



The Irony in Enola Holmes movie (2020): a study of figurative language

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Article Info

Article History:

Accepted 20

September 2023

Approved 11 January
2024

Published 15 March
2024

Keywords:

Figurative language,
Irony, Enola Holmes

Abstract

Figurative language, particularly irony, plays a significant role in both everyday communication and literary works. Irony occurs when there is a contrast between what is said and what is meant, often to highlight a deeper meaning, express subtle criticism, or create humor. Irony adds layers of meaning, encourages critical thinking, and enhances the richness of utterance. This research explores the use of figurative language, specifically irony, in the 2020 film *Enola Holmes*. The study aims to identify and analyze instances of irony within the film, focusing on how it contributes to character development, figurative meaning, and thematic expression. Hence, this study carried out a qualitative method with content analysis, the research examines dialogues and scenes where the irony plays a significant role, applying frameworks from pragmatic and discourse analysis to uncover deeper meaning. The findings showed that Seventeen Ironies appears and is analyzed using Perrine's theory of figurative language, which emphasizes the contrast between literal and intended meaning in *Enola Holmes* movie (2020). This study contributes to the understanding of figurative language in movie and its broader implications for audience engagement and interpretation.

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p-ISSN 2087-0108

e-ISSN 2502-4566

INTRODUCTION

Language and humans are two things that cannot be separated because they both develop together. It can be said that people are social beings since they require interpersonal communication to fulfill their social needs and as a communication tool in social life. Effective communication goes beyond mere words, it encompasses the art of conveying ideas, emotions, and nuances that resonate with the hearer. Figurative language plays a pivotal role in this process to enrich conversations with layers of meaning. By employing figurative language as metaphors, similes, and irony, speakers and hearers can evoke vivid imagery, provoke thought, and elicit emotional responses.

According to Wardani (2022), figurative language appears beyond the literal meanings of the words to present new insights to the hearer. This study uses Perrine's theory to analyze the figurative language used in *Enola Holmes* movie 2020, movies is mostly chosen by the previous researcher to learn about figurative language. (Rahmawati et al., 2021; Nehe et al., 2022; Damopolii et al., 2023).

Regarding that, there are some research related to figurative language. (Harya, 2016; Kendenan, 2017; Siallagan et al., 2017; Dobrovolski & Piirainen, 2018; Hadjim & Napu, 2021; Mohd et al., 2021; Jamaludin, 2015; Mukti et al., 2022; Febrianto et al., 2019; Mustofa et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2023). In the article, Figurative has the important role of making the conversation more interesting, and they use figurative language to produce images in the listener's mind and to explain ideas, emotions, and images more efficiently than through plain language.

Among the various forms of figurative expression, irony stands out as a powerful tool to highlight contradictions between appearance and reality or evoke humor. In some conditions, the irony conveys powerful social and political messages (Anderson, 2019; Segnini, 2018; Palgana et al., 2021; Bollig, 2015). Irony adds depth and complexity, challenging the hearer to think critically about what they hear. In this article, we will explore how irony is used in

movies to engage the hearer, shape narratives, and reveal deeper meaning about the utterance.

The irony is a common aspect of daily life that often surfaces in unexpected and humorous ways. It occurs when there is a discrepancy between what is said and what is actually meant, or between what is expected and what actually happens. Understanding irony is important to avoid misunderstanding (Lavau, 2023). According to Leech (1981), Irony is a figurative language that declares the opposite meaning of the actual meaning. Moreover, Mac Dowell (2016) states irony is a form of communication where the intended meaning differs from the explicit statement, often highlighting a contrast between expectation and reality. For example, consider a situation where someone meticulously plans an outdoor picnic, checking the weather forecast for a sunny day, only to be greeted by an unexpected downpour. This twist highlights the irony of human expectations versus nature's unpredictability.

In 2020 *Enola Holmes* movie, the irony plays a significant role in both the plot and character development. This article focuses on *Enola* as the main character. She is the younger sister of the famous detective Sherlock Holmes, who defies societal expectations and embarks on her own investigation. Here, the irony emerges as *Enola* often outsmarts her famous brother, highlighting the contrast between her cleverness and the limitations placed on women in the society. For instance, while Sherlock is regarded for his intelligence and detective skills, *Enola's* abilities challenge the idea that only men can be great detectives. This ironic twist not only adds depth to the story but also emphasizes themes of independence and empowerment, showcasing how *Enola's* journey is as much about self-discovery as it is about solving the mystery of the disappearance of her mother.

