TRANSLATION OF HUMOUR IN THE ENGLISH SUBTITLES OF TWO MALAYSIAN CHINESE FILMS

TU KAH YEE

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

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TU KAH YEE

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TRANSLATION OF HUMOUR IN THE ENGLISH SUBTITLES OF TWO MALAYSIAN CHINESE FILMS

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate humour translation in two Malaysian Chinese New Year films: *Woohoo!* and *The Journey*. There are two objectives of this study: i) to find out the translation strategies used in subtitling humour into English subtitles, and ii) to analyse whether the humour in the films is effectively translated into English subtitles. Chiaro's (2010) strategies for subtitling verbally expressed humour (VEH) are adopted to analyse the strategies employed in subtitling humour. The results of the study show that leaving the humour unchanged and ignoring the humour are the two most common strategies used in subtitling humour in the selected films. Moreover, it is found that for some humorous instances, a combination of strategies is used to translate the humour. The findings also reveal that some subtitling strategies are more commonly used in translating certain types of humour. To answer the second research question, Martínez-Sierra's (2006) methodology is adopted to investigate the effectiveness of the translation of humour by analysing the humorous elements found in the source language and the target language. The findings show that humorous elements are preserved, changed or lost in the English subtitles. In addition, the findings reveal that humour that is generated based on linguistic elements is the most difficult type to translate.

TRANSLATION OF HUMOUR IN THE ENGLISH SUBTITLES OF TWO MALAYSIAN CHINESE FILMS

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyiasat penterjemahan lawak dalam dua filem Tahun Baru Cina Malaysia: *Woohoo!* dan *The Journey*. Terdapat dua objektif dalam kajian ini: i) untuk mengetahui strategi terjemahan yang digunakan dalam penyampaian lawak ke dalam sari kata bahasa Inggeris, dan ii) untuk menganalisis sama ada lawak dalam filem-filem tersebut diterjemahkan secara berkesan ke dalam sari kata Bahasa Inggeris. Strategi Chiaro (2010) bagi penterjemahan lawak secara lisan ke dalam sari kata digunakan untuk menganalisis strategi yang digunakan dalam penterjemahan tersebut. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa strategi tidak mengubah lawak dan mengabaikan lawak sama sekali adalah dua strategi penterjemahan lawak yang paling biasa digunakan dalam filem-filem terpilih. Selain itu, gabungan strategi untuk menterjemahkan lawak didapati digunakan dalam beberapa contoh keadaan lucu. Kajian ini mendapati bahawa beberapa strategi penterjemahan sari kata lebih sering digunakan dalam menterjemahkan jenis lawak tertentu. Bagi menjawab soalan penyelidikan kedua, metodologi Martinez-Sierra (2006) diterima pakai untuk mengkaji keberkesanan terjemahan lawak dengan menganalisis unsur-unsur lucu yang terdapat dalam bahasa sumber dan bahasa sasaran. Penemuan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa unsur-unsur lucu dipelihara, berubah dan hilang dalam terjemahan. Di samping itu, penemuan ini juga menunjukkan bahawa lawak yang dihasilkan berdasarkan unsur linguistik adalah jenis yang paling sukar diterjemahkan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

SL :   Source language

TL :   Target langauge

CI :   Community-and-institutions Element

CSH :   Community-sense-of-humour Element

L :   Linguistic Element

NM :   Non-marked element

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

This chapter comprises several sections which lay the foundation for this study. In this chapter, the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study and limitations of the study will be described.

1.2   Research Background

In recent years, watching "Chinese New Year film" (贺岁片) together with family and friends has become a popular activity during Chinese New Year in Malaysia. "贺岁" (he sui) literally means to celebrate new year. To this day, there are many practices and traditional customs that are preserved to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Despite the variations in the form and nature of celebrations due to the difference in regions, the main celebratory activities include cleaning the house, having the family reunion dinner, giving red envelopes with money as a blessing to children and visiting relatives as the celebrations focus on strengthening familial ties by allowing people to spend time together. Meanwhile, watching a Chinese New Year film is a more recent culture in Malaysia (Ong, 2017). It is very common to see groups of family members or friends heading to the cinema for Chinese New Year blockbuster during this festive period. Chinese New Year films are released annually in Malaysia during the Chinese New Year season. They normally revolve around the theme of family, comedy and action to measure up to the joyous festive atmosphere. The motives of these highly entertaining films are to elicit laughter and happiness among the audiences. Chinese

New Year films culminate on a happy note, thereby disseminating peace, harmony and positivity among people.

Chinese New Year film originated from Hong Kong. In the 1980s, it started to make its way in the film industry and fully flourished in the 1990s. Some of the Hong Kong Chinese New Year films remain classics till now, in which they are repeatedly broadcasted on the television. Every year, the cinemas in Malaysia are packed with Chinese New Year films. Malaysians are familiar with Hong Kong made Chinese New Year films especially those from Jackie Chan and Stephen Chow. However, the trend of watching Hong Kong Chinese New Year films has changed owing to a stark rise in the number of local Chinese New Year films (Seto & Cheang, 2014). Malaysians are therefore, not limited to Hong Kong Chinese New Year movies anymore during Chinese New Year.

Malaysia's first Chinese New Year film, *Woohoo!* was released in 2010. It has raked in RM4.2 million at the box office. As a result of the box-office success of *Woohoo!*, the local Chinese New Year film industry has started to thrive and expand. Since then, at least one Malaysian Chinese New Year film has been released each year. Report from FINAS (2014) shows that in 2014, the three highest ranked box office local movies in Malaysia are all Chinese New Year movies. They are, *The Journey*, *Ah Beng The Movie* and *Huat Ah! Huat Ah! Huat!*. In Malaysia, Chinese New Year films are not restricted to Chinese audiences only as Malaysia is a multicultural country consisting of people who speak different languages. Thus, films are screened with English and Malay subtitles. They enable those who do not understand Chinese to follow what is happening in the film. In the festive New Year film where humour is one of the important elements, subtitles play an important role in helping the viewers to understand the humorous

utterances, experience the amusement and share the laughter together with the source language audience.

1.3   Problem Statement

Translating humour has always been one of the key challenges for a translator. According to Chiaro (2004), a translator needs to deal with the most complicated types of language when translating humorous expressions. In Chinese New Year films which contain a lot of humorous expressions, translators have a daunting job of not only retaining but also maintaining humorous effect through the subtitles. This is because humour is normally culturally and linguistically specific (Harrison, 2013). Zolczer (2016) states that a translator needs to be immensely creative and linguistically equipped in order to keep the desired humorous effect in the target text. Translation of humour on screen into subtitles is not only constrained by linguistic and cultural boundaries but also by the audiovisual context (Ellender, 2016). For instance, spatial and temporal constraints are the two common restrictions of subtitling (Pedersen, 2010). Consider the following example taken from the Malaysian Chinese New Year film, *Woohoo!*. The example shows an utterance made by a mother who is calling for her four daughters.

SL   ：来弟，带弟，招弟，有弟，快点呐, 慢吞吞的！

Transliteration：lai di, dai di, zhao di, you di, kuai dian na, man tun tun de

BT   : Come Boy, Bring Boy, Invite Boy, Possess Boy, faster, so slow.

TL   : Lai Di, Dai Di, Zhao Di, You Di, faster!

The utterance is intended to be humorous by using special names for all the daughters which indicates the parent's desire to have a son. "来弟" (lai di), "带弟" (dai di), "招弟" (zhao di), "有弟" (you di) literally means "come boy", "bring boy", "invite boy" and "possess boy" respectively. The names of the daughters are transliterated in the target text. For example, "来弟" is transliterated into "Lai Di". The names in the subtitles fail to convey the special meaning as in the source language. As a result, the humorous effect is lost in the subtitles and thus, evades the target audiences. This gives rise to the following questions: "What are the strategies used to translate humour in subtitles?" and "How is the humorous effect maintained in the target text?"

1.4   Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To find out the strategies used in translating humour in English subtitles of two Malaysian Chinese New Year films.

2. To analyse whether the humorous elements in the films are effectively translated in the English subtitles.

1.5   Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the research, the study will seek to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the strategies used in translating humour in the English subtitles of the selected Malaysian Chinese New Year films?

2. To what extent are the humorous elements effectively translated in the English subtitles?

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The aim of the first research question is to examine how humour is conveyed in English subtitles of Malaysian Chinese New Year films by exploring the strategies used based on Chiaro's (2010) strategies. By identifying the strategies used in subtitling humour, the researcher can determine the common strategies used in subtitling different types of humour in these films.

