

Maintaining Funniness of Jokes Translated from Indonesian into English

Jehoshua Yeremia Putra Sutanto

English Department, Faculty of Humanities and Creative Industries, Petra Christian University, Siwalankerto 121-131, Surabaya 60236, INDONESIA

Email: a11180007@john.petra.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study is about translation of Indonesian jokes into English. This study is about maintaining the funniness of jokes in Indonesian when translated into Indonesian and the difficulties experienced while translating jokes. Mona Baker [2018] theory is used in this study. The difficulties found also varied, such as errors in word, above word, and grammar in humorous texts. To maintain the funniness of the jokes in English, the writer shifts the jokes after rereading and revising the translation.

Key words: funniness in jokes; humorous texts; translation; errors

INTRODUCTION

As a person who loves comedy, the writer often watches, reads, and hears lots of comedy that is served in many platforms such as television or social media, books, and audio. Starting from when the writer was a child, the writer often watched comedy shows such as *Charlie Chaplin* and *Mr Beans*. In junior until high school the writer often watched *Opera Van Java* and *Stand-Up Comedy Indonesia*. The writer grew up with lots of comedy around until one day YouTube gave the writer a video recommendation about *Stand-Up Comedy* that was performed by Jeff Dunham. He is a stand-up comedian with a persona, and he can change his voice based on his persona. Usually, he brings his dolls and his favourite companion named Achmed. Jeff Dunham loves to talk about things with Achmed and performs stand-up comedy. His material onto the stage is not so much different from comedy material from people of Indonesia.

Therefore, the writer was curious about this; what if the comedy of Indonesia was conveyed with English translation? Will it still be funny? Will people laugh with Indonesian Comedy? The writer tried to translate one or two jokes from Bahasa into English, and the writer found difficulty while translating it. The most problematic is words from Bahasa are difficult to translate into English, for instance “tidak jadi” In Bahasa, the writer used this word almost every day but to translate it into English is difficult. Some people use the word “never mind” or “it didn’t happen” to explain the context of “tidak jadi”. After the writer translated the text into English, the writer read the translation again and found out that the joke is not funny. With this kind of difficulties, the writer wants to try to translate Indonesian humour into English humour because it has lots of challenges.

This study tries to answer two questions; first, how can the funniness of jokes in Indonesian be preserved when translated into English and second, what are the difficulties experienced while

translating jokes. Before doing translation, the writer uses Mona Baker [2018] theory namely; Equivalence at Word Level, Equivalence above Word Level, and Grammar Equivalence. All the resources of Indonesian humour were taken from Google and using Google Docs website, Oxford Dictionary, and KBBI for the translation process.

METHOD

The data taken for this study is qualitative data which is taken through the internet website. There are as many as 7 websites, each of which contains more than 30 lists of jokes. After all the sources were collected, the writer sorted out the collections of these humours. The target is short text jokes containing 20 lists. Short text jokes have a large number and more than 50 lists can be collected, but because what is needed is only 20 lists, the writer decided to research short text jokes. All data that has been collected will be analysed. There are 7 steps of data analysis; read the whole text, find funny word points, re-read the whole text, know the jokes, identify the key word or punchline, translating, and revising.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In writing the translation process, the writer divides it into two parts: first is maintaining or preserving funniness in translating jokes and second is the difficulties.

In maintaining the funniness, there are two ways. The jokes can be directly translated as in the following example:

Table 1- Dibalik Nikmatnya Berlibur - Beyond Vacation

Indonesia Text	Translation Text
Sebuah keluarga sedang pergi ke Disney Land. Setelah melewati liburan yang menyenangkan dan melelahkan, mereka kembali ke rumah.	A family went to Disney Land. After went through a good and tiring holiday, they went back home.
Saat mereka meninggalkan Disney Land, anak laki-laki melambaikan tangan dan berkata, "Goodbye, Mickey."	When they left Disney Land, the son waved his hand and said "goodbye, Mickey."
Lalu si anak perempuan juga melambaikan tangan dan berkata, "Goodbye, Minnie."	Later, the daughter also waved her hand and said, "Goodbye, Minnie."
Kemudian si ayah juga melambaikan tangan dan dengan lemahnya berkata, "Goodbye, Money."	Then the father also waved his hand and with weakly said, "Goodbye, money."

