
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Gothic Metaphors in Translation: Strategies for Preserving Literary Imagery

Claudia Castañeda García

PhD. Claudia Castañeda García, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, San Nicolás de los Garza, México

Corresponding Author: Claudia Castañeda García **E-mail:** klaudyac@hotmail.com claudia.castanedagrc@uanl.edu.mx

ABSTRACT

This study explores the translation of Gothic metaphor from English into Spanish in Part II: The Legacy of Magnus of Anne Rice's *The Vampire Lestat* (1985), with particular attention to the strategies used to preserve the stylistic features of the source text. Rice's writing relies heavily on evocative and sensory imagery, through which metaphor contributes to the representation of horror, immortality, and decay. The analysis draws on Peter Newmark's taxonomy of metaphor, including dead, cliché, stock, adapted, recent, and original metaphors, as well as his seven proposed translation strategies. A qualitative, descriptive, and comparative methodology is applied to examine the selected corpus and determine how translation choices influence the reproduction of Rice's poetic and Gothic style in Spanish. Preliminary findings indicate that original metaphors tend to retain their source-text imagery, while stock metaphors and clichés are more frequently adapted or reduced to their underlying meaning. Such choices may preserve semantic content while slightly reducing the expressive richness of the original Gothic imagery. By examining these patterns, the study contributes to discussions on literary translation within genre fiction and considers the applicability and flexibility of Newmark's model when dealing with the stylistic demands of contemporary horror literature.

KEYWORDS

Literary translation; translation strategies; Gothic literature; Gothic metaphor.

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1. Introduction

Translation is an age-old practice that has enabled communication since time immemorial and has also contributed, albeit indirectly, to the transmission of knowledge on a global scale. Prior to translation, however, there is another fundamental human capacity: language. From the perspective of prominent thinkers who have addressed this concept, language was classically conceived as a system of symbols in which spoken words directly represent the affections of the soul or shared mental experiences (Aristotle, 350 B.C./2021). Nevertheless, the transition toward modern linguistics demonstrated that this phenomenon is not purely referential. Language was substantially redefined as an autonomous system of interdependent signs; that is, a formal structure of signifiers and signifieds whose value arises particularly from their reciprocal opposition within the social network (Saussure, 1945). For translators working with the Gothic genre and its imagery, this cultural perspective becomes particularly evident when considering that metaphors of the uncanny or the sublime do not depend on isolated words, but rather on the network of formalized relationships that shapes the atmosphere of the source language.

In this regard, Vygotsky (1986) formulated a theory of historical-cultural mediation in which language is not merely a consequence of intrapsychic cognitive development, but rather the primary social instrument that, once internalized, transforms biological processes into higher psychological functions. Vygotsky's position contrasts with that of Piaget, for whom language is a product subordinated to the development of the semiotic function, emerging as a reflection of the maturation of structures of assimilation and the individual's biological action schemes (Piaget, 1926).

When translating Gothic metaphors, in which physical spaces such as castles or ruins often operate as projections of the mind or of collective historical trauma, translators do not merely transfer pre-existing abstract concepts in the Piagetian sense. Instead, they must reconstruct a mechanism of sociocultural mediation, in the Vygotskian sense, capable of activating in target readers the same processes of psychological meaning-making encoded in the original text.

From another perspective, Jakobson (1960) argues that language does not merely serve to transmit static information. Rather, language performs different functions depending on which aspect of communication is foregrounded. In literary discourse, poetic function is particularly significant. It emerges when language ceases to operate as a simple transparent channel and instead becomes aesthetic and self-conscious.

Another perspective on language is offered by Chomsky (1965), for whom language is not something learned entirely from scratch. Instead, human beings are born with an innate biological capacity, a kind of internal software commonly referred to as Universal Grammar.

From this perspective, translation can be understood as possible considering Chomsky's (1965) theory of language. However, the central challenge lies in Jakobson's (1960) concept of the poetic function, which becomes particularly important when dealing with literature. Translators cannot simply break down a sentence and transfer information directly into another language; rather, they must recreate its rhythm, musicality, and aesthetic qualities. In this sense, Chomsky (1965) helps explain how languages can be understood at an underlying level, whereas Jakobson (1960) highlights the artistic demands placed upon the translator at the level of literary expression.

Based on the preceding discussion, translation can be regarded as a complex process because language does not consist of a series of isolated elements. Instead, these elements acquire different meanings depending on the contexts and cultures in which they are used, thereby positioning the translator as a cultural mediator. This complexity becomes even more pronounced in literary texts, as is the case in the present study.

This research focuses on the translation strategies used to render Gothic metaphor in Part II: The Legacy of Magnus of Anne Rice's novel *The Vampire Lestat* (1985). The following sections address the main theoretical and methodological aspects that constitute the present study.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Rhetorical Figures

Rhetoric should not be reduced to a mere catalogue of ornamental devices or regarded simply as a technique of superficial embellishment. Rather, it should be understood as a fundamental structure of thought and social communication. As Pujante (2003) points out, rhetoric has remained a fundamental element of culture, serving as an essential mechanism for the construction of persuasive discourse from Antiquity to the contemporary media age. Its relevance extends beyond purely aesthetic concerns and places it at the heart of civic life, where it operates as a necessary bridge between individual intention and collective action within spaces of public debate.

The conceptualization of rhetoric has historically been the subject of extensive academic debate, reflecting the different ontological perspectives found within the classical corpus:

Aristotle (1990): He defined rhetoric as the faculty of identifying the available means of persuasion in each case, focusing his analysis on the communicability of opinions (*dóxai*) and the communal system of beliefs (*pistéis*).

Quintilian (1987): He characterized rhetoric as the "art of speaking well" (*ars bene dicendi*), encompassing not only the qualities of effective expression but also the moral foundations of the orator.

Isocrates: He regarded rhetoric as a form of "philosophy" in a broad sense, understanding it as a comprehensive and practical education for political life (Pujante, 2003, p. 46).

2.2 Etymology and Terminology

According to the research conducted by López Eire (1998) and the observations of Quintilian (1987), rhetoric has been associated with several terms that help define its technical and legal scope:

Rhétor: Originally, the author of a *rhétra*.

Rhétra: An established term with a fundamental "double meaning": discourse understood as law or norm (López Eire, 1998).

Oratory / Eloquence: Latin terms that emphasize the practice of speaking effectively and the appropriate use of style.

From a philological perspective, rhetorical figures are not merely ornaments (*sermo ornatus*), but specific modes of meaning-making. They represent strategic deviations from ordinary expression that provide discourse with persuasive force.

2.3 Taxonomy of Rhetorical Figures

Following Quintilian (1987) and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, rhetorical figures can be technically classified as follows:

1. **Figures of Speech:** Based on linguistic form and divided according to the mechanism of modification:

Addition (*Adiectio*): Adding elements to reinforce an idea.

Subtraction (*Detractio*): Omitting elements to achieve greater conciseness.

Order (*Transmutatio* / *Immutatio*): Altering the logical sequence of elements (e.g., hyperbaton).

2. **Figures of Thought (or Figures of Sentence):** These depend on the concept being expressed rather than on specific wording:

Audience-oriented figures: Intended to gain the audience's goodwill (e.g., apostrophe).

Subject-oriented figures: Intended to describe or clarify the subject matter (e.g., hyperbole or prosopopoeia).

3. **Tropes:** Defined as the use of words in a sense different from their original meaning to provide semantic force and dynamism (Pujante, 2003, p. 203).

2.4 Prominent Rhetorical Figures

These figures provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of rhetorical art in shaping human perception.

Metaphor: Regarded as the "color of discourse." Nietzsche associated metaphor with painting to explain how language creates images that are constantly changing, moving away from the "conceptual grayness" of traditional philosophy (Pujante, 2003, p. 28).

Antithesis: A fundamental element in Protagoras' *antilogiai* and in the Platonic method, based on the assumption that every issue has at least two opposing aspects, thereby driving debate through contrast.

Prosopopoeia: Quintilian (1987) emphasizes its importance within the suatory genre, as it allows the orator to give voice to inanimate entities to produce a profound emotional effect on the audience.

Through these figures, the orator constructs a "plausible world" that the audience comes to accept as truth. The effectiveness of rhetoric does not lie in scientific accuracy, but rather in its ability to construct a coherent and aesthetically powerful interpretation that resonates with the audience's lived experience, allowing the proposed interpretation to be assimilated as reality itself.

2.5 Rhetoric in the 21st century

Today, rhetoric has regained a prominent position after having long been regarded as a discipline belonging to the past. Its presence is particularly significant in fields such as marketing and political communication, where the effective construction and transmission of messages play a fundamental role. Within the context of the so-called "global village," the five classical operations of rhetoric have once again gained importance: *inventio*, related to the selection of ideas and arguments; *dispositio*, concerned with their organization; *elocutio*, associated with the form and style of expression; *memoria*, related to the mastery of discourse; and *actio* or *pronuntiatio*, which refers to its delivery through voice, gestures, and other expressive resources. In this way, contemporary communication integrates verbal, visual, and gestural elements that contribute to strengthening the meaning, persuasive power, and overall impact of the message (Pujante, 2003).

