

Unveiling Similes in the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans*

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ABSTRACT

Similes help set the tone and mood while making writing more vivid, immersive, and engaging for readers. The aim of this research identifies, interprets, and classifies the similes in the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans*. This research seeks to identify and analyze the use of similes in the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans* and classify the type of simile. This study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology. This study gathered the data from Kate O'Hearn's novel the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans*, book 5. The research findings reveal that 20 sentences in the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans* contain similes, with 14 sentences categorized as Traditional Rhetoric similes and 6 classified as Homeric or Epic similes. The data also reveal that there are 7 sentences use "as," 11 sentences that use "like," and 2 sentences that use both "as" and "like" in a single sentence.

Keywords: *classic fantasy, Homeric or epic simile, mythology, traditional rhetoric simile, young adult*

INTRODUCTION

Figurative language refers to words or phrases beyond their literal definitions to convey deeper meanings or make a point. It encompasses expressions not meant to be taken literally, emphasizing symbolic or extended meanings. While not all forms of figurative language are frequently used by everyone, many people incorporate them into daily conversation, especially in literary works like poetry and fiction. Examples of figurative language include euphemism, metaphor, metonymy, repetition, oxymoron, puns, simile, personification, irony, imagery, and onomatopoeia (Colston, 2015; del Pilar Salas-Zárate et al., 2020; Marpaung, 2025; Merriam-Webster Dictionary; Natanael et al., 2022).

Simile belongs to the figures of resemblance or relationship, categorized into five main groups of figures of speech in European languages. They are figures of resemblance or relationship, figures of emphasis or understatement, figures of sound, verbal games and gymnastics, and errors. A simile compares two things that highlight or vividly describe a particular quality. In other words, a simile is a figure of speech that compares two things using "like" or "as." It is used to create a vivid image or make a description more emphatic or relatable. For example, "Her smile was as bright as the sun", or "He fought like a lion." In these examples, the simile is compared to the sun's brightness, and the person's fighting is compared to a lion's fierceness. Using "like" or "as" helps compare the two elements (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014; Deignan et al., 2013; Landis, 2022; Siregar & Pane, 2020). Similes are often used in literature, novels, poetry, and everyday language to make descriptions more relatable and engaging

The function of a simile is to enhance the vividness and expressiveness of language by making comparisons that help the reader or listener better understand or visualize something. There are some critical functions of similes. The first is clarification. Clarification is when something unfamiliar or abstract is compared to something familiar; a simile can clarify a concept. For example, saying "as busy as a bee" helps convey the idea of being active. The second is imagery, where similes create strong visual images in the reader's mind, making descriptions more engaging and memorable. For instance, "Her eyes sparkled like stars" evokes a vivid mental picture. The third is emotional impact. Similes can evoke emotions by drawing parallels between the subject and something emotionally significant. For example, "He was as cold as ice" can convey a sense of emotional distance or harshness. Fourth is creativity and style; the writers use similes to add creativity and stylistic flair to their work. Unique or unexpected comparisons can make the language more interesting and original, and the last key feature is emphasis. A simile can emphasize particular qualities or characteristics of a subject by highlighting them through comparison. For example, "He fought like a lion" emphasizes bravery and strength. Overall, similes are potent written and spoken language tools that enhance communication by making it more descriptive, relatable, and impactful (Meriam-Webster, 2024; Natanael et al., 2022; Siregar & Pane, 2020; Tulung et al., 2021).

Pegasus and Rise of The Titans is the fifth book in the Pegasus series by Kate O'Hearn. The book was released in the UK on February 5, 2015, and in the US on December 1, 2015. In this installment, the ancient conflict between the Olympians and the Titans reignites, with the Titans possessing a new and formidable weapon that can rival the power of the Flame of Olympus. When Saturn, the leader of the Titans, uncovers a secret weapon, Olympus faces imminent peril amid this ancient conflict between Olympus and the Titans. The protagonist, Emily Jacobs, and her winged horse, Pegasus, must embark on the Human World perilous journey to Hawaii, specifically the Diamond Head volcano, to locate the only thing to save Olympus from the Titans. However, the stakes are higher than ever as Emily's control over her flame begins to weaken, and the Titans and another group called the CRU (Central Research Unit) are hot on their trail. If Emily is going to rescue Olympus, she must first save herself. The book continues the series' blend of modern adventure with ancient mythology as Emily and her friends face increasingly complex challenges to protect the world of Olympus from destruction (O'Hearn, 2015).

