



Ciencia Latina Revista Científica Multidisciplinar, Ciudad de México, México.
ISSN 2707-2207 / ISSN 2707-2215 (en línea), julio-agosto 2026,
Volumen 10, Número 4.

https://doi.org/10.37811/cl_rcm.v10i4

EL HUMOR “CAMP TALK” EN LOS SUBTÍTULOS AL ESPAÑOL DE LA SERIE RUPAUL’S DRAG RACE: REVISTA CIENTÍFICA Y ACADÉMICA

**“CAMP TALK” HUMOR IN THE SPANISH SUBTITLES OF
THE SERIES RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE: ACADEMIC AND
SCIENTIFIC MAGAZINE**

Pas. David Osvaldo García Méndez
Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco

Dra. Veronika de la Cruz Villegas
Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco



El humor “CAMP TALK” en los subtítulos al español de la serie RuPaul’s Drag Race: Revista Científica y Académica

Pas. David Osvaldo García Méndez¹

osvaldomendez250@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8856-8538>

Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco,
México

Dra. Veronika de la Cruz Villegas

veronika.delacruz@hotmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3570-2021>

Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco,
México

RESUMEN

El tema principal que abarcaremos en este artículo es el subtitulado del lenguaje y el humor arraigado en la comunidad LGBTQ+ y cómo plantea importantes dificultades para transmitir con precisión la sensibilidad camp y el humor presentes en el diálogo original en inglés, con el objetivo de identificar las diferencias y los problemas que representa la traducción y subtitulación del éste. Todo esto gracias a preguntas de investigación, por ejemplo: ¿Cómo se traduce y subtitula al español el humor característico de RuPaul's Drag Race? Y ¿Qué estrategias de traducción se utilizan para transmitir el estilo camp y el humor en los subtítulos en español? Además del uso de diferentes herramientas como tablas de comparación y un checklist que funciona como parámetro para la evaluación de capítulos. Este artículo se basa en una investigación cualitativa y con diferentes artículos que hablan sobre al análisis de este humor. A través de éstos y de muchas recopilaciones de diferentes casos (episodios) se llegan a los resultados que remarcan como el subtitulaje del humor LGBTQ+ o “camp” es adaptado desde el idioma inglés al español así como su análisis y de donde surge la manera más aceptada para realizar el correcto subtitulaje.

Palabras claves: Charla camp; humor; subtitulaje; RuPaul’s Drag Race.

¹ Autor principal

Correspondencia: osvaldomendez250@gmail.com



“CAMP TALK” humor in the Spanish subtitles of the series RuPaul's Drag Race: Academic and Scientific Magazine

ABSTRACT

The main topic we will cover in this article is the subtitling of language and humor rooted in the LGBTQ+ community and how it poses significant difficulties in accurately conveying the camp sensibility and humor present in the original English dialogue, with the objective of identifying the differences and problems posed by the translation and subtitling of humor (camp talk) from English to Spanish. All this thanks to research questions, Such as how is the characteristic humor of RuPaul's Drag Race translated and subtitled into Spanish? And what translation strategies are used to convey the camp style and humor in the Spanish subtitles? In addition to the use of different tools such as comparison tables and a checklist that functions as a parameter for the evaluation of chapters. This article is based on qualitative research and different articles on the analysis of camp talk humor. Through these examples and numerous compilations of different cases (episodes), the study arrives at findings that highlight how subtitles for LGBTQ+ humor or “camp” are adapted from English to Spanish, as well as an analysis of where the most widely accepted approach to proper subtitling originates.

Key words: Camp talk; humor; subtitling; RuPaul’s Drag Race.