The social value of rhetoric lies in its ability to construct persuasive discourse in a world saturated with signs. However, given the increasing sophistication of these rhetorical tools, Quintilian's (1987) ethical ideal of the *vir bonus* ("good man") becomes an essential safeguard. Rhetoric fulfills its civilizing function only when it is practiced with moral responsibility, preventing rhetorical techniques from becoming a form of manipulation devoid of meaningful content.

3. METAPHORS AND THE TRANSLATION OF METAPHORS

While the translator's broader decision involves selecting the general method through which a text will be approached, one of the most significant practical challenges lies in the transfer of metaphors (Newmark, 2010).

These conceptual figures simultaneously serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, they operate at the referential level by conveying ideas, realities, or mental states in a more concise and comprehensive manner than literal language. On the other hand, they function at a pragmatic level, seeking to stimulate the senses, engage the reader, provide visual clarity, and produce an aesthetic impact on the recipient. In the most effective metaphorical expressions, these two functions become inseparably intertwined, merging content and forming a unified whole (Newmark, 2010).

3.1 Analytical Components of Figurative Language

To systematize the study of these figures, Newmark (2010) proposes specific terminology to define the elements involved in the process:

Image: The mental representation evoked by the figure, which may have a universal, cultural, or purely individual scope.

Object: The concrete reality, concept, or element being described or characterized.

Sense: The shared semantic ground or underlying meaning that connects the object and the image, usually consists of multiple nuances.

Metaphor: The statement or text used figuratively, which may range in length from a single term to an entire work.

Metonymy: The substitution of the object by means of a single-word image, a category that also encompasses synecdoche.

Symbol: A culturally established form of metonymy in which a material element represents an abstract idea.

From this perspective, language transcends its role as a mere cultural inheritance and becomes a means of both universal and personal expression (Newmark, 2010).

Therefore, translators must examine the presence of metaphorical expressions in syntactic structures that, although grammatically correct, may appear illogical when interpreted literally (Newmark, 2010).

3.2 Types of Metaphor and Their Translation Strategies

There are six distinct categories of metaphors, each of which requires a particular approach to translation.

1. Dead Metaphors

These are expressions that have become fully integrated into everyday language and are associated with universal notions such as time, space, human anatomy, or nature. They are commonly used to illustrate concepts and define scientific discourse (Newmark, 2010). In general, their transfer does not present major difficulties, although they often resist literal translation and may allow for several solutions in the target language.

Example: *The "foot" of the mountain* → *El "pie" de la montaña*. These expressions are based on universal concepts related to the human body or spatial relationships. They can be translated naturally because both cultures have assimilated the same physical analogy.

2. Cliché Metaphors

These consist of clichés or overused expressions that are often employed emotively to compensate for the absence of a clearly defined idea, thus losing some of their validity and connection with the objective reality of the situation (Newmark, 2010).

Example: *At the end of the day* → *A fin de cuentas* or *Al fin y al cabo*, rather than the literal *al final del día*. The translator must identify the cliché in the source language and replace it with a functional equivalent in Spanish that conveys the same pragmatic meaning without reproducing its exact linguistic structure.

3. Stock Metaphors

Stock metaphors are established expressions that function effectively in informal contexts to describe physical or mental situations concisely. They retain a certain emotional quality without becoming completely worn out (Newmark, 2010). Their translation can be complex because direct equivalents may become obsolete or may be influenced by social and generational factors. To address these difficulties, Newmark (2010) proposes the following alternatives:

a) Preservation of the image: Reproducing the same figure when it has a comparable frequency and registers in the target language.

b) Analogical substitution: Replacing the original figure with an equivalent one that is recognizable within the target culture and has a similar level of usage, while avoiding unnecessary details that could disrupt the balance or linguistic economy of the text.

c) Reduction to sense: Translating only the literal meaning of the expression, with the understanding that this approach eliminates certain informational nuances as well as its pragmatic and emotional impact.

d) Explanatory combination: Retaining the metaphor, or converting it into a simile, while adding an explanation of its meaning. This approach balances the cultural value of the expression for specialized readers with clarity for a general audience.

Stock metaphors are therefore established cultural or idiomatic expressions with a strong emotional or descriptive quality, although they have not become as semantically depleted as clichés.

Example: *To kick the bucket*

Image replacement: *Estirar la pata* or *colgar los tenis*. The original image of the bucket is replaced by that of a leg or shoes, both of which are familiar within informal Spanish.

Reduction to sense: *Morir* or *fallecer*. This option preserves the referential meaning but removes the emotional and informal qualities of the original expression.

4. Adapted Metaphors

These metaphors derive from established metaphorical expressions. Whenever possible, they should be translated by using an equivalent adapted metaphor, a principle that becomes particularly important when dealing with texts of significant institutional or political relevance (Newmark, 2010).

Example: *Poner el dedo en la llaga* (*To touch a sore spot*), meaning to address the most painful or controversial aspect of an issue. If a journalist modifies this established expression to make it correspond more precisely to the subject of a text, an adapted metaphor is created.

Standard expression: *El diputado puso el dedo en la llaga*.

Adapted expression: *El diputado puso el dedo presupuestario en la llaga*

5. Recent Metaphors

These consist of metaphorical neologisms that spread rapidly within the source language and are frequently of anonymous origin (Newmark, 2010). They function as metonymies when they name a contemporary object or process, or as innovative uses of existing linguistic qualities when they describe prototypical characteristics.

Example: *To ghost someone*, meaning to suddenly disappear from someone's life, particularly within digital contexts. Possible Spanish translations include *hacer ghosting*, *dejar plantado*, or *desaparecer como un fantasma*.

These metaphors are often transferred directly as loanwords because of digital globalization. Alternatively, they may require descriptive adaptations when the target audience is unfamiliar with the context from which they originated.

6. Original Metaphors

Original metaphors are individual creations of an author that embody the essence of their message, personality, and worldview (Newmark, 2010). The treatment of these figures varies according to text type:

a) Expressive and authoritative texts: As a general principle, literal translation is required to preserve the integrity of the original idea and enrich the target language, regardless of whether the metaphor is universal or subjective. However, when an original cultural metaphor is excessively obscure or of secondary importance, it may be replaced with a descriptive alternative or reduced to its basic sense (Newmark, 2010).

b) Non-literary and anonymous texts: Original or unusual metaphors should also be translated literally to maintain the reader's interest, even at the risk of producing an image that may appear inconsistent with the overall style of the work (Newmark, 2010).

c) Informative texts: These metaphors allow for a broader range of interpretive options, depending on whether the translator prioritizes conceptual meaning or the strength of the visual image. This differs from expressive texts, in which the available options are more restricted because of the requirements of semantic translation (Newmark, 2010).

Original metaphors therefore refer to the distinctive and innovative creations of a particular author. They do not belong to the shared cultural repertoire but instead reflect the author's individual style. Literature provides a clear example. In Anne Rice's *The Vampire Lestat*, descriptions of vampiric transformation and the effects of light or immortality rely on dark and sublime imagery created by the author. Such metaphors should, according to this framework, be translated literally. When an author produces an unusual or extravagant combination of words, the translator should seek to preserve that same sense of strangeness in Spanish. According to Newmark (2010), literal translation in expressive texts preserves the author's style while simultaneously enriching the target language by introducing new ways of perceiving or describing the world.

Thus, the seven translation strategies for metaphors proposed by Newmark (2010) are as follows:

1. Reproduce the same image in the TL (Target Language)
2. Replace the image from SL (Source Language) with a standard image from the TL.
3. Translate the metaphor as a simile (while retaining the image)
4. Translate the metaphor (or simile) as a simile plus an explanation
5. Convert the metaphor into its meaning (paraphrase)
6. Eliminate/omit the metaphor if it is redundant
7. Use the same metaphor combined with its meaning (explanation)

Regarding the first strategy, reproducing the same image in the target language, this approach involves a literal translation of the metaphor. It is used when the cultural or conceptual image in the source language is fully comprehensible, familiar, or has an exact equivalent in the target language.

This strategy is particularly suitable for expressive texts, such as literature and poetry, or when the metaphor is sufficiently universal that it does not create a sense of unfamiliarity for target readers. For example, "*He has a heart of gold*" can be translated as "*Tiene un corazón de oro*." Both the visual image and its underlying meaning—being a good person—remain intact.

The second strategy consists of replacing the source-language image with a standard target-language image. In this case, the translator recognizes that the original image would not function naturally within the target culture and therefore replaces it with an equivalent metaphor that is already established or conventional in the target language.