The second question aims to examine whether the humorous elements in Malaysian Chinese New Year films are successfully translated in the English subtitles. The humorous elements in the original utterances and the English subtitles will be compared in order to find out whether the humorous element is preserved or has been changed or lost in the subtitles based on Martínez-Sierra's (2006) framework.

1.6   Significance of the Study

There are very limited studies that can be found on the subtitling of humour in Chinese movies into English, and especially so with regard to the local Chinese New Year films.

To date, no study on subtitling of humour in Malaysia Chinese films can be found. Therefore, it is important to look at humour translation in this film genre. This study focuses on the translation of humour in the English subtitles of two Malaysian Chinese New Year films. The source languages in the selected films include Mandarin and other Chinese dialects such as Cantonese, Hokkien and Hakka. It is hoped that this study can provide insight into the strategies often employed by subtitlers in coveying Malaysian Chinese humour in English subtitles. By examining the English subtitles of these films, the findings will not only contribute to the study on translation of humour but also provide useful information on audiovisual translation, especially subtitling. Besides that,

this study can be used as a reference for other researchers who want to carry out studies related to the subtitling of humour in the future.

1.7   Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations in this study is the subjective point of view of the researcher. Qualitative analysis of the data is based on the interpretation of the researcher only. That is to say, the researcher's knowledge and viewpoint alone will influence the data analysis.   Another limitation is related to the representativeness of the data. The data only represents the two Malaysian Chinese New Year films chosen, which are *Woohoo!* (2010) and *The Journey* (2015) directed by Chiu Keng Guan. In other words, the findings in this study may not be applicable to other Malaysian Chinese New Year films. The films depict Malaysia's multilingual society, and thus, a variety of languages and dialects are spoken by the characters. It is common for the characters to mix different languages and dialects when they speak. However, this study does not look at humours that are generated by the changes in the use of different languages or dialects. Besides that, this research focuses on the linguistic aspect of the translation of humour. Multimodality is only used to describe the scene and its impact on the translation will not be compared.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter mainly reviews the existing literature on humour and subtitling. It begins with several definitions of humour. Following this, the reviews on the common types of verbally expressed humour and classification of humour are presented. In the next section, the reviews discuss on the characteristics of subtitling, limitations of subtitling and subtitling strategies. Finally, previous studies related to translation of humour in audiovisual context are discussed and reviewed.

2.2 Humour

Humour is a universal phenomenon present in our daily life. Although a plethora of definitions are given by scholars, there is no consensus on a specific definition that satisfies every scholar (Ma & Jiang, 2013). Scholars from different fields define humours from different perspectives. Vandaele (2002) proposes that scholars define humour from three different perspectives where they focus on humorous stimulus, response, and both stimulus and response.

According to Chang (2005), humour does not have a multiplicity of meanings; in fact its definitions are tied closely to amusement and laughter. Ross (2005) defines humour based on the humorous response and notes that humour is something that causes an audience laugh or smile. According to López González (2017), surprise, uncertainty or insight is mediated through our symbolic mind and then produces laughter. In other words, surprise, uncertainty and insight have the potential to trigger humour. All of the

aforementioned definitions of humour are associated with the effect or response of humour that is laughter or amusement.

Vandaele (2002) points out an issue when defining humour based on the humorous response solely. Intentional humour which is misunderstood and does not stimulate a humorous response will not be deemed as humour according to this definition. That is to say, humour that fails to trigger laughter among the audiences will not be interpreted as a humour based on the definition of humour that focuses on humorous response. Interestingly, Hay (2001) reveals that laughter is not the only way to support humour. Some common reactions for supporting humour include contributing to more humour, participating in the gag, repeating the humour and offering sympathy. In other words, the hearer may response to the humour differently as shown in the aforementioned reactions, in which the response is not limited to laughter only.

Chang (2005) defines humour as "a stimulation that has fulfilled the intention to excite amusement" (p.79) in line with his point of view that humours are normally intentional in the literary work. Kostovčík (2009) also includes the intention of the speaker or writer in creating humour in his definition and refers humour to anything that is intended to be amusing. The definition of humour which includes the intention of the speaker allows humour to exist even when the humour is not perceived as humorous by the audience or fails to produce laughter from the audience.

According to Ritchie (2010), verbally expressed humour refers to humour communicated vocally through words. Verbally expressed humour can be further differentiated into referential humour and verbal humour. Referential humour is the humour that is based on the meaning or content of the text, such as a narration of a story or a depiction of a situation. On the other hand, verbal humour refers to humour that

depends on particular language devices to create humour. It is noteworthy that verbally expressed humour and verbal humour are not the same. The difference lies in the fact that, verbally expressed humour is broader than verbal humour. This study will look into the humours that are expressed through language, which are the verbally expressed humour.

Over the years, researchers have successfully identified numerous types or forms of humour. According to Norrick (1993), sarcasm, irony, satire, pun, allusion, spoonerisms, metaphor and hyperbole are some different types of humour. Dynel (2009) discusses a variety of humours, namely jokes, conversational humour, lexemes and phrasemes, witticisms, irony, puns, allusion, retorts, teasing, banter, putdowns, self-denigrating humour and anecdotes. In the study investigating the issues in audiovisual translation with focus on humour, Vázlerová (2011) differentiates language-dependent jokes into wordplay, funny names, metaphor, play with sounds, alliteration, rhyme, use of specialised discourse and accents. Alharthi (2016) discovers eight major types of humour in his study, which are wordplay, satire, irony, sarcasm, self-denigrating humour, register clash, retorts and catchphrases. The study also finds out different examples of wordplay, which include paronymy, homonymy, initialisms and spoonerism. Ellender (2016) states that other than the common types of wordplay such as polysemy or homophony, wordplays can also be presented through homographs, homonyms, paronyms, rhyme, alliteration, deviant pronunciation/vocabulary/grammatical rules and manipulation of idioms. The following section will briefly discuss some common types of verbally expressed humour.

1. Wordplay

Scholars have different opinions on the term 'wordplay' and 'pun'. Delabastita (1996) considers these two terms as interchangeable and synonymous. However, not everyone shares the same opinion that wordplay and pun are equated. Giorgadze (2014) thinks that pun is one of the forms of wordplay where wordplay includes pun, spoonerism, malapropism, wellerism, onomatopoeia and palindrome. Delabastita (1996) defines wordplay as below:

> "Wordplay is the general name for the various textual phenomena in which structural features of the language(s) are exploited in order to bring about a communicatively significant confrontation of two (or more) linguistic structures with more or less similar forms and more or less different meanings" (Delabastita, 1996:128).

In other words, wordplay is achieved by manipulating identical or similar forms in a text that has double or several meanings. According to Dynel (2009), a humorous pun is a result of two interpretations of the text caused by the ambiguity of a word. Delabastita (1996) suggests that wordplay or pun can be classified further into four categories: homonymy, homophony, homography and paronymy. Homonymy is described when two words are pronounced and spelled identically but differ in meaning (e.g. rock, which has two different meanings: a stone, a genre of music). Homophony describes the situation where two words have identical pronunciation but different spellings (e.g. right and write). Homography occurs when two words have identical spellings but pronounced differently (e.g. minute /ˈmɪnɪt/ which means sixty second and minute /maɪˈnjuːt/which means very small). Paronymy refers to the case where two similar words that slightly differ in both sound and spelling (e.g. accept and except).

2. Irony

The oxford dictionary defines irony as: "the use of words that say the opposite of what you really mean". According to Alharthi (2016), irony refers to the process of producing the opposite, in which it includes "the contradiction between what a person says and what he means, what s/he says and what s/he does, what s/he means or says and what others understand, and what is expected or intended and what happens" (p.19). It is worth mentioning that not every ironic utterance in conversation has a humorous effect (Dynel, 2009). However, Gibbs, Bryant, & Colston, (2014) highlight that irony in spoken and written language is often associated with humour. A study of Gibbs (2000) reveals that almost all the ironic utterances in the conversation between friends are humorous. In addition, Chiaro (2006) states that verbally expressed humour on the screen is mostly generated based on irony rather than punning. Below is an example showing an ironic utterance.

"A mother walks into her son's room which seems messy and says: Honey, your room is so tidy. I am so proud of you!" (Alharthi, 2016, p. 20)

3. Sarcasm

The word 'sarcasm' is originated from the Greek word 'sarkazein', that means "to tear flesh like a dog". Attardo (2000) states that there is no agreement on whether irony and sarcasm are similar, differ slightly, or have significant differences. Attardo (2000) thinks that these two terms are essentially similar; he proposes that "sarcasm is an overtly aggressive type of irony, with clearer marker/cues and a clear target" (p.795). Kreuz and Glucksberg (1989) differentiate sarcasm from irony by highlighting that sarcasm involves ridiculing someone whereas irony does not. In other words, sarcasm entails hurtful comments targeting on a specific person. Results from the study of Lee &

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Katz (1998) lend support for the view that sarcasm is different from irony as there is a particular victim who is ridiculed in sarcasm. Meanwhile, Partington (2006) states that sarcasm and irony are not the same because sarcasm need not necessarily involve oppositeness as in irony. Another difference between sarcasm and irony is that sarcasm is intentional whereas irony can be intentional or unintentional (Haiman, 1998).