Kate O'Hearn is a Canadian-born author known for her popular fantasy series targeted at middle-grade readers, including the Pegasus, Valkyrie, and Titans. Born in Toronto and raised in New York City, O'Hearn has lived in various cities across the United States and Europe. She eventually settled in England, where she continued to write. O'Hearn's career in writing followed her initial work in the fashion industry. Her love of storytelling led her to give up a prestigious fashion career to pursue writing full-time. Her first children's book, *Shadow of the Dragon – Kira*, won the 1066 Literary Prize. However, she is best known for the Pegasus series, which blends modern adventure with ancient mythology, captivating young readers with tales of gods, heroes, and mythical creatures. Intense, young female protagonists, action-packed narratives, and a deep engagement with mythology and folklore characterize her work. In addition to her series of novels, she has also written a children's musical titled *The Caterpillar and the Blackbird*, which has toured in the United Kingdom. (Simon & Schuster Books, Greenhouse Literary Agency; Wikipedia, 2024).

This study focuses on similes in the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans*, aiming to uncover the meaning behind the author's use of similes in the novel. The researchers' interest in similes stems from how these comparisons enhance sentences' beauty. Using similes, the author vividly compares different elements, allowing the researchers to visualize complex ideas from simple statements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Figurative language has two similar figures of speech, similes and metaphors, but is different in use. Similes and metaphors are figures of speech used to compare two unlike things. The critical distinction is that similes use "like" or "as" to draw the comparison, while metaphors state that one thing is another. A simile compares one thing to another by using phrases like "is like" or "is as... as." In contrast, a metaphor directly states that one thing is another without using "like" or "as" in the comparison. In other words, a metaphor is a form of figurative language that directly compares two things by identifying or substituting one for the other. The example of the simile "Kate swims *like* a fish" means that Kate is an excellent swimmer, while the example of metaphors is "My computer was a dinosaur." The meaning is that the computer is ancient. The two examples of simile and metaphor show the difference between simile and metaphor (Britannia, 2024; Sinaga & Marpaung, 2023).

There are two common types of similes. Classical rhetoric and literature often use Traditional Rhetorical Simile, especially in ancient Greek and Roman texts. This type of simile is characterized by its formal structure and use to enhance the persuasive or aesthetic quality of the speech or writing. It is undoubtedly the most common simile. A traditional rhetorical simile follows a descriptive word or adjective like/as a noun structure in a few words. Traditional rhetorical similes make the speech or text more memorable and impactful, drawing on shared cultural knowledge and elevating the language to suit the occasion. They are often used in epic poetry, speeches, and other forms of high rhetoric, aiming to persuade, inspire, or move the audience through powerful imagery and comparisons. There are some main characteristics of traditional rhetorical similes. First is formal structure. Traditional rhetorical similes often follow a structured format, typically using "like" or "as" to introduce the comparison. Example: "He fought like a lion in battle." The second is extended comparisons. These similes can be extended, elaborating on the comparison to determine the similarities between the two subjects. For example, in Homer's *The Iliad*, the hero Achilles is often compared to various powerful animals or natural forces, with the comparison sometimes extended over several lines. The third characteristic is elevated language. The language used in traditional rhetorical similes tends to be more elevated or poetic, suitable for formal oratory or epic poetry. Example: "Her beauty was as the radiant dawn breaking through the darkness of night." Fourth is cultural or mythological references. These similes often draw on cultural, historical, or mythological references familiar to the audience, adding depth and resonance to the comparison. An example is "As swift as Hermes, the messenger of the gods"; the last is the persuasive purpose, where the similes are used not just for description but also to persuade or influence the audience by appealing to their emotions, values, or sense of logic. For example, a speaker might say, "Our courage must be like that of our forefathers, unyielding in the face of adversity," to inspire bravery (Chinea, 2024; Landis, 2022; Natanael et al., 2022; Siregar & Pane, 2020).