This strategy is commonly used in communicative texts, everyday language, and idiomatic expressions. The primary objective is to preserve the emotional or figurative impact rather than the exact wording. For example, the English expression "*It's raining cats and dogs*" may be rendered in Spanish as "*Está lloviendo a cántaros*." The image of animals falling from the sky is replaced by a culturally familiar image involving large quantities of water, while maintaining the same communicative effect.

The third strategy involves translating the metaphor as a simile while retaining the original image. This technique reduces the intensity of the metaphor by turning it into an explicit comparison through expressions such as *like*, *as*, or *seems*. It is useful when the original metaphor may appear too striking, forceful, or obscure to target readers, while the translator still wishes to preserve its visual impact.

For example, the metaphor "*Él es un león en el campo de batalla*" may be reformulated as "*Él es como un león en el campo de batalla*." By introducing the comparative element *como* ("like"), the expression is presented as an explicit poetic analogy rather than as an unusual literal description.

The fourth strategy consists of translating the metaphor (or simile) as a simile combined with an explanation. This hybrid strategy goes beyond the previous approach. The metaphor is not only softened by transforming it into a simile, but the attribute or basis of comparison is also explicitly stated to avoid ambiguity. This approach is particularly useful when the target culture recognizes the conceptual object but does not necessarily share all its connotations.

For example, *"Su mente es un laberinto"* may be rendered as *"Su mente es como un laberinto, llena de pensamientos complejos y difíciles de descifrar."* The additional explanation clarifies the point of connection between the two concepts for the reader.

The fifth strategy, converting the metaphor into sense (paraphrase), consists of removing the metaphorical dimension entirely and reducing the expression to its literal or conceptual meaning. In doing so, the aesthetic qualities of the original expression are sacrificed in favor of the accurate transmission of information.

This approach is particularly common in informative, technical, scientific, or commercial texts, where clarity takes precedence over rhetorical beauty. It may also be used when the source-language metaphor cannot be effectively transferred figuratively. For instance, *"Take it with a grain of salt"* may be translated as *"No te lo tomes tan en serio"* or *"Hay que tomarlo con escepticismo."* The image of the "grain of salt" disappears, while the intended meaning is preserved.

The sixth strategy involves deleting or omitting the metaphor when it is redundant. This approach consists of completely removing the metaphor from the target text. Such omission is based on linguistic economy rather than convenience. It may be appropriate when the metaphor is merely decorative or repetitive, contributes little to the development of the text, or would interfere with fluency without adding substantial meaning.

For example, if a lengthy financial report states, *"The company is growing, soaring like an eagle towards new heights of success,"* the translator might simply render it as *"La empresa está creciendo con éxito,"* omitting the image of the soaring eagle if a more restrained and direct corporate tone is considered appropriate in the target text.

Finally, the seventh strategy consists of reproducing the same metaphor while combining it with its sense or an explanation. This strategy involves glossing or adding information. The translator preserves the original image in the target language, as in the first strategy, but incorporates a brief explanation into the text to ensure that the reader understands the cultural or semantic background of the metaphor.

This strategy is frequently employed in the translation of cultural, historical, or literary texts in which preserving the distinctive character or "flavor" of the original is important, but target readers may lack the necessary context to understand the analogy. For example, the expression *"Logró una victoria pírrica, un triunfo que costó más de lo que valió"* retains the historical reference to Pyrrhus while simultaneously explaining its meaning for readers who may be unfamiliar with it.

Ultimately, the choice among these seven strategies depends on the type of text—informative, operative, or expressive—the expectations of the target audience, and the purpose (*skopos*) of the translation. The following sections will address the central areas of this research.

4. GOTHIC AND GOTHIC LITERATURE

The Gothic emerged in the mid-eighteenth century not as an isolated literary eccentricity, but as the "necessary reverse" of Enlightenment discourse. As the so-called Age of Reason sought to organize the world through science, empiricism, and rationality, it simultaneously needed to construct an opposing image—the Gothic—to establish the boundaries of what it considered progress (Botting, 2014). By locating superstition, the supernatural, and the irrational within a fictionalized medieval past, Enlightenment thought created a dark Other against which it could define itself as orderly, mature, and civilized.

This process generated a strong tension between classical aesthetic values and the emerging Gothic mode. Eighteenth-century taste was grounded in the principles of the Greco-Roman tradition: uniformity, proportion, clarity, and simplicity. Both architecture and literature were conceived as "polite companions" intended to provide readers with moral instruction (Botting, 2014). Within this framework, "Gothic" initially functioned as a derogatory label for the Middle Ages, which were portrayed as an era of barbarism, superstition, and uncontrolled fantasy, all regarded as products of an "infantile" and uncultivated mind.

Throughout the century, however, these same characteristics gradually came to be revalued as sources of imagination. Extravagance, wildness, and superstition ceased to be regarded solely as flaws and became resources capable of expanding the boundaries of representation beyond the rigid conventions of Neoclassicism. What had previously been dismissed as excess began to be recognized as a source of aesthetic energy (Botting, 2014). Ruins, "barbaric" ballads, graveyard poetry, and theories of the sublime thus opened a space in which literature could explore intense emotions—fear, awe, and melancholy—that Enlightenment narratives of reason could not fully encompass.

The early reception of novels such as M. G. Lewis's *The Monk* clearly illustrates the unease generated by this shift. Critics spoke of "monstrosity" to condemn works that sacrificed moral plausibility in favor of "monsters of the imagination" and scenes involving lust, incest, and sacrilege (Botting, 2014). They feared that such narratives would destabilize domestic order, corrupt the taste of the emerging reading public, and lead readers away from the virtues of obedience, prudence, and moderation. From this perspective, Gothic writing appeared as an antisocial force, suspected of reviving precisely the "barbarism" that modernity claimed to have overcome.

Botting (2014) summarizes this conflict through a series of Enlightenment antitheses. On one side stands the Enlightenment Age: reason, science, empiricism, the city, commerce, manufacturing, and political representation; on the other stands the "Gothic past": superstition, ignorance, tyranny, monarchy, religious mystery, and an agrarian economy. Yet this opposition never becomes entirely stable. The Gothic past is not merely a repository of horrors supposedly overcome by

modernity, but also an imaginary space to which the present repeatedly returns to reintroduce mystery, excess, and ambivalence into a world that presents itself as transparent and rational.

In this sense, the Gothic emerges as a contested space in which a progressive impulse seeking to impose order and dispel mystery confronts a conservative—or melancholic—desire to preserve the enigmatic depth of the past. From this tension between progress and nostalgia arise the recognizable forms through which the Gothic genre materializes on the page: castles, monks, and persecuted heroes and heroines.

4.1 The Architecture of Terror: Structural Forms and Negative Aesthetics

In Botting's (2014) interpretation, Gothic forms function as a transitional fabric between the older romance tradition and the emerging realist novel. While the eighteenth-century novel sought to represent everyday life with a sense of verisimilitude, Gothic fiction returned to the non-realistic settings of romance—remote castles, abbeys, and mountainous landscapes—to explore disturbances of sanity and security that the urban-bourgeois framework could not represent without disruption (Botting, 2014).

The combination of contemporary rational attitudes with fantastic mysteries creates a narrative space in which what Botting describes as a negative aesthetic can flourish: a systematic engagement with shadows, disorientation, and the unknown that, by contrast, exposes the limits of human knowledge.

The characteristic settings of the genre are crucial in this respect. Castles, monasteries, ruins, and isolated mansions are situated in remote, "lawless" regions—spaces in which the protection offered by the state and Enlightenment reason becomes weakened and archaic forms of feudal, patriarchal, or religious power re-emerge (Botting, 2014). The ruin, for instance, is not merely a picturesque backdrop; it embodies in decline, including aristocratic lineages, manor houses, and monastic orders whose authority is no longer stable but has not entirely disappeared. Consequently, the Gothic building combines the functions of home and prison: an apparent refuge that simultaneously becomes a space of confinement, surveillance, and violence.

Within these architectural spaces, the heroine-villain dynamic unfolds. The villain—whether a corrupt nobleman, an overreaching scientist, or a resentful outcast—operates from a position "beyond" the law, unrestricted by moral or social constraints. The heroine, meanwhile, embodies a combination of curiosity and vulnerability that exposes her to both real and imagined dangers (Botting, 2014). Removed from familial supervision, she experiences a degree of independence unusual by the standards of the period; however, this autonomy is accompanied by extreme insecurity as she moves alone through passageways, crypts, and hostile landscapes where no protection can be guaranteed.

Botting (2014) also identifies several Gothic devices that sustain this atmosphere of instability. The uncanny manifests itself through the disruption of subjective unity: inanimate objects appear to come to life—portraits seem to watch and statues appear to move—while doubles and echoes suggest the return of the repressed in forms that are only partially recognizable.

The macabre repertoire of the Gothic—moldy manuscripts, secret passages, bloodstained daggers, and skeletons—does more than produce isolated moments of shock. It encourages a fearful curiosity, creating a desire for knowledge that exists alongside feelings of repulsion.

