

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AND SUBTITLING STRATEGIES IN BATWOMAN SERIES

Dara Azalia Bastian¹, Sujana²

^{1,2} Gunadarma University, Pondok Cina, Depok 16424, Indonesia

Corresponding Author(S): daraazalia97@gmail.com

Abstract:

This research discussed about subtitling of figurative language in Batwoman drama series. The aims of this research to find kinds of figurative languages used in Batwoman and to identify subtitling techniques used in figurative languages in Batwoman. The researcher use Perrine's theory to find figurative language and Gottlieb's theory find subtitling strategies. The researcher focused on each character's dialogue, those are Batwoman (Kate Kane), Alice, Luke Fox, The method that the researcher used is qualitative method. The result of this research is the researcher found 83 data in the series. For the figurative, the frequency of the data is 16 of simile, 7 of metaphor, 2 of apostrophe, 24 of metonymy, 9 of synecdoche, 1 of symbol, 18 of overstatement, and 6 of irony. For the subtitling strategies, the researcher found 4 of expansion, 2 of paraphrase, 49 of transfer, 26 of imitation, 1 of transcription, and 1 of condensation.

Keywords:

Subtitling; Figurative
Language; Film



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INTRODUCTION

Language is used for communication purposes. Language is a form of communication to connect each other verbally through sentences or writing. Language has been grown from over centuries and changes too around the time to make it more understandable to people. Language can also express their thought to people whether is vague or not. According to Verderber & MacGeorge (2016, p. 98) language is a system of symbols used by people to communicate orally or in writing.

Figurative language is a sentence that does not use a literal meaning to it. When you speak using figure of speech, sometimes it can be mean one another than the actual meaning like comparing people to some objects or being sarcasm. According to M.H. Abrams (1999), figurative language is a conspicuous departure from what competent users of a language apprehend as the standard meaning of words, or else the standard order of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect. Perrine's (in Johnson 2016, p. 774) figurative languages consist of simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, metonym, symbol, allegory, paradox, overstatement (hyperbole), understatement, and irony.

Translation is the process of transferring a SL word to a TL text (Newmark, p.87). Translation helps you to understand behind those words and you can also learn from it too. Subtitling are the sentences that showed from below of the film or shows. Subtitle helps you to understand what the objects are presented by showing their version of interpretation. Subtitling consist in two types, intralingual subtitling which is translation within one cultural language and interlingual subtitling which is translation between two cultural languages. There are 10 different strategies of subtitling according to Gottlieb (1992) which are expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, dislocation, condensation, decimation, deletion, and resignation. (Cay Dollerup and Anne Loddegaard, 1992, p. 166).

Film is one of the literature that consist of moving images and sound. It is the same as theater, but film is more complex. The main purpose of film is to entertain the audience by their performance to bring the story livelier. Film-making is managed by producer, director, catching a scene by cameramen, and characters played by the actors or actress. Film has so many genres like action, romance, documentary, horror, historical, adventure, and others.

Batwoman is an action series premier in October 6, 2019 adapted from DC Comics. It tells us about story of Kate Kane who just got back to Gotham and found a secret of her cousin, Bruce Wayne, who is actually is Batman. Upon waiting for Bruce Wayne to return, Kate replace Batman and suit up as a Batwoman. During her journey, Batwoman found out that her sister, Beth Kane, is alive and go under a name Alice, leading the Wonderland Gang to terrorize Gotham City. The series have 3 seasons and the fourth one is coming soon, it has 82% from Rotten Tomatoes.

In this research, the researcher will be focus on researching figurative language in selective Batwoman episodes. The researcher chose this film because there is so many figurative languages that can be found in Batwoman. The researcher chooses this topic because wanted to know what kinds of figurative language and how the figurative language does translate.

The problem of this research are what kinds of figurative languages that are implemented in Batwoman and how the figurative languages are translated. The significance of this research is not only for entertainment purposes, it can find a message behind those figurative languages and the subtitling strategies. Hopefully this research will be useful either it is theoretically or academically.

Gorys Keraf (2006) noted that figurative language allows us to judge a personality, character, and ability to use the language. According to Abrams and Harpham (2011, p.130) figurative language is a conspicuous departure from what competent users of a language apprehend as the standard meaning of words, or else the standard order of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect.

