

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Humor is generally understood as a form of expression that aims to amuse and entertain, often resulting in laughter or enjoyment. It can appear in many forms, such as jokes, short stories, satire, irony, and wordplay, all of which depend on shared knowledge and context between the speaker and the audience. According to Chiaro (2010), humor is closely related to language and culture, meaning that what is considered humorous often depends on the audience's ability to recognize particular linguistic and cultural references. Humor is not only intended to make people laugh but can also function as a means of conveying ideas, criticism, and social messages in an engaging way. Because humor relies heavily on interpretation, the same humorous expression may be understood differently by different people depending on their experiences, cultural background, and personal perspectives.

Building on this idea, humor can also be seen as something subjective, since what one person finds funny may not be funny to someone else. This subjectivity allows people to interpret humor from different perspectives, influenced by factors such as morality, social norms, and timing. According to Shade (1996), humor can be divided into four categories, namely verbal, figural, visual, and aural humor. Among these categories, verbal humor becomes the focus of this research because it relies on the use of language to create humorous effects through contradiction, exaggeration, surprise, or reversal. Shade (1996) further classifies verbal humor into twelve categories, namely pun, riddle, joke, satire, limerick, parody, anecdote, farce, irony, sarcasm, tall tale, and wit. Verbal humor in this study is defined as humor that is constructed through linguistic elements in dialogue, such as words, phrases, and sentences, which create humorous effects through meaning and contextual interpretation.

As explained by Shade (1996), verbal humor can appear in different forms, such as puns, sarcasm, irony, satire, and wit, all of which require a certain level of language

and cultural understanding. Since verbal humor often depends on how words and expressions are used in a specific context, audiences need to understand not only the language itself but also the cultural meaning behind it. Because of this, verbal humor can be difficult to understand, especially for people who are not native speakers. For instance, the English pun “Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana” creates humor through the double meaning of the word “flies,” which can refer either to the movement of time or to insects. This type of wordplay relies heavily on linguistic knowledge and may not be easily understood by audiences from different language backgrounds. The humorous effect arises from ambiguity and the shifting interpretation of a single lexical item within different contexts.

The challenge becomes even greater when verbal humor is translated into another language, such as Indonesian, because differences in language and culture may affect its meaning and humorous effect. In some cases, the humor can be maintained, while in others it may be altered or even lost. For example, the joke “I used to be a banker, but I lost interest” contains wordplay on the word “interest,” which refers both to financial interest and personal enthusiasm. When translated into Indonesian as “Dulu saya seorang bankir, tetapi saya kehilangan minat,” the general meaning is preserved, but the double meaning that creates the humor is reduced. Therefore, discussing verbal humor naturally leads to the topic of translation. Translation is the process of transferring meaning from a source language into a target language while attempting to preserve the intended message. However, translation involves more than simply replacing words; it also requires adapting meaning to suit the linguistic and cultural context of the target audience.

According to Chiaro (2010), translating humor is particularly challenging because humorous expressions often depend on language-specific features and cultural references that may not exist in the target language. As a result, careful linguistic choices are needed to preserve both meaning and humor. Understanding how humor is translated is important because humor frequently depends on language, culture, and context, making it difficult to transfer into another language without affecting its original impact.

To better understand how humor is transferred between languages, the concept of translation techniques becomes important. Molina and Albir (2002) define translation techniques as procedures used to transfer meaning from the source language into the target language in specific situations. Their framework consists of eighteen translation techniques, including borrowing, literal translation, modulation, adaptation, and compensation. Some techniques attempt to preserve the original form, while others allow adjustments to accommodate linguistic and cultural differences. In the translation of humor, these techniques play an important role in determining whether the humorous effect is maintained, modified, or lost. Therefore, Molina and Albir's framework provides a useful tool for analyzing how verbal humor is rendered in translation.

In recent years, humor has become an important element in entertainment media, particularly in films that rely on dialogue to create comedic effects and engage audiences. One film that strongly presents verbal humor in its conversations is *Barbie* (2023). The film contains various forms of verbal humor which are conveyed through interactions between the characters, making these humorous dialogues relevant for linguistic and translation analysis. The researcher chose *Barbie* (2023) as the source of data in this study because it provides a rich source of verbal humor that can be classified using Shade's (1996) theory and analyzed through Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques, and the researcher's personal interest in the film as a comedy movie further contributed to its selection, as the humor is delivered entertainingly while also conveying social commentary; beyond personal interest, the researcher also intends to demonstrate that *Barbie* (2023), which is often perceived primarily as a film addressing social issues such as feminism and patriarchy, in fact contains a substantial amount of verbal humor that is worth identifying, classifying, and examining from a translation perspective, making it an appropriate object for investigating verbal humor and its translation.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

1. What types of verbal humor are found in *Barbie* (2023)?
2. How is the verbal humor in *Barbie* (2023) translated into Indonesian subtitles using Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

1. To identify and classify verbal humor found in *Barbie* (2023).
2. To analyze how verbal humor in *Barbie* (2023) is translated into Indonesian subtitles using Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques.