Negative aesthetics operates through flickering lights, shadows, veils, and partial perspectives: "something" can be seen, but never completely. This controlled obscurity supports the distinction that Botting (2014), following Gothic tradition, draws between terror and horror. Terror operates from a certain distance, withholding complete vision and sustaining anxiety. Horror, by contrast, involves an excessive and indistinct proximity to the monstrous—a presence so immediate that it threatens to overwhelm or even dissolve the subject.

At the structural level, Gothic narratives reinforce this logic through limited perspectives, fragmented testimonies, and systematic delays in explaining events. Before any rational explanation is provided, if one is provided at all, the text has already activated the reader's imagination through a series of hypotheses, fears, and false leads (Botting, 2014). Intellectual resolution becomes less important than the production of intense emotional responses: fear, anxiety, disgust, but also a certain fascination with the emergence of the excessive and overwhelming.

With the advent of Romanticism, these forms did not disappear; instead, their location began to shift. The ruined castle remained, but it increasingly began to merge with the inner fractures of the human mind.

4.2 Romantic Transformations: Psychology, Divided Subjectivity, and the Sublime

What late eighteenth-century fiction represented through dungeons, specters, or endless corridors increasingly came to be understood in Romanticism as a metaphor for a divided self-trapped within its own abysses (Botting, 2014). The prison ceased to be exclusively architectural and became psychological: the individual discovers that there are also locked rooms and shadowy spaces within the self.

Within this context, the figure of the solitary visionary or social outcast acquires greater importance. The Gothic "double" is no longer merely a narrative device, but a representation of desires, fantasies, or impulses that do not conform to socially accepted models—another self-embodying what the socially recognized subject cannot acknowledge as its own (Botting, 2014). Thus, strangeness is no longer located exclusively within a threatening external world but becomes a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity.

Botting (2014) connects this transformation to the concept of the sublime developed by Burke (1757/2008) and Kant (1790/2000). The sublime is defined as a form of “negative pleasure”: an experience in which the individual feels overwhelmed by magnitudes or intensities that appear to exceed the limits of human comprehension—immense mountains, storms, oceans, as well as ideas of infinity or death (Burke, 1757/2008; Kant, 1790/2000). In the Romantic manifestation of the Gothic, this experience is represented as an exposure of the self to forces that threaten to dissolve it: a moment in which the unity of the subject falters upon recognizing its own finitude.

At the same time, the Romantic sublime retains a structure of loss and recovery. The self risks breaking apart when confronted with the incomprehensible; however, by distancing itself and “overcoming” this sense of vertigo, it reasserts its rational power, as though the experience ultimately confirmed the superiority of the mind capable of judging it (Botting, 2014). At this point, the Gothic imagination both engages with and challenges the Romantic project: it shares its fascination with extremes but does not always allow the subject to emerge strengthened from the encounter.

Another central element of these transformations is transgression. By crossing moral, scientific, or political boundaries—as Frankenstein does by creating artificial life—characters in the Romantic Gothic novel call into question what had previously been presented as natural and immutable: the laws of nature, the limits of science, and the very definition of what it means to be human (Botting, 2014). Transgression does not simply violate established norms; it also exposes them, revealing their historical and contingent nature.

In this context, nature ceases to function as a harmonious backdrop and instead appears “monstrous” or alien to civilized codes. Storms, Alpine landscapes, Arctic ice, and boundless seas become settings for the confrontation between humanity and the world, exposing the fragility of any supposed human sovereignty over the environment (Botting, 2014). The release of “monstrous” forces—within the body, the mind, and nature itself—challenges the idea of a stable social order and of firmly established boundaries.

Taken together, these discussions of the origins, forms, and Romantic transformations of the Gothic reveal it as a persistent means of giving form to cultural and psychological fears. Since its eighteenth-century beginnings, this narrative mode has questioned the legitimacy of human norms and exposed the darker ambiguities of progress. At the same time, it demonstrates the extent to which modernity continues to imagine its own ghosts to confront what cannot be accommodated within its narratives of light and reason (Botting, 2014).

For Vijay Mishra (1994), the Gothic cannot be reduced to a mere popular “chamber of horrors.” Rather, it operates as a strategic intervention within the field of ideological and aesthetic reception: a device that destabilizes the boundaries of realist verisimilitude and creates fractures in the historical continuity of the Enlightenment project. From this perspective, the Gothic is not simply a collection of recurring motifs—castles, corrupt monks, and apparitions—but a space of aesthetic negotiation in which the “unreality” of everyday life becomes visible through the spectral and the sublime (Mishra, 1994).

Mishra (1994) reconstructs the historiography of the genre as a field shaped by a strong tension between the “numinous” interpretations of the mid-twentieth century and more contemporary, subversive approaches. Critics such as Montague Summers (1938) and Devendra P. Varma (1957) interpret the Gothic novel primarily as a spiritual quest: an experience of awe before “divine immanence” through which a sense of the sacred might be recovered amid the dominance of bourgeois individualism (Varma, 1957; Mishra, 1994). Within this framework, the Gothic becomes a “flame” or a “quest” directed toward absolute spiritual values.

According to Mishra (1994), this interpretation rests upon what he calls an “Absolute Meaning”: God or the ideal *logos* that legitimizes the text and stabilizes its ultimate meaning.

Summers (1938) presents himself as an “aristocrat of literature” who defends the genre against avant-garde appropriations, parodying André Breton and the Surrealists while dismissing as “nonsense” their emphasis on the collapse of the boundary between dream and reality (Summers, 1938; Mishra, 1994). For Summers, Gothic ruins are sacred relics, symbols of “infinite sadness” and a melancholic sensibility, rather than dreamlike corridors leading toward a radical, godless unconscious.

In contrast to this numinous interpretation, later criticism shifts its attention toward the structurally and socially disruptive dimensions of the Gothic. David Punter (1980) understands it as an open form that explores a literature of terror characterized by taboo, alienation, and class ambivalence: simultaneously a literature of the bourgeoisie and a literature against the bourgeoisie (Punter, 1980; Mishra, 1994). Elizabeth Napier (1987) questions the tendency to impose grand “profound revelations” upon the genre and instead proposes interpreting its verbal disruptions, stylistic lapses, and inconsistencies as inherent features of a design that resists semantic stability. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1985), meanwhile, identifies the Gothic as a space in which tensions surrounding male homosocial desire and the homophobic mechanisms associated with it are negotiated (Sedgwick, 1985; Mishra, 1994).

This historiographical trajectory—from Gothic as a search for the divine to the Gothic as a form of subversive textuality—leads to what Mishra (1994) considers the theoretical core of the genre: the sublime and its capacity to produce the disintegration of both the mind and representation.

4.3 The Conception of the Vampire in Gothic Literature

In Gothic fiction, narrative form does not merely serve as a framework for the plot; it also shapes the experience of fear. David Seed (1985/2004) explains that, in *Dracula*, terror is constructed through a fragmented structure combining diaries, phonograph recordings, letters, and newspaper clippings, preventing the threat from ever appearing entirely stable or fully explained. The result is a reading experience characterized by uncertainty: both the characters and the reader must navigate a documentary network that appears to provide evidence while simultaneously delaying any sense of certainty.

This narrative strategy directly influences the construction of vampire. Rather than presenting the monster from a single perspective, the text disperses it across multiple voices. Seed (1985/2004) observes that this plurality prevents a unified perception of the creature and transforms the vampire into an elusive presence, almost like a void around which the entire narrative revolves. The vampire is never fully known; instead, it must be reconstructed through traces, partial testimonies, and incomplete records.

Another important feature is the use of almost bureaucratic logic. The characters classify, record, transcribe, and archive information. This obsession with modern documentation gives the text an appearance of rational control yet ultimately produces a different effect. According to Seed (1985/2004), the instruments of Victorian progress fail to contain the supernatural and instead expose their own limitations. The vampire may be documented through modern technologies, but it continues to resist being fully defined or understood.

From this perspective, the novel raises an epistemological problem. The subjectivity of the narrators destabilizes the boundary between objective observation, fear, and delusion. Seed (1985/2004) suggests that this narrative form disrupts the separation between the empirical world and the inexplicable. Thus, the terror of *Dracula* does not depend solely on the appearance of the monster, but also on the unsettling possibility that even modern evidence may fail when attempting to explain an ancient threat.

The nineteenth-century vampire no longer corresponds exclusively to the folkloric image of the clumsy and grotesque corpse returning from the grave. Toward the end of the century, the vampire acquires a more refined, socially recognizable, and even attractive appearance. Christopher Craft (1984/2004) examines this transformation and argues that the power of the modern vampire lies not only in physical violence but also in the psychological and symbolic complexity that reshapes its role within Gothic fiction.

The vampire's characterization is built upon constant tension. On the one hand, it retains its predatory impulses, hunger, and physical threat. On the other, it displays manners, lineage, charm, and social sophistication. Craft (1984/2004) interprets this combination as a kind of dark double of Victorian morality: a figure that appears to belong to civilized society while subverting it from within. This social mask does not diminish the vampire's monstrosity; rather, it makes the creature even more dangerous.