4. Teasing

According to Keltner, Capps, Kring, Young, and Heerey (2001), teasing is a provocative commentary on something related to the intended target accompanied by the use of off-record markers. They claim that the off-record markers make the tease less face threatening as they are the cues to indicate that the provocation is to be understood as a jest. As stated by Albert (1992), the cues make the aggressive comment on the particular target to be taken as playful and non-serious. Lampert & Ervin-Tripp (2006) explains that tease can be signalled as non-serious through markers such as prosodic cues (e.g. elongation, pitch, and intonation), linguistic devices (e.g., exaggeration, repetition) and nonverbal displays (e.g., facial expression). While many researchers view teasing as aggressive and define teasing based on the aggressive quality (Drew, 1987; Albert, 1992; Shapiro, Baumeister, & Kessler, 1991), Dynel (2009) argues that aggression can be absent in teasing, even if it appears, it is only ostensible and implicit as the speaker's intention is not to be hurtful towards the listener. The following example taken from Dynel (2009) shows teasing in a conversation:

"Female: You're a thief and a liar.

Male: I only lied about being a thief, I don't do that anymore. (teasing)

Female: Steal?

Male: Lie. (teasing)" (p. 1293).

5. Self-denigrating humour

According to Zajdman (1995), self-denigrating humour happens when the speaker aims the humour on one's self by mocking him/herself in front of others. Self-denigrating humour also known as self-defeating humour, self-deprecating humour, self-disparaging humour, self-directed humour, and self-mockery (Dynel, 2009). People who use self-denigrating humour often make fun at their weaknesses in general intelligence, personalities, moral virtues, mental condition or physical appearance (Greengross & Miller, 2008). Self-denigrating humour serves different purposes in conversation. Firstly, self-denigrating humour can be used as a means to build friendly relationships (Niwa & Maruno, 2009). In a similar vein, Liu (2012) proposes that the speakers who joke on their own weakness have the intention to ingratiate themselves with others. In other words, the speaker uses self-denigrating humour to shorten the distance with the hearer. However, Zajdman (1995) proposes that self-denigrating can be used to set a boundary between the speaker and the hearer as the hearer will be confused and not be able to know whether the speaker thinks of him/herself like what has been said by him/herself. Meanwhile, Lampert & Ervin-Tripp (2006) state that if the speaker and the hearer do not know each other well, a self-directed humour may be taken as a confession by the hearer. Consider the following examples of self-denigrating humour.

"My brain must be on the standby mode.

In today's performance, the role of the idiot will be played by myself" (Dynel, 2009, p.1295).

6. Register Clash

Register clash is referred to register humour by Attatro who defines it as "humour caused by an incongruity originating in the clash between two registers" (1994, p. 230). According to Dynel (2009), register clash can be differentiated into upgrading and downgrading. Upgrading register clash happens when linguistics items from a higher register are used in informal discourse whereas downgrading register clash entails the utilisation of linguistic items from a lower register in the formal discourse. It is normally possible to identify the specific linguistic item in the utterance that is from a different register (Partington, 2006). To illustrate upgrading register clash and downgrading register clash, Dyne (2009) has provided the following examples.

"(1) The PM cocks his head like a Snow White listening to the animals.

(2) I'd like to file charges against your improper birthday behaviour." (Dynel, 2009, p.1291).

In example (1), the word 'cocks', which is from a lower register clash is used to describe the action of the PM, who is normally described by others using polite and formal language. On the other hand, example (2) shows upgrading register clash where a formal term 'file charges' is used in a daily informal conversation.

7. Retort

According to Norrick (1986), retort is a witty response to the preceding utterance. Dynel (2009) states that retort as a reply, is out of the expectation of the speaker of the preceding utterance with the motifs to amuse the third party who hears the conversation. Norrick (1986) proposed that a punning retort is a retort that is produced based on the surface-level ambiguity of the foregoing conversation.

"What does your watch say? — Ticktock, ticktock" (Norrick, 1986, p.230).

In the example above, the expected reply is the time shown on the watch. However, the response which tells the sound produced by the watch is surprising. On the other hand, prosaic retort is created based on the misunderstanding on the semantic or pragmatic level of the preceding utterance (Norick, 1986).

"A: Why are you drinking alcohol?

 B: What else do you want me to do with it?" (Dynel, 2009, p.1292).

Retort can be also done by rhetorically questioning back the person asking something from the other person. The example below is an example of retort based on rhetorical question.

"A: Do you mind if I smoke?

B: Do you mind if I throw up on your trousers?" (Dynel, 2009, p. 1293).

8.   Allusion

There are two types of allusion: distortion and quotation (Dynel, 2009). Distortion happens when a group of words or longer text is taken from other spoken or written sources, with changes in the initial forms and meanings. Distortion can be done through deletion, substitution or addition. On the other hand, quotation occurs when direct citation from pre-existing sources is used in the current situation. Dynel (2009) discusses some examples of the source of quotation: "scripts and film titles, songs, books, advertising slogans, nursery rhymes". Consider the following examples:

"(a) The pot calling the grass green. (The pot calling the kettle black)

 (b) Shaken but not stirred. (from the James Bond series)" (Dynel, 2009, p. 1290).

Example (a) shows a distortion based on the idiom "the pot calling the kettle black" by using substitution of words while Example (b) shows a quotation of a catchphrase from the James Bond series.

2.2.1 Classification of humour

Scholars have proposed different classification of humours. Raphaelson-West (1989) classified jokes into three different types: linguistic jokes, cultural jokes and universal jokes. Linguistic joke refers to a joke which is created based on language while cultural joke refers to joke that is rooted on cultural elements. Meanwhile, universal joke refers to a joke that transcends geopraphical and linguistic boundaries and can be comprehended worldwide. Raphaelson-West (1989) states that it is the simplest when dealing with a universal joke, as universal joke is not tied to linguistic and cultural specificity. Zabalbeascoa (1996) in his study on translation of jokes in dubbed comedy series categorised joke into international/binational joke, national-culture-and-institution joke, national-sense-of-humour joke, language-dependent joke, visual joke and complex joke. International/binational jokes refer to the jokes that do not rely on language-specific or culture specific features for the humorous effect. The humorous element can be recognised internationally as it is well-known and familiar to the foreign audience also. National-culture-and-institution jokes include the jokes that rely on specific national, cultural or institutional references of the source language which are unknown to the foreign audience. An adaptation is needed for the specific references to keep their humour. Meanwhile, national-sense-of-humour jokes are the jokes that are based on the preferences of the communities, in which the joke is more popular in a certain community and is not considered as funny by others. Language-dependent jokes refer to the jokes that depend on a specific linguistic feature to create the humorous effect.

Besides that, visual jokes are the jokes that heavily rely on visual elements. Lastly, complex joke is a combination of different types of jokes where two or more of the previously mentioned types of jokes are presented together in a joke.

Based on Zabalbeascoa's categorisation of jokes, Martínez-Sierra (2006) proposes a new category of jokes in which the jokes are categorised according to their humorous elements. He proposed eight different elements which are community-and-institutions elements, community-sense-of-humour elements, linguistic elements, visual elements, graphic elements, paralinguistic elements, non-marked elements and sound elements.

1. Community-and-institutions elements

Community-and-institutions elements are similar to the national-culture-and-institution jokes proposed by Zabalbeascoa (1996). Community-and-institutions elements refer to jokes that rely on culture-specific references such as politicians, celebrities, newspapers, organisations, films and books for the humorous effect (Martinez-Sierra, 2006). Baker (1992) defines the culture-specific items as:

> "The source-language word may express a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture. The concept in question may be abstract or concrete; it may relate to a religious belief, a social custom, or even a type of food. Such concepts are often referred to as 'culture specific' " (p. 21).

