

ENGLISH VERBAL HUMOR EXPRESSIONS IN THE *KUNG FU PANDA 3*  
 MOVIE TEXT AND THEIR BAHASA INDONESIA TRANSLATED  
 EXPRESSIONS IN THE SUBTITLING TEXT

Written by : Abdy Bani Yanuar  
 First Supervisor : Drs. Asruddin Barori Tou, M.A. Ph. D.  
 Second Supervisor : Yosa Abduh Alzuhdy, S.S, M. Hum.

English Literature Study Program  
 Faculty of Languages and Arts  
 Yogyakarta State University  
[abdybaniyanuar@gmail.com](mailto:abdybaniyanuar@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

The purposes of the research are (1) to describe the types of verbal humor in the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text, (2) to describe subtitling strategies employed in the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text, and (3) to describe the degree of meaning equivalence as assessment from the result of strategies employed.

The research used a descriptive qualitative. The data of this research were the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text. Meanwhile, the units of analysis are words, phrases, or sentences. The researcher as the main instruments in this research manually collected and analyzed the data from the movie. To gain the trustworthiness of the data, the data are repeatedly checked by the researcher and some friends in a triangulation process.

The research shows three crucial findings. First, there are three types of verbal humor. They are wordplay, allusion, and verbal irony. The most frequent type that appears in the research is verbal irony. Ironic repetitions become amusing verbal humor in the movie. Ironic repetitions are represented by the main character in the movie. The type of verbal irony is increasing the strength of questioning and automatic influence and also increase the probability of recollection of earlier asking, a consciously controlled use memory. Second, the translator used seven subtitling strategies in subtitling English verbal humor expressions in the movie. The most frequent strategy is transfer, because the translator focuses in meaning instead of in verbal humor. Third, the translator is succeeding in transferring the English verbal humor expressions. The result of the research shows that 39 data from 73 data of verbal humor in this research are considered as fully equivalent; 30 data are considered as partly equivalent; 4 data are considered as fully non equivalent; and there is no datum considered as no meaning at all.

Keywords: verbal humor, subtitling strategies, degree of meaning equivalence

## INTRODUCTION

Translation has become the most important thing in processing different languages all over the world. It is a process of changing one language into another language. The pivotal function of the translation can be seen in every aspect of daily life. Translation plays a significant role as a bridge of communication among people, communities, and countries. In the modern technology, translation is becoming a window to open the world. People can get more information, knowledge, and news from every country in the world. They can enjoy watching and understanding the dialogue of the movie or news from another country easily with the subtitle on the screen. It is also important in the academic major, helping the students to know more material about their lessons,

there are many books translated for studying in the school adapted from another country used in the school.

Translation is a process of transferring message from the source language to the target language. It is necessary to understand the process of translation, and also to know translation deeper. According to Nida and Taber (1974: 12) translating consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style. The result from the source language should be equivalent into the target language to understand by the reader. The result should also translate the culture in the source language into the target language correctly.

It is not easy to be a translator; there are many steps that must be passed to

be a good translator. According to the definitions of translation from Nida and Taber, it needs a deeper understanding on both the source language and the target language to deliver the message from the text easily to be understood by target readers. The translator should understand about linguistic aspects to make the texts equivalent. However, it is not only linguistic aspect but also geographical, and socio-cultural aspects to be considered to make it meaningful in the target text.

In the modern era, technology rises rapidly. It becomes easier for the people in the world to access everything needed. One of the favorites is accessing entertainment. Film is an entertainment that can be accessed in YouTube or watched in the movie theatre. There are many kinds of films in movie theaters, Indonesian or local film and foreign film. In local films,

there is no problem for most of the audience to understand the dialogue. However, foreign films, especially English films, still pose a crucial problem that many local people are still unfamiliar with English. The best way to solve this problem is by using audio visual media subtitling. It is translation texts written on the screen which represents the spoken language.

Subtitling becomes a crucial bridge in conveying the message from foreign films or TV programs. Subtitle helps the target audience to understand the dialogue or the meaning of the content in the source language. It is conveyed by the texts on the screen as what the dialogue in the films or TV programs expresses. In addition, subtitle becomes an inevitable part of audio-visual media translation.

In the last fifteen years, the development of cinema industry

increase rapidly. There are many movies produced and shared in foreign countries especially Indonesia. Those movies are divided into some genres such as drama, thriller, horror, and comedy. Each of the movies has their different style, difficulty, and content in translating the text. Different from others, comedy needs some formula in translating text. *Kung Fu Panda 3* is one of the foreign comedy films that has been translated into Indonesian.

