

# KNEECAP



‘Gach focal a labhraítear i nGaeilge, is é piléar scaoilte ar son saoirse na hÉireann’:  
*Kneecap* and the politicisation of the Irish language in film.



## INTRODUCTION

Rich Peppiatt’s 2024 biopic *Kneecap* is a groundbreaking Irish-language film that follows the formation of the Belfast-based rap group Kneecap. Featuring the group members playing themselves, the film explores how the Irish language can serve as a form of cultural identity and political resistance. They challenge the static portrayal of the Irish language as they engage with contemporary issues facing Irish youth. The film touches on the complexity of colonialism and identity with music and the Irish language as a tool of empowerment and reclamation.

## OBJECTIVE

This project will explore how the Irish language has been politicised and used as a tool of resistance in film. It will explore the history of the Irish language in film and will provide a textual analysis of *Kneecap* to investigate how the group uses the Irish language as an act of defiance and to preserve their cultural identity, situating their work within a broader tradition of Irish-language cinema.

## MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION



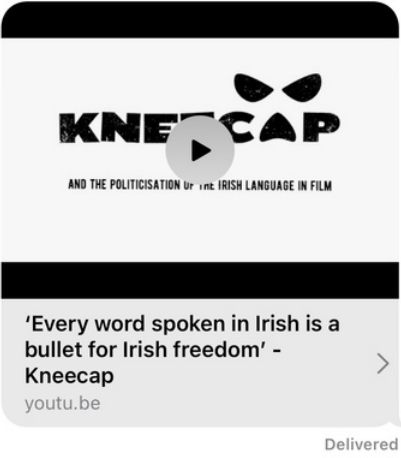
How does the film *Kneecap* politicise the Irish language?

## REFERENCES

- Ruth Barton, *Irish National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2004).
- John Hill, Kevin Rockett, and Luke Gibbons, *Cinema and Ireland* (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis Group, 2013)
- Kneecap*. Directed by Rich Peppiatt, 2024

## METHODS

- Research
- A textual analysis of the 2024 film *Kneecap*
- Final product is a video essay



## CONCLUSION

‘language has always been used as a form of resistance, although the language itself isn’t inherently political, the 800 years of suppression makes it so’. *Kneecap* recognise the history and power of the Irish language as a form of resistance which is depicted throughout their music and film.

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