The second type of simile is Homeric, also known as an epic simile, a detailed and extended simile used in epic poetry. This simile is characteristic of the works of the ancient Greek poet Homer, particularly in his epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Homeric similes are more elaborate than typical similes, often extending over several lines, and they serve to enhance the narrative by providing vivid imagery and deeper insight into the characters or actions being described. The Homeric or epic simile tends to span multiple lines of text rather than being neatly wrapped up in four or five words. Homeric similes are more extensive and are commonly used in poetry to emphasize a theme or a heroic deed. Homeric or epic similes amplify the grandeur of the epic's subjects—heroes, gods, and battles—by linking them to universal experiences or natural phenomena. They help to illustrate the action in a way that is both visually and emotionally engaging, making the epic's events more vivid and memorable for the audience. These similes also connect the epic's extraordinary events with the everyday world, bridging the gap between the mythic and the real. There are some characteristics of the Homeric or epic simile; the first characteristic is extended length. Unlike a simple simile consisting of a brief comparison, a Homeric simile is often extended over several lines, allowing for a more detailed exploration. For example, in *The Iliad*, Homer might compare a hero's actions in battle to a lion hunting its prey, elaborating on the lion's movements, the reaction of the prey, and the surrounding environment. The second is detailed imagery. Homeric similes are rich in descriptive detail, painting a vivid picture in the reader's mind. They often describe natural events, animals, or everyday activities in great detail. Example: "As when the shudder of the west wind suddenly rising scatters across the water, and the water darkens beneath it, so dark were the thoughts of Achilles." The third is a comparison to everyday life. The similes often compare the grand actions of heroes or gods to more common, everyday occurrences. This contrast makes the epic's extraordinary events more relatable and understandable to the audience. For example, a warrior might be compared to a farmer working his fields, making the hero's actions more vivid by linking them to familiar experiences. The fourth is a narrative pause. Homeric similes often pause the narrative, allowing the audience to reflect on the described events. They slow the story's pace, giving time for contemplation and adding depth to the action. Example: "As a lion in the mountains, confident in his strength, scatters a herd in his hunger, cattle and sheep alike, and his wrath strikes down the shepherd too, so did Achilles drive the Trojans before him." The last characteristic is enhanced emotional and symbolic impact. By drawing out the comparison, Homeric similes can evoke a more robust emotional response and add symbolic meaning to the narrative. The detailed comparison allows the audience to see the action in a new light, often revealing underlying themes or emotions. Example: The comparison of warriors to natural forces like storms or wildfires emphasizes the unstoppable, destructive power of the heroes (China, 2024; Landis, 2022; Natanael et al., 2022; Scott, 2009; Siregar & Pane, 2020; Wikipedia, 2024).

Some researchers have conducted studies of similes in songs and fiction stories. Sangki, J. E., Kumayas, T. A., & Rorimpandey, R. S. (2024) did a study called "An analysis of simile found in Adele's Song lyrics." The result showed that Adele's song lyrics use open and closed similes. Open similes occur eight times, for 57%, while closed similes appear six times, making up 43%. This indicates that open similes are the more dominant in some of Adele's lyrics. Another study was done by Hayeesa-i, T., & Maisarah, I. (2023). Simile's analysis in Thai literature: A case study of "The happiness of Kati" in the English version. Based on a meaning analysis, the study identified 78 similes in the novel, consisting of 63 explicit similes and 25 implicit ones, representing 68% and 32%. Putri, Pardede, & Bahri, S. (2022) conducted a study

entitled “Similes in George Bamber’s Return to Dust.” The findings revealed that the most common type was descriptive similes at 40%, followed by close similes at 35%, and illustrative similes at 15%, with both open and illuminative similes each accounting for 5%. Tulung, Maru, and Kumayas, 2021 conducted a study entitled "The analysis of simile in Taylor Swift’s songs." This research indicates that Taylor Swift's songs use two types of similes: open and closed.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method. The researcher gathered data from Kate O'Hearn's novel, *The Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans*. In qualitative descriptive research, data collection methods are varied and aim to explore the "who," "what," and "where" of phenomena (Sandelowski, 2000). The researcher followed several steps to collect the data. First, a fiction novel was selected. Second, the novel was read from start to finish to identify similes. After completing the reading, the researcher organized the data into a table and categorized the similes. The third step involved classifying the types of similes found in *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans* and determining the meaning of each one. The data from this research has been presented in written form, describing the findings related to the similes identified in the novel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers identified 20 sentences containing similes in the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans*. Table 1 explains the sentences that contain similes, the type of similes, and the interpretation of the simile.

Table 1. Simile

No.	Sentences of Simile	Types of Similes	Meaning
1.	Olympus at night was as beautiful as it was by day (p. 7)	Traditional Rhetorical	Expresses that Olympus has a timeless beauty that transcends the time of day.
2.	... a voice as soft as a gentle breeze (p. 8)	Traditional Rhetorical	The voice described is calm, peaceful, and soothing, much like a gentle breeze. It evokes a sense of comfort and tranquillity.
3.	His eyes were elliptical like a snake’s, and even though they were as black as night, they still sparkled and shone (p. 12)	Homeric or epic	It conveys an eerie, magnetic quality to the character's eyes—dark and mysterious yet oddly compelling or full of life. The snake comparison also hints at something sly or possibly dangerous.