The writer chooses *Enola Holmes* 2020 because the movie has a good moral value. According to Lestari (2022), this movie gives us useful moral values such as care, fairness or proportionality, liberty, authority or respect, loyalty, fairness, respect for persons, freedom, and well-being and it can be applied in daily life

and for student's characters building at school (Yusriah, 2022).

The irony is figurative language which appears the most, there are seventeen ironies found in *Enola Holmes 2020* movie. According to Ridanpää (2018), irony sometimes borders on lying because it involves saying something that is deliberately opposite to what is true or intended, often with the expectation that the listener will recognize the discrepancy. Unlike outright falsehoods, the irony relies on shared understanding between the speaker and the listener, where the real meaning lies beneath the surface of the spoken words.

Arp (2011) classified Irony into three main types namely verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatic irony. Verbal Irony occurs when a speaker says one thing but means another. It often involves sarcasm or a contradiction between the literal meaning of the words and the intended meaning. Situational Irony arises when there is a discrepancy between what is expected to happen and what occurs. It involves a situation where the outcome is contrary to what was anticipated, and dramatic Irony occurs when the audience knows more about a situation than the characters do. This creates tension or humor, as the audience anticipates the reactions of characters based on information that they lack. Each type of irony serves to create meaning, enhance emotional responses, or highlight contradictions in characters' perceptions versus reality.

Learning about the irony is important for several reasons, as it enhances both critical thinking and communication skills. Firstly, the irony helps individuals recognize and interpret complex meanings in language, literature, and everyday conversations. This skill enables deeper comprehension of texts and dialogues, revealing hidden layers of meaning and intentions behind words. Secondly, the irony often reflects cultural and social contexts, allowing learners to develop a greater awareness of societal norms and values. This understanding can foster empathy and critical engagement with various perspectives. Moreover, mastering the irony can improve one's ability to express thoughts creatively and humorously, making communication more

engaging and effective. Overall, learning about irony enriches language comprehension, encourages critical analysis, and enhances interpersonal communication, making it a valuable component of education and personal development.

METHOD

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the data which is the figurative language found in *Enola Holmes's 2020* movie. The descriptive method aims to systematically find a detailed explanation and description of the study object (Creswell, 2012).

This method emphasizes the subjective experiences and perspectives of participants, allowing researchers to explore complex social phenomena through rich, descriptive data.

The subject of the research is the transcript of *Enola Holmes 2020* Movie. *Enola Holmes* is a 2020 mystery-adventure film by Nancy Springer. It was released on Netflix and became a hit due to its entertaining take on the famous Sherlock Holmes universe, featuring his younger sister, *Enola Holmes*.

The instrument in this research is the transcript of *Enola Holmes 2020* movie, data collection was done by collecting several dialogues containing figurative language and was then analyzed by using figurative language theory by Perrine. This research data collection method is a documentation method. Documentation is a record of events that have passed. Documentation can be in the form of writing, pictures, or monumental works from someone. Documents in the form of writing are a diary, history of life, story, biography, regulations, and policies. Documents are in the form of images, such as photos, images, life and sketches, and others. Documents are in the form of works such as artwork, which can be in the form of images, statues, films, and others.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

There are seventeen Ironies of figurative language found in *Enola Holmes* movie 2020.

The utterances are mostly uttered by Enola. According to Mearthur (1996), the irony is words with an implication opposite to their usual meaning. Ironic comments may be humorous or mildly sarcastic. The irony of the sentence will be explained clearly. The results are displayed in Table 1