In this section, it can be seen that there are no changes in the humorous sentence text. This is due to the fact that no errors were found in the Indonesian humour text and its translation into English.

Another type of joke that cannot be funny when it is directly translated, the funniness should be shifted as in the following example:

Table 2. Ditilang Polisi - Fined

No	Indonesia Text	Translated Text	Revised Translation
1	Cewe: "Nggak tau, pak. Sekarang suka ngilang-ngilang gak ada kabar. Mungkin udah bosan."	Woman: "I have no idea sir, now like to disappear alone without news. Maybe it bored with me"	"are you f***in kidding me? How the H*** am I supposed to know where I lost it?" or "are you stupid? Is that how you pass your police exam?"

It can be seen in the table if there are changes that are replaced in the part of the response given. The translation that the writer provides is an ordinary translation, while the rightmost table is the result of re-read and re-write by the writer. This is done because the response given is not funny, by re-phrasing it, can help maintain the humour in the humour text.

Difficulties in the process of translation

In this second sub-chapter, the writer found difficulties experienced in translating humorous text and mostly, the error is grammar and vocabulary. Errors in grammar are divided into several categories such as conditional, conjunction, noun, verb, gerund, and adjective. Meanwhile, errors in vocabulary are divided into several categories such as words, idioms, phrases, and collocation. An example of difficulty in grammar is as follows.

Table 3. Salah Bertanya - Ask the Wrong Question

No	Indonesia Text	Translation Text	Revised Translation by Gdocs
1	Seorang polisi sedang bertanya kepada terdakwa, seorang istri yang melakukan pemukulan kepada suami.	A police was asking to the defendant, a wife who did a violation to her husband	A police officer is asking the defendant, a wife who beating her husband.
2	"apakah yang di katakan suami kepada anda pagi ini"	"What he has said to you this morning?"	"What did your husband say to you this morning?"

This table is an explanation of difficulties in the translation process and the first example is difficulty in grammar. The left column is Indonesian humour text, the middle column is the translation of the writer, and the right column is the translation assisted by Google Docs. The main problem in the humour text is the conditional tenses which in English are very important while in

Sutanto: Maintaining Funniness of Jokes Translated from Indonesian into English

Indonesian there are no conditional tenses. Therefore, Google Docs translation results are better than the writer's translation due to differences in the structure of Indonesian and English.

An example of difficulty in vocabulary is as follows.

Table 4. Inem Bingung - The Confused Maid

No	Indonesia Text	Translation Text	Revised Translation by Gdocs
1	Ini bekas bersetubuh	This one is used sex	This one is former intercourse

This section focuses on vocabulary and the main problem is finding the right words to describe a situation. The left column is Indonesian text, the middle column is the writer's translation, and the right column is the revised translation from Google Docs. According to the writer, the result of the translation is correct, it's just that it is not strong enough to describe the situation, so Google Docs helps to find an alternative word and this is how it is formed.

The Difficulties Found in the Process of Translating

No	Difficulties		Source to deal with difficulties	Title of Jokes	
1	Grammar	Conditional	Google Docs	1. Foto di Dompok	
			Google Docs	10. Salah Bertanya	
		Conjunction	Google Docs	1. Foto di Dompok	
		Noun	Google Docs	2. Kisah Brewok Bapak	
			Google Docs	3. Takut di Denda	
			Google Docs	4. Cerita Ramalan Untuk Katak	
			Google Docs	8. Cara Berpikir	
			Google Docs	9. Made in Japan	
		Verb	Oxford Dictionary	6. Penyakit Rematik	
			Oxford Dictionary	16. Penjual Pempek	
		Gerund	Oxford Dictionary	11. Paling Hebat	
		Adjective	Oxford Dictionary	11. Paling Hebat	
			Google Docs	13. Istri yang Bego	
	2	Vocabulary	Word	Oxford Dictionary	4. Cerita Ramalan Untuk Katak
Google Docs				7. Orang Berkaki Empat	
Google Docs & KBBI				9. Made in Japan	
Google Docs				12. Obat dari Dokter	
Google Docs				16. Penjual Pempek	
Google Docs				19. Inem Bingung	
			Idioms	Oxford Dictionary	2. Kisah Brewok Bapak
				Oxford Dictionary	20. Sebuah Pengakuan
			Phrases	Google Docs	3. Takut di Denda
				Re-read the punchline	5. Ditilang Polisi
				Re-read the punchline	7. Orang Berkaki Empat
				Re-read the punchline	12. Obat dari Dokter
				Re-read the punchline	14. Ini Diisi Juga Pak?
			Collocation	Google Docs	12. Obat dari Dokter

