and once more, body language becomes significant. She looks very confident when she says it and her enemies’ expressions change immediately:

### 1

S02E10, *Valar Morghulis*

- Warlock Pyat Pree: Do you want to be with them? You will be. When your dragons were born, our magic was born again. It is strongest in their presence. And they are strongest in yours. You will be with them, through winter, summer, winter again. Across a thousand, thousand seasons you will be with them. And we will be with you until time comes to an end. Welcome home, Daenerys Stormborn.
- Daenerys: This is not my home. My home is across the sea, where my people are waiting for me.
- Pyat Pree: will be waiting a long time.
- Daenerys: **Dracarys.**

### 2

S06E09, *Battle of the Bastards*

- My reign has just begun. **Dracarys.**

### 3

S07E04, *The Spoils of War*

- Bronn: Get back to King’s Landing.
- Jaime: I’m not abandoning my army.
- Bronn: You’re the commander, not a damn infantryman. Those fuckers are about to swamp us.
- Jaime: We can hold them off.
- Daenerys: **Dracarys!**

## 4

S07E05, *Eastwatch*

- Daenerys: Lord Randyll Tarly, Dickon Tarly, I, Daenerys of House Targaryen, First of My Name, Breaker of Chains, and Mother of Dragons, sentence you to die. **Dracarys.**

## 5

S03E04, *And Now His Watch is Ended*

- Daenerys Targaryen: I am Daenerys Stormborn of the House Targaryen, of the blood of Old Valyria. Valyrian is my mother tongue. (to Unsullied):<sup>15</sup> Unsullied! Slay the masters, slay the soldiers, slay every man who holds a whip, but harm no child. Strike the chains off every slave you see!
- Kraznys: I am your master! Kill her! Kill her!
- Daenerys Targaryen: **Dracarys.**

#### 2.6.2.2.3. "Bend the knee"

In Season 7, we can see Daenerys Targaryen back in Westeros, after spending her whole life in exile. She is determined to claim the Iron Throne back at any cost. One of her most famous phrases in this season is "bend the knee". Daenerys wants everyone to pledge themselves to her and declare her their Queen.

## 1

S07E05, *Eastwatch*

- Daenerys: I offer you a choice. **Bend the knee** and join me. Together, we will leave the world a better place than we found it. Or refuse and die.

## 2

S07E04, *The Spoils of War*

- Daenerys Targaryen: I will fight for you. I will fight for the North. **When you bend the knee.**
- Jon Snow: My people won't accept a southern ruler. Not after everything they've suffered.

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<sup>15</sup> The Unsullied (*Astapori Valyrian: Dovoghedhi*) are elite warrior-eunuchs bred and trained in Astapor, one of the three major cities of Slaver's Bay. They are slave-soldiers famed for their skills and discipline in battle.

## 3

S07E01, *Dragonstone*

- Daenerys: Send a raven north. Tell Jon Snow that his Queen invites him to come to Dragonstone and **bend the knee**.

## 4

S07E03, *Queen's Justice*

- Daenerys: I am the last Targaryen, Jon Snow. Honour the pledge your ancestor made to mine. **Bend the knee** and I will name you Warden of the North.

2.6.2.3. *The Lannisters*2.6.2.3.1. *"The things I do for love"*

One of the best quotes from Jaime Lannister is "the things I do for love". He says it twice during the series, but the meaning behind the sentence is very powerful. This phrase refers to anything immoral he does or has done in the name of love, especially in the name of his love for Cersei. He pronounces it for the first time at the end of S01E01, *Winter is Coming*. In S06E08, *No One*, Jaime repeats this sentence (just changing *I* for *we*) when he is talking to Edmure Tully, who is under Jaime's captivity.

- Jaime: I'll talk about whomever I want. She loved her children. I suppose all mothers do, but Catelyn and Cersei, there's a fierceness you don't often see. They'd do anything to protect their babies. Start a war. Burn cities to ash. Free their worst enemies. **The things we do for love.**
- Edmure: You didn't come here to talk about our sisters.
- J: That's exactly why I came here. **I love Cersei.** You can laugh at that if you want. You can sneer. Doesn't matter. She needs me. And to get back to her, I have to take Riverrun. I'll send for your baby boy. And I'll launch him into Riverrun with a catapult. Because you don't matter to me, Lord Edmure. Your son doesn't matter to me. The people in the castle don't matter to me. **Only Cersei.** And if I have to slaughter every Tully who ever lived to get back to her, that's what I'll do.

This scene has a clear connection with the one in S01E01, *Winter is Coming*. Jaime would do unspeakable things to keep Cersei safe and happy, because he needs her and he loves her. He will kill an innocent boy if he needs to, and he will destroy everyone in his way. It is peculiar how Jaime refers to Catelyn's and Cersei's actions for the sake of their children. Back in Season two, Catelyn started a war, and she freed Jaime Lannister in order to get her children back from King's Landing. But, I consider fascinating how he talks about burning cities to ashes as an anticipation of what would happen two episodes later, when Cersei burns The High Septum with Wildfire.

