

# The Transformations from the Novel *Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer to the Fan Fiction *Master of the Universe* by E.L. James

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**Abstract**—The aim of this paper is to analyze the transformation from the popular novel *Twilight (TL)* by Stephenie Meyer to the fan fiction *Master of the Universe (MotU)* by E.L. James. The analysis is supported by the four elements of transformation: addition, deletion, substitution, and transposition. The method used is a qualitative one in a contextual analysis that focuses on the transformation process by analyzing the plot and conflict, the character, and the setting. The results show that the four elements are applied in the transformation process. The element of addition serves to alter the focus from romantic love between a handsome vampire with an innocent girl in *TL* to an erotic love full of BDSM sexual practice in *MotU*. The element of deletion supports the new focus by removing all scenes concerning the vampires. The element of substitution serves to retain the similarities while avoiding plagiarism through replacing certain parts in *TL* with basically similar things but not the same ones in *MotU*. The element of substitution swaps particular parts with seemingly different things but the connections with the original one is carefully kept. The transposition that dominates the transformation process indicates the creative innovation of the epigone writer to create an epigone work that is as interesting as the original work in the similar plot frame.

**Keywords**—transformation, addition, deletion, substitution, transposition, fan fiction

## I. INTRODUCTION

Fan fiction, thrives in the first half of the twentieth century [1], is “the practice of writing a new version of an already existing work” [2] that revives “The tradition of borrowing from predecessor works” [3] in the oral tradition of the past. The fame of Meyer’s *Twilight* published in 2005 inspired James “under the pseudonym Snowqueens Icedragon” [4] to write a fan fiction version entitled *Master of the Universe* which is “in on line spaces” [5]. Later, with some revision, it is published as “a 2011 blockbuster *Fifty Shades of Grey*” [6].

The shift from printed novel into internet-based fan fiction involves certain changes to avoid plagiarism. The shift from the original form into an altered one has been a discussion in the semiotics area for a long time. Quintillian in the first century, as quoted by Noth, proposes “four general categories of deviation (*mutatio*)” from straightforward expressions; namely, addition, omission, rearrangement,

substitution [7]. Levi-Strauss uses the term “bricolage” to refer to a new construction based on the previous available materials [8]. Chandler, combining Quintillian’s and Levi-Strauss’ concept, states that “Logically (following Quintilian), the practice of bricolage can be seen as operating through several key transformations: addition, deletion, substitution, and transposition” [9]. Meanwhile, Kristeva views the shifts and influences as inevitable that she calls “intertextuality” [10].

Based on Chandler’s proposal, the shift from the novel *Twilight* into its fan fiction *Master of the Universe* will be analyzed using the four elements of transformation: addition, deletion, substitution, and transposition.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes proposed research method. Section III presents the obtained results and following by discussion. Finally Section IV concludes this work.

## II. PROPOSED METHOD

The method of analysis used in this paper is a contextual literary analysis, focusing on the internal and external elements. The internal elements that support the discussion on transformations are character, plot/conflict, and setting. The external element is focusing on the key transformations deducted by Chandler. The data gathered using library method is analyzed through a descriptive-qualitative method.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The fan fiction *Master of the Universe (MotU)* as the epigone of the popular novel *Twilight (TL)* obviously has several similarities with the inspiring novel. The first similarity is the plot frame which is basically about the eventful relationship between an outstanding male protagonist with the awkward and simple female protagonist. The other similarities are concerning the name, the appearance, personality, and familial status of the female protagonist (Isabella Marie Swan/Bella) and male protagonist (Edward Cullen/Edward).

Based on those similarities, the overall analysis indicates that the four elements of transformation are applied and support each other to produce an epigone fan fiction that is similar but different with a new focus that can attract the fan fiction readers. The transformative form with the new focus

later will emerge as a blockbuster novel entitled *Fifty Shades of Grey*, but it is not under the scope of this discussion. The following discussion will focus on each element of transformation.