Fahim & Mazaheri (2013) have stated some common categories of culture-specific items proposed by different scholars, which are (i) ecology (flora, fauna hills), (ii) material culture (food, drinks, clothes, measuring system), (iii) social culture (work and leisure), (iv) organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concept (political, religious, artistic) (v) anthroponyms (people's name, and nickname), (vi) fictional character

(novel, play, film), and (vii) Slang/idioms (dialect and specific speaking style shared by a group of people). According to López González (2017), one needs a considerable amount of background knowledge in order to understand humour that is based on specific-cultural items, thus this type of humour can be recognised as intertextual humorous instances. The specific cultural or institutional elements of the source version have to be adapted in the target version to maintain the humorous effect for the target audience (Zabalbeascoa, 1996). The following example shows a joke that depends on a specific reference in the source culture.

"It wasn't me who put it that way, it was The Daily Mirror." (Zabalbeascoa, 1996, p. 252).

In this example, The Daily Mirror is a specific reference from the source culture. The humour disappears if the target audience does not have the knowledge to understand the cultural reference.

2. Community-sense-of-humour elements

This category of humour is similar to the national-sense-of-humour joke proposed by Zabalbeascoa (1996). Community-sense-of-humour elements comprise jokes that rely on the topics which seem to be funny and popular in certain communities only. Instead of cultural specificity, community-sense-of-humour elements focus on a preference of the community for humorous effect (Martínez-Sierra, 2006). For example, in some communities it is acceptable and humorous to make fun of oneself, whereas in some communities making fun of themselves is not common and not considered to be humorous (Zabalbeascoa, 1996). Moreover, Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) note that

this humour is very often created based on prejudice and sometimes even racism. Consider the following example.

"Leader: Welcome to our world, most gracious Lisa.

Lisa: Your world is incredible. And you speak English!" (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291).

In the example above, the humorous element is based on the prejudice that the leader does not speak English.

3. Linguistic elements

Linguistic elements refer to jokes which are tied to the linguistic aspect of the source language (Martínez-Sierra, 2006). For example, linguistic elements can be realised in polysemy (a word with different meanings), homophony (different words which have same sound) and zeugma (a word which has more than one meaning that is used to refer to different senses in a sentence) (Zabalbeascoa, 1996). As discussed before, there are other types of jokes that rely on language specificity such as wordplay, funny names, metaphor, play with sounds, alliteration and rhyme as suggested by Vázlerová (2011).

4. Visual Elements

Visual elements involve humour that is generated by what can be seen on screen (Martínez-Sierra, 2006). In other words, it is based on the visual representation of the scene that is non-verbal.

5. Graphic elements

Graphic elements consist of jokes that are produced by the written messages inserted in a screen picture (Martínez-Sierra, 2006).

6. Paralinguistic elements

Paralinguistic elements include jokes generated by the nonverbal qualities of a voice, such as pitches, rhythms, tones, timbre which are associated with expressions of emotions (Martínez-Sierra, 2006).

7. Non-marked elements

According to Martínez-Sierra (2006), non-marked elements include humorous instances that cannot be categorised into other categories of this classification. Consider the following example found in the study of Kianbakht (2016).

"Lois: Listen, pervert, this is the third time you've called and I have just about had it with...
Stevie: Is Malcolm... there?
Lois: Oh, hi, Stevie. Sorry." (p.71).

8. Sound elements

Sound elements refer to the special effects and sounds found in the soundtrack that create the humorous effect.

Comparing the classification of humour proposed by Zabalbeascoa (1996) and Martínez-Sierra (2006), more categories have been proposed by the latter. The new categories include graphic elements, paralinguistic elements, non-marked elements and sound elements. In the meantime, the international/binational category is absent in Martínez-Sierra's classification. Apart from adding a new category to the categorisation of humour, it is noteworthy that Martínez-Sierra uses the term "elements" in his classification instead of the term "jokes" as in Zabalbeascoa's classification of jokes.

Martínez-Sierra (2006) states that he chose to use the term "element" instead of "joke" as there is possibility for a joke to encompass multiple elements. By using the term "element", differentiating between simple jokes (which comprise only one element) and compound jokes (which comprise two or more elements) becomes convenient. In short, the use of the term "elements" describes the nature of each category of humour better. This categorisation allows him to categorise the humorous instances according to their humor-evoking elements to enable the examination of the humorous elements in both the source text and the target text. Zolczer (2016) states that the taxonomy of humorous elements proposed by Martínez-Sierra (2006) is very useful, as it helps to identify the change or loss of humorous loads in the source version and target version of any humorous scene.

Seghers (2017) adopted the humour categories proposed by Martínez-Sierra (2006) in analysing the subtitles of the *Big Bang Theory*. Seghers (2017) states that visual elements, paralinguistic elements and sound elements are non-verbal in nature. Thus, these categories of humour cannot be considered as an independent category in the study of verbal humour but they can appear together with other categories to produce a humorous effect.

This study will adopt Martínez-Sierra's (2006) classification of humour to categorise humour found in the selected films.

2.3 Subtitling

There are two main modes of audiovisual translation: subtitling and dubbing. According to Pedersen (2010), dubbing involves replacing the original source language soundtrack with another spoken target language soundtrack. Gottlieb (2004, p.86)

defines subtitling as "the rendering in a different language or verbal messages in filmic media, in the shape of one or more lines of written text, presented on the screen in sync with the original verbal message". According to Tuominen (2011), the purpose of subtitling is to make the programmes understandable for the viewers who are able to comprehend languages other than the source language. In other words, subtitling involves transferring the message in spoken dialogue of source language to the target language of the audience in written form for understanding. Díaz Cintas (2003) states that subtitling consists of two types, that are intralingual subtitling and interlingual subtitling. Intralingual subtitling happens when the dialogue and the subtitle are of the same language whereas interlingual subtitling happens when the dialogue needs to be translated into a different target language. Therefore, no translation is required for intralingual subtitling. Meanwhile, interlingual subtitling is a type of translation that is different from other translations as the process of translation is twofold- it does not only transfer the message from the source language to target language, but also from the spoken form to written form (Pedersen, 2010).

Zolczer (2016) explains that subtitles are the compressed and reduced version of the dialogues in the audiovisual media. As stated by O'Connell (2000), subtitling is a type of constrained translation, as the source language soundtrack is translated into segments following the restrictions of subtitling. Pedersen (2010) discusses spatial and temporal constraints as the limitations of subtitling. Regarding the spatial constraint, only a limited amount of words are allowed to be projected at the bottom of the screen. Samir Hassanvandi, Ali Ilani, & Abouzar Kazemi (2016) suggest that subtitles can only appear at one or two lines with around 35 characters per line. Pedersen (2010) highlights that 'characters' in subtitles include all the visible results from pressing a keyboard key such as commas, full stops, dashes and blank spaces.

In respect of temporal constraint, subtitles can only display on screen for a limited time because of the audiovisual medium. According to Burczynska (2012), the minimum display time for subtitles on screen is 1.5 seconds while the maximum display time is 6 seconds. Karamitroglou (1998) states that viewers read approximately 2.5-3 words per second on average. Tuominen (2011) states that the amount of subtitles must match the average reading speed of the audiences to make sure that they finish reading the subtitles within the limited time. Pederson (2010) explains a few situations where the reading speed of the viewers is slower: (i) children are the target audiences, (ii) when the lexis and syntax of the target text are more complex, (iii) when more information is displayed through the non-verbal video channel. In the meantime, O'Connell (2000) points out people read slower than they speak, thus subtitles are usually summaries of the original spoken dialogue. The shorter version of the dialogues enables the viewer to read the subtitles displayed completely. Due to these restrictions, subtitles are normally condensed translations of the original source language soundtrack (Tuominen, 2011). Therefore, omissions are inevitable in the translation of subtitles.

2.3.1   Subtitling strategies

Gottlieb (1992) suggests ten translation strategies for subtitling film, which are expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, dislocation, condensation, decimation, deletion and resignation. Expansion is employed when there is an addition of information in the target text that is often used for the culture-specific references. Paraphrase is used in the cases where the structure of the sentence has to be altered in the target language while retaining the meaning. Transfer happens when the message in source text is translated completely and accurately into the target text. Imitation refers to the strategy used where word is transferred directly to target text, mainly in the names

of people or places. Transcription is adopted to render an uncommon term presented in the source text, such as a term from a third language, or nonsense language. Dislocation refers to the strategy used when translation of specific effect in the source text is more important than the context, for instance the special effect of a song or metaphorical phenomena. Condensation is used when the source text is translated into a shorter text without missing the important message. Decimation refers to an extreme form of condensation, in which the target text is shortened and some essential elements are excluded. Deletion is the absolute elimination of parts of the source text in the target text, such as a phrase or a total line in the utterance. Resignation refers to the cases where no translation solution can be identified, thereby leading to the loss of meaning. Kianbakht (2015) discussed a few problems of Gottlieb's strategies, where some of the strategies seemed to be overlapping, and some were discovered to be inconsistent and unusual, and some were of low priority.