Vampiric charm should not be understood as a merely superficial characteristic either; it functions as a mechanism of inversion. Craft (1984/2004) demonstrates that scenes such as the invitation to kiss "those red lips" disrupt conventional hierarchies of male activity and female passivity while exposing deeper anxieties surrounding desire, sexuality, and identity. In this sense, the vampire does more than seduce it destabilizes categories that Victorian culture regarded as fixed.

The figure of *Dracula* clearly illustrates this process. His transformation from a strange, almost animalistic presence into a more sophisticated and socially mobile figure allows him to circulate within spaces that had previously appeared protected. Craft (1984/2004) notes that this refined version of the monster inspires both fear and fascination. Much of the vampire's power lies precisely in this duality: he functions not merely as an external threat, but as the return of repressed impulses that society would prefer not to acknowledge.

With the development of the domestic Gothic, the center of horror is no longer located exclusively in distant castles or ruined landscapes; instead, it enters the home. Carol A. Senf (1979/2004) explains that this transformation intensifies the experience of terror because the Victorian home, traditionally conceived as a moral and emotional refuge, becomes a vulnerable space. The place that was supposed to protect the family begins to resemble a prison and, at times, even a tomb.

The vampire plays a decisive role in this inversion of domestic space. It does not simply invade from the outside; it enters, remains, transforms the environment, and reorganizes the meaning of the home. Senf (1979/2004) argues that the monster converts an architecture of safety into an architecture of confinement. Intimacy no longer guarantees protection but instead becomes a condition that facilitates infiltration, emotional deterioration, and loss of control.

This invasion also affects family relationships and gender norms. The Victorian ideal of the "angel in the house" is threatened when the vampire seduces or transforms the women within the domestic sphere. Senf (1979/2004) emphasizes that this transformation destroys the purity and moral function traditionally assigned to figures such as the fiancée or mother, replacing them with disturbing forms of desire and aggression. Horror, therefore, emerges not only from the monster itself, but also from what its presence reveals about the fractures already existing within the home.

From this perspective, the vampire functions as a disturbing mirror. Senf (1979/2004) argues that it reflects repressed impulses, latent violence, and desires that domestic life seeks to keep under control. This is precisely why its presence is so destabilizing. The problem is not simply that the monster has entered the home, but that its presence makes visible something that was already there, although previously concealed.

From Ken Gelder's (2002) perspective, the evolution of the Victorian vampire can therefore be understood as a transition from a folkloric creature to a complex subject within nineteenth-century literature.

Gelder (2002) argues that the Victorian vampire ceases to be a disorderly, primitive, or purely terrifying creature. Its power no longer resides in overt brutality, but in its ability to disguise itself within respectable forms of social interaction. This transformation is most clearly embodied in the figure of the aristocratic vampire, with Lord Ruthven serving as a significant example. The monster acquires a distinguished, educated, and sophisticated appearance that grants it the social authority to circulate within prestigious spaces, making the threat considerably more subtle and difficult to identify.

According to Gelder (2002), the vampire becomes "socialized." Its invasion does not occur through direct physical violence but through politeness, hospitality, and mastery of social conventions, allowing it to enter the home as a "legitimate guest" without disrupting the appearance of social order.

This ability to master the language of courtesy subverts the Victorian domestic space, traditionally regarded as a refuge of morality and family stability. Gelder (2002) emphasizes that the vampire ceases to be an obvious external invader and instead becomes an internal threat through its command of domestic and social conventions.

This transition from the primitive and brutal vampire to the aristocratic, cultured, and sophisticated figure described by Gelder (2002) can be observed in Anne Rice's vampire Lestat. In *Part II: The Legacy of Magnus*, which represents Lestat's threshold of initiation and his absolute rupture with human life, the trauma of his Gothic rebirth becomes particularly evident. This stage is marked by isolation, psychological shock, and aesthetic violence. Lestat, for instance, is abducted by Magnus, an ancient, decrepit vampire and alchemist who bestows the "Dark Gift" upon him without his consent before immediately taking his own life in a funeral pyre.

Unlike other myths in which the creator guides the initiate, Lestat is left entirely alone, although he inherits an immense material fortune—Magnus's gold and possessions—as well as a superhuman body that he does not yet know how to control. These events take place in a remote and gloomy tower, a distinctly Gothic setting that contrasts sharply with the luminous and theatrical Paris for which Lestat had longed.

Gelder (2002) points out that the vampire's new form of power depends on its ability to navigate the codes of social life. Lestat embodies this idea particularly well because of his own human background: he is an actor, a young man fascinated by the theater, lights, and the attention of an audience. Although Magnus represents the archetype of the ancient and secluded monster, Lestat rejects this marginal existence. His personality is inherently sociable and exhibitionistic, which accelerates his process of social assimilation.

For Gelder (2002), the danger of the modern vampire lies in its ability to present itself as educated and refined, thereby becoming a subtler threat. After receiving Magnus's legacy, Lestat uses his enormous inherited fortune to dress in the finest silks, purchase carriages, and travel through the boulevards of Paris. He does not lurk in cemeteries like a walking corpse; in fact, he detests them. Instead, he transforms himself into a gentleman of high society. His aristocratic status does not derive from wealth or social privilege at birth; he comes from an impoverished provincial noble family but becomes an aesthetic performance that allows him to integrate into society without being recognized as a threat.

Likewise, Gelder (2002) describes the vampire as becoming a legitimate guest, an idea that can be observed when Lestat returns to interact with his human social environment, particularly by sending money and luxuries to his mother, Gabrielle, and his friend Nicolas. Lestat does not invade through physical violence; rather, he re-enters family and social relationships through affection, gifts, and material generosity. He becomes the "prodigal son" who conceals the predator beneath the surface, reflecting Gelder's (2002) argument that the vampire's greatest advantage—and greatest danger—lies in its ability to master the language of courtesy.

While *The Legacy of Magnus* initially immerses Lestat in a more traditional and isolated form of Gothic terror, his personality rapidly moves toward the model described by Gelder (2002). Lestat refuses to become the primitive monster of folklore; instead, he adopts sophistication, wealth, and social conventions to transform himself into the quintessential modern vampire: one who does not break down the door but is invited inside.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study is firmly situated within the qualitative approach that emerged following the "cultural turn" in Translation Studies. Rather than seeking a single or prescriptive equivalent, it focuses on examining how actual practices in literary translation shape and recontextualize Gothic style (Rojo López, 2013).

Following Rojo López (2013), this research design aligns with the work of researchers with a more literary or philosophical orientation, who tend to rely on introspection and in-depth critical analysis rather than statistical tools.

The object of study is Gothic metaphor as a unit carrying aesthetic, symbolic, and cultural meaning, particularly in relation to concepts such as darkness, vampiric sensuality, immortality, and decay in Anne Rice's work.

Furthermore, the study adopts a descriptive and qualitative approach. The purpose is not to determine how frequently a particular strategy occurs, but rather to examine how the strategies selected by the translator influence the preservation, alteration, or loss of the Gothic atmosphere and poetic qualities of the source text when transferred into the target culture. In other words, the study does not seek to quantify the success of the translation, but to explore how the translator handled the

opacity, lyricism, and somber atmosphere of Anne Rice's Gothic metaphors through the translation options theorized by Newmark.

Before analyzing the translation strategies, the methodology requires the Gothic metaphors identified in the selected textual corpus to be classified. The corpus comprises *Part II: The Legacy of Magnus* from Anne Rice's novel *The Vampire Lestat* and its corresponding Spanish translation.

Following Rojo López (2013), the selection of the object of study responds to the nature of the phenomenon under investigation. This section concentrates the narrative's aesthetic transition toward a darker and more alchemical form of the Gothic, providing an especially rich concentration of original metaphors related to immortality, horror, fire, madness, and blood imagery.

In accordance with the "cultural turn" in Translation Studies described by Rojo López (2013), this study rejects a prescriptive approach based on judging isolated errors through intuition and instead adopts an empirical-descriptive perspective focused on actual literary norms and practices. The research design follows an introspective and analytical orientation appropriate for literary analysis, seeking to uncover the nuances of figurative language without reducing or distorting them through statistical analysis.

The units extracted from *The Legacy of Magnus* will be categorized according to Newmark's (2010) taxonomy to determine their stylistic significance before evaluating their translation:

Rice's Original Metaphors: These are metaphors created by the author to describe Lestat's experience of the "Dark Birth" or the atmosphere surrounding Magnus's tower, such as descriptions of immortality as a prison or a divine gift. Newmark (2010) argues that such metaphors should primarily be approached through semantic translation to preserve the author's originality and individual style.

Cliché Metaphors of the Genre: These are Gothic expressions inherited from the tradition of horror, including references to graves, monsters, and darkness, which contribute to the overall tone of this section.