Table 1 The analysis of irony found in Enola Holmes 2020 movie

No	Time	Sayer	Utterance	Irony type
1	00:04	Mycroft	We didn't send for you, silly girls. We sent for the carriage	Irony (verbal)
2	00:13	Enola	I don't need friends. I have my own company	Irony (situational)
3	00:14	Mycroft	So remarkable that she left you in my care.	Irony (situational)
4	00:16	Sherlock	A caricature, Perhaps best if Mycroft doesn't see it. Do you intend to stay up there?	Irony (situational)
5	00:24	Enola	You have not escaped. There is a man in a brown bowler hat currently on this train searching for you.	Irony (dramatic)
6	00:28	Enola	You do make an awful lot of noise, don't you?	Irony (verbal)
7	00:32	Enola	I didn't want to go to Miss Harrison's finishing school for young ladies	Irony (situational)
8	00:44	Enola	You can, but you won't.	Irony (verbal)
9	00:49	Enola	No, your face is totally unmemorable!	Irony (verbal)
10	01:09	Twekesbury's Grandma	You are most intriguing, miss Posy. Or should I say "missus", My condolences, by the way.	Irony (verbal)
11	01:12	Enola	I must tie you up and claim it! Stars and garters, are you really so ridiculous?	Irony (verbal)
12	01:13	Enola	Did you just rent a room at the Ritz?	Irony (verbal)
13	01:18	Enola	Let me out of this carriage. I will deny I am your sister to whoever asks and I will do it with pleasure.	Irony (dramatic)
14	01:24	Enola	You're being emotional. It's understandable, but unnecessary	Irony (verbal)
15	01:26	Enola	So that's why you came here. Shark lessons	Irony (verbal)
16	01:46	Enola	Congratulations. You finally look like the nincompoop you were born to be.	Irony (verbal)
17	01:49	Eudoria	I thought you had forgotten it. You never could leave it alone as a little girl.	Irony (situational)

The data shows that Enola utters twelve sentences of irony, here is a detailed explanation of the irony that is found in Enola Holmes movie 2020.

Data 1

Mycroft: We didn't send for you, silly girl. We sent for the carriage.

The sentence is uttered by Mycroft, Mycroft's statement is ironic because it highlights a miscommunication or misunderstanding about what was intended. Mycroft speaks sarcastically to Enola, he emphasizes that it is not Enola that they want but the carriage. He highlights a miscommunication or misunderstanding about what was intended by them. Enola was confused because she didn't get the information that Mycroft wanted a carriage to pick them up. The sentence "We sent (the money) for the carriage" is a verbal irony. In this case, Mycroft expresses something that seems to mean one thing but actually implies the opposite or an underlying, contrasting meaning. In this sentence, Mycroft ostensibly addresses Enola dismissively, implying she is insignificant compared to the carriage they came in, which likely highlights their actual importance or how the speaker's priorities are misguided. This discrepancy between what is said and what is meant creates the irony.

Data 2

Enola: I don't need friends. I have my own company.

The sentence is uttered by Enola. Enola's insistence on self-sufficiency contrasts with her actual need for social interaction and support. The sentence "I don't need friends. I have my own company" is situational irony. There could be a contradiction between what Enola says and the human needs. While she claims not to need friends, this assertion could reflect a deeper loneliness or isolation, emphasizing the gap between their words and the reality of human relationships. In this scene, Enola says that she doesn't need friends or relations, she only needs her mother because since they were little they have lived together. But Enola still couldn't do anything because she had to follow her brother Mycroft's wishes. Hearing that, Mycroft is very angry with Enola because Enola argues with him even though Mycroft is trying to give the best for Enola's future. That is Mycroft wants Enola to

enter in Ms Harrison finishing's school, that is the school for learning manner.

Data 3

Mycroft: So remarkable that she left you in my care.

The sentence is uttered by Mycroft. "So remarkable that she left you in my care" conveys situational irony. It conveys a meaning opposite to the literal interpretation, often with a mocking or critical tone. In this case, the irony comes from the underlying expectation that the speaker might not be the most logical or ideal choice for caring for someone, which contrasts with the fact that they were chosen. The word "remarkable" suggests surprise, and the situation could involve an unexpected or inappropriate person being entrusted with care, leading to an ironic tone. Mycroft's surprise or disbelief highlights the gap between what is expected and what is happening, while Enola can't say anything and just looks at Mycroft speechlessly. She feels sad because it reminds her that her mother left her.

Data 4

Sherlock: A caricature, Perhaps best if Mycroft doesn't see it. Do you intend to stay up there?