*Kung Fu Panda 3* is one of the most favorite animated films that has been watched in many countries. According to Rottentomatoes.com, one of the film review websites, this film has various audiences, ranging from children to adults. Moreover, it is also an example of comedy films using verbal humor to create a humorous nuance within. However, the problems appear when the source of the humorous dialogue

cannot be rendered well in the target audiences, whereas humor is an enchantment in this film.

This research discusses the subtitle of *Kung Fu Panda 3*. Thus, the research discusses several subtitling strategies used by the translator to render the humorous atmosphere for the target audience. In addition, the discussion stretches in how the translator preserved the atmosphere of humor in the source language. This analysis of subtitling strategies of verbal humor will give knowledge to the target audience. Sometimes the translator fails in translating the humor, because of the rules of subtitling itself. Hence, improvisation and creativity of the translator are needed to minimize the mistake and to produce a good translation product.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study is categorized as descriptive qualitative research. According to Bogdan and Binklen (1982: 28), descriptive qualitative research concerns providing description of a phenomenon that occurs naturally without any intervention of an experiment or an artificially contrived treatment.

The data of this research are the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text. Meanwhile, the units of analysis within which English verbal humor expressions and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions are located may be words, phrases, or sentences. There were two instruments in this research. The first as main instrument was the researcher that acts as the planner, the data collector, the observer, the analyst,

and the reporter of the findings. The second instrument included data sheets, tables, books, internet, and laptop. The techniques of data collection of this research used three steps. First, the researcher watched the movie to see all of the phenomena of the research, while reading the script of English text and their bahasa Indonesia subtitling text. Second, identifying all of English verbal humor expressions from the source text or English language and put it into the table as the data 1. Third, identifying the subtitle text of verbal humor of source language or bahasa Indonesia and put it into the table as the data 2.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

This findings is divided in three parts. The first part is the types of verbal humor in English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3*

movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text. In the first part, the findings focus on the types of verbal humor of *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text. The second part is the subtitling strategies used by the translator in translating the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text. Then, the third part or the last part is the degree of meaning equivalence in the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text. Each of the data in the table contains frequency and percentage.

Table 1. Types of Verbal Humor by the Character in *Kung Fu Panda 3* Movie Text

N O	Verbal Humor	Fre q	%
1.	<b>Wordplay</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18%</b>

	Homonymy	<b>3</b>	<b>4.11%</b>
	Homophony	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
	Homograph	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
	Paronymy	<b>10</b>	<b>13.70%</b>
	Polysemy	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Allusion</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16%</b>
	Proper Name	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
	Key Phrase	<b>12</b>	<b>16.44%</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Verbal Irony</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>66%</b>
	Hyperbolic Expression	<b>12</b>	<b>16.44%</b>
	Tag Questions	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
	Hyperformality	<b>4</b>	<b>5.48%</b>
	Intensifiers	<b>8</b>	<b>10.96%</b>
	Interjection	<b>11</b>	<b>15.07%</b>
	Ironic Repetition	<b>13</b>	<b>17.81%</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the table 2, verbal irony appears as the most frequent type of verbal humor in 66% of the data. It is followed by wordplay in the second rank with 18% of the data and allusion as the third rank with 16% of the data. It can also be concluded that verbal irony is the most amusing verbal humor in *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie to amuse the viewers. There are two types of wordplay that appear in *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text: homonymy and paronymy. From two kinds of Allusion, there is only key phrase allusion that appears in the movie.

Table2. Subtitling Strategies of Translation Verbal Humor in *Kung Fu Panda 3* Movie Text

<b>N O</b>	<b>Subtitling Strategies</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	Expansion	6	8.22%
2.	Paraphrase	23	31.51%
3.	Transfer	36	49.32%
4.	Imitation	1	1.37%
5.	Transcription	3	4.11%
6.	Dislocation	0	0.00%
7.	Condensation	0	0.00%
8.	Decimation	0	0.00%
9.	Deletion	2	2.74%
10.	Resignation	2	2.74%
<b>TOTAL</b>		73	100%

From the table above, according to

Table 3 that transfer becomes the most frequent subtitling strategy used by the translator in translating the verbal humor dialogue. The second rank is paraphrase and the third rank is expansion. Furthermore, the high percentage of transfer as a subtitling strategy indicates that the translator attempted to translate the humor with the same impression and understanding as what is appeared in the source text into the target text. The translator also

tried to express the meaning of humor completely with the same meaning words without addition or deletion.