*Artículo recibido 20 mayo 2026
Aceptado para publicación: 20 junio 2026*



INTRODUCTION

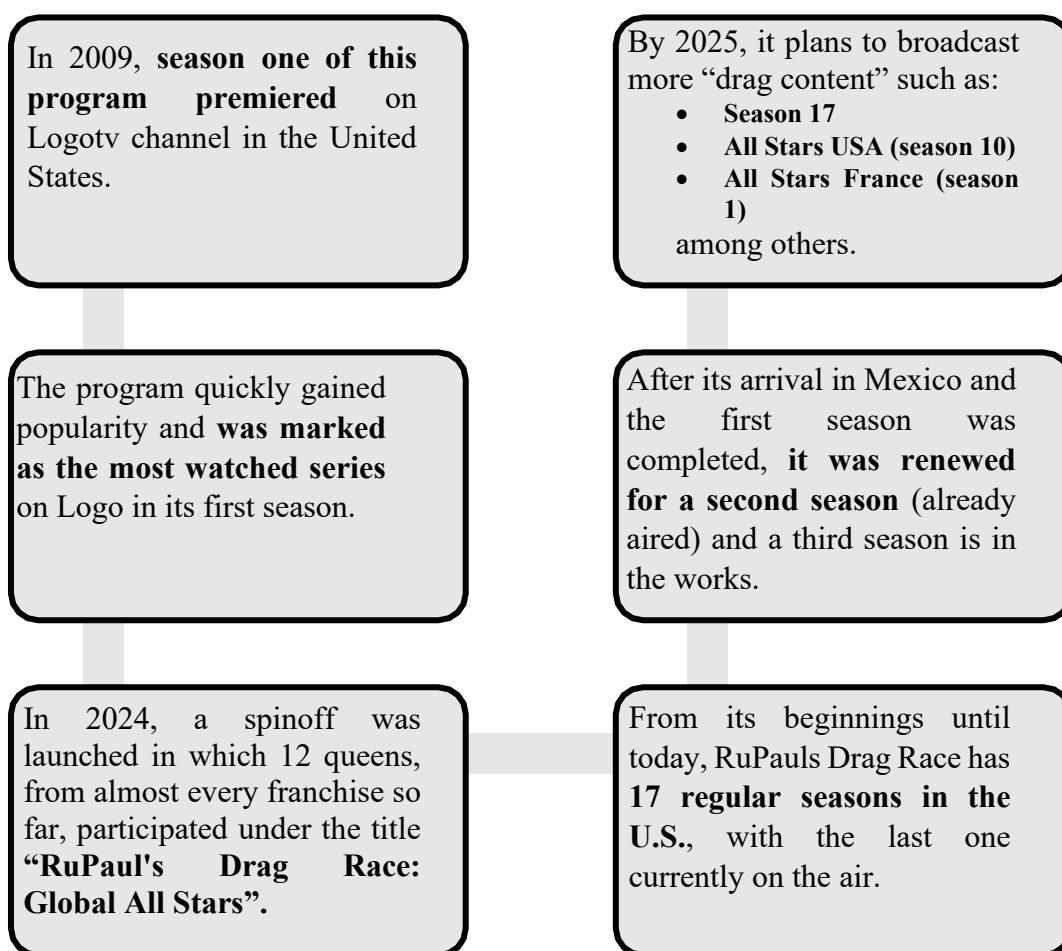
The intersection between language, culture and humor is a complex terrain, especially when it comes to the translation and subtitling of television programs. It is essential to find linguistic and cultural equivalents that generate the same humorous impact as in the original language, thus maintaining the essence and enjoyment of the comedy for the Spanish-speaking viewer.

Television as a cultural artifact offers unique opportunities to explore the interplay between language, identity, and humor. Among contemporary programs, *RuPaul's Drag Race* has emerged as a global phenomenon, celebrated not only for its dazzling performances and compelling narratives but also for its rich linguistic textures. Central to its appeal is the use of “camp talk,” a highly stylized and performative mode of speech characterized by irony, theatricality, and humor deeply rooted in queer culture. The translation of this distinct linguistic register into other languages, such as Spanish, presents significant challenges, particularly in maintaining the intricate humor and cultural nuances that define the original text; in the specific case of series such as *RuPaul's Drag Race*, where the camp language is an integral part of its identity, it is crucial not only to translate the words, but also to capture the tone, irony and humor characteristic of the original.

RuPaul's Drag Race is an American reality television competition show produced by World of Wonder for Logo TV, later for VH1, and finally for MTV. RuPaul, drag superstar, is the host, mentor, head judge, and inspiration for this series, which details RuPaul's quest to find the next “America's Drag Superstar”.



Image 1.



NOTE: Diagram made with information extracted from the show's fan page: RuPaul's Drag Race Wiki:

https://rupaulsdragrace.fandom.com/wiki/RuPaul%27s_Drag_Race

Currently, the translation of the spoken language of an audiovisual product is approached in two ways, the addition of on-screen text (subtitling) or the total or partial replacement of the spoken language. The addition of text on the screen (subtitling) or the total or partial-substitution of the original sound track with one in the target language (dubbing, narration, voice-over, voice-over, voice-over). The original sound track with one in the target language (dubbing, narration, voice-over, interpretation), and the choice of one technique or the other depends on factors such as custom, economic constraints, the genre of the program, the distribution format or the audience profile (Diaz Cintas, J., & Anderman, G. (2009). The following work focuses on the subtitling of humor in order to analyze the translation in the subtitling of an audiovisual product: The reality show RuPaul's Drag Race, also known by its acronym RPDG.