#### 2.6.2.3.2. "We don't get to choose who we love"

"We don't get to choose who we love", or "We don't choose whom we love" are two sentences repeated by Jaime Lannister, and Cersei Lannister (*we love whom we love*, meaning "we do not have any choice when it comes to the heart"). We could not study this sentence without analyzing why Cersei says the same phrase. Jaime and Cersei Lannister are twin siblings. They were born and grown together, but nonetheless they fell for each other and developed romantic feelings. The Targaryens tended to commit incest to keep the lineage pure, but not the Lannisters. Among the other Great Houses, that was a repulsive act. Whenever Jaime and Cersei pronounce this phrase they are referring to the fact that no one is capable to control whom we love. It could happen to be your worst enemy, or even your own brother.

### 1

S03E05, *Kissed by Fire*

- Brienne: I'm not interested in foul rumors.
- Jaime Lannister: Unless they're about me. It's all true about Renly. His proclivities were the worst kept secret at court. It's a shame the throne isn't made out of cocks. They'd have never got him off it.
- B: Shut your mouth!
- J: I don't blame him. And I don't blame you, either. **We don't get to choose who we love.**

## 2

S05E10, *Mother's Mercy*

- Jaime: The Lannisters and the Martells have hated each other for years, but you've fallen in love with Trystane. It was an accident, really. I mean, what were the chances? You happen to fall in love with the man you were assigned to marry? **My point is we don't choose whom we love.** It just, well-- it's beyond our control. I sound like an idiot.

## 3

S07E03, *Queen's Justice*

- Cersei Lannister to Ellaria Sand: I never got to have a mother, but Myrcella did. She was mine, and you took her from me. Why did you do that? Doesn't matter now. Your daughter's a beauty, too. Those brown eyes. Those lips. Perfect Dornish beauty. I imagine she's your favorite. I know, I know, we're not supposed to have favorites, but still, we're only human. **We love whom we love.**

#### 2.6.2.3.3. "A Lannister always pays his/her debts"

One of the most famous expressions in the show is "A Lannister always pays his/her debts". This sentence is considered the extra official motto of House Lannister, although not only the members of this Great House say it, but other characters also refer to it during the seven seasons of the TV series. The meaning of this motto is obviously not only about members of this family giving back something they had borrowed, or returning a favour they asked of somebody. They will "pay back" any treason they discover and take revenge, and they will suffer the consequences of their evil acts somehow through the series. Tywin pays his debts when Tyrion murders him with a crossbow, after he has discovered Tywin sleeping with Shae (Tyrion's lover). Tyrion was always rejected by his own father because he blames Tyrion for his wife's death when she gave birth to him. This is a *debt* that Tywin could never *pay* to Tyrion as in the end he was his son (Tywin disgusts Tyrion, and that is clearly visible through the entire show whenever he has to admit that Tyrion is his son, and for the sake of the family he had to keep the boy).



The scene in S04E10, *The Children*, is fascinating as you can feel how thirsty Tyrion is for revenge, and how his words and expressions reveal that his father will never mistreat him again once he has killed him:

- Tywin: Tyrion. Put down the crossbow. Who released you? Your brother, I expect. He always had a soft spot for you. Come, we'll go and talk in my chambers. This is how you want to speak to me, hmm? **Shaming your father has always given you pleasure.**
- Tyrion: **All my life you've wanted me dead.**
- Tywin: Yes. But you refused to die. I respect that. Even admire it. You fight for what's yours. I'd never let them execute you. Is that what you fear? I'll never let Ilyn Payne take your head. You're a Lannister. You're my son.
- Tyrion: I loved her.
- Tywin: Who?
- Tyrion: Shae.
- Tywin: Oh, Tyrion. Put down that crossbow.
- Tyrion: I murdered her. With my own hands.
- Tywin: It doesn't matter.
- Tyrion: Doesn't matter?
- Tywin: She was a whore.
- Tyrion: Say that word again...
- Tywin: And what? You'll kill your own father in the privy? No. You're my son. Now, enough of this nonsense.
- Tyrion: I am your son and you sentenced me to die. You knew I didn't poison Joffrey, but you sentenced me all the same. **Why?**
- Tywin: Enough. We'll go back to my chambers and speak with some dignity.
- Tyrion: I can't go back there. She's in there.
- Tywin: You're afraid of a dead whore? (Tyrion shoots him) **You shot me. You're no son of mine.**
- Tyrion: **I am your son. I have always been your son.**

Jaime paid his debts after killing the Mad King and pushed Bran out of the window being Catelyn's prisoner, and getting his right hand cut off as a result. Cersei is paying her debts through her children's deaths for all the atrocities she has committed.

Other scenes which show the Lannisters talking about “debts being paid” are:

## 1

S01E05, *The Wolf and The Lion*, and S01E06, *A Golden Crown*

In these two episodes Tyrion becomes Catelyn’s prisoner after being accused of trying to kill Bran with a dagger, and of conspiring to murder Lord Jon Arryn. He is kept in a sky cell until he manages to deliver a message to Lysa Arryn and Catelyn Stark through the guard.

- Tyrion (to the guard): Have you ever heard the phrase "Rich as a Lannister"? Of course you have! You’re a smart man. You know who the Lannisters are. I am a Lannister. Tyrion, son of Tywin! **And of course, you have also heard the phrase, "a Lannister always pays his debts"**. If you deliver a message from me to Lady Arryn, I will be in your debt. I will owe you gold.