Chiaro (2010) proposed a few common strategies for translating on screen verbally expressed humour: leaving the humour unchanged in the target language, replacing the humour in source language with another humour in the target language, replacing the humour in the source language with an idiomatic expression in the target language, and ignoring the humour.

1. Leaving the humour unchanged

The strategy of leaving the humour unchanged is used when the humour in the source language is translated as literally as possible into the target language. Consider the following example.

"*Tenez, allez voir ma mère, ella a une memoir d'éléphante de mer!* [Back-translation 'You'd better go and see your mother, she has a memory like an elephant. She's an elephant seal!]" (Chiaro, 2010, p.11).

The humour spoken in French in the above example is based on the homophone "mère" (mother) and "mer" (sea), as well as the expression "avoir une mèmoire d'éléphante". The idiom avoir la mèmoire d'éléphante (to have the memory of an elephant) denotes an extremely good memory, thereby contributing to generation of humour. The following is the translation in Italian target version.

"*Le conviene andare a trovare mia madre. Ha una memoria da elefante mia madre. E un elefantessa!* (You should go and see my mother. She has a memory like an elephant. She is an elephant seal)" (Chiaro, 2010, p.11).

In the Italian target version, the translator adopted literal translation to render this utterance. Although the formal equivalence (similarity of lexis and syntax in source language and target language) is maintained in the target language, the pun is lost.

In addition, this strategy is used when the humour remains the same with no translation done. According to another example given by Chiaro (2010), this strategy is adopted when the names of Mr Melville Orton, Mr Maurice Horton and Mr Lawrence Laughton, as the source of humour, remain unchanged in the translated version.

2. Replacing the humour with another humour

According to Chiaro (2008), this strategy involves replacing the verbal humour in the source language with another verbal humour in the target language, in which at least one aspect of the original humour persists in the translation. It is the most difficult strategy to use as it primarily relies on the dexterity of the translator. Even if the

substitution only preserves partial meaning, form or both partial meaning and form of the source language humour in the target text, this is normally the most satisfying solution for the target viewers. In the English subtitle of the preceding example from Chiaro (2010), the translator replaced the pun with a blend of "mother" and "elephant": "Go and see my mother. She's got a memory like an elephant. Mum-ephant" (p.12).

3. Replacing the humour with idiomatic expression

This strategy consists of replacing the humour in the source language with an idiomatic expression in the target language. Consider the following example offered by Chiaro (2010).

"You'd better go see your mother, an elephant never forgets" (p.12)

4. Ignoring the humour

Ignoring the humour refers to the case where humour in the source language is totally ignored in the translation. According to Chiaro (2010), it is difficult to identify whether the omission in the translation is a strategy used on purpose or because of the failure of the translator in recognising the humour in the source language. Chiaro (ibid) gave the example where the humour based on the written message on screen is ignored completely in the target text, as no translation is provided for the graphic element. Meanwhile, Chiaro (2017) states that a translator can choose to ignore the source language humour completely and insert an instance of different humour elsewhere in the target text.

Chiaro's strategies emphasise on the translation of verbal humour while Gottlieb's strategies focus on the translation of the whole utterance. This study will adopt Chiaro's (2010) strategies which are specifically used for subtitling humour on screen.

2.4   Martínez-Sierra's (2006) Framework

Martínez-Sierra (2006) carried out a case study to analyse the humour translation in an animated American television serial, namely *The Simpsons* by analysing the humorous loads in both the American source version and Spanish target version. Martínez-Sierra (2006) set up a method for the analysis of humour in audiovisual translation. As discussed before, Martínez-Sierra (2006) proposes a taxonomy of humorous elements based on the categorisation of jokes proposed by Patrick Zabalbeascoa (1996). There are eight different categories of humorous elements: community-and-institutions elements, community-sense-of-humour elements, linguistic elements, visual elements, graphic elements, paralinguistic elements, non-marked elements and sound elements. Each category of jokes is differentiated based on the humorous element that causes the humorous effect.

According to Martínez-Sierra (2006), humorous load is the discrete number of humorous elements found in a joke. The humorous load of a humorous instance not only results from a humorous element, it can also comprise different humorous elements. In the example shown in the case study of Martínez-Sierra (2006), the humorous load is a combination of three humorous elements: Community-and-institutions + visual + sound elements. The changes experienced by the humorous load after translation was observed by analysing and comparing the humorous loads in both the source version and target version. Martínez-Sierra (2006) highlights that humorous load can change quantitatively and qualitatively after translation. Humorous elements can be maintained, lost, added or even changed to other types of humorous element after translation in the target version. As Kianbakht (2016, p.68) explained, "this basically means that not all the humorous elements are rendered on the one to one basis". When the humorous element is maintained in the translation, the same element is found in both the source

and target version. On the other hand, when the humorous element presented in the source version is no longer found in the target version, the humorous element is lost. Meanwhile, a humorous element that is initially not found in the source version can also be added to the target version. Humorous element is identified to be changed in the translation if the humorous element in the source version changes to the other type of humorous element in the target version. Both Kianbakht (2016) and Zolczer (2016) have proven that the categorisation of humorous elements formulated by Martínez-Sierra (2006) is useful as a means to identify and measure the humorous elements of humorous scenes in the source version and target version.

2.5   Multimodality

The concept of multimodality is introduced by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996). Gambier (2006) states that text is not a product consisting of a single mode only; in fact text is multimodal, consisting of different modes such as gesture, gaze, movement, visual image, oral and written language. Baumgarten (2008) explains that film is a multimodal text as the meanings are conveyed through visual and audio modes of the film. Chuang (2006) points out the most common semiotic modes found in the films: the written modes, spoken modes, audio modes (music or sound effects), and visual mode (moving images).

Gambier (2006) argued that studies on screen translation which only include the dialogues and subtitles without the images of the film cannot be considered as screen translation studies. Taylor (2003) adapted the multimodal transcription introduced by Thibault (2000) for his audiovisual translation research. The transcription is made up of a grid divided into rows and columns which includes visual frames, description of the visual image and kinesics action, description of the soundtrack and the subtitle. The

presentation of the visual frames is done in either a vertical or horizontal way following the chronology. The description of the kinesics action contains the description of the body movements or the facial gestures of the characters while the description of soundtrack includes the dialogue, music and sound. In short, multimodal transcription is a detailed description of the semiotic modes appearing in each visual frame. According to Taylor (2003), all these semiotic modes operate together to produce meaning. Taylor (2016) points out that the information provided in the multimodal transcription provides an insight to a translator about how meaning is created through other semiotic modes and thus assists the translator in doing the translation. When facing time constraint, translators can choose to discard the meanings that have been portrayed via other modalities in the subtitle.

This study will employ Taylor's (2003) multimodal transcription to describe the humorous scene which sets the background for the linguistic study of the translation of humour.

2.6   Previous Studies

Numerous studies have been done on the subtitling of humour in films or comedy series (Yetkin, 2011; Chu, 2013; Nufus, 2014; Kianbakht, 2015; Hassanvandi, Ilani, & Kazemi, 2016; Zolczer, 2016). Yetkin's (2011) study that compared the humorous load of satirical and ironical humour in the American source text and Turkish subtitles indicates that the humorous load tends to be lost in the translations. A total loss of 70.9% humorous load in the target text is shown in his study. Yetkin (ibid) points out that the loss of linguistic humorous elements is not due to technical constraints solely but also because of cultural and linguistic differences.

Chu (2013) carried out a qualitative research to investigate the strategies used in the translation of puns in three Taiwanese films. The study showed that puns in comedies are normally meant to be fun. The strategies used to translate the puns in the films include annotation, paraphrase with sense transfer and adaptation. Annotation is the strategy that involves adding extra information in parentheses, brackets or footnotes. The study revealed that it is the easiest to maintain the literal meaning while explaining the puns by using the strategy of annotation. Besides, paraphrasing with sense transfer is the strategy that can most likely keep the coherence of the context. Meanwhile, adaptation is the most possible strategy to retain the original or similar humorous force of the source language in the subtitle.

Kianbakht (2015) adopted Gottlieb's classification of subtitling strategies in his study on the subtitling strategies utilised in the translation of humour in an American comedic film. In order to analyse the data, he adapted Martínez-Sierra (2006) humorous chart to describe and analyse the humorous segments. His study reveals that transfer is the most frequent strategy used to translate humour, and universal humour is the most convenient type of humour to translate. According to Kianbakht, a humorous segment can be translated by using more than one strategy. As discussed earlier, Kianbakht discovered some shortcomings of Gottlieb's strategies including the overlapping of some strategies while the low priority of others. He claimed that Gottlieb proposed this typology based on his own personal experience solely.

