

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The field of audiovisual translation, specifically the translation of comedy, is most definitely an important and frequently complex area of academic study (Pérez-González, 2017). With its particularly slice-of-life brand of modern American teenage comedy, the television series *Victorious* provides a corpus from which to sample the layered translation discourse surrounding humor as it operates not just as a dynamic linguistic medium but also as a reflective product of cultural currency.

Created by Dan Schneider and aired on Nickelodeon from March 2010 to February 2013, *Victorious* stands out among teen sitcoms. The story follows Tori Vega (Victoria Justice), a talented high school student who gets accepted into Hollywood Arts, a performing arts school where she navigates friendships, performances, and chaotic school life. The humor in the show is layered, consisting of witty dialogue, situational jokes, unique character humor, and pop culture references, all of which are targeted at a teen audience.

The field of audiovisual translation, particularly comedy translation, presents unique linguistic and cultural challenges. Comedy is inherently complex, as it relies on various elements such as wordplay, irony, satire, and cultural references, all of which must be effectively translated without losing their humorous impact (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021). This study focuses on analyzing the translation techniques used in the subtitling of comedic elements in the American television series *Victorious*. By examining how different forms of humor—such as slapstick, wordplay, irony, and situational comedy—are preserved, adapted, or altered in translation, this study aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of various subtitling strategies. This explain how well different translation techniques work when they are used to translate comedy in subtitles—especially in the *Victorious* series. Using a qualitative descriptive approach and content analysis, this research identified techniques such as literal translation, adaptation, localization, omission, and others. By comparing the original English dialogues with their

translated subtitles, it assessed whether these strategies successfully maintain the comedic intent of the source material.

The significance of comedy translation extends far beyond mere linguistic conversion. It involves a complex way of connecting and adjusting between cultures, where translators navigate the delicate balance between preserving the original comedic intent and making the humor accessible and resonant for diverse international audiences. Each comedic element—be it a pun, a cultural reference, or a nuanced character interaction—represents a complex translational challenge that requires deep linguistic competence, cultural understanding, and creative adaptation.

Humor, by its very nature, is deeply rooted in cultural specificity. As noted by translation scholar like Chiaro (2010), comedic translation involves more than literal word-for-word translation. Translator becomes not just a linguistic mediator but a cultural interpreter, making strategic decisions that can either preserve or fundamentally alter the original comedic experience (Dore, 2012, p. 2).

Translating comedy in a TV show like *Victorious* is not easy because it comes with many challenges. The humor in the show appears in different forms, such as fast-paced conversations, tricky wordplay, jokes that match each character's personality, cultural references from American teen life, and even musical or performance-related humor. There is also situational comedy that depends on the characters' reactions and interactions.

By focusing on *Victorious*, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of comedy translation techniques, exploring how comedic elements are preserved, adapted, or potentially lost in translation. The research examine dubbing and subtitling strategies across multiple language translations, offering insights into the complex processes of rendering American teen comedy for global audiences (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021).

The researcher chose *Victorious* series as the main source of data for this study because of its unique style of comedy. The show combines different kinds of humor, like smart wordplay, funny situations, strong character personalities, and jokes that refer to itself or media in general. These tons of humor make *Victorious* a good example for studying various types of comedy and how they are translated.

This series uses many different types of jokes—like wordplay, silly situations, and character-based humor. Because the humor is so varied, the show is a great choice to see how each kind of joke is translated into another language, especially in subtitles. The series also uses fast and tricky jokes, many cultural references from American teen life, and musical comedy, which are not easy to translate and create interesting challenges to understand. Victorious series includes jokes that are spoken quickly, use clever or hard-to-translate words, and refer to American teen culture (like school, slang, or celebrities). It also has jokes in songs. These things can be difficult to change into another language while keeping the humor. Because of that, the series gives a lot of challenges, making it interesting to study how to deal with those problems. These features help the researcher explore how humor is adapted for audiences from different cultures. In addition, Victorious reflects some of the bigger issues in audiovisual translation, like cultural differences and how people understand translated media, which makes it a good case study for research on subtitling. Lastly, since not many studies have focused on the translation of humor in Victorious, this research is considered new and important, and it helps fill a gap in the academic field.