This table shows all the difficulties in the process of translating. There are two difficulties namely, grammar and vocabulary. Grammar itself has many main problems such as conditional, conjunction, noun, verb, gerund and adjective. Vocabulary also has many main problems such as word, idioms, phrases, and collocation. How to deal with main problems has many ways. The writer uses Google Docs, Oxford Dictionary, KBBI, and the writer's own translation for re-phrase (re-read

and re-write) sentences. Also, to make sure readers are not confused, the writer put all the resources of the problems with the title to make it easier for the reader.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data taken from internet websites and doing the process of translation, the writer found a way in order to maintain the funniness of jokes and the difficulties in the process of translation. To maintain the funniness of jokes are divided into two parts namely, shifted and not shifted translations. Not shifted translation can be done directly because there is no significant change in the humour text while shifted is a translation that cannot be changed directly because there is a significant change in the humour text. The writer found shifted translation is a humorous text where the punchline is changed or re-phrased and the translation process takes a long time to do because it uses Google Docs, Oxford Dictionary, and KBBI to improve the punchline. The writer also found difficulties in the process of translation and divided it into two parts namely, grammar and vocabulary. These difficulties happened to occur because of differences in the structure of Indonesian and English languages. Therefore, the writer found many grammar problems such as conditional text, conjunction, noun, verb, gerund, and adjective. Not only grammar but also vocabulary has many problems such as words, idioms, phrases, and collocation.

In doing the translation the writer cannot be arbitrary and has responsibility for the resources that have been taken. The writer's main task is to translate and improve humorous translation to be funnier without deviating from the original text. The writer hopes by sticking to the text and doing translations that are on point the humour will not be lost also can convey the humour well. Furthermore, in improving a humorous text, more performance is needed, such as looking up the desired word in a dictionary and learning the synonyms of the word. By doing this, the writer can have a wide choice in choosing a word.

REFERENCES

- Adytya, B. (2022, January 21). *80 Joke Lucu dan Menggelitik, Bikin Ketawa Ngakak Dijamin Menghibur* | merdeka.com. Merdeka.com. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from <https://www.merdeka.com/trending/80-joke-lucu-dan-menggelitik-bikin-ketawa-ngakak-dijamin-menghibur-klm.html>
- 45 *Cerita Lucu Humor Pendek Menghibur, Bikin Ngakak*. (n.d.). Kozio.com. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from <https://www.kozio.com/cerita-lucu/>
- Frida, T. (2022, March 29). *65 Jokes Receh yang Auto Bikin Ngakak Banget!* Viva. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from <https://www.viva.co.id/gaya-hidup/inspirasi-unik/1461880-jokes-receh>
- Hatma, T. (n.d.). *55 Kumpulan Jokes Receh dan Tebak-tebakan Lucu*. theAsianparent. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from <https://id.theasianparent.com/jokes-receh>
- Tysara, L. (2021, January 11). *12 Cerita Pendek Lucu yang Gokil Banget, Bikin Ngakak*. hot liputan6.com. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from <https://hot.liputan6.com/read/4453894/12-cerita-pendek-lucu-yang-gokil-banget-bikin-ngakak>

- Tysara, L. (2021, February 19). *18 Cerita Lucu Pendek yang Bikin Ngakak, Sukses Ngocok Perut*. hot liputan6.com. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from <https://hot.liputan6.com/read/4487363/18-cerita-lucu-pendek-yang-bikin-ngakak-sukses-ngocok-perut>
- Widyananda, R. F. (2020, November 17). *80 Jokes Lucu Bikin Harthe writer Menyenangkan, Cocok Jadi The writer Hiburan | merdeka.com*. Merdeka.com. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from <https://www.merdeka.com/jatim/80-jokes-lucu-bikin-hari-menyenangkan-cocok-jadi-hiburan-klm.html>