1.4 Significance of the Study

1. This research provides a deeper understanding of the types of humor that appear in the movie *Barbie* (2023) according to the Shade's theory.
2. This research contributes to the field of translation studies by analyzing how humor is translated from source language to the target language using translation techniques, which will contribute to the broader field of humor translation.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meanings that individuals or groups give to social or human issues. A descriptive qualitative approach was suitable for this study because the research focused on understanding and describing verbal humor in its context. The study examined how humor was created through words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and short dialogue exchanges spoken by the characters in *Barbie* (2023). It also examined how these humorous expressions were translated from English into Indonesian. The findings were explained through descriptions and interpretations rather than statistical testing.

Content analysis was used to examine the meaning of each humorous utterance within the context of the film. Krippendorff (2004) defines content analysis as a

systematic research method used to examine and interpret meanings found in texts, speech, and other forms of communication. Through this method, researchers can identify patterns, categories, and meanings in the data. Content analysis was appropriate for this study because verbal humor in a film cannot always be understood from the spoken words alone. Its meaning may also depend on the speaker, the relationship between the characters, the situation in the scene, the visual elements, and the dialogue that appears before or after the humorous utterance.

This study applies Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) as the method of data analysis. According to Mayring (2021), qualitative content analysis is a systematic and theory-guided approach to analyzing textual data by developing categories and interpreting meaning within its context. Schreier (2012) further explains that QCA is a method used to systematically describe the meaning of qualitative data by organizing relevant segments into categories within a coding frame, which can be developed either inductively from the data or deductively based on existing theories. Through this approach, textual data can be examined systematically by identifying, classifying, and interpreting patterns of meaning found in the text.

In conducting the analysis, this study adopts three stages of Qualitative Content Analysis adapted from Bengtsson (2016). The steps are as follows:

1. Open Coding

In this stage, the researcher carefully watched the film *Barbie* (2023) repeatedly to gain a thorough understanding of the storyline, character interactions, and contextual meanings of the dialogues. Each utterance identified as containing verbal humor was given a preliminary label based on its linguistic features and the context in which it appeared. The selected data consist of words, phrases, and sentences that contain verbal humor relevant to the objectives of this study. In addition, the English dialogue transcript and the Indonesian subtitle version were collected and compared to support the identification of meaning and translation differences.

2. Recontextualization

In this stage, each utterance that had been given a preliminary label during open coding was re-examined in its full situational context. This includes considering the speaker, the relationship between characters, the setting of the scene, and the surrounding dialogue. This step is important because verbal humor in film cannot be fully understood from linguistic form alone, as its meaning and humorous effect are strongly influenced by context. By re-evaluating each coded utterance within its original context, the researcher ensured that the identification of verbal humor was accurate and consistent with the intended meaning in the film.

3. Categorization and Compilation

In this final stage, the refined data from the recontextualization process were categorized based on the theoretical frameworks used in this study. The classification of verbal humor follows Shade (1996), which divides verbal humor into twelve types: pun, riddle, joke, satire, limerick, parody, anecdote, farce, irony, sarcasm, tall tale, and wit. Meanwhile, the analysis of translation techniques applied in the Indonesian subtitles follows Molina and Albir (2002), which consists of eighteen translation techniques, including adaptation, borrowing, established equivalent, description, amplification, calque, compensation, discursive creation, generalization, linguistic amplification, linguistic compression, literal translation, modulation, particularization, reduction, substitution, transposition, and variation. After categorization, the data were compiled into tables and analyzed to identify patterns and to answer the research questions of the study.

In this study, Shade's (1996) theory of verbal humor was used to identify and classify the humorous utterances found in *Barbie* (2023). Shade classifies verbal humor into twelve types: pun, riddle, joke, satire, limerick, parody, anecdote, farce, irony, sarcasm, tall tale, and wit. Molina and Albir's (2002) theory was then used to identify the techniques applied in translating the humorous expressions into Indonesian. These

theories provided clear categories that helped the researcher examine the data in a systematic and consistent way.