There are 12 types of figurative language according to Perrine (in Johnson 2016):

1. Simile

Simile is one of the figurative language that compares two things. According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 774) simile is expressed by the use of some word or

phrase, such as like, as, then, similar to, resembles, or seems. According to Keraf (2006) simile is an explicit comparison, by explicit it means that comparing something similar with other objects.

2. Metaphor

Metaphor is also a comparison figurative language but different from simile. According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 774) metaphor is the comparison is not expressed but is created when a figurative term is substituted for or identified with the literal term. Leech (1969, p. 153) stated that metaphor is making believe that tenor and vehicle are identical, but as many writers have observed, the pretense often seems more serious and more real than the real world of literal understanding. Naturally enough, metaphoric transference can only take place if some likeness is perceived between tenor and vehicle.

3. Personification

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 776) Personification is one of the figurative language that consists in giving the attributes of a human being to an animal, and object, or a concept. It is really a subtype of metaphor, and implied comparison in which the figurative term of comparison is always a human being.

4. Apostrophe

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 778) apostrophe is close enough to personification which consists in addressing someone absent or dead or something nonhuman as if that person or thing were present and alive and could reply to what is being said. According to Keraf (2006) apostrophe is a figurative language in the form of diverting the message from the audience to something that is not present.

5. Metonymy

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 779) metonymy is the use of something closely related for the thing actually meant. According to Keraf (2006) the word metonymy is derived from the Greek word meta which means to show changes and onoma means name. Thus, metonymy is a figurative language that uses a word to express something else that has close relationship.

6. Synecdoche

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 779) synecdoche is the use of the part for the whole. According to Keraf (2006) synecdoche is also derived from Greek word synekdechesthai which means to receive together.

7. Symbol

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 793) symbol means what it is and something more, too. A symbol, that is, functions literally and figuratively at the same time.

8. Allegory

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 793) allegory is a narrative or description that has a second meaning beneath the surface. According to Keraf (2006) allegory is a short story that contains a figure of speech. The meaning must be drawn from below the surface of the story.

9. Paradox

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 814) a paradox is an apparent contradiction that is nevertheless somehow true. It may be either a situation or a statement. According to Keraf (2006) paradox contains a real contradiction with a fact. Paradox can also mean anything that attracts attention because of its truth.

10. Overstatement

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 815) overstatement, or hyperbole, is simply exaggeration, but exaggeration in the service of truth. According to Keraf (2006) overstatement or hyperbole is a figurative language that contains an exaggerated statement.

11. Understatement

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 816) saying less than one means, may exist in what one says and in how one says it. In shorts, understatement is the same as hyperbole, but deliberately makes a situation seem less important.

12. Irony

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016, p. 817) irony has meanings that extend beyond its use merely as a figure of speech. Verbal irony, saying the opposite of what one means, is often confused with sarcasm and with satire, in dramatic irony the discrepancy is not between what the speaker says and what the speaker means but between what the speaker says and what the poem means.

Subtitling is one of the translation method and of the audio visual translation. Subtitling can be found in shows or movie on TV by showing a transcript dialogue. According to Cintas and Ramael (2014) subtitling defined as a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavors to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off).

There are 10 types subtitling strategies according to Gottlieb (1992):

1. Expansion

Expansion gives you an explanation about the target language because some cultural distinction that nobody knows yet in target language.

2. Paraphrase

Paraphrase purpose is to translate phrase that cannot be reconstructed but still give the same meaning.

3. Transfer

Transfer is used to translate the source language completely accurate.

4. Imitation

Imitation is used to translate and maintain the same form like names of people and places.

5. Transcription

Transcription is used if there are some unusual terms or to translate the third language.

6. Dislocation

Dislocation refers to translate a source language that has special effects such silly song in cartoon.

7. Condensation

Condensation is common used in translation by shortening the text to keep it simple.

8. Decimation

Decimation is another form of condensation by omit the important elements because of discourse speed problems.

9. Deletion

Deletion is used by eliminate some of the text.

10. Resignation

Resignation is used when other strategies can't find the meaning of the text.

METHOD

This research is using a qualitative method. The purposes of this research is to analyze kinds of figurative language and which subtitling strategies on each figurative language. The trait of the research topic is to find each figurative language and subtitling strategies that implemented on each figurative language on each scene in Batwoman series. John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell (2018, p. 254) stated that qualitative methods demonstrate a different approach to scholarly inquiry than methods of quantitative research. Although the processes are similar, qualitative methods rely on text and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and draw on diverse designs.