To examine how the translator managed the transfer of the Gothic atmosphere surrounding Magnus into Spanish, each selected Gothic metaphor will be analyzed according to Newmark's (2010) seven translation strategies:

1. Reproducing the same metaphor: Exact preservation of the alchemical or Gothic image.
2. Replacing the source-text (ST) image with a standard target-text (TT) image: Cultural adaptation of the imagery of terror.
3. Translating the metaphor as a simile: Softening the Gothic impact while retaining the image.
4. Translating the metaphor as a simile combined with its sense: Providing subtle clarification of the horror conveyed by the image.
5. Converting the metaphor into sense: Reducing the metaphor to its meaning, with a consequent loss of some of its Gothic aesthetic qualities.
6. Omission: Removing the metaphorical unit from the target text.
7. Reproducing the same metaphor combined with its sense: Preserving the metaphor while adding clarification to reinforce comprehension of Gothic imagery.

The textual analysis will be structured through a direct exegetical examination of the most representative metaphors found in *The Legacy of Magnus*.

6. Sample

The sample analyzed comprises forty metaphorical units extracted from *Part II: The Legacy of Magnus* of Anne Rice's *The Vampire Lestat* (1985). The units were selected purposively according to their relevance to the construction of the Gothic atmosphere, their aesthetic and sensory qualities, and the variety of translation procedures they allowed the study to examine. The selection includes original, stock, adapted, cliché, and dead metaphors associated with vampiric transformation, blood, fire, death, supernatural perception, the sublime, and the transgression of the sacred. Rather than encompassing every metaphor found in this section, the sample was designed to provide representative examples of the Gothic imagery and figurative language present in the selected corpus.

Each unit was organized in a comparative matrix comprising six elements: the original metaphor in English, its classification according to Newmark's (2010) taxonomy, the proposed Spanish translation, the translation strategy applied, its function in the construction of the Gothic, and an analysis of the effects produced by the translation decision. This structure allows the analysis to consider not only the preservation of referential meaning, but also the extent to which the original imagery, expressive intensity, and aesthetic function are maintained in the target language.

Table 1

Translation Analysis Matrix of Metaphors and Their Gothic Function in Part II: The Legacy of Magnus

Original Metaphor (English)	Type of Metaphor (Newmark)	Proposed Translation (Spanish)	Translation Strategy (Newmark)	Gothic Function
1. "a whisper that was like a summons and a tribute at the same time." (p. 56)	Original	"En un susurro largo y grave que parecía, al mismo tiempo, una llamada y un homenaje "	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Introducing the supernatural presence and foreshadowing the threat.
2. "The sleep was slipping off me like garments" (p. 56)	Original	"El sueño se me disipó de golpe "	5. Converting the metaphor into sense.	Representing the sudden transition from sleep to the intrusion of the supernatural.
3. "I struck it as if I were striking the brick wall." (p. 57)	Stock	"No se movió; fue como golpear un muro de ladrillo, pues su cuerpo no cedió en absoluto "	4. Translating the metaphor combined with its sense.	Conveying Magnus's supernatural strength and Lestat's human helplessness.
4. "its laughter grew louder...with a strong undercurrent of pleasure" (p. 57)	Stock	"Su risa fue creciendo, deliberadamente burlona, aunque bajo la burla latía un placer tan evidente que resultaba todavía más enloquecedor "	2. Replacing the ST image with a standard TT image.	Characterizing Magnus's sadism and intensifying psychological terror.
5. "I felt its hands close on my shoulders like things forged of metal..." (p. 57)	Original	"Sentí que sus manos se cerraban sobre mis hombros como tenazas forjadas en metal "	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Dehumanizing the monster and representing physical confinement.
6. "...like a drowned thing shooting to the surface of black water and breaking free in the light" (p. 58)	Original	"Como un cuerpo ahogado que ascendiera desde el fondo de aguas negras hasta irrumpir en la luz "	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Representing the return of repressed knowledge and the revelation of the monstrous.
7. "...the sound of a deep gong perhaps, being struck very slowly... its sound washing through me..." (p. 58)	Original	"Un sonido profundo que me envolvía, quizá el de un gong golpeado muy lentamente con un ritmo perfecto... Su eco me atravesaba en oleadas..." "	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Creating a hypnotic state and representing supernatural ecstasy.
8. "His eyes were rimmed with blood." (p. 58)	Stock	"Tenía los ojos profundamente enrojecidos "	5. Converting the metaphor into sense.	Introducing the motif of blood and foreshadowing suffering.
9. "The faraway city was vanishing in the black sky, leaving a little sea of lights behind it." (p. 60)	Stock	"La ciudad lejana se desvanecía bajo el cielo negro, dejando tras de sí una pequeña constelación de luces "	2. Replacing the ST image with a standard TT image.	Constructing the nocturnal sublime and representing isolation.
10. "The whole impression was of something limp and lifeless..." (p. 60)	Original	"En conjunto, daba la impresión de ser algo flácido y sin vida "	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Representing the abject and the vampire's liminal condition.
11. "Huge black eyes seeming to stretch the white flesh in deep folds..." (p. 60)	Original	"Los enormes ojos negros parecían tensar la piel blanca hasta formar profundos pliegues "	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Producing a grotesque deformation of the body.

12.".... the mouth the jester's smile. There were the fang teeth, just touching the colorless lip..." (p. 61)	Original	"La boca se curvaba en aquella sonrisa de bufón. Sus pequeños colmillos blancos apenas rozaban los labios incoloros "	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Combining theatricality with grotesque and monstrous.
13."The mask of old age, this grinning thing cut deeply with the marks of time and yet frozen..." (p. 62)	Original	"Aquella cosa sonriente parecía llevar una máscara de vejez, profundamente surcada por las marcas del tiempo y, sin embargo, congelada"	3. Translating the metaphor as a simile.	Conveying the uncanny and the unnatural suspension of time.
14."...this vast realm of dark beings and hideous meanings..." (p. 62)	Original	"...se extendía un vasto reino de seres oscuros y verdades horrendas"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Expanding the supernatural universe and producing cosmic terror.
15."...a perfect mask of comedy from the proscenium arch." (p. 62)	Original	"...convirtiendo su rostro en una perfecta máscara de comedia, rígida y artificial, como aquellas que adornaban el arco del proscenio de los teatros"	7. Reproducing the same metaphor combined with its sense.	Merging theater, artificiality, and horror.
16."...as the nightful of stars slid upwards, jewels affixed to a dark purple veil." (p. 63)	Stock	"La noche cuajada de estrellas se deslizaba hacia arriba; las estrellas parecían joyas prendidas a un velo púrpura oscuro"	3. Translating the metaphor as a simile.	Constructing the sublime and representing spatial disorientation.
17."The light's going out of your blue eyes as if all the summer days are gone..." (p. 64)	Adapted	"La luz de tus ojos azules se está apagando, como si todos los días del verano hubieran terminado..."	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Representing death and the exhaustion of life.
18."A dark Prometheus stealing a luminescent fire." (p. 64)	Adapted	"Un Prometeo oscuro, un ladrón de inmortalidad que robaba un fuego luminoso"	7. Reproducing the same metaphor combined with its sense.	Representing transgression and defiance of natural order.
19."The thirst seemed to hiss aloud." (p. 65)	Original	"La sed pareció sisear en voz alta"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Animalizing desire and conveying bodily horror.
20."...it was like light passing into me, so brilliant did it seem to the mind, so blinding, that red stream..." (p. 65)	Original	"... era como si una luz penetrara en mí, pues así de brillante se presentaba ante mi mente, así de cegador era aquel torrente rojo..."	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Combining ecstasy, violence, and supernatural transformation.
21. "The cold was an icing on me and the fire melted it..." (p. 68)	Original	"El frío era como una capa de escarcha que me cubría y que el fuego derretía.	3. Translating the metaphor as a simile.	Bodily estrangement and supernatural transformation.
22. "The light exploded on his satin rags..." (p. 68)	Original	"La luz estallaba sobre sus harapos de satén..."	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Visual violence and an infernal atmosphere.
23. "...the fire licking the ceiling behind him..." (p. 69)	Stock	"...el fuego lamía el techo a su espalda..."	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Threatening personification of fire.

