

Examining Humor Translation Techniques in *Despicable Me* Movie from English to Indonesian Subtitle

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Abstrak

*Penelitian ini meneliti terjemahan, khususnya terjemahan lelucon dalam film *Despicable Me*. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menentukan teknik penerjemahan yang digunakan untuk mempertahankan kata-kata humor universal dalam teks target. Tujuan penelitian ini dicapai dengan menggunakan metodologi kualitatif. Untuk mendapatkan informasi yang akurat, peneliti mengamati versi bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia dari film tersebut, mengidentifikasi istilah-istilah humoris, dan mengklasifikasikannya berdasarkan teknik penerjemahan. Penelitian ini mengklasifikasikan data menggunakan teori teknik penerjemahan dari Molina dan Albir (2002). Humor dalam teks sumber berhasil dipertahankan melalui penggunaan teknik terjemahan literal, modulasi, dan generalisasi. Namun, komedi hilang dalam teknik reduksi.*

Kata Kunci: *Terjemahan, teknik terjemahan, terjemahan humor, terjemahan literal.*

Abstract

This research examined translation, specifically the translation of jokes in the *Despicable Me* film. The goal of this research was to determine the translation techniques employed to preserve the universal humor words in the target text. The study objectives were fulfilled using qualitative methodologies. To get accurate information, the researcher observed both the English and Indonesian versions of the film, identified humorous terms, and classified them based on translation techniques. This study classified the data using Molina and Albir's (2002) translation technique theories. The humor in the source text was effectively preserved through the use of literal translation, modulation, and generalization techniques. However, the comedy was lost in the reduction technique.

Keywords: Translation, translation techniques, humor translation, literal translation.

INTRODUCTION

Translation is essential for effective communication between individuals, groups, and governments. Translation is an important tool for global understanding in today's technology society. It allows individuals to access an immense variety of information, experiences, and news from all around the world. Bassnett (2002), defined translation as "the method of changing the source text (ST) text into a target text (TT)". Translation can be used in a variety of applications. Movies represent one of the most popular types of art. Movies provide amusement, education, and experiences. Foreign films, especially those in English, remain difficult because several individuals are inexperienced with the language. Subtitling is an effective answer to this problem. According to

Sponholz (2002), subtitles are "a written translation of movie speech at the bottom of the screen".

There are techniques for translating humorous words. To get the intended humorous impact or laughter from the audience, the translator should utilize a familiar term in the target language. According to Molina & Albir (2002), there are 18 translation strategies, such as literal, calque, amplification, borrowing, and description. These translation approaches help the translator make the translated phrases acceptable and successfully communicated in the target text.

This research focuses on the subtitle of the *Despicable Me* movie. "*Despicable Me*" is a 2010 American 3D computer-animated comedy film and Illumination Entertainment's debut project, released by Universal Pictures. Directed by Pierre Coffin and Chris Renaud, it follows supervillain Gru, who plans to steal

the Pyramids of Giza but discovers his rival, Vector, has already done so. Enraged, Gru tries to steal a shrink ray, but Vector thwarts him. Ready to give up, Gru encounters three orphaned girls—Margo, Edith, and Agnes—who transform his life and help him on his mission to defeat Vector. Certain portions of the film may inspire laughing, allowing the audience to relax their tension. The viewers commented, "*Despicable Me* is LOL funny all over, warm, silly, and will not disappoint," and 175 of 207 people agreed. Compared to the other franchise, this one gets the highest rating on IMDb because it was the first in the series. It has a rating of 4.7 stars, compared to 4.6 stars for the second film and 4.3 stars for the last.

By analyzing the English and Indonesian subtitles of "*Despicable Me*," this research highlights the intricacies of translation techniques, including harmonizing cultural meanings, preserving linguistic subtleties, and effectively transmitting humor across languages. This study offers deeper insights into translation methods and their impact on audience reception and cross-cultural communication.

This study focuses on examining the translation techniques employed by translators to translate humorous terms found in "*Despicable Me*." It utilizes the translation technique theory proposed by Molina and Albir (2002) to analyse the data.

Translation experts can enhance the quality and accuracy of animated film subtitles by employing recognized translation techniques, thereby improving the viewing experience for Indonesian audiences and others. This study concentrates on examining the translation techniques used for universal humor terms in the subtitles of the movie "*Despicable Me*." It does not provide a comprehensive evaluation of the entire film's translation or the translation of non-humorous elements.

METHOD

This study investigates the techniques of translation employed by translators to preserve the humorous features of the *Despicable Me* movie subtitles. This study's data includes humor words in two languages: the Source Text (English) and the Target Text (Indonesian). While the data came from the *Despicable Me* Movie on Netflix, which was published in 2010.

According to Ary et al. (2010), "Qualitative researchers function as human instruments for determining research objectives, decide on data sources, extract data, assess data quality, analyse data, and create findings". The researcher collects data through documentation, as the study's data consists of

subtitles obtained from the movie "*Despicable Me*." This documentation technique involves gathering and analyzing textual, visual, and electronic materials.

The study starts with the researcher studying the movie twice. First, use English subtitles, followed by Indonesian subtitles. The researcher then collects the movie's humorous lines and categorizes the data based on the translation techniques used by the translator.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The translator employed literal, modulation, reduction, borrowing, description, and generalization among the 18 translation methods given by Molina & Albir (2002) to translate the data in *Despicable Me* Movie.

1. Literal

This literal translation technique is most commonly employed to translate subtitles in the *Despicable Me* movie.