In another study, Kianbakht (2016) also adopted Martínez-Sierra's methodology (2006) to investigate the humorous elements in the English source version, Persian dubbed version and Persian subtitled version of an American comedy series. The results of Kianbakht's study show that the target text contains less humorous elements than the

source texts in general, in which 30% humorous loads were lost in the target text. Besides that, the results from this study show that there are four possible outcomes of humorous elements after translation: rendered without type change, rendered with type change, lost and added. The cases that involve a change of type of the humorous element include the change from linguistic element to non-marked element, community-and-institutions element to non-marked element and community-sense-of-humour element to non-marked element.

Following the methodology of Martínez-Sierra (2006), Zolczer (2016) conducted a study on humour translation in two American comedies, *Friends* and *The Big Bang Theory*. His study aims to investigate the differences of humorous load between the original, dubbed and subtitled versions. By using the categorisation of humour proposed by Martínez-Sierra (2006), Zolczer was able to examine the humorous elements in the source and target versions. The results of Zolczer's (2016) study show that constraints of dubbing and subtitling result in the difference between the humorous load in the dubbed and subtitled versions. In addition, Martínez-Sierra's framework enables the identification of humorous load as maintained, reduced, lost or increased in the target language by comparing the number of humorous elements in the source language and target language. The result also showed that an utterance of the source language most likely can be translated into target language while maintaining the same amount of humorous load regardless of the space constraint.

Hassanvandi, Ilani, and Kazemi (2016) examined the translation of humorous segments in four American movies. They discovered that the strategies used to translate the humorous elements are transfer, paraphrase, localization, addition, deletion, transliteration, preservation and creation. Meanwhile, they point out that paraphrase is

used most frequently while localization is the most effective strategy used to transfer sense and essence of humour in the translation. Their study also revealed that humorous sense was lost in 46% of the translated humorous segments. Furthermore, they also stated that appropriate cultural equivalent in the target text is needed in order to transfer the humour into the target text. Thus, a translator needs to have extensive understanding of both the source language and target language, including history, culture and social relation.

Yuan (2016) examined the strategies used to translate verbal and non-verbal humours in "A woman, a Gun and a Noodle Shop" into English subtitles. The result showed that the two frequently used strategies to translate Chinese verbal humour in the film are explicitation and omission which often cause a loss of the humorous effect. Explicitation refers to the strategy used when explanatory words or connectives are added to the translation.

Kavaliauskaitė (2019) carried out a study to investigate the translation of conversational humour in the subtitles of six selected Spanish movies. Three movies are translated from Spanish to English while the other three are translated from Spanish to Lithuanian. The identified examples of conversational humour were analysed by using the translation strategies proposed by Chiaro (2010). The results showed that the two most frequently adopted translation strategies were leaving the humour unchanged and substituting the humour in source language with another humour in the target language. Kavaliauskaitė (2019) explained that the other strategies were used less frequently because of the following reasons: (i) the limited amount of characters in the subtitles, (ii) difficulties in looking for the appropriate idiomatic expression, or (iii) the examples found were all understandable to the translator, thus they did not choose to ignore the

humour. The results also showed that when all the translation strategies were used, except for the strategy of ignoring humour, the conversational humour preserved in the target text.

2.7   Summary

This chapter reviewed various topics related to humour translation in subtitles. Different definitions of humour, types of humour, as well as classification of humour proposed by different scholars were discussed. The subtitling strategies, especially the subtitling strategies for humour were also discussed. Additionally, multimodality that is crucial for the study of on screen translation was looked into. The review on the past studies of translation of humour in subtitles shows that most of the previous studies focus on comedic films or comedic series, the genre in which Chinese New Year films have been neglected. On the whole, the literature review provides a firm foundation for the methodology and analysis of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this study. The discussion covers the research design, conceptual framework, sources of data, summaries of the selected films, data collection, justification of data used and data analysis procedure.

3.2 Research Design

This study employs a mix-method approach. In this study, a qualitative approach is used to determine the humour in the movies, analyse the strategies used in the translation of humour and find out whether the humorous elements are effectively conveyed in the English subtitles. On the contrary, a quantitative approach is adopted to investigate the possible reasons for the translator's choice of subtitling strategies for each type of humour and to what extent he is able to maintain the humorous elements in the translation.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

Several theories are employed as the conceptual frameworks of this study. Kostovčík's (2009) definition of humour refers to anything that is intended to be amusing will be used to identify the humour in the films. In addition, multimodal transcription used in Taylor's (2003) study will be adapted in order to include important semiotic resources, such as visual frame, description of the visual image and kinesics action, description of soundtrack and subtitles, which describe the humorous instances in the films. In addition, Martínez-Sierra's (2006) framework is applied to classify and

analyse humorous elements in both the source language and target language. The classification of jokes proposed by Martínez-Sierra (2006) is used to categorise the humour found in the films. As the analysis in this study is based on verbal humour, the categories of humour discussed in this study are community-and-institutions elements, community-sense-of-humour elements, linguistic elements, graphic elements and non-marked elements. The visual elements, paralinguistic elements and sound elements which are non-verbal will not be discussed as a stand-alone category in this study. Furthermore, by comparing the humorous elements in the source language and the target language, the changes in the humorous elements after translation can be examined. Additionally, Chiaro's (2010) strategies for translating humour on screen are adopted to analyse the strategies employed in translating humorous expressions in the English subtitles.

3.4   Source of Data

Two Malaysian Chinese New Year films, titled *Woohoo!* (2010) and *The Journey* (2015) are chosen as the corpus of this study. The reasons for selecting these two Malaysian Chinese New Year films are: (i) this genre of film is merry and humorous in nature, (ii) these films are well-known Malaysian Chinese films, and (iii) these films are available on DVD with English subtitles. Both of the films are produced by one of the biggest film companies in Malaysia, Astro Shaw and directed by Chiu Keng Guan, who is active in the local film industry. He is also the director of *Great Day* (2011), *Ola Bola* (2016) and *Think Big Big* (2018). *Woohoo!* is the first Malaysian Chinese New Year film and it grossed RM4.2 million at the box office. On the other hand, *The Journey* had grossed a total of RM 17.28 million and broke the box office record for a local movie (Lee, 2016). To this day, it is still the highest-grossing local Chinese New Year film in

Malaysia. As a well-received film, *The Journey* has successfully won four awards, which are the Best Non-Malay Language Local Film, Best Cinematography, Box Office Award and Best Actor Award at the 27th Malaysia Film Festival (Yeoh, 2015).

Both films revolve around the life of the Chinese community in Malaysia, depicting Malaysian Chinese lifestyle, culture and tradition. Malaysia is a multilingual country with people who speak different languages and dialects. The way the characters talk in these films clearly reflect the common phenomenon in Malaysia where people mix different languages and dialects in their conversation. The languages used in the films include Mandarin, Malay, English and other Chinese dialects such as Cantonese, Hokkien and Hakka. Apart from the storyline that focuses on the Chinese community in Malaysia, the multiple languages and dialects spoken by the characters also allow Malaysian audiences to engage with and relate to the films easily. Meanwhile, the selected films are heart-warming films that emphasise on family, friendship and tradition. The director also incorporates the values of determination and unity in the films and this is seen when the characters gain success in performing the tiger dance and building a hot air balloon, as a result of perseverance and cooperation. And, there are many amusing and hilarious moments in the films.

3.4.1 Synopsis of *Woohoo!*

This movie centres around a small village located at Beserah, Kuantan. There is a tradition in the village where Woohoo, a tiger dance will be performed by five people who were born in the year of the tiger during a prayer ceremony every 60 years. However, Lian Baji who is the master of the tiger dance is unable to perform in the upcoming ceremony due to his health condition. Lian Baji is very upset as the upcoming ceremony is approaching and he cannot find qualified people to join the tiger

dance in the village. Therefore, his granddaughter, Lian Rong puts up a misleading advertisement in the newspaper to attract people to work as the performers of the tiger dance. Attracted by the promising pay, Ah Beng and Ah Rain bring along Ah Huat to the village to learn the tiger dance. Ah Beng, Ah Rain and Ah Huat are facing difficulties in their career. Ah Beng who is a security guard is fired by his company. Ah Rain, who is a photographer, has to stop his business because he is unable to pay the rental. Additionally, Ah Huat who owns a fried kuey teow stall is only able to sell ten plates of fried kuey teow in a day. Another two men, Alan and Bobby also join the team for different reasons. Bobby purposely goes to Kuantan because he is passionate about the traditional culture of the tiger dance whereas Alan is forced by his father, the village head to take part in the performance. The five men undertake an intensive training together to master the tiger dance. There are several obstacles which nearly stopped the ceremony from taking place such as Lian Rong failing to pay the tiger dance players, which causes the players to try to leave the village as well as the one and only performing tool, which is the tiger's head is accidentally damaged by the kids. In the end, the five youngsters manage to perform the tiger dance successfully. Meanwhile, this traditional culture of the tiger dance has successfully gained the attention of the reporters and it is introduced to others through the news and interviews.