The statement is uttered by Sherlock. Sherlock likely refers to an exaggerated or humorous representation of something (caricature), and the comment about Mycroft not seeing it implies that it would be embarrassing or inappropriate if he did. The irony might lie in the understatement or in the idea that the caricature is so obvious that Mycroft sees it. In the scene, Enola was upset with Mycroft, she drew Mycroft's ugly face on a piece of paper on the tree. Just as Sherlock came, the paper fell in the wind and was taken by Sherlock. He knew that Enola was sad so Sherlock tried to cheer her up. Knowing Sherlock's arrival, Enola looked at him and listened to what Sherlock had to say. The sentence "A caricature, Perhaps best if Mycroft doesn't see it. Do you intend to stay up there?" reflects situational irony. There is an implied contradiction between what is expected and the reality. The mention of a "caricature" suggests something exaggerated or perhaps embarrassing. The irony could lie in the fact that it exists, and the speaker implies it's better hidden from Mycroft (who might react negatively or be

critical), despite the fact that it somehow came into being. This unexpectedness adds to the irony of the situation.

Data 5

Enola: You have not escaped. There is a man in a brown bowler hat currently on this train searching for you.

The statement is uttered by Enola. Enola's warning is ironic because Tewkesbury's earlier confidence about being safe contrasts with the real danger. In the scene, both Tewkesbury and Enola panic, she explains to Tew that his escape has failed because before Enola got on the train she saw a man in a brown hat on the train to catch him. Therefore, Enola asks Tew to get out of the train immediately so as not to endanger Enola. Tewkesbury is disappointed with Enola because Enola still sends him away even though she knows Tewkesbury is in danger, and it reminds her of her uncle. The sentence "You have not escaped. There is a man in a brown bowler hat currently on this train searching for you." conveys dramatic irony. In this case, dramatic irony occurs because Enola knows something that Tewkesbury might not be aware of, specifically, that he believes he has escaped, but in reality, he is still being pursued. Enola reveals that the man in the brown bowler hat is searching for him on the same train, creating tension between Tewkesbury's perceived safety and the actual danger they are in.

Data 6

Enola: You do make an awful lot of noise, don't you?

The sentence is uttered by Enola. Tewkesbury's comment about being thrown off the train contrasts with the irony of Enola's situation being so much more dangerous and noisy. In this scene, Enola is very annoyed with Tew because as a man Tew is very noisy. Tewkesbury shows his anger on his face because he is annoyed, he loses his button and feels shock after jumping from the train. Even when faced with an urgent choice, he takes a long time to think. The sentence "You do make an awful lot of noise, don't you?" reflects verbal irony. In this case, Enola intends to criticize or sarcastically point out that Tewkesbury is being noisy. The use of "do" and "don't you?" gives the statement a sarcastic tone, as if Enola is exaggerating the obviousness of the noise or expressing frustration

indirectly. The literal meaning suggests a statement of fact, but the actual intent is likely to mock or reprimand Tewkesbury for being too loud. This contrast between the literal statement and the intended meaning is what creates verbal irony.

Data 7

Enola: I didn't want to go to Miss Harrison's finishing school for young ladies

The statement is uttered by Enola. The reason Enola runs away contrasts with her actual situation, she is still being forced into a role she doesn't want, even while trying to escape it. Tewkesbury and Enola were having a conversation about their reason for escaping from home. Tewkesbury listens to Enola's story and tries to be gentle by caring for her. The sentence "I didn't want to go to Miss Harrison's finishing school for young ladies" conveys situational irony. Enola is expressing her reluctance to attend the school, yet circumstances or expectations force her to go anyway, there is a contrast between her personal desires and what actually happens, which creates situational irony. The irony comes from the expectation that finishing school is meant to be a privilege or desirable for young ladies, but Enola feels the opposite.

Data 8

Enola: You can, but you won't.

The statement is uttered by Enola. It contrasts the potential for action with the reality that action will not be taken. Enola criticizes Ms. Graystone because Ms. Graystone won't tell Enola about where her mother is. She said so because she had high hopes that Ms. Greyton would tell him where her mother was. The sentence "You can, but you won't." exemplifies verbal irony. In this context, Enola acknowledges that Ms. Greyton has the capability to perform an action "You can" but immediately contradicts this by stating she won't do it. This contradiction highlights a disparity between Ms. Greyton's abilities and her intentions or decisions, creating an ironic effect. The irony lies in the juxtaposition of acknowledging capability while simultaneously expressing doubt or resignation about the action being taken.