This American has gained great relevance in the last few years due to its particular format and distinctive expressions of the show, which has come to be consumed by a wide variety of audiences in different countries.

The **subtitling of humor** refers to the process of translating and adapting humorous content from one language into another in subtitles, often for movies, TV shows, or online videos. This is **not just direct translation**—it involves understanding the **cultural, linguistic, and contextual nuances** that make something funny in one language and trying to **recreate that humor** for a different audience.

Key Aspects of the Subtitling of Humor:

1. **Cultural adaptation**

2. Humor often relies on cultural references, idioms, or wordplay that may not exist in the target language. Subtitlers must find an equivalent joke or expression that elicits a similar effect.

3. **Wordplay and puns**

4. Puns and plays on words rarely translate directly. Subtitlers must get creative to maintain the comic intent, even if the words themselves change.

5. **Timing and length constraints**

6. Subtitles are limited in space and time. Translating humor must be brief, timed correctly, and readable, while still being funny.

7. **Tone and delivery**

8. Humor often depends on tone, sarcasm, irony, or character voice. Subtitlers must preserve these subtle cues even with minimal words.

9. **Audience expectations**

10. Humor varies widely across cultures. What's funny in one country might be offensive or confusing in another, so subtitles must align with the target audience's sense of humor.

This reality competition series, hosted by iconic drag queen RuPaul, has not only achieved worldwide acclaim, but has also become a cultural touchstone for LGBTQ+ representation and celebration of drag culture.

The essence of “RuPaul's Drag Race” lies not only in its outlandish drag performances and fierce competition, but also in its linguistic style characterized by wit, innuendo and camp humor. Camp, a



concept deeply rooted in queer culture, encompasses exaggerated, theatrical and often ironic expressions of identity and aesthetics. We will examine how translators navigate linguistic and cultural barriers to ensure that the humor and cultural significance of the original English dialogue is preserved while making it accessible and relatable to Spanish-speaking audiences.

In addition, the role of linguistic creativity and adaptation in subtitling will be explored, as well as the potential challenges and limitations translators face in capturing the dynamic and culturally specific nature of camp talk.

The language and humor employed is deeply rooted in LGBTQ+ community, subtitling this content into Spanish poses significant difficulties in accurately conveying the camp sensibilities and humor present in the original English dialogue.

The analysis of camp talk and humor in the Spanish subtitling of "RuPaul's Drag Race" sheds light on the intricacies and challenges of translating humor across linguistic and cultural boundaries (Osvaldo García, 2024)

This analysis seeks to examine the representation of humor and camp in the Spanish subtitles of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, focusing on the translation strategies employed to capture the show's linguistic creativity and cultural specificity. By investigating how puns, double entendres, and culturally embedded references are adapted—or at times lost—this study illuminates the complexities of rendering humor across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Furthermore, it reflects on the implications of these translation choices for the broader understanding of camp as both a cultural phenomenon and a communicative style. In doing so, this analysis contributes to a deeper appreciation of how humor, language, and identity intersect in global media.

GENERAL METODOLOGY

Objective

Identify the differences and the problems that represent the translation and subtitling of the humor (*camp talk*) from English to Spanish. As *Osvaldo Garcia (2024)* mentions “Understanding how Spanish-speaking viewers perceive and respond to the translated camp and humor to complement the textual analyses conducted thus far”.



METODOLOGY

This research is based on a **different articles** refers to the analysis of camp talk humor. First of all, it should be made clear that the purpose of the paper is not to produce an assessment in terms of correct or is not to produce an evaluation in terms of correct or incorrect subtitling from English to Spanish of RuPaul's Drag Race, but the analysis of the different translation techniques applied to its subtitling, so we consider the study to be qualitative.ç

Qualitative analysis consists of examining non-numerical data to identify patterns, themes and perspectives. Qualitative research is a method used to collect non-numerical data, often exploring complex phenomena that cannot be quantified (Stewart, Lauren. 2023).