The data source of this research is taken from the drama series titled Batwoman which was released in 2019. The data are taken from the dialog of each character in the series if it is related to figurative language or subtitle strategies.

Data collecting procedure in this study were carried out in several ways, namely watch the Batwoman series many times from HBO Go, read the subtitle of the series, and underline the subtitle that contains a figurative language and subtitling strategies.

Data analysis techniques in this study were carried out in several ways, namely classifying the figurative language that shows in the Batwoman, classifying the subtitling strategies that contains figurative language, analyzing existing data and then implement with the theory from Perrine and Gottlieb, and draw the conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After collecting data the data from 20 episodes of Batwoman series, the researcher found 83 data in the series. The result for the figurative languages there are simile, metaphor, apostrophe, metonymy, synecdoche, symbol, overstatement, and irony. As for the subtitling strategy, there are expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, and condensation.

Table 1. Data of Figurative Language

| No | Figurative Language | Data |
|----|---------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Simile | 16 |
| 2 | Metaphor | 7 |
| 3 | Apostrophe | 2 |
| 4 | Metonymy | 24 |
| 5 | Synecdoche | 9 |
| 6 | Symbol | 1 |
| 7 | Overstatement | 18 |
| 8 | Irony | 6 |
| | Total | 83 |

Table 2. Data of Subtitling Strategies

| No. | Subtitling Strategies | Data |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Expansion | 4 |
| 2 | Paraphrase | 2 |
| 3 | Transfer | 49 |
| 4 | Imitation | 26 |
| 5 | Transcription | 1 |
| 6 | Condensation | 1 |
| | Total | 83 |

Discussion

A. Figurative Language

1. Simile

Example 1:

Mary: Batwoman will kill me. Frankly, she's way scarier than you

The example (1) is classified as simile because there is a keyword 'than' in the sentence. According to Perrine, simile is expressed by the use of some word or phrase, such as like, as, then, similar to, resembles, or seems. The word "she" is referring to Batwoman, while the word "you" is referring to Sophie. Mary compares Batwoman and Sophie because Mary prefer to obey Batwoman rather than Sophie since Batwoman is more assertive than Sophie, enough to make Mary obey her. Point of similarity between Batwoman and Sophie is their behavior towards Mary.

Example 2:

Jacob Kane: Apparently, he's a better magician than a doctor

The example (2) is classified as simile because there is a keyword 'than' in the sentence. According to Perrine, simile is expressed by the use of some word or phrase, such as like, as, then, similar to, resembles, or seems. Magician is a job where you perform a magic tricks to the audience. Jacob Kane referred Cartwright as doctor, more precisely a deranged surgeon. Jacob Kane compares Cartwright's job as a surgeon with a magician because when Jacob Kane saw one of the Cartwright's mask made out of human skin, he rather amazed by his work. The point of similarities between magician and doctor is Cartwright's work as a doctor when creating a mask precisely and neat just like a magician.

2. Metaphor

Example 3:

Grandma: Aren't you a curious thing with your milky young complexion

The example (3) is classified as metaphor because it compares two different things, "milky" and "complexion". According to Perrine, metaphor is the comparison is not expressed but is created when a figurative term is substituted for or identified with the literal term. Milky in dictionary is "A milky liquid contains milk or is made with a lot of milk" and complexion in dictionary is 'the natural appearance of the

skin on a person's face". According to Leech, there are two elements in metaphor; vehicle and tenor.

Vehicle: milky

Tenor: skin tone

In this example, milky doesn't mean a drink, it is the color of the milk. Point of similarities between milky and complexion is how Grandma complimented Beth's skin tone is white as the color of milk.

Example 4:

Supergirl: You brought that poisonous snake back?

The example (4) is classified metaphor because it compares two different things, "poisonous snake" and "that". According to Perrine, metaphor is the comparison is not expressed but is created when a figurative term is substituted for or identified with the literal term. Poisonous in dictionary is "toxic" and snake in dictionary is "a reptile with a long body and no legs", with these terms it can be concluded that poisonous snake is a reptile that can produce venom to kill its prey, while the word that refers to Lex Luthor, one of the Superman's villain. According to Leech, there are two elements of metaphor; vehicle and tenor.

Vehicle: Poisonous snake

Tenor: a villain

In this example, poisonous snake doesn't actually a reptile, it is referred to Lex Luthor. Point of similarities between poisonous snake and Lex Luthor is how Supergirl called Lex because he is evil.