When Tyrion finally meets Lady Arryn and Catelyn Stark he wants to confess “his crimes”. He demands a trial by combat which is won by Bronn and Tyrion is released from the Vale.

- Robin Arryn (the King): Is it over?
- Lysa Arryn: You don’t fight with honour! (to Bronn)<sup>16</sup>
- Bronn: No. He did.
- Robin: Can I make the little man fly now?
- Tyrion: Not this little man. This little man is going home. I believe you have something of mine.  
**A Lannister always pays his debts.**

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<sup>16</sup> Bronn is a sellsword: a highly trained, extremely lethal, and a feared mercenary soldier whose service as a warrior is for hire. Not much is known about his past or family, except that he had a younger brother.

## 2

S02E08, *The Prince of Winterfell*

In this episode, Tyrion is talking to Cersei (who had imprisoned Tyrion's prostitute) after he shipped Cersei's only daughter, Myrcella, to Dorne.

- Cersei: **Because a Lannister always pays her debts.** You stole my only daughter, you plot to have Joffrey killed.
- Tyrion: And how do I know you haven't killed her already?
- Cersei: Would you like to see her? I thought you might. Ser Mandon, bring in my brother's whore.
- Tyrion: I'm sorry they hurt you. You must be brave. I promise I will free you.
- The *lover*: Don't forget me. (to Tyrion)
- Tyrion: Never.
- Tyrion (to Cersei): I will hurt you for this. A day will come when you think you're safe and happy, and your joy will turn to ashes in your mouth. **And you will know the debt is paid.**

## 3

S04E01, *Two Swords*

Oberyn Martell<sup>17</sup> attends the royal wedding between Margaery Tyrell and Joffrey Baratheon in King's Landing. Tyrion asks him why he is in King's Landing when Martells and Lannisters had hated each other for years.

This is the conversation between the two of them:

- Tyrion: Why did you come to King's Landing, Prince Oberyn?
- Oberyn Martell: I was invited to the royal wedding.
- T: I thought we were speaking truth.
- O: The last time I was in the capital was many years ago. Another wedding. My sister Elia and Rhaegar Targaryen, the Last Dragon. My sister loved him. She bore his children. Swaddled them,

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<sup>17</sup> Prince Oberyn was the younger brother of Prince Doran Martell and Princess Elia Martell, and like most members of House Martell, he was styled "Prince" instead of "Lord". He was nicknamed "the Red Viper" for his knowledge of poisons and for his unusual, deadly style of combat. Oberyn was known for being an accomplished warrior, but he was just as infamous for his sexual appetite,

rocked them, fed them at her own breast. Elia wouldn't let the wet nurse touch them. And beautiful, noble Rhaegar Targaryen left her for another woman. That started a war and the war ended right here when your father's army took the city I wasn't actually present. And butchered those children. My nephew and niece. Carved them up and wrapped them in Lannister cloaks. And my sister, you know what they did to her? I'm asking you a question.

- T: I've heard rumors.
- O: So have I. The one I keep hearing is that Gregor Clegane, the Mountain, raped Elia and split her in half with his great sword.
- T: I wasn't there.
- O: I don't know what happened. If the Mountain killed my sister, your father gave the order. Tell your father I'm here. **And tell him the Lannisters aren't the only ones who pay their debts.**

#### 4

##### S07E06, *Beyond the Wall*

In this episode we can find Jaime talking to Bronn. After being promised a castle and gold several times, Bronn is tired of the same *false saying*.

- Jaime Lannister: You have better instincts than any officer in the Lannister army.
- Bronn: That's like saying I have a bigger cock than anyone in the Unsullied army.
- J: I expect to command all the Lannister forces before long. You can be the right hand I lost.
- B: You **promised me** a lordship and a castle and a highborn beauty for a wife.
- J: **And you'll get all three. A Lannister always pays...**
- B: **Don't say it. Don't fucking say it.**

##### 2.6.2.4. Others

There are other characters that we could mention when it comes to describing that they have their own idiolect or their own recognizable expressions, among them, e.g. Joffrey Baratheon and Melisande.

### 2.6.2.4.1. Joffrey Baratheon

Joffrey Baratheon is one of the most despicable characters in Game of Thrones. He enjoys having people killed under his commands, and he loves to mistreat his oppressed citizens. He is a very young King, with no skills at anything, but being a dictator. He continuously reminds everyone who the King is and who has the last say.

#### 1

Executing Lord Eddard Stark. S01E09, *Baelor*

- Joffrey Baratheon: "My mother wishes me to let Lord Eddard join the Night's Watch... stripped of all titles and powers, he would serve the realm in permanent exile. And my Lady Sansa has begged mercy for her father. But they have the soft hearts of women... **so long as I'm your King** treason shall never go unpunished! Ser Ilyn, bring me his head!"

#### 2

S02E01, *The North Remembers*

Talking to his mother about how to find Arya Stark, who seems to have run away from King's Landing:

- Cersei: I'm sure if you asked Grandfather
- Joffrey: **The king does not ask, he commands.** And my grandfather's stupidity in the field of battle is the reason Robb Stark has Uncle Jaime in the first place.