Results

This section shows the results obtained through the application of two data collection instruments in some chapters of different seasons of this show, through their analysis.

First, we have this instrument, which is based on the creation on a table, or document that places the original English dialogue (in this case, an episode of the series) next to the Spanish subtitles for an easy comparison and analysis of translation choices.



Episode and time.	Original text.	Spanish subtitle.	Translation strategy.	Camp/Humor type.	Cultural references.
S9E01, 05:30	The body is here, bitches!	¡Aquí llega el cuerpo, putas!	Equivalence	Body reference	N/A
S6E01, 04:00	Come on season 6, let's sickening!	¡Sexta temporada, pongámonos sexy!	Adaptation	Hyperbole, slang	Drag Culture.

Episode and time.	Original text.	Spanish subtitle.	Translation strategy.	Camp/Humor type.	Cultural references.
S12E08, 56:15	Shantay, you stay.	Shantay, te quedas.	Literal translation.	Catch-phrase.	Show specific.
S15, 36:20	"She padded for the Gods"	Se rellenó como una Diosa	Cultural adaptation	Religious reference	Greek mythology

This table is designed to systematically analyze and compare the original English dialogue with its Spanish subtitle translation in **RuPaul's Drag Race**.

Episode and time.	Original text.	Spanish subtitle.	Translation strategy.	Camp/Humor type.	Cultural references.
S17E01, 41:00	You know what her favorite band is? What? The Slice Girls	¿Sabes cuál es su grupo favorito? ¿Cuál? Las Slice Girls	Literal translation.	Food-phrase.	Band or musical group
S9E10, 39:05	Sue me!	¡Demandame!	Literal translation	Legal term	Law



Episode and time.	Original text.	Spanish subtitle.	Translation strategy.	Camp/Humor type.	Cultural references.
S4E01 All Stars, 56:15	You can't spell legendary, without... leg.	No puedes ser legendaria sin piernas.	Adaptation/Literal translation	Body Reference	Word game
S11E1, 36:20	"It looks like things just got... eleven-dary"	Parece que las cosas se han vuelto... once-darias	Literal translation	Catch-Phrase	Word-Game

This instrument pretends develop a **checklist** of specific **linguistic features of camp talk** (e.g., exaggeration, irony, wordplay) to analyze their presence in both the original and translated versions. This checklist is designed to systematically identify and analyze specific linguistic features of camp talk and humor in both the original English dialogue and Spanish subtitles of RuPaul's Drag Race.

With the application of this instrument, the elements of the episode are made known in order to identify them correctly and through their analysis make a correct subtitling.

RPDR: S10, E1 “10s Across the Board”

Exaggeration and Hyperbole.

[.] Use of superlatives.

[] Overstatement

[.] Intensifiers

Wordplay and Puns

[.] Rhyming

[.] Alliteration

[] Malapropisms

LGBTQ+ Slang and Drag Terminology

[.] Drag-specific terms (e.g., "fish," "beat," "read")

[.] Ballroom culture terms (e.g., "shade," "house,"

[.] General LGBTQ+ slang (e.g., "tea," "wig")

Pop Culture References

[.] Celebrity name-dropping

[] Movie/TV show quotes

DISCUSSION

This research made it possible to answer the main questions and meet the overall objective, which was to explore how humor and “camp talk” are translated and subtitled in *RuPaul’s Drag Race from English to Spanish*. After analyzing different episodes and comparing the original dialogue with the Spanish subtitles, several important insights emerged:

1. How is the show’s unique humor translated?

The humor is approached in various ways, but the most common strategies are literal translation, adaptation, and equivalence. Some iconic phrases like “*Shantay, you stay*” are translated almost word

Sarcasm and Irony

[.] Verbal irony

[.] Self-deprecating humor

[] Mock formality

Code-Switching and Multilingual Elements

[.] Mixing languages (e.g., English and Spanish)

[.] Use of foreign phrases for effect

Interjections and Exclamations

[.] Camp-specific exclamations (e.g., "Yas queen!")

[.] Dramatic gasps or reaction

Metaphors and Similes

[.] Comparisons to pop culture icons

[] Exaggerated descriptive language

Diminutives and Honorifics

[.] Use of -y/-ie endings (e.g., "hunty")

[] Playful titles (e.g., "Miss Thing")



for word, which maintains the original form, but not always its deeper meaning. In other cases, such as “*Come on season six, let’s get sickening!*”, a more playful approach is used (“*¡Sexta temporada, pongámonos sexy!*”), keeping the over-the-top energy and fun.