Tabel 1. Literal Translation Technique

Datum	Time	Source Text	Target Text
1	0:09:56-0:10:02	Gru: "We stole the Statue of Liberty..." Minions: "Yeah!" Gru: " The small one from Las Vegas. "	Gru: " <i>Kita mencuri Patung Liberty...</i> " Minions: " <i>Ya!</i> " Gru: " Yang kecil dari Las Vegas. "
2	0:10:05-0:10:08	Gru: "And I won't even mention the Eiffel Tower! also Vegas. "	Gru: " <i>Belum lagi Menara Eiffel! Juga dari Vegas.</i> "
3	0:12:48-0:12:53	Miss Hattie: "Edith! What did you put on my desk?" Edith: " A mud pie. "	Bu Hattie: " <i>Edith! Apa yang kau taruh di mejaku?</i> " Edith: " Pai lumpur. "
4	0:06:00-0:06:15	Margo: "Hello! Cookies for sale!" Gru: "Go away. I'm not home. " Margo: "Yes, you are. I heard you. "	Margo: " <i>Halo! Kami menjual kue!</i> " Gru: " <i>Pergilah. Aku tak ada di rumah</i> " Margo: " <i>Kau ada. Aku mendengarmu,</i> "
5	0:16:49-0:16:53	Vector: "Check out my new weapon. Piranha gun! Oh, yes."	Vector: " <i>Lihat senjata baruku. Pistol piranha!</i> <i>Ya!</i> "

The samples provided above demonstrate that the literal translation technique may preserve the humorous tone of the words in the source text.

The sentence from datum 1, "The small one from Las Vegas," translated word for word into "Yang kecil dari Las Vegas." Datum 2, the phrase

“Also Vegas,” translated into “juga dari Vegas.” The punchline “A mud pie” was translated literally to “Pai lumpur” in datum 3. As in datum 4, the sentence “I heard you,” translated literally to “Aku mendengarmu.” The last, in datum 5, the phrase “piranha gun,” translated to “pistol piranha.” These samples translated using literal technique, because it has identical significance and context in Indonesia. As a result, the translation preserves the funny effect of the comedy phrases.

This is the most common strategy employed by translations in the *Despicable Me* subtitles. According to the research, this strategy can keep the film's hilarious terms even after it was successfully translated into the target text. This proven by Bey (2015), that investigated about acceptability of humor translation.

2. Reduction

Reduction is a translation strategy that condenses or simplifies the original meaning of a phrase in the target language while maintaining it.

Tabel 2. Reduction Translation Technique

Datum	Time	Source Text	Target Text
6	0:05:06-0:05:14	Fred: “Sorry. You know dogs. They go wherever they want to go.” Gru: “Unless they’re dead.”	Fred: “Maaf. Kau tahu bagaimana anjing. Selalu pergi sesukanya.” Gru: “Kecuali mati.”

Gru says, “Unless they’re death” in the original language, with “they” alluding to dogs. However, the subject “they” disappears from the translation, and the context is represented as “Kecuali mati,” which does not mention the subject “they” (dogs). Without precisely stating the subject, the audience may not immediately recognize that the punchline “unless they’re dead” refers to dogs.

The loss of the subject “they” in the translated sentence may confuse audiences or listeners in the intended country. However, in Puspita's (2012) research, the reduction strategy can keep the humor words. The reduction process involves reducing phrases in the source language and proceed straight to the humor keywords. That is why, according to Puspita's research, this reduction strategy can keep the hilarious impact.

3. Generalization

This strategy is commonly employed when there is a lack of translation in the target language

or if the intended audience fails to understand a certain term.

Tabel 3. Generalization Translation Technique

Datum	Time	Source Text	Target Text
7	0:36:38-0:36:41	Gru: “Now those are cookie robots! ”	Gru: “Nah! Itu baru robot kue. ”

The term “cookie robots” has a unique connotation in the source language that may be regarded amusing, as it refers to robots made of cookies. In English, a “cookie” is a type of baked food that is often crunchy, sweet, and dry. In Indonesia, the word “cookie” means “kue kering.” However, the translator chose to use only the word “kue” to ensure the humor was conveyed effectively. In Indonesian the word “kue,” actually refers to cake or pastry, a more inclusive term in English. The usage of “kue” ensures that the phrase maintains its cheerful and funny tone while being comprehensible.

4. Modulation

Modulation seeks to convey the same thought or idea through the target language by another term or point of view.

Tabel 4. Modulation Translation Technique

Datum	Time	Source Text	Target Text
8	0:03:00-0:03:05	News anchor: “...the Great Pyramid of Giza had been stolen and replaced by a giant inflatable replica. ”	Pembawa berita: “... bahwa Piramida Agung Giza telah dicuri dan digantikan oleh replika tiup raksasa. ”

The transition from addressing the object's properties to emphasizing the process of blowing it occurs when the adjective “inflatable” becomes the verb “blow,” which is “tiup” in Indonesia. The modulation in the Indonesian version ensures that the act of inflating the duplicate is the primary focus. This maintains the original sentence's funny tone while also conveying the sense that the duplicate is filled with air.

CONCLUSION

Examining movie subtitle translation processes reveals a diverse range of techniques. The most commonly used approach is literal translation. It assures accuracy by closely mirroring the original content. Once modulation happens, the description is seen once. Generalization was also seen once. All of the strategies mentioned above can keep the original

speech's comedy while adapting it to the target language and culture, enhancing the audience's experience. While reduction and borrowing strategies also emerge, they produce uncertainty in the terms of comedy, resulting in the humor not being presented successfully to the intended audiences.

Those interested in conducting study in this topic may choose to focus on literature or plays rather than just movies. The primary cause is a need for further research on the issue. There are still a few studies that employ novels or plays to investigate comedy translation approaches. Performing such a study will widen the area of translation research.

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