24. "It seemed his head became a torch..." (p. 69)	Original	"Durante un instante, pareció que su cabeza se convertía en una antorcha"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Bodily horror and grotesque destruction.
25. "Each change in the moving air was caressing." (p. 71)	Stock	"Cada variación en el movimiento del aire era una caricia"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Supernatural sensualization of the night.
26. "Blood came up like liquid fire into my mouth..." (p. 78)	Stock	"La sangre me subió hasta la boca como fuego líquido..."	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Bodily pain and fascination with blood.
27. "...the sweet smell of it cut like a blade through the stench of the dead." (p. 78)	Original	"...su dulce aroma atravesaba como una cuchilla el hedor de los muertos"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Attraction and repulsion; macabre sensuality.
28. "His eye like a fractured crystal stared at me." (p. 78)	Original	"Su ojo, semejante a un cristal fracturado, me contemplaba"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Grotesque beauty and the dehumanization of the corpse.
29. "The pain in my face and hands died away..." (p. 79)	Stock	"El dolor de mi rostro y mis manos desapareció"	5. Converting the metaphor into sense.	The tomb as a supernatural refuge.
30. "His eyes weren't the portals of his soul anymore." (p. 81)	Stock	"Sus ojos ya no eran las ventanas de su alma"	2. Replacing the ST image with a standard TT image.	Loss of the soul and dehumanization of the victim.
31. "...that had been light itself made liquid." (p. 81)	Original	"Aquella otra sangre había sido la luz misma convertida en líquido"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Supernatural sublimation of blood.
32. "I heard my voice like a knife." (p. 85)	Stock	"Mi voz me pareció tan afilada como un cuchillo"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Threat and supernatural power.
33. "The forest seemed to breathe for an instant." (p. 85)	Stock	"Durante un instante, el bosque pareció respirar"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Animated nature and an unsettling setting.
34. "I began to drink up Paris as if the city were blood." (p. 89)	Original	"Comencé a beberme París como si la ciudad misma fuera sangre"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Predation and domination of the city.
35. "The hours flew as I roamed the city." (p. 93)	Cliché	"El tiempo pasó con rapidez mientras recorría la ciudad"	5. Converting the metaphor into sense.	Alteration of mortal time.
36. "...as if his mind were merely a portal to a chaos stretching out from the borders of all we know." (p. 95)	Original	"...como si su mente apenas fuera la antesala de un abismo que se extendía más allá de todo cuanto conocíamos"	2. Replacing the ST image with a standard TT image.	Psychological abyss and fear of the unknown.
37. "Beauty was a Savage Garden." (p. 96)	Original	"La belleza era un-Jardín Salvaje"	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Gothic sublime: the union of beauty and violence.
38. "...the thirst was like a cat clawing to get out." (p. 100)	Original	"La sed era como un gato atrapado dentro de mí: me arañaba por dentro, desesperado por escapar"	4. Translating the metaphor combined with its sense.	Animalization and the inner monster.
39. "...at the foot of the altar..." (p. 100)	Dead	"...ante el altar..."	6. Omission.	Religious setting and inversion of the sacred.
40. "Strong wine I'd had, in chipped and	Adapted	"Hasta entonces solo había bebido vino fuerte	1. Reproducing the same metaphor.	Sacrilege and objectification of the victims.

broken vessels..." (p. 100)		servido en recipientes astillados y rotos"		
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Note. Own elaboration based on The Vampire Lestat (Rice, 1985) and Newmark's (2010) classification of metaphors and translation strategies.

7. Analysis

The analysis of the sample shows that metaphor is one of the main resources through which Anne Rice constructs Lestat's supernatural experience. The selected expressions do not function merely as ornamental features of language; rather, they contribute directly to the representation of the body, perception, death, and vampiric transformation. Through these metaphors, experiences such as fear, thirst, pain, and loss of consciousness acquire material and sensory qualities. Sleep slips away like a garment, thirst hisses, blood becomes light, and cold clings to the body like a layer of frost. For this reason, the translation of these metaphors requires attention not only to their referential meaning, but also to the imagery and Gothic function they perform within each passage.

A significant presence of original metaphors can be observed within the sample, particularly those created by Rice to represent events that lie beyond ordinary human experience. These images become especially relevant during Lestat's transformation, as they express sensations for which literal description would be insufficient. Magnus's blood, for instance, is presented as a light entering the protagonist's body and as "light itself made liquid." The association between blood and light transforms the violence of the bite into an experience of illumination, pleasure, and knowledge. In this way, the image brings together two seemingly opposing meanings: the death of Lestat's human identity and the birth of a new supernatural consciousness.

When dealing with this type of metaphor, reproducing the same image in Spanish allows Rice's strangeness and expressive intensity to be preserved. The translation of like a drowned thing shooting to the surface of black water as "un cuerpo ahogado que ascendía desde el fondo de aguas negras" retains the visual elements of the submerged body, the dark water, the upward movement, and the emergence into the light. Within the context of the scene, the word "vampire" enters Lestat's consciousness as something repressed that returns from the depths of his memory. Preserving the image also maintains the Gothic relationship between death and return, since what emerges from the water resembles a corpse rising back to the surface.

The same strategy is significant in the thirst seemed to hiss aloud, translated as "la sed pareció sisear en voz alta." The personification turns thirst into an animal-like presence, suggestive of a serpent, that seems to exist independently within Lestat. The image anticipates the protagonist's gradual loss of control over his own will as his body begins to respond to a predatory nature. By preserving the verb hiss as "sisear," the translation retains both the auditory component of the metaphor and the animalization of the desire for blood.

Metaphors associated with fire also contribute to the transformation of the surrounding space. Expressions such as the light exploded on his satin rags and the fire licking the ceiling attribute violent or animate actions to light and flames. In "la luz estallaba sobre sus harapos de satén," light ceases to function as a passive element and instead acquires the destructive force of an explosion. Similarly, in "el fuego lamía el techo," the flames appear to advance deliberately, almost like a creature feeding upon the room. Preserving these images turns Magnus's death into a grotesque and infernal spectacle in which fire simultaneously functions as an instrument of destruction, purification, and damnation.

Another important dimension of the sample involves theatrical imagery. Because of Lestat's experience as an actor, his perception of Magnus is associated with masks, jesters, prosceniums, and theatrical performances. In the mouth the jester's smile, the "sonrisa de bufón" transforms the vampire's face into a theatrical expression that would normally suggest comedy yet becomes disturbing because of its rigidity and the presence of fangs. The familiar image of a smile thus becomes uncanny: rather than communicating genuine emotion, it functions as an artificial expression concealing monstrosity.

This relationship is further developed in a perfect mask of comedy from the proscenium arch. The proposed translation, "una perfecta máscara de comedia, rígida y artificial, como aquellas que adornaban el arco del proscenio de los teatros," preserves the main metaphor while adding information that clarifies the connection between Magnus's face and theatrical masks. In this case, the translation corresponds to the strategy of reproducing the same metaphor combined with its sense. The adjectives "rígida y artificial" make the point of comparison between the face and the mask explicit, while the reference to the proscenium connects the image to Lestat's theatrical memories. Although this explanation facilitates interpretation, it also makes more explicit an image that is considerably more condensed in the source text.

The replacement of the source-text image with one that is more recognizable in Spanish can be observed in a little sea of lights, translated as "una pequeña constelación de luces." The translation preserves the perception of numerous points of light surrounded by darkness but shifts the semantic field from an aquatic image to a celestial one. Although both metaphors contribute to the representation of a distant and illuminated city, "constelación" places greater emphasis on Lestat's elevated position and isolation above Paris. The substitution therefore modifies the specific image while preserving the sense of vastness and estrangement associated with the sublime.

A similar process occurs in the portals of his soul, translated as “las ventanas de su alma.” The selected expression is more conventional in Spanish and preserves the symbolic relationship between the eyes and human interiority. However, the negation accompanying the metaphor indicates that Lestat no longer perceives his victim’s eyes as manifestations of identity. Instead, they become physical objects whose colors and textures awaken his appetite. The image therefore anticipates both the dehumanization of the victim and the protagonist’s moral transformation.

The translation of metaphor as simile occurs when the direct identification established in the source text is rendered in Spanish through expressions such as “parecía” or “como.” In *The mask of old age*, the translation “parecía llevar una máscara de vejez” preserves the image while introducing an explicit comparison. Whereas the source text identifies the face directly with a mask, the target text establishes only a resemblance between them. This modification facilitates comprehension, although it slightly reduces the intensity of the image, since the face no longer is the mask but merely appears to resemble one.

The same transformation occurs in the description of the stars as “joyas prendidas a un velo púrpura.” The translation introduces the verb “parecían,” thereby converting direct metaphorical identification into a simile. Despite this modification, the central elements of the image are preserved: the stars as jewels, the sky as a veil, and darkness as a purple surface. The resulting translation maintains the visual beauty and sense of supernatural movement of the source text, although the metaphorical assertion is slightly softened.

Added explanation may also reinforce the shared attribute between the object and its metaphorical image. In the comparison of Magnus with a brick wall, the clarification “su cuerpo no cedió en absoluto” is incorporated into the Spanish version. This information makes it explicit that the point of comparison lies in the vampire’s supernatural rigidity and resistance. Similarly, the thirst compared to a cat is expanded in Spanish by explaining that the animal is trapped inside Lestat, clawing at him from within and desperately attempting to escape. Such explicitness intensifies the idea of an inner monster, although it also reduces some of the ambiguity and expressive economy of the original.