#### 3

S03E10, *Mhysa*

When Joffrey gets the news that Robb Stark<sup>18</sup> has been killed, along with his wife, his non-born son and his mother, Catelyn Stark, he wants to hurt Sansa with the death of her family. Tyrion Lannister, Sansa's husband at that time, reminds Joffrey that Sansa does not longer belong to him, and therefore he has no right at all to torture her:

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<sup>18</sup> King Robb Stark was the eldest son of Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell and his wife, Lady Catelyn. He was the older brother of Sansa, Arya, Bran, and Rickon Stark, and cousin (believed to be half-brother) of Jon Snow. Robb was declared King in the North, the first since his ancestor Torrhen Stark bent the knee three centuries before, during the War of the Five Kings after the execution of his father by King Joffrey Baratheon.

- Joffrey: **Everyone is mine to torment.** You'd do well to remember that, you little monster.
- Tyrion: Oh, I'm a monster. Perhaps you should speak to me more softly, then. Monsters are dangerous and just now kings are dying like flies.
- J: I could have your tongue out for saying that.
- Cersei: Let him make his threats. Hmm? He's a bitter little man.
- Maester Pycelle: Lord Tyrion should apologize immediately. Unacceptable, disrespectful, and in very bad taste.
- J: **I am the king!** I will punish you.
- Tywin: Any man who must say, "I am the king" is no true king.

#### 2.6.2.4.2. *Melisandre, The Red Woman*

Melisandre, usually known as the Red Woman, is a Red Priestess in the religion of R'hllor, the Lord of Light,<sup>19</sup> and a counselor to Stannis Baratheon in his way to claim his right to rule over the Seven Kingdoms:

### 1

“The night is dark and full of terrors”

In S02E01, *The North Remembers* Melisandre is conducting a ceremony where people promise to worship the new gods, the Lord of Light, over the old gods.

- Melisandre: Lord of Light, come to us in our darkness. We offer you these false gods. Take them and cast your light upon us, **for the night is dark and full of terrors.**
- Men: For the night is dark and full of terrors.
- Melisandre: After the long summer, darkness will fall heavy on the world. The stars will bleed.

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<sup>19</sup> The religion of the Lord of Light is centered on belief in the existence of two deities, in the words of Melisandre: “A god of light and love and joy, and a god of darkness, evil, and fear, eternally at war.” R'hllor is the god of fire, which provides light, heat, and life, and struggles against darkness, cold, and death, represented by an opposing deity, the Great Other. Due to the dualistic worldview of this religion, its more fanatical followers believe the Lord of Light is the “one true god”, and all other gods from other religions - the Old Gods of the Forest, the Seven-Faced God, the Drowned God, etc. - are demons and false idols that must be cast down and burned.

- Melisandre: In the ancient books, it's written that a warrior will draw a burning sword from the fire. And that sword shall be Lightbringer. Stannis Baratheon, Warrior of Light, your sword awaits you. Lord, cast your light upon us! **For the night is dark and full of terrors.**
- Stannis: For the night is dark and full of terror.

In S05E09, *The Dance of Dragons*, Melisandre burns Princess Shireen (Stannis Baratheon's daughter) as a sacrifice to the Lord of Light, after discovering that Stannis is the 'chosen one', i.e. the one chosen to rule the Seven Kingdoms:

- Melisandre: For you, we offer up this girl Please! that you may cleanse her with your fire and that its light may lead our way.
- Princess Shireen: Please! No, please let me see my father.
- Melisandre: Accept this token of our faith, my Lord, and lead us from the darkness. Lord of Light, show us the way.
- PS: Mother! Mother, please! Mother, please! Mother! - Mother! Please don't do this!
- M: Lord of Light, protect us.
- PS: Please! Father, please!
- M: **For the night is dark and full of terrors.**

### 3. Conclusions

The use of a language, and English is not an exception, varies depending on the needs of the speakers at the moment of their speech. Speakers will choose among their own linguistic resources to achieve successful communication with their interlocutors, e.g. when deciding whether to use formal or informal language, or determining when to use particular expressions.

In this piece of research I have analyzed aspects of linguistic variation within the TV Series *Game of Thrones*. The producers have meticulously designed and selected the language for the specific characters, so that the audience may identify characters from particular expressions or relevant linguistic features.

Firstly, to make the reader become familiar with the topic, a general and broad introduction to linguistic variation was offered, together with definitions of register, jargon and idiolect.

Secondly, certain aspects concerning linguistic variation within the TV Series *Game of Thrones* were described and discussed, among them the pronunciation of the characters depending on the areas they came from; the different registers the characters used depending on the situations they found themselves in, as well as the individual way in which the characters used the language. Moreover, I also contributed to the idea of a linguistic connection between the sigils and the mottos of the Great Houses. For this purpose, I paid attention to several scenes and dialogues and to certain events happening throughout the first seasons of the show.

From the very beginning, I noticed significant register differences among the characters, e.g. Tywin Lannister avoiding the word *whore*, and saying it twice later on in another scene, or the different pronunciation of words like *mother*, or *blood* depending on whether the characters were from the North or from the South. In general terms, this paper contains many personal opinions as a viewer, which I have tried to illustrate through clear examples. Thus, I have considered the background of the characters and I have paid special attention to the way in which they used the language in certain contexts. For instance, Tyrion Lannister and Cersei Lannister change their register (from formal to informal) when they both talk in anger. Likewise, from expressions like “a lion doesn’t concern himself with the opinions of the sheep”, I could justify the arrogance shown by Tywin Lannister and House Lannister, and the superiority they exhibited. Moreover, in Section 2.2., I also concentrated on how the language defines the personalities, lifestyle, and even fate of the characters and the importance that some of them give to honour.