#### A. Addition

In the transformation process from *TL* to *MotU*, the element of addition is applied to give a new focus on the epigone fan fiction. The new focus here is substantial in the form of professional BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Sadism, and Masochism) sexual practices. The professional practice of BDSM by the male protagonist (Edward the CEO) is indicated by a contract consisting of rules, hard limits, and roles of the dominant and submissive that must be signed by the female protagonist [11]. The male protagonist in *MotU* also has a “play room” accommodating the various expensive, hygienic, queer tools to support his obsession with BDSM sexual practice that he shows to the female protagonist (Bella who is just waiting for the university graduation) [11]. The male protagonist is also described as having 15 submissives before he meets and is enchanted by the female protagonist [11]. Thus, with the addition of the new focus, the epigone *MotU* is not completely the same as *TL*.

#### B. Deletion

To support the new focus added in the transformation process, certain deletion must be conducted. In deletion, parts of the original work considered not in line with the new focus are erased. There are several deletions in the transformation process from *TL* to *MotU*. The first deleted part from *TL* is the initial scene about Bella’s deliberate move from her mother’s house in the hot and sunny Phoenix to live with her father in the cold and rainy Forks. This part also covers Bella’s adjustment to the new school and new friends in Fork High School [12]. The *TL* epigone, *MotU*, opens with Bella prepares herself to go from Portland to Seattle to interview Edward the CEO for the sake of her roommate who is having flu [11].

The massive deletion is about the vampire things due to shift from the male protagonist Edward the handsome vampire to Edward the handsome CEO. The first vampire thing deleted from *MotU* is the scene in *TL* when Bella and Edward the vampire go to a secluded and hilly area. On this occasion Edward tests his control on the alluring aroma of Bella’s blood, he shows Bella how he looks under the sun, and he runs so fast like flying while taking Bella on his back [12].

Another vampire thing erased is the scene when Bella watches the Cullens play baseball in a remote clearance under the storm. In this occasion they have to meet a group of wandering vampires who feeds on human blood ending in their being tempted by Bella’s blood aroma [12]. The next scene when the Cullens try very hard to protect Bella from the persistent James, the head of the wandering vampires, is also deleted. This covers the scene when the Cullens set the strategy, how their strategy is futile, how Bella secretly runs away from the protection because she is tricked by James to save her mother, how James records his slowly torturing Bella to make Edward suffer, how Edward and his family

finally can save Bella, and how the badly injured Bella has to stay in hospital for a several weeks [12].

#### C. Substitution

After the addition with the BDSM sexual practices and deletion of the vampire things, the next element of the transformation from *TL* to *MotU* is substitution. In the transformation process, substitution basically means the replacing of thing with another thing which is similar in function or essence. The purpose of substitution is to retain the similarity with the original work referred while not trapped in plagiaristic practice.

The first substitution is about the title. The original title *Twilight* is replaced by the epigone entitled *Master of the Universe*. The essence is the same, telling the story of Bella and Edward and following almost the same plot line. The substitution is also taken place between the authors. The American, Mormon female author, Meyer [13], is replaced by the English, non-religious Christian female author, E.L. James which is the pen name of Leonard [14]. The medium used is also substituted. Meyer’s *Twilight* is originally a novel, or using a printed medium, while its epigone, *Master of the Universe* by E.L. James, is a fan fiction using an internet medium. The changes on the part of the author and the medium affect the focus of the content as has been discussed in the addition and deletion section.

Another substitution to adjust with the new focus is about the first meeting of Bella and Edward. In *TL*, Bella sees Edward the vampire for the first time in the school’s cafeteria. It is soon followed by Bella’s meeting Edward in the classroom. Bella is curious with Edward’s differently handsome appearance and Edward’s first hostile reaction when he is close to her. Edward is curious because he cannot read Bella’s mind and her blood aroma is very tempting [12]. In *MotU*, Bella knows Edward’s presence for the first time from Rose, her roommate when she has to replace the sick Rose to interview him. Bella’s first meeting with Edward the CEO is unique. The awkward Bella falls down face forward tripped by her own feet upon entering Edward’s office right in front of Edward that triggers Edward’s curiosity [11]. The essence is kept in the substitution; namely, the first meeting is eventful and triggers the curiosity of the male protagonist leading to mutual interest later on.