The data in this research were taken from two sources. The English dialogue transcript of *Barbie* (2023) was used as the source text, while the Indonesian subtitle obtained from the version available on Idlix was used as the target text. The English dialogue and Indonesian subtitle were compared to examine how verbal humor in the original dialogue was translated into Indonesian. The data consisted of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and short dialogue exchanges that contained verbal humor. A short dialogue exchange was included when the humorous meaning could not be understood from one sentence alone. In such cases, the researcher included the relevant lines spoken before or after the main humorous expression.

The researcher also recorded the speaker, timestamp, and context of each scene. This information was needed because the context helped explain why an utterance was humorous. Information about the film version, film duration, subtitle source, and date of access was also recorded. These details made the data source clear and easier to check. This was important because different subtitle versions may contain different word choices and translation results.

The data are collected using documentation techniques. The documentation process involved watching the film *Barbie* (2023) repeatedly and collecting the full English script in order to understand the contextual meaning behind the utterances and matching the dialogues with the Indonesian subtitles. After that, the researcher selected utterances that contain verbal humor based on Shade's (1996) theory, focusing on linguistic expressions such as words, phrases, and sentences that create humorous effects within the dialogue.

The researcher marked utterances that created humor through wordplay, contradiction, exaggeration, criticism, double meaning, unexpected responses, cultural references, and other verbal features. After identifying a possible humorous utterance, the researcher collected the relevant English dialogue from the transcript and matched it with the Indonesian subtitle. The scene was replayed when necessary to ensure that the English dialogue was paired with the correct subtitle. Each datum was then recorded

in a data sheet containing the datum number, speaker, English dialogue, Indonesian subtitle, timestamp, and a brief description of the scene.

The researcher checked the collected data by replaying the relevant scenes. Utterances that relied solely on physical actions or visual comedy without any spoken language were excluded from the data. However, if a scene contained both visual elements and verbal expressions, the verbal utterances were still included as data. This process ensured that the study remained focused on verbal humor expressed through language. It also helped the researcher avoid including dialogues that appeared humorous only because of gestures, facial expressions, or other visual actions.

In analyzing the data, the researcher first identified humorous utterances in the English dialogue of *Barbie* (2023). Each utterance was examined together with its situational context. The researcher considered who produced the utterance, to whom it was addressed, the relationship between the characters, the situation in the scene, and the dialogue that appeared before and after it. These contextual elements helped the researcher understand the meaning of the utterance and the reason it created humor.

The researcher then examined the main mechanism that produced humor in each datum. The analysis focused on features such as wordplay, double meaning, contradiction, exaggeration, criticism, unexpected responses, and cultural references. Based on these features, each datum was classified using Shade's (1996) theory of verbal humor. One dominant humor type was assigned to each datum for the frequency calculation. When an utterance showed characteristics of more than one humor type, the researcher selected the category that best represented the main way in which the humor was created. Other possible humorous functions were explained in the discussion when necessary.

Next, the researcher compared each English humorous utterance with its Indonesian subtitle. This comparison was carried out to identify the translation techniques used based on Molina and Albir's (2002) theory. The analysis was conducted at the level of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences because different parts of the same subtitle could be translated by using different techniques.

When a subtitle contained more than one translation technique, the technique applied to the main humor-bearing expression was recorded as the primary technique. Other techniques found in the same subtitle were recorded as secondary techniques. This process allowed the researcher to identify the main translation technique for the frequency calculation while still recognizing other translation choices in the same datum.

The researcher also examined the effect of the translation on the humorous meaning. Each English utterance and its Indonesian subtitle were compared to determine whether the original meaning and humorous effect were preserved, partly preserved, shifted, reduced, or lost. Particular attention was given to changes involving wordplay, double meanings, cultural references, tone, and punchlines. These elements were important because even a small change in wording could affect the way the audience understood the humor.

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Finally, the researcher calculated the frequency and percentage of each verbal humor type and primary translation technique. All identified data were included in the classification and frequency calculation. Selected data were then discussed in greater detail based on the clarity of the humor type, the variation of translation techniques, changes in humorous meaning, and the presence of important linguistic or cultural features.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study analyzes verbal humor and translation techniques in *Barbie* (2023), with English as the source language (SL) and Indonesian as the target language (TL).

The study focuses on verbal humor found in the characters' dialogues and its translation in the Indonesian subtitles. The analysis of verbal humor is based on Shade's (1996) theory, which classifies verbal humor into twelve types: pun, riddle, joke, satire, limerick, parody, anecdote, farce, irony, sarcasm, tall tale, and wit. Meanwhile, the analysis of translation techniques refers to Molina and Albir's (2002) theory, which includes eighteen techniques: adaptation, amplification, borrowing, calque, compensation, description, discursive creation, established equivalent, generalization, linguistic amplification, linguistic compression, literal translation, modulation, particularization, reduction, substitution, transposition, and variation. The study also explains how the translated humor functions in Indonesian by examining whether the humorous meaning is preserved, partially preserved, changed, or lost in the subtitles.