I hope I have managed to illustrate how linguistic variation works in *Game of Thrones*, and the excellent job that the producers have done to personalize, linguistically speaking, all the characters. Thus, every motto, every phrase, every expression, and even every situation in the show reflect the personalities of the characters in a very individual way.

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## I. Appendix

### Characters

#### **Aemon Targaryen**

Aemon was the maester at Castle Black and one of Lord Commander Jeor Mormont's closest advisors in the Night's Watch. He was born Aemon Targaryen and was the last known Targaryen in Westeros. He was the great-uncle of Daenerys Targaryen, and unbeknownst to him, the great-great uncle of Jon Snow. Aemon's origins have long been forgotten by most, as he remained dedicated to his vows as a Maester and a brother of the Night's Watch for many decades.

#### **Archmaester Ebrose**

Ebrose is an archmaester of the Citadel, one of the governing members of the Order of Maesters. At some point early in his life, Ebrose committed himself to the life of a maester, and would have studied at the Citadel in order to forge his chain of service. Eventually he rose through the ranks, ultimately achieving the position of Archmaester, making him one of the most senior members of the order.

#### **Archmaester Pycelle**

Pycelle was the Grand Maester for multiple kings and a member of the small council, but his true loyalties lay with House Lannister. He died moments before the destruction of the Great Sept of Baelor as a result of a plot orchestrated by Qyburn, a former maester himself, who had his little birds (kids) stab Pycelle to death.

#### **Arya Stark**

Arya Stark is the third child and second daughter of Lord Eddard Stark and his wife, Lady Catelyn Stark. She is the heir of House Stark under the reign of her sister, Sansa, the Queen in the North, and heir to the Kingdom of the North.

After narrowly escaping the persecution of House Stark by House Lannister, Arya is trained as a Faceless Man at the House of Black and White in Braavos, and uses her new skills to avenge her family.

### **Balon Greyjoy**

Balon Greyjoy was the head of House Greyjoy and Lord of the Iron Islands. The Iron Islands are one of the constituent regions of the Seven Kingdoms and House Greyjoy is one of the Great Houses of the realm. House Greyjoy rule the region from their seat at Pyke and Balon also holds the title Lord Reaper of Pyke. He was the father of Yara and Theon Greyjoy, and the older brother of Euron, and Aeron "Damphair" Greyjoy.

### **Black Fish**

Ser Brynden Tully, popularly called "the Blackfish," was a knight and a member of House Tully. He was the younger brother of Lord Hoster Tully, and the uncle of Catelyn, Lysa, and Edmure Tully.

After the massacre of the Northern army at the Red Wedding and the death of Robb Stark, the Blackfish reassembled the remnants of the Tully host and retakes Riverrun from House Frey, becoming the de facto leader and lord of House Tully during his nephew's captivity. Refusing to surrender his family home to the Freys, he was killed in a final stand when Jaime Lannister retook the castle with the unwilling help of Edmure.

### **Bran Stark**

King Bran I the Broken, born Brandon Stark and commonly known simply as "Bran", is the fourth child and second son of Eddard and Catelyn Stark. He was born and raised in Winterfell. Bran is a warg and a greenseer serving as the new Three-Eyed Raven, using his supernatural gifts in the war against the Night King and the White Walkers in which the living ultimately emerge victorious. After the assassination of Daenerys Targaryen at the hands of Jon Snow, Bran was chosen to ascend to the throne by a gathering of the remaining great Westerosi lords and ladies.

### **Bronn**

Bronn is a sellsword: a highly trained, extremely lethal, and a feared mercenary soldier whose service as a warrior is for hire. Not much is known about his past or family, except that he had a younger brother.

### **Catelyn Stark**

Lady Catelyn Stark, née Tully, was born into House Tully as the daughter of Hoster Tully, the Lord Paramount of the Trident, and sister of Lysa and Edmure Tully. She married into House Stark

through her marriage to Eddard Stark, though she was originally intended for Brandon Stark. Together, she and Eddard had five children: Robb, Sansa, Arya, Bran, and Rickon. Catelyn was a devoted mother and was fiercely protective of her children. However, she was resentful towards her husband's alleged bastard son, Jon Snow.

### **Cersei Lannister**

Queen Cersei I Lannister was the twentieth ruler of the Seven Kingdoms and the widow of King Robert Baratheon, with whom she had her sole trueborn child, and the Queen of the Seven Kingdoms. She was the daughter of Lord Tywin Lannister, twin sister of Jaime Lannister and elder sister of Tyrion Lannister. She was involved in an incestuous relationship with Jaime, who was secretly the father of her three deceased bastard children, Joffrey, Myrcella and Tommen, as well as an unborn child.