Another substitution is related to Bella’s accident. In *TL* Bella is almost hit by her friend’s uncontrolled car in the schoolyard and saved by Edward the vampire [12]. In *MotU* Bella, while walking with Edward the CEO after having coffee together, is almost hit by a careless cyclist who is against the traffic and is saved by Edward the CEO [11].

Another specific substitution is about the scene of flying. In *TL* Bella is carried pick bag by Edward the vampire on returning to Bella’s old truck after their going to the secluded hilly area [12]. In *MotU*, because Edward the CEO cannot fly like Edward the vampire, he flies Bella using his private helicopter that he pilots by himself [11]. In this substitution the similar essence is also well kept. Bella is brought flying and Edward the CEO is in control of the flying action.

#### D. Transposition

The last element in the transformation process is transposition. In transposition, one thing in the referred work

is swapped with another thing in its epigone. The basic characteristic of transposition is that the original thing and its swapped one should be different in essence, nature, relationship, or function. However, although it is different, its similarity with the original work still can be detected. Transposition indicates the creativity and innovation of the epigone writer in avoiding the dull imitation.

The first form of transposition is as follows. In *TL* Bella is described as attending Forks High School [12] but in its epigone, *MotU*, Bella is described as a university student of WSU in Portland [11]. This is transposition, although the status of Bella is the same, that is, a student, there is an extension of that status in the epigone, the level of education is transposed to be higher.

Transposition also takes place concerning Bella's feeling. In *TL* Bella is described as disliking even hating the cold, wet, and green Forks [12]; however, in *MotU* Bella does not hate Portland. Her feeling about Portland is not described specifically, but it seems that she is just fine with Portland. Here, it is transposition because Bella's feeling is swapped, her feeling is in different zone from negative into neutral which will produce different effect needed to develop the story.

Another transposition is concerning Bella's preventable calamity. In *TL* Bella is described as nearly raped by several males when she walks alone looking for the bookstore in Port Angeles. This impending doom is prevented by Edward the vampire who appears suddenly [12]. This event is transposed in *MotU*. Bella who never drinks a lot of alcohol gets drunk in the bar when she and her friends celebrate the end of their final examination. Jake who secretly loves Bella forces to kiss Bella. Edward the CEO comes suddenly and saves Bella from the harassment [11]. Although both rotate around sexual intention, it is different in the level and perpetrator. In *TL* it is an intended rape, in *MotU* it is based on repressed love. The perpetrator is also different. In *TL* the number of perpetrators is more than one and they are all strangers while in *MotU* the perpetrator is someone known, even a friend, and only one person.

Transposition also happens concerning Edward's existence and personality. In *TL* Edward is described as a vampire who is old-schooled and romantic [12] while in *MotU* Edward is described as a human whose life is oriented on sexual activity especially the BDSM sexual practice [11]. Their existence and personality is swapped. Although both have the appearance of humans, vampire is not human. The faithful vampire is swapped into a human who avoids permanent commitment.

The next form of transposition is concerning Bella again. This time Bella's peculiarity is swapped. In *TL* Bella's peculiarity is in the form of her blood aroma that is very delicious for Edward the vampire, especially [12]. In *MotU* Bella's peculiarity that enchants Edward the CEO is her habit of biting her lip unconsciously [11]. Although Bella's peculiarity is different in *TL* and in *MotU*, both have the capacity to captivate both Edwards with different effects. For Edward the vampire, it makes him want to suck Bella's blood to satisfy his revived thirst for human blood. For Edward the human, it makes him want to fuck Bella in the various BDSM practices. The transposition is about

satisfying the deepest need, sucking for Edward the vampire and fucking for Edward the human.

This transposition is also related to the dark life of Edward the vampire and that of Edward the human. Both have a dark life that wants to be kept as a secret to the public, although it is revealed to Bella. The dark life of Edward in *TL* is his being a vampire [12] while the dark life of Edward the CEO in *MotU* is his peculiar sexual preference [11].