This study is limited to verbal humor expressed through dialogue in the film *Barbie* (2023). The analysis focuses only on linguistic elements in the form of words, phrases, and sentences that create humorous effects through meaning and context. Therefore, non-verbal humor that is not conveyed through language in the dialogue is excluded from this study. In addition, this study does not examine audience responses or measure whether Indonesian viewers perceive the translated expressions as humorous.

1.7 Status of the Study

Wisasonoko et al. (2023), in their study titled "A Pragmatic Study on Verbal Humor Used in Mrnigelng YouTube Videos," published in the *Scholars International Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, analyzed the types of verbal humor found in the YouTube videos of a content creator named Mrnigelng, who reviews Asian food in a humorous way. The study used Shade's (1996) classification of verbal humor alongside Attardo's (1994) General Theory of Verbal Humor to identify and analyze the humor found in the videos, with the findings showing that satire was the most dominant type of verbal humor in the data. The study focused only on identifying and explaining the types of verbal humor present in the content, without looking at how the humor was translated into another language.

Similarly, Rahmat et al., in their study titled "Analysis of Verbal Humor in Jimmy O. Yang's Stand-Up Comedy Special Guess How Much," published in *Hikmah: Journal of English Literature and Linguistic Studies*, looked at verbal humor in the transcript of a stand-up comedy performance by Jimmy O. Yang. Using Shade's (1996) taxonomy of verbal humor and the General Theory of Verbal Humor by Raskin and Attardo, the study found that 11 out of 12 types of verbal humor appeared in the performance, with anecdote being the most dominant type found in the data. Like Wisasongko et al. (2023), this research only focused on classifying the types of verbal humor and did not examine how those verbal humor expressions were translated.

Shifting to translation studies, Purba et al. (2023), in their study titled "Translation: The Implementation of Molina and Albir's Theory in a Movie from English into Indonesian," published in *Studies in Media and Communication*, examined the translation techniques used in the Indonesian subtitles of the animated film *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021). Using Molina and Albir's (2002) eighteen translation techniques as the analytical framework, the study found 36 data points and identified that the most dominant techniques used were literal translation, modulation, and established equivalent. However, this study analyzed general dialogue from the film rather than focusing specifically on humorous utterances.

Ismayanti et al. (2024), in their study titled "Humor Maintenance and Translation Techniques in *Cunk on Earth*'s Indonesian Subtitles," published in *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, looked at how humor was translated in the Indonesian subtitles of the British mockumentary series *Cunk on Earth* (2022). Applying Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques to 128 humorous utterances, the study found that 12 translation techniques were used in total, with literal translation (24.78%), linguistic compression (16.37%), and modulation (15.04%) appearing most frequently. The study also evaluated whether the humorous effect was fully maintained, partially maintained, or lost in the Indonesian subtitles through responses from both native English speakers and Indonesian participants.

What makes the present study different from the studies above is the combination of focus it brings together. Wisasongko et al. (2023) and Rahmat et al. both used Shade's (1996) classification to identify verbal humor, but neither of them looked at how that humor was translated into another language. Purba et al. (2023) and Ismayanti et al. (2024) both examined translation techniques using Molina and Albir's (2002) framework, but Purba et al. (2023) did not specifically focus on humor, while Ismayanti et al. (2024) analyzed humor in a mockumentary series rather than a feature film and used a different humor classification framework rather than Shade's (1996) theory. The present study fills this gap by combining both approaches: it uses Shade's (1996) classification to identify and categorize the types of verbal humor found in the dialogue of the feature film *Barbie* (2023), and then applies Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques to examine how each type of verbal humor was rendered into the Indonesian subtitles. This makes the present study unique in that it connects the identification of verbal humor types directly to the translation choices made for each instance.

1.8 Organization of the Study

- 1. Chapter I** – Introduction: This chapter includes the research background, statement of the problems, purpose of the study, significance of the study, methodology of the study, and the status of the study.
- 2. Chapter II** – Review of Related Literature: This chapter explains the theory used and discusses its implementation in another research.
- 3. Chapter III** – Findings and Discussion: This chapter presents the results of the analysis conducted by the researcher and describes the answers to the research questions.
- 4. Chapter IV** – Conclusion: This chapter provides conclusions drawn from the research and analysis. Additionally, suggestions for future research related to translation techniques, particularly in the context of humor, will be offered