3. Apostrophe

Example 5:

Alice: Farewell, Mr. Caterpillar. Give my regards to Queen of Heart

The example (5) is classified as apostrophe because the sentence described there is two dead persons. According to Perrine, apostrophe is close enough to personification which consists in addressing someone absent or dead or something nonhuman as if that person or thing were present and alive and could reply to what is being said. In this example, Alice buried deceased Cartwright after Kate killed him and Alice said goodbye to dead Cartwright.

4. Metonymy

Example 6:

Luke: Did we just lure a vampire to us using bar full of walking blood bag

The example (6) is classified as metonymy because according to Perrine, metonymy is the use of something closely related for the thing actually meant. Luke says "walking blood bag", the blood bag that he meant is human. In this example, Luke said "walking blood bag" instead of human because Luke and Kate is hunting a fake vampire so that is why Luke called human a walking blood bag.

Example 7:

Alice: Time's up. Pencils down. Now read to me from my new favorite bedtime story

The example (7) is classified as metonymy because according to Perrine, metonymy is the use of something closely related for the thing actually meant. Bedtime story

in dictionary is “a story that is read or told to a child just before bedtime”. In this example, bedtime story is a book, and it is included as metonymy because Alice says bedtime story instead of journal.

5. Synecdoche

Example 8:

Reagan: He’s around but if you wanna safe yourself from a verbal carwash of veiled misogyny, you might wanna plant yourself here

The example (8) is classified as synecdoche because Reagan use a close relation to describe a whole thing. According to Perrine, synecdoche is the use of the part for the whole. In this example, “verbal carwash of veiled misogyny” that Reagan said is referring to rich people, especially men, who likes to flirt.

Example 9:

Jacob Kane: These monsters long for the good old days when gangs ran around unchecked

The example (9) is classified as synecdoche because it uses a close relation to describe a whole thing. According to Perrine, synecdoche is the use of the part for the whole. In this example, “these monster” is represent all the criminals in Gotham city.

6. Symbol

Example 10:

Catherine: The Bat’s not coming back

The example (10) is classified as symbol because the word ‘Bat’. According to Perrine, symbol means what it is and something more, too. A symbol, that is, functions literally and figuratively at the same time. In this example, instead of calling him Batman, Catherine called him Bat because there is a symbol of bat in his suit that represents Batman.

7. Overstatement

Example 11:

Catherine: Mayor Akins, help us say goodbye to Gotham’s outdated tradition

The example (11) is classified as overstatement because tradition in dictionary is “a belief, principle, or way of acting that people in a particular society or group have continued to follow for a long time, or all of these beliefs”. According to Perrine, overstatement, or hyperbole, is simply exaggeration, but exaggeration in the service of truth. In this example, Catherine told Mayor Akins to turn off the Bat-signal permanently because Batman is gone for 3 years. In the series, the Gotham city’s tradition is to put Bat-signal whenever there is a crime in Gotham city.

Example 12:

Sophie: What went down at the Point Rock was the worst day of my life

The example (12) is classified as overstatement because the exaggeration is where Sophie remembering her past. According to Perrine, overstatement, or hyperbole, is simply exaggeration, but exaggeration in the service of truth. Kate trying to persuade Sophie to get back together like at Point Rock, but Sophie declined it

because she remembers when make out with Kate and got caught by one of the teacher and eventually they are separated.

8. Irony

Example 13:

Luke: Cool. Yeah, no, I'll be here. Not dating anyone because I love to work. Love to work. This is great. Have fun

The example (13) is classified as irony because the sentence is contrary to the true meaning. According to Perrine, irony has meanings that extend beyond its use merely as a figure of speech. In this example, Luke congratulate Kate for having her date and leave Luke to work. When Luke said "have fun" he does not say that sincerely because Luke is jealous not going out when he is working.

B. Subtitling Strategies

1. Expansion

Example 14:

SL: I'd like to offer my sincere "what up" on shutting down that chop-chop

TL: Aku ingin memberikan "ada apa" yang tulus atas penutupan toko daging itu

The example (14) is classified as expansion because one of the word requires an explanation. According to Gottlieb, expansion gives you an explanation about the target language because some cultural distinction that nobody knows yet in target language. In this example, the word "chop-chop" is explained in target language into "toko daging".