### **Daenerys Targaryen**

Queen Daenerys I Targaryen, also known as Dany and Daenerys Stormborn, was the younger sister of Rhaegar Targaryen and Viserys Targaryen and only daughter of King Aerys II Targaryen and Queen Rhaella Targaryen, who were both ousted from the Iron Throne during Robert Baratheon's rebellion. She also served a brief tenure as the *de facto* Queen of the Andals and the First Men and the twenty-first ruler of the Seven Kingdoms, after claiming the throne from her predecessor Cersei I Lannister, who was killed in the Battle of King's Landing. However, Daenerys was never formally crowned, nor did she sit upon the Iron Throne. Upon her destruction of a surrendered King's Landing, Daenerys was assassinated by Jon Snow to prevent further carnage. She was eventually succeeded several weeks later by Bran Stark (an elective monarch chosen by the Great Council).

After the respective deaths of her remaining brother, Viserys, and husband *Khal* Drogo, Daenerys builds up her own base of power in Essos, where she hatches three dragons, is joined by prominent advisers including Ser Jorah Mormont and Tyrion Lannister, liberates the slaves of Slaver's Bay, gains the Unsullied, and unites the Dothraki. Following the War of the Five Kings, Daenerys rules Meereen for a period of time before sailing to Westeros to begin her war to take the Seven Kingdoms with her followers and allies to claim the Iron Throne from Cersei Lannister.

### **Edmure Tully**

Lord Edmure Tully is the Lord of Riverrun and Lord Paramount of the Trident, and is the son and heir of the late Lord Hoster Tully of Riverrun. He is the younger brother of Catelyn and Lysa,

nephew of Brynden Tully, and maternal uncle of Robb Stark, Sansa Stark, Arya Stark, Bran Stark, Rickon Stark, and Robin Arryn. He fought for his nephew, King Robb Stark, during the War of the Five Kings.

During the Second Siege of Riverrun, Ser Jaime Lannister used Edmure to force the Riverrun garrison led by the Blackfish to surrender.

### **Ellaria Sand**

Ellaria Sand was the paramour of Prince Oberyn Martell of Dorne and a bastard of House Uller, carrying the bastard surname "Sand" like all bastards in Dorne.

### **Elia Martell**

Princess Elia Martell was the sister of Doran Martell, the Prince of Dorne and head of House Martell, and Oberyn Martell, the Red Viper. She was married to Prince Rhaegar Targaryen, heir to Aerys II, and bore him two children: Rhaenys and Aegon. She and her children were killed by Ser Gregor Clegane on the orders of Lord Tywin Lannister during the Sack of King's Landing at the end of Robert's Rebellion.

### **Gendry**

Gendry is the last living bastard son of King Robert Baratheon, who throughout his childhood was unaware of his lineage. Gendry did not receive the bastard surname used in the Crownlands (Waters) because, like the rest of his half-siblings, he has never been openly acknowledged by Robert.

### **Hot Pie**

Hot Pie is an orphan and baker's apprentice who was part of the batch of Night's Watch recruits that left King's Landing with the disguised Arya Stark. They were later attacked and captured by Lannister soldiers and taken to Harrenhal, until the only three survivors - Arya, Hot Pie, and Gendry - managed to escape.

### **Jaime Lannister**

Ser Jaime Lannister was the eldest son of Tywin, younger twin brother of Cersei, and older brother of Tyrion Lannister. He was involved in an incestuous relationship with Cersei, and unknown to



most, he was the biological father of her three deceased children, Joffrey, Myrcella, and Tommen, as well as her unborn child.

Jaime previously served in the Kingsguard of Aerys Targaryen, known as the Mad King, before infamously backstabbing him during the Sack of King's Landing, earning Jaime the nickname of the Kingslayer. He continued to serve in the Kingsguard of Robert Baratheon, and as Lord Commander for Robert's alleged sons Joffrey and Tommen.

### **Joffrey Baratheon**

King Joffrey I Baratheon was the eighteenth king to rule from the Iron Throne. He was formally styled as Joffrey of Houses Baratheon and Lannister, the First of His Name, King of the Andals and the First Men, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, and Protector of the Realm. Though believed by most to be the eldest son of King Robert Baratheon and Queen Cersei Lannister, Joffrey is actually a bastard born from Cersei's incestuous relationship with her twin brother, Ser Jaime Lannister of the Kingsguard. His bastardy, however, would unofficially make him the first ruling king without any blood relation to House Targaryen, as he had no blood relationship to his legal father, King Robert, whose ancestor and the founder of House Baratheon, Orys Baratheon, was the bastard brother of King Aegon I Targaryen, commonly known as Aegon the conqueror. He is the older brother of Myrcella and Tommen Baratheon, both of whom share the same parentage. Joffrey's actions during his rule sparked the War of the Five Kings and ended when he was poisoned at his own wedding feast by Olenna Tyrell and Petyr Baelish.

### **Jon Snow**

Jon Snow, born Aegon Targaryen, is the son of Lyanna Stark and Rhaegar Targaryen, the late Prince of Dragonstone. From infancy, Jon is presented as the bastard son of Lord Eddard Stark, Lyanna's brother, and raised alongside his lawful children at Winterfell, the seat of House Stark. However, his true parentage is kept secret from everyone, including Jon himself, in order to protect him from those that sought the complete annihilation of House Targaryen after Robert's Rebellion and to maintain order in the realm.

### **Jon Arryn**

Lord Jon Arryn was the Lord of the Eyrie, Lord Paramount of the Vale, Warden of the East, and the head of House Arryn, who was married to Lysa Tully. He served as the first Hand of the King to Robert Baratheon until he died of mysterious circumstances.