The benefits of this research are clearly explained in the significance of the study. It gives contributions to both academic and real-life translation work. For translation and media studies, this research provides a detailed example of how humor is translated in a well-known TV series, which can help support and improve existing theories. Practically, it is also helpful for translators and language experts because it shows what techniques work best to keep the humor in translations. This can help improve the way they work. Media producers can also learn from this study to make better comedy translations for global audiences, so the jokes still feel funny across cultures. Viewers can enjoy translations that feel more natural and entertaining, which can help build better understanding between different cultures. This study uses Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques to look closely at how jokes are translated, making the research clear and dependable. In general, this study helps improve how people understand and practice humor translation.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

Despite the global reach of *Victorious*, there remains a significant gap in scholarly research focusing on how its comedic elements are translated for non-English-speaking audiences. This creates an important question that is what translation techniques do translators employ to preserve the humour inherent in the original dialogue?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the translation techniques used in *Victorious* to effectively convey its comedic elements. By examining selected episodes that showcase various forms of humour—such as puns, slapstick, and situational comedy—this research seeks to identify which techniques are most effective in maintaining the comedic essence while considering cultural nuances. Additionally, this study aims to assess how these techniques influence audience perception and enjoyment of the series across different linguistic backgrounds.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research holds significance for various stakeholders in both academic and professional fields. For translators and linguists, it offers valuable insights into effective strategies for translating humor, potentially enhancing their skills and methodologies for more successful comedic adaptations. Media producers may also benefit from the study by gaining a better understanding of translation techniques that ensure humor resonates across diverse international audiences, supporting more effective global content distribution. Academically, the findings contribute to the disciplines of translation studies and media studies by presenting a detailed case study of a well-known comedic television series. Finally, for audiences, improved translations lead to a more authentic representation of humor in the original content, thereby enriching the viewing experience and fostering greater cross-cultural understanding.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

This research uses a qualitative method to understand how humor is translated in the Victorious series subtitles. This method helps the researcher explore language in depth, especially when it comes to jokes, sarcasm, and wordplay that can be hard to translate. Instead of using numbers or statistics, this method focuses on words and meanings. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), this kind of research is useful for studying problems where we need to understand people's experiences, language, or situations more deeply. In this study, the researcher tries to explain how the humor from English is translated into Indonesian and what strategies are used to keep the humor clear and funny for Indonesian viewers.

The researcher collected the data by selecting 19 episodes from Season 1 of Victorious that contain humorous dialogues. The English subtitles and their Indonesian translations were transcribed and paired. Then, the researcher identified parts that contain humor, such as sarcasm, wordplay, and situational comedy, based on humor theory by Chiaro (2010). After identifying the humor types, the researcher analyzed the translation using the theory of Molina and Albir (2002), who introduced 18 translation techniques. Each subtitle was categorized to see which technique was used and which technique appeared most often. This step helped the researcher understand how translators deal with different kinds of humor and what strategies are used to make the jokes work for Indonesian viewers.

1.5.1 Research Type

The research uses a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the translation techniques used in the humorous subtitles of the Victorious series. According to Creswell (2018), a qualitative research approach is designed to explore and understand social issues by examining people's experiences, behaviors, or perspectives in depth. This method focuses more on words and meaning rather than numbers. It is suitable for this study because the data involves interpreting jokes, sarcasm, and wordplay—things that require explanation, not calculation. To support this, (Ary et al., 2018) also explain that qualitative research helps the researcher find patterns and understand the meaning behind language-based data. In this case,

the researcher aims to explain how humor in the Victorious series is translated from English into Indonesian.

1.5.2 Data Collection Methods

The data were collected by observing and transcribing verbal humor instances from selected episodes of Victorious Season 1. English subtitles were compared with their Indonesian translations to identify humorous segments such as sarcasm, puns, and exaggerations. These segments were selected based on their relevance to the research focus. The researcher documented both versions (source and target language) and made initial notes to help in the theme development process.

1. Selection of Episodes: The researcher selected 19 episodes from Victorious Season 1 that contain rich comedic elements.
2. Transcription of Comedic Dialogues: The dialogues featuring humor (such as puns, slapstick, irony, and wordplay) were transcribed from the original English version along with their corresponding subtitles in the target language.
3. Classification of Comedy Elements: The comedic instances were categorized based on established humor theories, such as slapstick, dark comedy, and situational comedy.
4. Identification of Translation Techniques: The researcher analyzed how these comedic elements were translated using theoretical frameworks from audiovisual translation, including strategies like localization, adaptation, omission, and direct translation.