3.4.2   Synopsis of *The Journey*

This film begins with a Chinese wedding that Uncle Chuan is attending. He does not agree with the young bride and groom that choose not to follow the Chinese wedding tradition. Uncle Chuan is a conservative and old-fashioned man. He portrays the typical and traditional Chinese parent who does not express his love towards the child through words. Uncle Chuan lives alone in Cameron Highlands. His only daughter, Bee was

sent to England at the age of eight, after the death of her mother. Bee could not understand her father's decision of sending her to England and this leads to a tensed relationship between Bee and Uncle Chuan.

When Bee returns to Malaysia after her graduation, she brings along her Caucasian boyfriend, Benji and tells his father their decision to get married. Uncle Chuan firmly opposes to their decision, resulting in a big argument between Bee and Uncle Chuan. Later, he compromises and reluctantly agrees to the marriage with a condition, which is the wedding ceremony must follow the traditional Chinese custom. Uncle Chuan decides to invite his primary school classmates who live all over the peninsular of Malaysia to the wedding and send them the wedding invitation card personally. Benji reluctantly embark on the journey with Uncle Chuan to deliver the invitations. Throughout the journey, they slowly understand each other more. Benji and Bee then help Uncle Chuan to achieve his wish that is to build a hot air balloon. The strained relationship between Bee and Uncle Chuan is repaired through this incident. The film ends with the traditional wedding of Bee and Benji where everyone is happily giving their blessings to the couple including Uncle Chuan and Benji's divorced parents.

3.5   Data Collection

The data which will be investigated in this study are the humorous scenes taken from the films, *Woohoo!* and *The Journey*. The humorous expressions in the two selected films will be identified manually. Scenes which are intended to be humorous will be extracted and transcribed based on the multimodal transcription proposed by Taylor (2003) which consists of the visual frame, description of the visual image and kinesics action, description of the music and sound, dialogues and subtitles. The visual frame contains the screenshot of the humorous scene. Description of the visual image and

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kinesics action includes the description of the body movements, gestures and facial expressions of the characters while description of music and sound includes the description of the background music and sounds other than that of the spoken dialogue. The next description will be the dialogues that evoke humour. For the dialogues that are spoken in Mandarin, transliteration and translation in English will be provided while translation in Mandarin will be added to the dialogues that use dialects. Lastly, the subtitle section contains the English subtitles of the humorous scene. After extracting the humorous instances from the film, a survey is given to the respondents to justify the humorous instances found. Only the instances that are found humorous by the Chinese-respondents will be included in this study. Below is an example showing how a humorous example taken from the film is transcribed using the multimodal description.

	The Journey
Visual Frame	Lai Di, Dai Di, Zhao Di, You Di, faster!
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	A mother is sitting in a minivan, waving her hands and asking her daughters to be faster.
Music and Sound Effect	Sound of Chinese drumming.
Dialogue	Mother [Chinese]: 来弟，带弟，招弟，有弟，快点呐, 慢吞吞的! Mother: lai di, dai di, zhao di, kuai dian na, man tun tun de! Mother: Come Boy, Bring Boy, Invite Boy, Possess Boy, faster, so slow.
Subtitle	Lai Di, Dai Di, Zhao Di, You Di, faster!

3.6 Justification of the Data Used

To increase the reliability and validity of the samples selected, two surveys were administered. The respondents consisted of four Malaysian postgraduate students of Linguistics, where two of them are native speakers of the Chinese language whereas the other two do not understand Chinese. The Chinese respondents and non-Chinese

respondents were given different surveys (refer to Appendix B and C). Each respondent was required to answer the survey by watching the DVD of the two selected Malaysian Chinese New Year movies. A total of 71 instances from the selected films were included in the surveys for both pair of respondents. Given the time frame of the identified humorous instances, the respondents were asked to examine the particular scene, and then determine whether the selected scenes were humorous for them. As humour varies from individual to individual, it is important to have the agreement from other source language viewers that the verbal expressions extracted from the films are humorous. Therefore, only the instances that were deemed as being humorous by the Chinese respondents will be included as the corpus of this study. Out of 71 samples, 59 samples were identified as being humorous by the Chinese respondents. The survey for Chinese respondents differed slightly from the survey for non-Chinese respondents, in which the Chinese respondents were requested to look at the subtitles and determine whether the humour is preserved in the subtitles. Meanwhile, by gathering information from the non-Chinese respondents who were requested to examine whether the selected scenes were humorous, insight can be provided to the researcher whether the humour is conveyed in the subtitles. In addition, information gathered from the comment sections in both of the surveys could be helpful in analysing the findings obtained.

3.7   Preliminary Analysis

A preliminary analysis of the data was conducted to examine possible limitations of the methodological framework proposed. From the preliminary analysis, it is noticed that some humorous utterances were not rendered by any of the strategies for translating humour on the screen proposed by Chiaro (2010). Therefore, Gottlieb's (1992)

strategies for subtitling are included in this study in order to supplement Chiaro's (2010) strategies.

3.8   Data Analysis

To begin with, the categories of the humorous instances are identified following the typology of Martínez-Sierra (2006). In accordance to the categorisation of humour proposed by Martínez-Sierra, the humorous instances will be categorised into community-and-institutions elements, community-sense-of-humour elements, linguistic elements, graphic elements and non-marked elements. Subsequently, the frequency of each type of humour found will be quantified. As discussed earlier, visual elements, paralinguistic elements and sound elements are not included in this study as they are non-verbal in nature, thus they cannot be an independent category in this study of verbally expressed humour.

The analysis will continue in an attempt to answer research question one. The strategies employed to translate the humorous expressions are determined based on Chiaro's (2010) translation strategies of verbally expressed humour, which are leaving the humour unchanged, replacing the humour with another humour in the target language, replacing the humour with idiomatic expressions and ignoring the humour. For the cases where none of the strategies proposed by Chiaro is used, Gottlieb's (1992) strategies for subtitling will be adopted to analyse the cases. The frequency of occurrence for each type of translating strategy is calculated and tabulated in order to provide an insight to the saliency of each translating strategy employed by the translators in the translation of different types of humour.

In order to answer the second research question, the humorous loads in the source language and the target language will be identified based on Martínez-Sierra's framework (2006). As discussed earlier, humorous load refers to the humorous elements that contribute to humour. Then, the humorous loads of the source language and target language are compared to find out whether the humorous elements are preserved, changed, added or lost in the translation. After that, the frequency and the percentage of the humorous instances that are preserved, changed, added and lost are calculated with the aim to investigate the effectiveness of the translation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of translating strategies utilised by translators to translate the humorous utterances in the source language into English subtitles, as well as the effectiveness of the translation. The data analysis is discussed according to the categories of humour. There are four types of humour found in the selected data, which are; (a) community-and-institution elements, (b) community-sense-of-humour elements, (c) linguistic elements, and (d) non-marked elements. Graphic element is not included in the analysis as there is no humour related to graphic element that can be found in the data. Meanwhile, visual element, paralinguistic element and sound element are not considered as an independent category in this study as they are non-verbal.

4.1 Humorous Occurrence of Each Category

A total of 59 humorous instances are included for the analysis of this study. Based on Martinez-Sierra's classification of humour (2006), there are four categories of humour found in the selected data, which are; (a) community-and-institution elements, (b) community-sense-of-humour elements, (c) linguistic elements and (d) non-marked elements. Table 4.1 provides a summary that shows the number of occurrences for each type of humour and its respective percentage against the total number of humour.

Table 4.1: Occurrence of humour in the source language by categories

Types of humour	Occurrence	Percentage (%)
Community-and-institution elements	20	33.90
Community-sense-of-humour elements	5	8.48
Linguistic elements	15	25.42
Non-marked elements	19	32.20
Total	59	100%

As shown in the table above, the community-and-institution element is the most common humour found in the study, with an occurrence of 20, which accounts for 33.90% of the total number of humorous instances. The non-marked element is also frequently found in the data with an occurrence of 19 (32.20%). Out of 59 humorous instances, 15 (25.42%) examples of humorous instances are identified as a linguistic element while five (8.48%) of the examples are community-sense-of-humour elements. In the section below, I will present the frequency of strategies utilised by the translator to render humour into English subtitle based on each category of humour.

