

## TRANSLATION STRATEGIES IN SUBTITLING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE ON BATWOMAN SERIES

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### 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 15 similes, 8 metaphors, 2 apostrophes, 24 metonymies, 8 synecdoches, 2 symbols, 18 overstatements, and 6 ironies. For the subtitling strategies, the researcher found 3 expansions, 2 paraphrases, 52 transfers, 24 imitations, 1 transcription, and 1 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, 1988). 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, than, 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 Cresswell (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	15
2	Metaphor	8
3	Apostrophe	2
4	Metonymy	24
5	Synecdoche	8
6	Symbol	2
7	Overstatement	18
8	Irony	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>

**Table 2** Data of Subtitling Strategies

No.	Subtitling Strategies	Data
1	Expansion	3
2	Paraphrase	2

3	Transfer	52
4	Imitation	24
5	Transcription	1
6	Condensation	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>

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## **Discussion**

### **A. Figurative Language**

#### **1. Simile**

##### **Example 1:**

##### **Mary: 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*, *than*, 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*, *than*, 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: 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.

Tenor: milky

Vehicle: complexion

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.

Tenor: Poisonous snake

Vehicle: that (Lex Luthor)

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.

The example (5) is classified as apostrophe because the sentence described there is a dead man. 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:** 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:** 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:** From a **verbal carwash of veiled misogyny**

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

The example (9) is classified as synecdoche because it 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, “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:** 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:** **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 said that sincerely because Luke is jealous not going out when he is working.

## B. Subtitling Strategies

### 1. Expansion

#### Example 14:

(0:01:57-0:01:59)

**SL:** “what up” on shutting down that **chop-chop**

**TL:** “ada apa” yang tulus atas penutupan **toko daging** itu

The example (14) is classified as expansion because one of the words requires an explanation. In this data, Mary congratulates Kate and Luke for taking down human trafficking. The data in terms of figurative language is classified as metonymy because the word chop-chop is close resemblance to a butcher. According to Gottlieb (1992, p.166), expansion is an expanded expression, meaning that it gives you an explanation about the target language because some cultural distinctions that nobody knows yet in target language. In this data, the subtitler translated “**chop-chop**” into “**toko daging**” instead of “**potong-potong**” because in the series, the word “chop-chop” and even “**toko daging**” is referring to the human trafficking. Therefore, the data is classified as expansion.

### 2. Paraphrase

#### Example 15:

(0:36:41-0:36:45)

**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. In this data, Kate told Mary when Kate acted as *Batwoman*, her father, Jacob Kane, betrays her by commanded his men to shoot her after working together. The data in terms of figurative language is classified as simile because there is a keyword like in the sentence and a comparison between Jacob’s betrayal and Kate’s wound. According to Gottlieb (1992, p.166), paraphrase is altered expression, meaning that to translate phrase that cannot be reconstructed but still gives the same meaning. The word “**million time**” is translated onto “**lebih menyakitkan**”. If the source was translated literally, it would be “**juta kali**”. The subtitler used the phrase “**lebih menyakitkan**” because it is more acceptable instead translating into “**juta kali**”.

### 3. Transfer

#### Example 16:

(0:01:13-0:01:16)

**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. In this data, Sarah, Kara, and Kane were drinking and then welcomed Barry and the others. The data

in terms of figurative language is classified as irony because the term of joy zone is not a happy place and the way Sara said it it's not mean welcoming. According to Gottlieb (1992, p.166), transfer is full expression, meaning it 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 does not change as well.

**Example 17:**

(0:35:52-0:35:54)

**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. In this data, the CROW is trying to get in the Arkham Asylum because all the inmates are free and causing ruckus inside. The data in terms of figurative language is classified as simile because there is a keyword *like* and a comparison between World-War 3 and the situation inside Arkham. According to Gottlieb (1992, p.166), transfer is full expression, meaning it 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:**

(0:11:33-0:11:37)

**SL:** This place is giving me **Mr. Robot** vibe

**TL:** Tempat ini jelas memberiku aura **Mr. Robot**

The example (18) is classified as imitation because the bolded word "**Mr. Robot**" is translated and does not change in target language. In this data, *Batwoman* is searching for a hacker who is behind the train accident, when she found hackers in one place, there was Sophie interrogating most of the hackers. The data in terms of figurative language is classified as synecdoche because Mr. Robot represents all of the hackers, just like the drama. According to Gottlieb (1992, p. 166), imitation is Identical expression, meaning that it is used to translate and maintain the same form like names of people and places In this data, the word "**Mr. Robot**" is remain the same because it is American drama series.

**Example 19:**

(0:14:01-0:14:03)

**SL:** The **Lazarus** pit isn't some magical mud

**TL:** Lubang **Lazarus** bukan pemandian lumpur ajaib

The example (19) is classified as imitation because the bolded word "**Lazarus**" doesn't change in the target language. In this data; Sara, Barry, Mia, and Constantine were trying to resurrect Oliver from death using Lazarus pit, although Sara strictly forbid it because it has dangerous side effects. The data in terms of figurative language is classified as metaphor because of comparison between the

Lazarus pit and magical mud bath. According to Gottlieb (1992, p. 166), imitation is Identical expression, meaning that it is used to translate and maintain the same form like names of people and places. In this data, the word “**Lazarus**” is remains the same because according to the series, it is a name of an ancient pond that revived and brought a person back to life according to the series.

## 5. Condensation

### Example 20:

(0:04:29-0:04:32)

**SL:** Beth has gone **down, down, down** the rabbit hole

**TL:** Beth telah **masuk** ke lubang kelinci

The example (20) is classified as condensation because the word “**down, down, down**” is translated and shortened into “**masuk**”. In this data, Kate asked Alice to come back as her sister but Alice rejected because she already became deranged and already had new personality called Alice. The data in terms of figurative language is classified as overstatement because the exaggeration point is where Alice mentioned that her old self is gone. According to Gottlieb (1992, p. 166), condensation is condensed expression, meaning that it is commonly use in translation by shortening the text to keep it simple. In this data, the repeated word “**down, down, down**” is shortened in target language into “**masuk**”, the subtitler shortened the text is because to save the space on the screen.

## 6. Transcription

(0:05:12-0:05:15)

### Example 21:

**SL:** This season’s sexiest **haute couture**

**TL:** **Adibusana** paling seksi musim ini

The example (21) is classified as transcription because the word “**haute couture**” is a third language and unusual terms. In this data, Mary invited Kate to join Gala and offered Kate a dress, but Kate rejected because she was preparing for her new bar opening. The data in terms of figurative language is classified as overstatement because the exaggeration point and also comparison which is sexiest. According to Gottlieb (1992 p. 166), transcription is anomalous expression, meaning that it is used if there are some unusual terms or to translate the third language. In this data, 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 are 15 similes, 8 metaphors, 2 apostrophes, 24 metonymies, 8 synecdoches, 2 symbols, 18 overstatements, and 6 ironies. 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 there are 3 expansions, 2 paraphrases, 52 transfers, 24 imitations, 1 transcription, and 1 condensation.

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