More substantial changes occur when the metaphor is converted into sense. In *The sleep was slipping off me like garments*, the translation “el sueño se me dispó de golpe” conveys the idea of suddenly waking up but eliminates the image of sleep as a garment slipping away from the body. The Spanish version therefore preserves the narrative action while losing the suggestion that Lestat is shedding a protective layer before becoming exposed to Magnus.

A similar effect occurs in *His eyes were rimmed with blood*, translated as “tenía los ojos profundamente enrojecidos.” The translation communicates the physical condition of the eyes but removes the image of blood forming a border around them. Likewise, in *The pain in my face and hands died away*, the pain that metaphorically “dies” becomes simply a pain that “disappears.” This modification is particularly significant within the Gothic context because the original personification connects even physical relief with the recurring motif of death.

Omission can be observed in *at the foot of the altar*, translated as “ante el altar.” In this case, the bodily reference to the “foot” functions as a dead and lexicalized metaphor indicating spatial location. Its omission does not significantly alter either the atmosphere of the passage or the religious function of the altar. On the contrary, it avoids an unnecessarily literal formulation while preserving the meaning of the scene. This example demonstrates that omission does not necessarily result in aesthetic loss, since its effects depend on the vitality and relevance of the original image.

Overall, the metaphors analyzed construct several interconnected dimensions of the Gothic. Images of blood, thirst, and the body represent Lestat’s transformation and the emergence of his predatory instinct. Fire metaphors develop an infernal atmosphere while expressing Magnus’s destruction. Masks and theatrical references connect monstrosity with performance, artificiality, and deception. Finally, images of the sky, darkness, the abyss, and the city contribute to the experience of the sublime by confronting the protagonist with spaces and forces that exceed the limits of his former human condition. Metaphor therefore articulates the central motifs of the section and transforms vampiric transformation into a simultaneous experience of birth, death, pleasure, and damnation.

8. Results

The analysis revealed a close relationship between the type of metaphor and the strategy selected for its translation. In the case of original metaphors, there was a clear tendency to preserve the same image in Spanish, since these expressions form part of Rice’s distinctive style and her way of representing supernatural experience. Reproducing these images made it possible to retain the strangeness, sensuality, and violence of the source text, all of which are essential to the construction of its Gothic atmosphere.

The preservation of metaphor proved particularly effective in images associated with blood, fire, thirst, and bodily transformation. By reproducing these associations, the translations maintained the ambivalence between fascination and repulsion. Blood is represented not merely as a bodily substance, but also as light, fire, pleasure, and knowledge. Similarly, thirst is presented not simply as a physical need, but as an animal-like presence capable of controlling Lestat’s body.

Stock metaphors were found to allow greater flexibility. In some cases, they were preserved because equivalent and natural images were available in Spanish. In others, they were replaced with expressions that were more recognizable in the target language. These substitutions maintained the overall effect of the scenes while partially modifying their visual and cultural

associations. The findings therefore suggest that naturalness can be achieved without entirely sacrificing the Gothic function, provided that the replacement image maintains a comparable degree of intensity.

Transforming metaphors into similes increased the clarity of the images but reduced some of their force. Comparative markers made the relationship between the object and the image explicit, thereby facilitating the reader's interpretation. However, they also weakened the direct identification characteristic of metaphor. Consequently, the scenes retained their visual dimension but lost some of the intensity and sense of estrangement present in the source text.

Explicitating strategies made it possible to develop metaphors whose referents could be unclear to Spanish-speaking readers. These solutions preserved the image while adding information about its meaning or the attribute shared by the elements involved. This procedure proved useful for cultural and theatrical references, such as the comedy mask from the proscenium arch, as well as for comparisons representing supernatural strength or desire. Nevertheless, the added explanations reduced some of the ambiguity and poetic concision characteristic of Rice's prose.

Converting metaphor into sense produced the most noticeable aesthetic losses. Although these translations accurately conveyed the action or state being described, they removed images associated with garments, blood, death, or movement. Semantic clarity was preserved, but the expressions became less capable of stimulating the senses and establishing connections with other Gothic motifs throughout the narrative. This finding demonstrates that conveying referential meaning alone does not guarantee the preservation of literary function.

Omission proved appropriate only when the image was lexicalized and did not perform a significant aesthetic function. In such cases, removing the metaphor resulted in a more natural expression without altering either the meaning or the atmosphere of the passage. The analysis therefore suggests that the appropriateness of omission depends on both the type of metaphor and the role it performs within its narrative context.

The results also show that Newmark's strategies do not always operate as separate categories. Some proposed translations preserve the metaphor while simultaneously adding an explanation or introducing a comparative marker. This occurs because literary translation must respond to several demands at once: preserving imagery, maintaining naturalness in Spanish, facilitating comprehension, and reproducing the aesthetic effect of the source text. Classification should therefore consider the overall result of the translation rather than focusing exclusively on individual word correspondences.

Regarding Gothic function, preserving the original image proved particularly effective in maintaining bodily horror, dehumanization, vampiric sensuality, the inversion of the sacred, and the experience of the sublime. When the metaphor was preserved, readers could access the associations connecting blood with light, fire with damnation, and beauty with violence. When the metaphor was reduced to its sense, these relationships became weaker and the resulting expression acquired a more informative character.

Overall, the results indicate that the proposed translations largely preserve the Gothic atmosphere when Rice's central images are maintained. The most significant alterations occur in solutions that eliminate or over-explain figurative language. The analysis confirms that metaphor does more than communicate an idea: it organizes the perception of the vampiric world and shapes the reader's emotional response.

9. Conclusions

The study concludes that metaphor constitutes an essential component in the construction of Gothic in *Part II: The Legacy of Magnus*. Its function extends beyond the embellishment of discourse, as the images analyzed represent Lestat's transformation, give tangible form to his new sensations, and construct an atmosphere of horror, sensuality, decay, and estrangement. The Gothic dimension of the passage therefore depends not only on the events being narrated, but also on the way language transforms them into visual, bodily, and emotional experiences.

Reproducing the same image in the target language emerges as the strategy that most effectively preserves Rice's poetic voice when applied to original metaphors. This approach retains the uniqueness of the author's associations and their capacity to produce both fascination and repulsion. Images of blood transformed into light, thirst that hisses, and fire that comes alive preserve their intensity in Spanish as well as their function within the process of vampiric transformation.

Strategies involving image replacement and transformation into simile can provide natural and comprehensible solutions when the source image does not function in the same way in Spanish. However, their use requires careful consideration of the effect produced by such modifications. A culturally recognizable image may preserve the overall function of the metaphor, whereas introducing an explicit comparative marker may diminish its force. Naturalness should therefore not be pursued in isolation, but rather balanced against the preservation of style and atmosphere.

Converting metaphor into sense represents the procedure with the greatest risk of aesthetic loss. Although it allows the main information to be communicated clearly, it removes images that connect the expression to recurring motifs of the body, blood, death, and violence. In an expressive literary text, these associations form part of both the meaning and the emotional response the text seeks to evoke. A semantically accurate translation may therefore remain stylistically insufficient if it eliminates the figurative dimension of the source text.

Omission may be considered appropriate when applied to dead or lexicalized metaphors whose imagery no longer performs a relevant function. In these cases, removing the metaphor does not affect the atmosphere and may improve fluency in

Spanish. However, when applied to an original metaphor, the same strategy could erase a significant element of the author's voice. The decision should therefore always depend on the context and aesthetic value of the expression.

Newmark's (2010) model proves useful for classifying metaphors and identifying the transformations they undergo during the translation process. His strategies make it possible to describe whether an image is preserved, replaced, explained, reduced, or omitted. However, the analysis also reveals that these categories may overlap, since some solutions combine the reproduction of an image with the explicit expression of its sense. This demonstrates that applying the model requires contextual interpretation and cannot be reduced to a mechanical classification.

In response to the objective of this research, it can be concluded that the translation decisions analyzed largely preserve the Gothic function of the source text when its sensory and symbolic images are maintained. Reproducing the metaphors makes it possible to transfer not only what the expressions mean, but also the way in which they construct fear, pleasure, beauty, and estrangement. The most significant losses occur when translation prioritizes clarity alone and eliminates the figurative richness of the prose.

The literary translator therefore acts as a mediator between the uniqueness of the source text and the expressive possibilities of the target language. In translating Gothic fiction, this mediation requires preserving darkness, ambiguity, and sensory intensity when they constitute deliberate stylistic features. The objective should not be to eliminate strangeness, but rather to reconstruct it in a way that remains comprehensible and aesthetically effective for Spanish-speaking readers.

Finally, the findings are limited to the metaphors selected from a specific section of *The Vampire Lestat* and to the translations proposed in this study. Consequently, the findings are not intended to be generalized to the novel as a whole or to Gothic literature in its entirety. Future research could compare different published translations, examine other sections of the novel, or investigate how Spanish-speaking readers respond to these images. Such research could broaden our understanding of metaphor translation and the preservation of Gothic style across different contexts.

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ORCID iD <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5935-272X>

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