2. Paraphrase

Example 15:

SL: His betrayal hurt million times than any of these wounds

TL: Pengkhianatannya lebih menyakitkan daripada peluru itu

The example (15) is classified as paraphrase because the source language was translated differently. According to Gottlieb, paraphrase purpose is to translate phrase that cannot be reconstructed but still give the same meaning. The word "million time" is translated onto "lebih menyakitkan". If the source was translating literally, it would be "juta kali". The subtitler used the phrase "lebih menyakitkan" because it is more acceptable than translating into "juta kali".

3. Transfer

Example 16:

SL: Hey, welcome to joy zone

TL: Hei, selamat datang di zona kegembiraan

The example (16) use transfer strategy because there is no adding or cutting several words both in source language and target language. According to Gottlieb, transfer is used to translate the source language completely accurate. The sentence "Hey, welcome to joy zone" in the source language is translated into "Hei, selamat datang di zona kegembiraan". The sentence both source and target language does not change and the meaning also do not change as well.

Example 17:

SL: Sir, we were too late. It's like World-War 3 in there

TL: Pak, kami terlambat. Seperti Perang Dunia 3 di sana.

The example (17) use transfer strategy because there is no adding or cutting several words both in source language and target language. According to Gottlieb, transfer is used to translate the source language completely accurate. The sentence “Sir, we were too late. It’s like World-War 3 in there” in the source language is translated into “Pak, kami terlambat. Seperti Perang Dunia 3 di sana”, therefore both the meaning and the structure of the sentence does not change.

4. Imitation

Example 18:

SL: This is Desert Eagle Mrk 9 50 A-E. One of the most powerful gun in the world. It can literally bust a hole through anything

TL: Ini Desert Eagle Mrk 9 50 A-E. Salah satu pistol terkuat di dunia. Itu bisa melubangi apapun

The example (18) use an imitation strategy because the sentence is remaining the same. According to Gottlieb, imitation is used to translate and maintain the same form like names of people and places. The subtitler has translated “Desert Eagle Mrk 9 50 A-E” into target language because the sentence “Desert Eagle Mrk 9 50 A-E” in the episode is a name of a weapon.

Example 19:

SL: The Lazarus pit isn’t some magical mud bath where you get your soul in a cup of cucumber water at the end

TL: Lubang Lazarus bukan pemandian lumpur ajaib di mana kau mendapatkan jiwamu di dalam segelas air mentimun pada akhirnya

The example (19) is classified as imitation because one of the word in the sentence is remained the same. According to Gottlieb, imitation is used to translate and maintain the same form like names of people and places. In this example, the word “Lazarus” is remain the same because it is name of an ancient pond that revive and bring a person back to life according to the series.

5. Condensation

Example 20:

SL: Fine, no killing. But only for my darling Dodgson sake, not for Beth. Beth has gone down, down, down the rabbit hole and she never coming back.

TL: Baiklah. Tidak membunuh. Tapi hanya demi sayanku Dodgson, bukan untuk Beth. Beth telah masuk ke lubang kelinci dan dia tidak akan pernah kembali

The example (20) is classified as condensation because classified some of the words are shortened. According to Gottlieb, Condensation is common used in translation by shortening the text to keep it simple. In this example, the repeated word “down, down, down” is shortened in target language into “masuk”.

6. Transcription

Example 21:

SL: You can either spend your Friday night in here inhaling asbestos or you can join me in wearing this season’s sexiest haute couture

TL: Kau bisa menghabiskan malam jumat disini menghirup asbes atau kau bisa bergabung denganku memakai adibusana paling seksi musim ini

The example (21) is classified as transcription because there is a third language in the sentence. According to Gottlieb, Transcription is used if there are some unusual terms or to translate the third language. In this example, the word “haute couture” is a French and translated in the target language into “adibusana”.

CONCLUSION

The researcher uses the Perrine’s theory to classify the data. The result of this research is the researcher found 83 data in the series. The frequency of the data is 16 of simile, 7 of metaphor, 2 of apostrophe, 24 of metonymy, 9 of synecdoche, 1 of symbol, 18 of overstatement, and 6 of irony. The second research is how are the figurative language translated. The researcher uses Gottlieb’s theory to classify the data. The result of this research is the researcher found 4 of expansion, 2 of paraphrase, 49 of transfer, 26 of imitation, 1 of transcription, and 1 of condensation.

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