Some humors can be maintained well in the target text but there are some translations that cannot catch the humor.

Table3. The Frequencies of the Degree of Meaning Equivalence of the Translation of Verbal Humor in *Kung Fu Panda 3* Movie Text.

<b>Degree of Equivalence</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>
Fully Equivalent	39	53.42%
Partly Equivalent in Meaning	16	21.92%
Partly Equivalent in Verbal Humor	14	19.18%
Fully Non Equivalent	4	5.48%
No Meaning at All	0	0.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	73	100%

From the table above, it is found that there are 39 data or 53.42% in this research belonging to fully equivalent. Moreover, 14 data are considered as partly equivalent in meaning or 19.18%, 16 data are considered as partly equivalent in verbal humor or

21.92% and 4 data or 5.48% are considered as fully non equivalent. There is no data considered as no meaning at all.

## B. Discussion

### 1. Wordplay

#### a. Homonymy

SL:  
 PO : Oh, no! **fire!**  
 GOOSE : **Fire**  
 PO : Stop! Sorry, my fault  
 TL:  
 PO : Oh, tidak!  
**Kebakaran!**  
 GOOSE : **Tembak**  
 PO : Berhenti! Maaf, salahku  
 (Datum number 9: 009/WP-Hm/Trf/Full)

From the example above, the expression of homonymy is expressed in the word *fire*. When Po warns his friend Tigress, there is a fire behind her. The funny accident appears when the expression *fire* said by Po to warn his friend Tigress, he warns Tigress there is a fire in her tail, but the goose knows that is an order to shoot the fire that they hold to light up the light. The accident

happens in the first day Po's teaching kung fu. The misperception between Po and the geese create humorous effect or amusement. Using a word with same sound and spelling but different in meaning is effective in verbal humor expression.

#### b. Paronymy

SL:  
 KAI : I have taken the chi of every master here, and soon I will have your power, too  
 MR OOGWAY : When will you realize? The **more you take, the less you have**  
 TL:  
 KAI : Aku telah mengambil chi dari semua ahli silat  
 MR OOGWAY : **Semakin banyak kau rampas, semakin sedikit kau miliki.**  
 (Datum 02: 002/WP-Pr/Trf/Full)

Kai takes Oogway's chi after their battle in the spirit realm. Oogway lost at that battle, so Kai can get his chi. Before his chi is taken by Kai fully, he told to Kai *the more you take, the less you have*. That words give an advice to Kai with everything what he has done doesn't mean anything.

## 2. Allusion

## Key Phrase Allusion

SL:

MONKEY : **Maybe they are all at the party**

VIPER : Monkey

MONKEY : **I didn't get invited either**

TL:

MONKEY : **Mungkin mereka semua sedang ada di dalam sebuah pesta**

VIPER : Monkey

MONKEY : **Aku juga tidak diundang**

(Datum number: 48; 048/AL-Kp/Pp/E3)

The expressions *maybe they are all at party* and *I didn't get invited either* include key phrase allusion. These allusion utterances are to allude all the warriors in China caught by Kai. The humor arises when they get a letter informing that all the warriors have been caught by Kai and Monkey says *maybe they are all at party* and *I didn't get invited either*. Monkey is allusive why all of the warrior can be caught by Kai in the same time.

## 3. Verbal Irony

## a. Hyperbolic Expression

SL:

PO : **Guys, guys, you're never gonna guess who just showed. Not in million years. You just try**

ALL : Your father

PO : Whoa, how did you just guess that?

TL:

PO : **Kawan-kawan, kau tidak akan tahu siapa yang muncul Langka sekali. Kau tidak bisa. Coba saja**

ALL : Ayahmu

PO : Wow, bagaimana kau menebak itu?

(Datum number: 29; 029/VI-Hy/Res/Diff)

Po tries to introduce his father with the hyperbolic word. The hyperbolic expression arises when Po says *not in million years. Not in million years* include the hyperbolic expression of the expression of number. Po tries to exaggerate what he says. He makes irony about the time through the number in his utterance.

## b. Hyperformality

SL:

PO : **Yee-haw, you guys aren't doing the dramatic pose, are you?**

MANTIS : Do we have to strike a pose every time we land?