Data 9

Enola: No, your face is totally unmemorable!

The statement is uttered by Enola. Enola's comment about the hat man's face is ironic because she is clearly trying to mask her fear and uncertainty. Enola tricked the man in the brown hat by saying that Enola did not remember her face and that the man would let her go, but the man did not care. Finally, Enola had another way to trick the man in the brown hat by pretending to be dead. The sentence "No, your face is totally unmemorable!" is verbal irony. In this case, Enola is using a sarcastic tone. While the words "totally unmemorable" suggest that the man's face is forgettable, the way it's phrased could imply the opposite, perhaps as a form of insult or jest. The intended meaning is that the person's face is, very memorable or distinctive, but the literal words contradict that. This contrast between what is said and what is actually meant creates the irony.

Data 10

Tewkesbury's Grandma: You are most intriguing, miss Posy. Or should I say "missus", My condolences, by the way.

The statement is uttered by Tewkesbury's grandma. Grandma's compliments of "Miss Posy" contrast with the serious mocking tone of her words "missus" and her condolences. By giving that statement, Grandma wants to know who Enola is and the reason why she is undercover as a widow and as Sherlock's assistant. The sentence "You are most intriguing, miss Posy. Or should I say 'missus,' My condolences, by the way." contains verbal irony. The phrase "my condolences" following a compliment like "you are most intriguing" can also imply a form of sarcasm or insensitivity. The speaker may not genuinely feel sorrowful but rather be making a pointed comment about Enola's situation, further highlighting the disconnect between the compliment and the condolence.

Data 11

Enola: I must tie you up and claim it! Stars and garters, are you really so ridiculous?

The statement is uttered by Enola. Tewkesbury thinks that Enola is looking for him because she was paid by his family, whereas Enola looks for him because she cares for him. In this scene, Enola is happy to meet Tewkesbury because she likes him. Tewkesbury was panicking

because he thought that Enola was coming for money. But when he knows Enola's reason, he smiles happily since He misses Enola so much. The sentence "I must tie you up and claim it! Stars and garters, are you really so ridiculous?" contains elements of verbal irony. The phrase "are you really so ridiculous?" can be interpreted as sarcastic. Enola appears to be expressing disbelief at Tewkesbury's actions, suggesting that his behavior is absurd or nonsensical. The irony lies in the contrast between the serious tone of "I must tie you up and claim it" and the absurdity of the situation, implying that the situation does not warrant such an extreme reaction.

Data 12

Enola: Did you just rent a room at the Ritz?

The statement is uttered by Enola. Enola is saying the opposite of what she means. She said so because she was annoyed with Tew's question about her room, so she asked him back that question with a sarcastic tone. The Ritz is a famous luxury hotel, so she is asking him if he rented a room there implying that they are staying in a very high-end place. However, the irony comes from the fact that Tewkesbury might actually be staying somewhere much less fancy, making the statement intentionally sarcastic. The sentence "Did you just rent a room at the Ritz?" is verbal irony. Enola is using sarcasm that Tewkesbury is not staying at an upscale hotel like the Ritz but is behaving as if they are, the speaker's question could imply disbelief or mockery. This adds an ironic twist, as the literal interpretation contrasts with the implied meaning.

Data 13

Enola: Let me out of this carriage. I will deny I am your sister to whoever asks and I will do it with pleasure.

The statement is uttered by Enola. In this scene, Mycroft sits beside Enola angrily in the carriage. He is angry because Enola ran away from home and caused immense damage. Mycroft is afraid that Enola's presence will disrupt his life, and that Enola's bad actions will give bad reputation for Holmes. The irony is that Enola is willing to deny her family relationship with the Holmes family, while Mycroft's desire to control her contradicts any real familial affection. The sentence "Let me out of this carriage. I will deny I am your sister to whoever asks and I will

do it with pleasure." is dramatic irony. Enola's vehement denial of their identity as a sister suggests a strained or complicated relationship.