### **Jorah Mormont**

Ser Jorah Mormont was a formerly exiled Northern lord from Westeros previously living in Essos. He had sworn fealty to his fellow exile Daenerys Targaryen and was the first to help her adapt to life as a *khaleesi* of the Dothraki.

### **Khal Drogo**

Drogo is a *khal* or warlord of the Dothraki, the famed nomadic horse-lords of the eastern continent beyond the Narrow Sea. The Dothraki are fierce warriors, skilled in battle, unrelenting in combat and known for savagery towards non-Dothraki. (Daenerys' husband).

### **Lysa Arryn**

Lady Lysa Arryn, née Tully, was born into House Tully as the daughter of Hoster Tully, the Lord Paramount of the Trident, and sister of Catelyn and Edmure Tully. She married into House Arryn through her marriage to Jon Arryn. After Jon's death, whom she had secretly murdered on behalf of Petyr Baelish, her true lover and later second husband, she became the Lady Regent of the Vale, ruling on behalf of her young son, Robin Arryn. She doted on her son and pursued a policy of isolationism during the War of the Five Kings despite her blood ties to House Stark.

### **Margaery Tyrell**

Queen Margaery Tyrell was the only daughter of Lord Mace Tyrell and Lady Alerie Tyrell, granddaughter of Lady Olenna Tyrell and sister of Ser Loras Tyrell. Margaery became Queen Consort through her marriage to King Joffrey Baratheon, and later his younger brother, King Tommen Baratheon, following Joffrey's death. However, a charge of perjury and a false dedication to the Sparrow movement led to her downfall as she was eventually killed along with her brother and father when the Great Sept of Baelor was destroyed with wildfire as orchestrated by Cersei Lannister to reclaim her lost power.

### **Melisandre, The Red Woman**

Melisandre, often referred to as the Red Woman, was a Red Priestess in the religion of R'hllor, the Lord of Light, and had been a close counselor to Stannis Baratheon in his campaign to take the Iron Throne. Following Stannis Baratheon's death at the Battle of Winterfell, she revived Jon Snow after

he was murdered by various members of the Night's Watch, believing him to be “the Prince That Was Promised”.

### **Myrcella Baratheon**

Princess Myrcella Baratheon was commonly thought to be the only daughter of King Robert Baratheon and Queen Cersei Lannister. However, like her brothers, her real father is Jaime Lannister, making her a bastard born out of incest.

After her upbringing in King's Landing, Myrcella was shipped to Dorne in an attempt to forge a marriage-alliance with House Martell by having her wed to Trystane Martell. However, Myrcella was later killed by Ellaria Sand, who took vengeance for the Lannister family's involvement in Oberyn Martell's death.

### **Ned Stark**

Lord Eddard Stark, also known as Ned Stark, was the head of House Stark, the Lord of Winterfell, Lord Paramount and Warden of the North, and later Hand of the King to King Robert I Baratheon. He was the older brother of Benjen, Lyanna and the younger brother of Brandon Stark. He is the father of Robb, Sansa, Arya, Bran, and Rickon by his wife, Catelyn Tully, and uncle of Jon Snow, who he raised as his bastard son. He was a dedicated husband and father, a loyal friend, and an honorable lord.

Eddard's execution and revealing the illegitimacy of Cersei Lannister's children sparked the War of the Five Kings between Joffrey Baratheon, Robb, Renly Baratheon, Stannis Baratheon, and Balon Greyjoy.

### **Night King**

The Night King was a First Man who was captured by a tribe of the Children of the Forest. Leaf, who was among the group, pressed a dragonglass dagger into his chest, causing his eyes to turn blue and turning him into the first of the White Walkers. Thousands of years later, Leaf tells Bran Stark that her people created the White Walkers to defend themselves when Westeros was invaded by the First Men, who were cutting their sacred trees down and slaughtering the Children of the Forest.

However, the White Walkers soon turned on their creators and began what was known as the Long Night.<sup>[2]</sup> Though the Long Night ended upon the First Men and Children's victory in the War for the Dawn, the Night King survived and retreated with the rest of his forces to the Lands of Always

Winter, where they hid as they faded into legend and obscurity. The Night King is a legendary figure, known by name among, at least, some noble houses in the North.

### **Oberyn Martell**

Prince Oberyn Martell, commonly referred to as the Red Viper of Dorne, was a member of House Martell, the ruling family of Dorne, the younger brother of Doran Martell and the late Elia Martell, the father of eight bastard girls known as the Sand Snakes, and a member of the small council for Dorne to Tommen I. He is well known for his fighting skills, passionate temper, and sexual appetites.

### **Olenna Tyrell**

Lady Olenna Tyrell, née Redwyne, was the elderly matriarch of House Tyrell and the last known head of that house. Lady Olenna had been a mistress of court politics, plotting and intrigue *par excellence* throughout her life. She was also known for her wit and sarcasm. As a result, Lady Olenna was popularly nicknamed the Queen of Thorns, in reference to the Tyrell sigil - a rose - and her cutting, barbed comments. In many ways she was the *de facto* head of House Tyrell at the time of the War of the Five Kings and appeared to hold a great deal of influence over the Reach.