1.5.3 Data Analysis Methods

This study uses content analysis as the method for examining how humor is translated in the English subtitles of the series. According to Holsti, content analysis is a technique for making inferences by objectively, systematically, and generally identifying specific characteristics of a message. The data in this study consists of subtitle texts from Season 1, which were analyzed to uncover patterns in translation techniques used to convey humor (cited in Sianipar et al., 2025).

The steps of the content analysis followed the model described by Sitasari (2022). First, the researcher formulated research questions related to the translation of humor and the techniques applied. Then, data was selected by sampling episodes from Season 1. Next, categories were developed based on Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques and types of humor found in the series. After that, the researcher recorded and coded examples of translated humor using these categories. Scales and items were created to classify translation techniques and their functions in preserving or adapting humor. Finally, the researcher interpreted the findings to identify how humor was handled in translation, what patterns emerged, and how cultural or linguistic elements were adjusted through specific strategies.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on analyzing the translation techniques used to translate the humorous parts in the subtitles of *Victorious*, based on Molina and Albir's (2002) theory, which includes 18 types of translation techniques (such as adaptation, literal translation, compensation, and modulation). The research is limited to several episodes from Season 1 of the series. Season 1 of *Victorious* was selected not only for its concentrated use of verbal humor but also because it received consistently positive feedback from viewers. According to *rottentomatoes.com* page, Season 1 holds a solid audience rating, reflecting the show's strong debut and its appeal through witty dialogue and comedic timing. By focusing on a well-received season, the study ensures that the humor analyzed is both relevant and representative of what audiences found effective, making it a meaningful basis for examining the translation of humor into Indonesian. By limiting the study to just Season 1, the researcher was able to do a more detailed analysis and better understand the translation choices in a smaller, more manageable set of data. The study has several limitations. It only analyzes the subtitle text, without considering visuals or audio elements. It does not measure audience response or how well the humor is received. Also, space and time limits in subtitling may lead to simplified or shortened translations.

1.7 Status of the Study

As of now, preliminary research has been conducted, including extensive literature reviews on translation techniques and analyses related to humour in translation. Initial episode selections have been made based on their rich comedic content. The next steps involve detailed data collection through textual analysis.

Several previous studies have examined the challenges of translating humor in TV shows and movies, providing useful ideas for this research. Hikma & Mahmud (2023) in their *Humor In Film Of The Suicide Squad (2021) By James Gunn* looks at how Netflix adapts humor in movie like *Suicide Squad*, showing that some jokes are removed or simplified for global viewers—a problem also found in *Victorious* series. Zahara & Ernawati (2021) in *Analysis Of Puns On Nyenyas T-Shirt Products In Palembang* studies finds that direct translation rarely works, while replacing jokes with similar ones keeps the humor—useful for *Victorious*'s playful language. The next one, Jing (2020) in her study titled *Verbal Humor in Modern Family from the Perspective of Cooperative Principle* is focuses on humor in the original English dialogues, the present study explores how comedic elements in the sitcom *Victorious* are rendered in Indonesian using Molina and Albir's translation techniques, and finally, Narayana (2023) analyzes the cultural terms in the film *Ngeri Ngeri Sedap* using the translation techniques proposed by Molina and Albir.

This research stands apart by specifically targeting *Victorious*'s teen-oriented humor, combining analysis of verbal wit, situational comedy, and cultural references—a gap in existing literature. Unlike prior works that examined single humor types or broader genres, this research employs Molina & Albir's (2002) systematic framework to evaluate multiple comedic forms within one series. Additionally, it focuses on Indonesian audience reception, offering new perspectives on non-western humor adaptation. By emphasizing creative techniques like compensation and localization, this project aims to advance understanding of how multilayered comedy can be effectively translated for global audiences.

1.8 Organization of the Study

1. Chapter I: Introduction.

Consists of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Significance of the Study, Methodology of the Study, Scope and Limitation of the Study, Status of the Study, and Organization of the Study.

2. Chapter II: Review of Related Literature.

3. Chapter III: Findings and Discussion.

4. Chapter IV: Conclusion and Suggestion.