TL:  
PO : **Yii-haw, kalian tidak melakukan pose tubuh yang dramatis, bukankah begitu?**

MANTIS : Apa kita harus berpose tiap kali mendarat?  
(Datum number: 03: 003/VI-Hf/Pp/Full)

Po asks his friend why they do not pose when they land. The hyperformality in this datum can be found when Po asks his friends to do pose. Those words show how Po asks his friends in the formal ways which have a little meaning and will not affect what happens. It is like in the scene when Po and his friends are landing in the land. He asks his friends to pose dramatically with the formal question.

#### c. Intensifiers

SL:  
VIPER : Do you really think Po can master chi in time?

SHIFU : Doesn't matters what I think, it only matters what the universe thinks

MANTIS : **So, that's a "no"?**

TL:  
VIPER : Apa kamu benar-benar mengira Po bisa menguasai chi dengan tepat waktu?

SHIFU : Tidak penting apa pendapatku. Yang penting adalah apa yang dipikirkan alam semestanya

MANTIS : **Jadi, jawabannya adalah tidak?**  
(Datum number: 34: 034/VI-In/Pp/Full)

Mantis' utterance *So that's a no?* is considered as intensifiers. It can be a resume or question from Mantis. This expression is pointed to unsure that Po will be mastered chi in the right time. The intensifiers in this datum can be found in the word 'so'. Mantis emphasizes his resume or question to show his unsure feeling with Po. It brings a humorous in the conversation indirectly.

#### d. Interjection

SL:  
PO : **Wow, What was that?**

SHIFU : **That was chi**  
PO : **Wow, what's chi?**

TL:  
PO : **Wow apa itu tadi?**

SHIFU : **Itu adalah chi**  
PO : **Wah chi itu apa?**  
(Datum number: 15: 015/VI-Ij/Trc/Full)

Po says *wow* to show his impression about Shifu's move. The irony part is Po doing something terrible to Shifu. He says *Wow* but he does not know what the meaning of *Chi* is. The humorous part appears when he emphasizes the word *wow* to show his surprise in the move but actually he does not know what is *chi*.

#### e. Ironic Repetition

SL:

LI SHAN : Okay, I guess it would be cruel to make you fly back

PO : **You can fly?**

MR PING : **I'm a bird po.**

TL:

LI SHAN : Oke, aku rasa kejam untuk menyuruhmu terbang kembali ke rumah.

PO : **Kamu bisa terbang?**

MR PING : **Aku seekor burung Po.**

(Datum number 39: 039/VI-Ir/Trf/Full)

Po surprised that Mr Ping or his father can fly. Mr Ping answers that he can fly because he is a bird. After 20 years, he live with Mr Ping, Po still does not know that Mr Ping is a bird. The humorous irony arises when Po

still asks him about who he is. The smoothness of Po arises the laughter of viewers.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis in the findings in Chapter IV, the source text finding 73 data of verbal humor. They are wordplay, allusion, and verbal irony. Verbal Irony becomes the most frequent type of verbal humor in the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text. Wordplay is considered as the second most frequent occurrence, then allusion is considered as the third of verbal humor appears in the movie. It can be concluded that verbal irony is the most amusing and entertain verbal humor in the English verbal humor expressions in the *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text and

their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text.

Related to the second objective, the subtitling strategies of English verbal humor expressions in the Kung Fu Panda 3 movie text and their bahasa Indonesia translated expressions in the subtitling text, there are seven strategies applied by the translator. Transfer (49.32%) becomes the most frequent occurrence in the Indonesian subtitling of *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie text. The second rank is paraphrase (31.51%) and the third rank is expansion (8.22%).

In the third objective, it can be concluded that 53.42% (39 data) of the translation of verbal humor in *Kung Fu Panda 3* movies is fully equivalent. There are 21.92% (16 data) that is considered as partly equivalent in meaning and 19.18% (14 data) that considered as partly equivalent in

verbal humor. It indicates that more than half of the verbal humor in *Kung Fu Panda 3* movie can still maintain both the verbal humor and the meaning.

## REFERENCES

- Bell, R. T. 1991. *Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice*. London and New York: Longman Group UK Ltd.
- Gotlieb, H. 1998. Subtitling. In Baker, M. (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Nida, E. A. and Taber. C. R. 2003. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: Brill.
- Spanakaki, K. 2007. *Translating Humor for Subtitling*. <http://www.bokorlang.com/journal/40humor.htm/>. Retrieved on October 19,2014.