### **Robb Stark**

King Robb Stark was the eldest son of Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell and his wife, Lady Catelyn. He was the older brother of Sansa, Arya, Bran, and Rickon Stark, and cousin (believed to be half-brother) of Jon Snow. Robb was declared King in the North, the first since his ancestor Torrhen Stark bent the knee three centuries before, during the War of the Five Kings after the execution of his father by King Joffrey Baratheon.

### **Robert Baratheon**

King Robert I Baratheon was the seventeenth ruler of the Seven Kingdoms, formally styled as Robert of the House Baratheon, the First of His Name, King of the Andals and the First Men, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, and Protector of the Realm.

Robert, a great warrior and charismatic man in his youth, took the throne through conquest in the war known as Robert's Rebellion, which began when the Prince of Dragonstone, Rhaegar Targaryen, allegedly abducted Robert's betrothed, Lyanna Stark. Killing Rhaegar at the Battle of the Trident, his climactic duel turned the tides of the war in his favor. After the war and following

Lyanna's death, Robert married Cersei Lannister to cement an alliance with House Lannister to hold the kingdoms together.

### **Robin Arryn**

Robin was born in King's Landing where his father was serving as the Hand of the King for Robert Baratheon. Jon begins an investigation into Robert's legitimate and bastard children and then takes a fever and dies suddenly. Robin then inherits Jon's position. Lysa rushes Robin back to the Eyrie following Jon's death. She writes to her sister to accuse House Lannister of poisoning Jon. Lysa was fiercely protective of Robin. As a consequence, he has led an extremely sheltered life.

### **Samwell Tarly**

Samwell, born Samwell Tarly, and often called Sam, is the current Grand Maester of the Six Kingdoms. He is also a former steward of the Night's Watch and Jon Snow's closest friend. He is the eldest son of Lord Randyll Tarly and Lady Melessa Tarly of Horn Hill and older brother of Dickon and Talla Tarly. He was forced to join the Night's Watch by his father under the threat of death, putting him out of the line of inheritance for House Tarly.

### **Sansa Stark**

Sansa Stark is the eldest daughter and second child of Lady Catelyn and Lord Eddard Stark, the Warden of the North. Sansa was born and raised at Winterfell. She becomes well versed in politics and court intrigue under the tutelage of Cersei Lannister, Margaery Tyrell and Petyr Baelish, suffering but learning from her traumatic experiences as a hostage of House Lannister in King's Landing and House Bolton at Winterfell. Alongside Jon, Sansa takes back Winterfell from House Bolton at the Battle of the Bastards, becoming the new Lady of Winterfell. After the Battle of King's Landing, she declares the North an independent kingdom and is crowned Queen in the North.

### **Shae**

Shae was a prostitute who had begun an exclusive relationship with Tyrion Lannister during the time when he was fighting in the Lannister army as part of the Vanguard during the Battle of the Green Fork. When he is sent to King's Landing to be acting Hand of the King, he takes Shae with him as his mistress in defiance of his father's orders, and she lives with him at the Tower of the Hand.

Fearing for her safety, Tyrion eventually sends her away, insulting her in the process. However, she is intercepted before leaving the capital and gives vengeful (but false) testimony against Tyrion, whom she considers has betrayed her to remain with Sansa, at his trial for the assassination of King Joffrey, in the process having an affair with Tyrion's father, Tywin. She attempts to kill him, forcing him to kill her in self-defense, breaking him completely.

### **Stannis Baratheon**

King Stannis Baratheon was the Lord of Dragonstone, the younger brother of King Robert Baratheon, and older brother of Renly Baratheon. Following Robert's death and the revelation that Robert's heir, Joffrey, is actually Queen Cersei's bastard son with her twin brother Jaime, Stannis declares himself the rightful King and begins a campaign to take the Iron Throne from the Lannisters, formally styling himself as Stannis of the House Baratheon, First of His Name, King of the Andals and the First Men, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, and Protector of the Realm.

### **Theon Greyjoy**

Prince Theon Greyjoy was the only living son and heir of Lord Balon Greyjoy of the Iron Islands and the younger brother of Yara Greyjoy.

Following his father's failed rebellion against the Iron Throne, Theon is taken as a hostage/ward to Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell. After Eddard's execution in King's Landing, Theon pledges his loyalty to Eddard's eldest son, Robb Stark, in the subsequent War of the Five Kings, but ultimately betrays Robb and sides with his father in invading the North.

### **Three Eyed-Raven**

The Three-Eyed Raven was the last greenseer, a human living among the last of the Children of the Forest beyond the Wall. His real name is unknown. Under the guise of a three-eyed raven, he appears in Bran Stark's vision-dreams, following his fall and injury, prompting his quest beyond the Wall and guiding him to the cave in which his real human body resides. There, Bran is trained in the magic of Greensight.

### **Viserys Targaryen**

Viserys Targaryen was the younger brother of the late Rhaegar Targaryen and the older brother of Daenerys Targaryen. Viserys and Daenerys were the remnants of the exiled House Targaryen following Robert's Rebellion against their father Aerys II Targaryen, the Mad King. He claimed the

Iron Throne as King Viserys III after his father was overthrown and killed in Robert's Rebellion, but never returned to Westeros, as he was killed by his brother-in-law Khal Drogo before he could take the throne.