4.	Is this not as amazing as a silver arm? (p. 15)	Traditional Rhetorical	Something is just as impressive or extraordinary as the concept of a "silver arm," suggesting that both are equally astonishing.
5.	To leave Tom is like ripping out my claws one at a time (p. 25)	Traditional Rhetorical	It is excruciating, almost unbearable, and the person feels emotionally wounded by the thought of separation.
6.	... Tom rose and started to hop around the area like an overexcited dog (p. 34)	Traditional Rhetorical	Emphasizes the exaggerated, spontaneous, and chaotic nature of the actions. It is a fun and lively way to describe someone overcome with excitement or joy, acting with carefree exuberance.
7.	... he sat like a dog, ... (p. 35)	Traditional Rhetorical	This description might convey that the person is sitting in a relaxed or unassuming manner, or it could be a playful way to indicate that their posture is somewhat awkward or unusual.
8.	Tom was jumping around like an electrocuted cat. (p. 38)	Traditional Rhetorical	To describe frantic, erratic, or sudden movements, the term "electrocuted cat" emphasizes how uncontrolled, rapid, and almost wild the actions are, as in a state of panic or extreme agitation.
9.	It was like a tidal wave of sounds assaulting her ears. (p. 42)	Traditional Rhetorical	It describes a situation where the noise is so overwhelming that it feels like an unstoppable force, making it difficult for the person to cope. It is a powerful way of expressing auditory overload.
10.	The angry voice faded away, just like a radio station does	Homeric or epic	It highlights how initially strong and intense anger gradually fades until it is no

	when you drive out of range (p. 72)		longer audible or impactful, just like the static and loss of sound you experience when a radio signal fades. It is a poetic way to describe the anger subsiding or becoming less forceful over time.
11.	“As tall as the giants?” Pele asked ... (p. 109)	Traditional Rhetorical	It emphasizes that the person or object described is impressively or unusually tall, evoking a sense of awe or grandeur. It may also carry a sense of strength or dominance.
12.	Their skin was iridescent like a mother-of-pearl, and their eyes seemed to glow pearly white (p. 109)	Traditional Rhetorical	Describes someone or something with a striking, almost supernatural beauty or presence.
13.	Riza sighed and the pain it held cut through Emily like the sharpest knife. (p. 111)	Traditional Rhetorical	It emphasizes how deeply it is affected by hearing or sensing the pain—so much so that it feels as if it physically hurts.
14.	Lorin is like a wildfire burning out of control. (p. 114)	Traditional Rhetorical	The behavior and personality are intense and untamed, suggesting they may be difficult to manage or contain, much like wildfire.
15.	Riza chuckled and it was like a welcome breeze on a hot summer day. (p. 115)	Traditional Rhetorical	It brought relief, comfort, or joy to the situation, much like how a cool breeze offers relief on a sweltering day. The laughter had a positive and refreshing impact.
16.	His horse body was not quite as big as Pegasus, but he was much heavier. (p. 126)	Homeric or epic	The sentence contrasts the physical size and weight of the horse's body with that of Pegasus. It suggests that while the horse may not be as large as the mythical Pegasus, it has a greater weight, which could

			imply a denser or more solid build.
17.	Hyperion's were not quite as cold and threatening as Saturn's. (p. 146)	Traditional Rhetorical	This could describe atmospheric conditions, environmental hazards, or other comparative features.
18.	The sounds of deep cracking rolled out of the ground like rumbling thunder. (p. 209)	Traditional Rhetorical	It conveys a sense of foreboding and power, as if the earth is breaking apart with a force akin to a thunderstorm.
19.	Her hair was as green as the clearest ocean, and her face was pale like sea foam (p. 277)	Homeric or epic	Paints a striking image of the person's appearance, using the natural beauty of the ocean and sea foam to highlight the uniqueness and delicate quality of her hair and complexion.
20.	... looking just as young and radiant as she was before cancer had ravaged her body. Her curly brown hair and smiling, hazel eyes were just as Emily remembered. (p. 355)	Homeric or epic	The sentence describes a moment of emotional relief or joy, as the person now looks beautiful and vibrant, and these familiar features evoke solid and positive memories.

Based on the table above, the novel *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans* contains 20 sentences featuring similes, most of which are traditional rhetorical similes.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate 20 similes in Kate O'Hearn's the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans*.

Table 2. Percentage of simile

Number of Simile Sentences	Type of simile	Percentage
14 sentences	Traditional Rhetoric Simile	70%
Six sentences	Homeric or epic simile	30%

Table 3. Use of "as" and "like."

Number of sentences use “as”	Number of sentences use “like”	Number of sentences use “as” and “like”
7	11	2

The results show that the most frequent use of similes in the *Pegasus and the Rise of the Titans* is the traditional rhetorical simile, with 14 out of 20 simile sentences. Additionally, 11 of these 20 similes utilize the word "like."

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of similes in fiction can greatly enrich storytelling. Similes enhance imagery by drawing vivid comparisons, making descriptions more engaging and memorable. They clarify meaning, making abstract or complex ideas more accessible by connecting them to familiar objects or experiences. Similes add depth to the narrative by providing additional layers of meaning that offer deeper insights into characters or settings. They also enhance readers' emotions by evoking feelings through relatable or evocative comparisons, allowing readers to connect emotionally with the story.

Furthermore, similes help establish tone and mood, with the choice of similes shaping the atmosphere of a scene. Unique or original similes can also highlight an author's voice and style, making the writing more distinctive. When used effectively, similes make writing more vivid, immersive, and engaging for readers.

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