With whom Bella's living while studying is also transposed. In *TL* Bella lives with her father, Charlie Swan, while attending Forks high school [12] but in *MotU* Bella lives with Rose while attending WSU [11]. The transposition of Bella's father with a peer roommate indicates the differences in age and blood relationship. The authority is also transposed, Bella's total dependence on his father in *TL* is swapped into Bella's partial dependence on her friend because Bella pays rent to her friend who owns the apartment. Almost the same case of transposition happens to Edward. In *TL* Edward the vampire is described as living together with the Cullen family [12] while in *MotU* Edward the CEO is described as living alone in his own super luxurious house [11]. The communal living of Edward the vampire is transposed into the individual and solitary living of Edward the CEO.

Transposition is also about the relationship between characters. In *TL* Rose Hale is the adopted sister of Edward the vampire [12]. In *MotU* Rose Hale is Bella's roommate. In *TL* Jasper is also the adopted brother of Edward the vampire [12] but in *MotU* Jasper is the twin brother of Rose Hale, Bella's roommate [12]. Thus in *MotU* both Rose and Jasper are removed from the members of the Cullen family but they are still related to the protagonist especially the female protagonist, Bella.

Jacob Black (Jake) also undergoes transposition. In both *TL* and *MotU* he is Bella's close friend, however in *TL* he is an American Indian who has the mechanic skill [12] while in *MotU* he is a Mexican who has a photography skill [11]. Thus the transposition of Jacob Black is in the form of race and skill. Transposition of skill also happens to Alice. In both *TL* and *MotU* Alice is the adopted sister of Edward. However, in *TL* Alice the vampire has the ability to see future happenings [12] while in *MotU* Alice the human is studying mode in Paris [11]. Thus Alice experiences transposition in the species (if vampire is a species) and in skill/ability. Still concerning skill, Emmet also goes through transposition. Both in *TL* and *MotU* Emmet is Edward's adopted brother. However in *TL* Emmet the vampire is muscular and likes to fight [12] while Emmet the human in *MotU* is the owner of a construction company [11]. Thus, Emmet is transposed in terms of species and elevated skill. Mike Newton also experiences transposition. In *TL* he is Bella's friend in Forks high school [12] while in *MotU* he studies in Princeton [11]. Although in both *TL* and *MotU* Mike loves Bella, he transposes in terms of education level in *MotU*.

Esme Cullen, the foster mother of Edward in *TL* and in *MotU*, also undergoes transposition. In *TL* she is a vampire whose role is as a total housewife and mother for the 5 adopted children [12] while in *MotU*, she is a human who is an interior designer [11]. Thus, besides transposed into

human, Esme Cullen is also transposed into a professional worker with specific skill. However, her work is still closely related to houses and domestic atmosphere as in *TL*.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The analysis on the transformation from the popular novel *Twilight* by Meyer to a fan fiction *Master of the Universe* by E.L. James reveals that the four elements of transformation are applied. The first element, addition, changes the focus of the work from romantic love between a handsome vampire and an innocent girl into an erotic love between a super-rich CEO and an innocent girl by adding extensively the BDSM sexual practice. The second element, deletion, supports the new focus by erasing the vampire scenes. The third element, substitution, keeps the similarities with the original work by replacing one item with a similar but not the same thing, and thus avoid plagiarism. The last element, transposition, has a large portion in the analyzed epigone. Bearing in mind the basic characteristic of transposition; namely, being completely different but the traces of similarity still shadow it, various components are transposed. The transposition in the analyzed epigone covers the element of species (vampire-human), personality (romantically old schooled-obsessed with BDSM), level of education (high school-university), dark life (vegetarian vampire-human with 15 submissive), relationship (adopted sister/brother-acquaintance), level of sexual abuse (intended gang rape-forced kiss), alluring factor (blood aroma-lip biting), skills (amateur mechanics-photographer/knowing the future-studying fashion/housewife-pediatrician/muscular and like to fight-owner of construction company), way of living (with the big family-independent/with father-with roommate). The various types of transposition indicate the creativity and innovation of the epigone writer to create an epigone work that is as interesting as the original work even though still in the similar plot frame.

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