2. What translation strategies help preserve the camp tone?

Translators often try to balance faithfulness to the original with creativity. They use made-up expressions, cultural adaptations, and local slang to reflect the spirit of camp. For instance, “*The body is here, bitches!*” becomes “*¡Aquí llega el cuerpo, putis!*”, which keeps the cheeky and bold tone of the original.

3. Are cultural and linguistic nuances preserved or lost?

This is probably the trickiest part. In some cases, the nuance is maintained through clever choices (“*She padded for the Gods*” becomes “*Se rellenó como una diosa*”), preserving the exaggerated feel. But other times, especially with puns like “*You can’t spell legendary without leg*”, the humor doesn’t translate as well, and part of the meaning gets lost.

Final thoughts:

What this study shows is that subtitling *RuPaul’s Drag Race* isn’t just about words—it’s about context, identity, and cultural resonance. Subtitlers face real challenges in keeping the humor, irony, and theatricality of the original intact. Even with limitations like timing and space, you can see efforts to bring the same energy to Spanish-speaking audiences.

Overall, I believe the objective of the study was met, and it offers a valuable reflection on what it means to translate not just language, but identity and humor across cultures.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of camp talk and humor in the Spanish subtitling of “*RuPaul’s Drag Race*” sheds light on the intricacies and challenges of translating humor across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Throughout this exploration, it becomes evident that subtitling camp talk involves more than mere linguistic translation; it requires a deep understanding of cultural nuances, wordplay, and the dynamics of humor specific to drag culture.

Moreover, the study of humor in subtitling extends beyond “*RuPaul’s Drag Race*” to encompass a broader understanding of humor translation in series in general.



Humor, being highly context-dependent and culturally bound, poses significant challenges for translators across various genres and languages. Whether it's situational comedy, wordplay, or cultural references, translators must navigate linguistic, cultural, and audience-specific factors to ensure that humor resonates with viewers.

In essence, the analysis of camp talk and humor in the Spanish subtitling of "RuPaul's Drag Race" underscores the complexity and artistry involved in humor translation. It serves as a reminder of the rich interplay between language, culture, and humor, and the ongoing challenges faced by translators in conveying humor across linguistic and cultural boundaries. By celebrating and preserving the essence of humor in subtitling, we contribute to the enrichment of cross-cultural communication and appreciation of diverse forms of humor in series and popular media.

REFERENCES.

- Ávalos, F. (2019). *Dubbing into Latin Spanish: A glotopolitical perspective*.
- Chiaro, D. (2009). Issues in audiovisual translation. En J. Munday (Ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies* (pp. 141–165). Routledge.
- Díaz Cintas, J., & Remael, A. (2021). *Subtitling: Concepts and practices*. Routledge.
- Hidalgo, L. (2021). *The translation of sexual slang in teen series*.
- Jacinto, P. (W.D.). *Feminism and drag language in the dubbing of RuPaul's Drag Race*.
- Melchor, A. (2022). *Camp talk translation*.
- Ogea, M. (2020). *The translation of specialized terms with humorous effect in audiovisual text: The scientific jokes in The Big Bang Theory*.
- Ortega Gomez, C. (2022). *Neutral Spanish and Spanish from Spain in the dubbing and subtitling of the U.S. series The Office*. Universidad de Valladolid.
https://uvadoc.uva.es/bitstream/handle/10324/64614/TFG_F_2023_175.pdf?sequence=1
- García, O. (2024). *El humor y el "camp talk" en los subtítulos al español de la serie televisiva RuPaul's Drag Race*.
- Rodriguez Aguirre, E. (2015). Analysis of the humorous elements translated in the subtitling and dubbing of American comedy series,



https://repositorio.ucv.edu.pe/bitstream/handle/20.500.12692/3098/Aguirre_REP-SD.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y

Stewart, L. (2023) *Qualitative Research Methods*.

Toda, F. (2005). *Subtitling and dubbing: specialized translation*.

Trujillo Y. (2021). Analysis of the subtitling of humor in the Rupaul's Drag Race reality show.

Villanueva, A. (2019). “*You better work*” *Camp talk features in the spanish subtitling of Rupaul's Drag Race*.

Zárate, P. (W. D.). Analysis of translation techniques in the subtitling of RuPaul's Drag Race.