Data 14

Enola: You're being emotional. It's understandable but unnecessary.

The statement is uttered by Enola. The irony lies in Enola's dismissal of Sherlock's genuine concern as emotion while acknowledging it as understandable. In this scene, Enola is angry with Sherlock because he can't do anything to save her from Mycroft. Enola thinks that Sherlock doesn't care about her. The sentence "You're being emotional. It's understandable, but unnecessary." contains elements of verbal irony. The phrase implies that while the speaker acknowledges the emotional state of the other person, they simultaneously dismiss it as unnecessary. This can come off as condescending or dismissive, as the speaker seems to trivialize the other person's feelings. The irony lies in the contrast between acknowledging someone's emotions and then labeling them as unwarranted or excessive, which can invalidate the person's experience.

Data 15

Enola: So that's why you came here. Shark lessons

The statement is uttered by Enola. The irony is in Enola's sarcastic remark about Sherlock's visit, contrasting with his actual reason for being there. In this scene, Enola is still annoyed with Sherlock, which is why she talks sarcastically to him. But actually, she thanks Sherlock for giving her the advice which is very useful for her in revealing the case. The sentence "So that's why you came here. Shark lessons." can be interpreted as containing verbal irony. The phrase "shark lessons" suggests a rather absurd or unexpected reason for someone's presence, likely implying that the reason is either ludicrous or far from the truth. The speaker may be using sarcasm to mock or criticize the other person's motivations, highlighting how outlandish it seems to be learning about sharks in the given context.

Data 16

Enola: Congratulations. You finally look like the nincompoop you were born to be.

The statement is uttered by Enola. The irony is that while Enola offers what seems like a compliment, it's actually a sarcastic remark on the person's ineptitude. In this scene, Tewkesbury was ready to be crowned king when he saw Enola come to him, he was very happy because they could meet again. Enola looked stunning wearing a long dress that made Tewkesbury fascinated by Enola's beauty. The sentence "Congratulations. You finally look like the nincompoop you were born to be." contains strong elements of verbal irony. The use of "Congratulations" is particularly ironic because it suggests a positive acknowledgment or achievement, but it is immediately followed by an insult, referring to someone as a "nincompoop." The contrast between the celebratory tone and the derogatory remark creates a sarcastic effect. The irony emphasizes Enola's mockery. This juxtaposition highlights the absurdity of the situation, making the statement humorous.

Data 17

Enola: I thought you had forgotten it. You never could leave it alone as a little girl.

The statement is uttered by Enola. The irony lies in the mother's expectation that Enola would forget the item, while Enola's continued attachment reveals a deeper connection and persistence. Enola was very happy because her mother came to meet her even just for a moment. Although she is angry with her mom because she left her, but She misses her mother so much. The sentence "I thought you had forgotten it. You never could leave it alone as a little girl." contains elements of situational irony. The irony arises from the contrast between Eudoria's expectation that Enola would have forgotten her and the reality that she has not. This suggests that despite the passage of time, some behaviors or interests remain unchanged, highlighting a discrepancy between what is expected (growth or change) and what occurs.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to explain the use of the ironies in Enola Holmes 2020 movie. In this movie, the irony serves several important functions in communication, especially in literature and film. It can create a contrast

between what is said and what is meant, often highlighting deeper truths or contradictions in a subtle way. In dialogue, the irony can be used to criticize societal norms or to reveal a character's underlying emotions without direct confrontation. For instance, characters may use the irony to expose hypocrisy or absurdity in a situation, making the audience aware of a deeper message. Additionally, irony often adds humor or wit to a conversation, allowing for a more engaging and layered interaction between characters. By saying one thing and meaning another, the irony can deepen the complexity of a narrative and provide insight into the characters' true intentions or the themes of the story. In *Enola Holmes* movie 2020, there are ten verbal ironies, five situational ironies, and two dramatic ironies. Verbal irony plays a crucial role in communication by allowing speakers to convey meanings that differ from the literal interpretation of their words. This form of irony often serves to enhance humor, critique social norms, or express frustration. Additionally, verbal irony can serve as a tool for character development, revealing their personalities and emotional states. It enriches dialogue by adding layers of meaning (Brendel, 2022).

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