4.2   Strategies Used to Translate Humour

In this research, all of the strategies proposed by Chiaro (2010) were used to translate the verbally expressed humour in films. These strategies include leaving the humour unchanged, replacing the humour with another humour, replacing the humour with idiomatic expression, and ignoring the humour. However, the analysis shows that other strategies were also adopted to translate the humour in some cases. Three of the strategies; namely paraphrase, expansion and condensation proposed by Gottlieb (1992) were also used in translating humour from these films. Both strategy of expansion and strategy of condensation are used together with another strategy proposed by Chiaro

(2010), which is leaving the humour unchanged. Thus, there are two combinations of strategies; (a) leaving the humour unchanged + expansion and (b) leaving the humour unchanged + condensation.

Table 4.2: Subtitling strategies used in translating humour

Strategies	Community-and-institution elements	Community-sense-of-humour elements	Linguistic elements	Non-marked elements	Total	
					Number	Percentage (%)
Leaving the humour unchanged	11	4	8	14	37	62.71%
Replacing the humour with another humour	5	1	-	-	6	10.17%
Replacing the humour with idiomatic expression	-	-	1	-	1	1.69%
Ignoring the humour	1	-	2	-	3	5.08%
Paraphrasing	-	-	2	1	3	5.08%
Leaving the humour unchanged + expansion	3	-	1	-	4	6.78%
Leaving the humour unchanged + condensation	-	-	1	4	5	8.47%
Total	20	5	15	19	59	100%

As shown in the table above, seven strategies were adopted by the translator in subtitling the humour from source language to English. It can be seen that the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy is the most frequently used with an occurrence of 37, which accounts a percentage of 62.71%. The second most commonly used strategy is "replacing the humour with another humour" which have been identified to be used in six (10.17%) cases. The strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged + condensation" was used to render 5 (8.47%) humorous instances. Another combination of strategies,

which are "leaving the humour unchanged + expansion" were used to translate four (6.78%) humorous instances. Each of the strategy of "ignoring the humour" and "paraphrasing" was used to translate three (5.08%) of the humorous instances. The results also reveal that the "replacing the humour with idiomatic expression" strategy was rarely used to translate the humour with an occurrence of 1.69%.

For the community-and-institution elements, 11 of the humorous instances were translated using the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy while five of the humorous instances were translated by utilising the strategy of "replacing the humour with another humour". Combined strategies consisting of "leaving the humour unchanged and expansion" were adopted in translating three cases of the community-and-institution elements. The "ignoring the humour" strategy was only used once to translate one humorous instance in this category.

Out of five humorous instances in the category of community-sense-of-humour elements, four of them were translated into English subtitle by using the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy. Only one humorous utterance in this category was translated by using the "replacing the humour with another humour" strategy.

For the category of linguistic elements, six different strategies were applied to translate the humorous linguistic elements. The "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy was used in translating eight humorous instances. Meanwhile, "ignoring the humour" and "paraphrasing" strategies were used to render two cases of linguistic elements respectively. "Replacing the humour with idiomatic expression", "leaving the humour unchanged + expansion" and "leaving the humour unchanged + condensation" strategies were each used once to translate the linguistic elements.

For the non-marked elements, 13 out of 19 cases were translated by "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy. In addition, the "leaving the humour unchanged + condensation" strategy was used in translating five cases of non-marked elements. Meanwhile, the "paraphrasing" strategy was used once to render non-marked element.

The next section will show the in-depth findings on humorous instances taken from the films according to each category of humour. Out of 59 humorous instances identified, 37 instances will be discussed in details in the following section.

4.2.1   Community-and-institutions Elements

Community-and-institutions elements refer to jokes that rely on particular culture such as politicians, celebrities, newspapers and books for humorous effect (Martinez-Sierra, 2006). As we have discussed earlier, some common types of culture-specific items include ecology, material culture, socio culture, organizations, customs, activities, procedure, concept, fictional character and slang. One must possess relevant cultural knowledge in order to understand this type of humour.

4.2.1.1 Translating Community-and-institutions Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged

The following examples are community-and-institutions elements found in the films that are translated by using the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy, in which the humorous utterances are literally rendered.

Example 1

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame		
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	A man points at Ah Beng while talking to him.	A man points at Ah Beng while talking to him.
Music and Sound Effect	Sound of lion dance instruments	
Dialogue	Passer-by: [Cantonese] m hou yi si, ngo yeng co yan. Passer-by: 不好意思，我认错人。 Passer-by: Sorry, I mistaken you.	Passer-by: [Cantonese] **Lam Dak Wing** mou lei gam fei. M hou yi si. Passer-by: 林德荣没你这样肥。不好意思。 Passer-by: Jack Lim no you this fat. Sorry.
Subtitle	Sorry, I've mistaken you as someone else.	**Jack Lim** is not as fat as you.
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: Community-and-institution element	

The humorous load in this example is based on a specific cultural reference, who is "Lam Dak Wing" (Jack Lim) a famous Chinese Deejay in Malaysia. He is also a host, producer and actor. In this film, the role of Ah Beng is played by the Deejay, Lam Dak Wing. In the above scene, the stranger mistaken Ah Beng for Lam Dak Wing and says that Lam Dak Wing is not as fat as Ah Beng. In fact, Ah Beng is Lam Dak Wing. This humorous load is a community-and-institution element as culture-specific knowledge is needed in order to appreciate the humour. The translator chose to leave the humour unchanged in the translation. Malaysian target viewers are expected to be familiar with the specific cultural reference, Jack Lim who is famous in Malaysia. In addition, they are believed to know that the main character, Ah Beng is played by Jack Lim. As stated by respondent D, this utterance is humorous because Ah Beng is Jack Lim. Meanwhile,

respondent C found this utterance is humorous as it is a tease to the character's body

size. Hence, the target viewers are able to experience the humour presented in this scene.

As a result, the community-and-institution element is preserved in the subtitle.

Example 2

	The Journey	
Visual Frame	This Mr Sheep Low Cheng Boon	Is now known as Low Boon Cheng?
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Uncle Chuan is pointing at the photo of a boy.	Uncle Chuan is looking downwards.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Chuan: [Cantonese+Mandarin] Li go 羊咩咩刘正文 Transliteration: Li go Yang Mie Mie Liu Zheng Wen Chuan: 这个羊咩咩刘正文 Chuan: This Sheep Liu Zheng Wen	Chuan: [Cantonese+Mandarin] Hok yan giu 刘文正? Transliteration: Hok yang giu Liu Wen Zheng Chuan: 学人叫刘文正? Chuan: imitate people called Liu Wen Zheng?
Subtitle	This **Mr Sheep Low Cheng Boon**	Is now known as **Low Boon Cheng**?
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: -	

In the example above, the humour derives from a community-and-institution element.

It involves a specific cultural reference, "刘文正" (Liu Wen Zheng). Liu Wen Zheng is

a famous Taiwanese singer in the 1970s and 1980s. His songs are popular among

Chinese, even among Malaysian Chinese. Uncle Chuan discovers his classmate, "羊咩

咩刘正文", who is introduced by the host as "刘文正" (Liu Wen Zheng). He was

performing on stage in a television show. "羊咩咩" is the nickname of a classmate

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which means sheep. From the school magazine, Uncle Chuan confirms that his classmate's real name is "刘正文" (Liu Zheng Wen), in which its only difference with the celebrity's name is the sequence of the second and third word. Uncle Chuan's classmate has changed his name to "刘文正" (Liu Wen Zheng), to be the same as the popular singer. In this example, the humour is appreciated by those who know who Liu Wen Zheng is. The translator utilised the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy in the translation, in which "刘正文" is transliterated as "Low Cheng Boon", while "刘文正" is transliterated as "Low Boon Cheng". The surname "刘" is translated as "Low" following the pronunciation of Teochew dialect. However, the surname "Low" may derive from another Chinese surname "罗". The community-and-institution element is lost in the subtitle because the translated name "Low Boon Cheng" is less likely to be connected with the famous singer "刘正文" (Liu Wen Zheng). It can be seen from the survey that both respondents C and D felt that this utterance is not humorous.

Example 3

	The Journey
Visual Frame	 Lai Di, Dai Di, Zhao Di, You Di, faster!
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	A mother is sitting in a minivan, waving her hands and asking her daughters to be faster.
Music and Sound Effect	Sound of Chinese drumming.
Dialogue	Mother [Mandarin]: 来弟，带弟，招弟，有弟，快点呐，慢吞吞的! Transliteration: Lai di, dai di, zhao di, you di, kuai dian na, man tun tun de Mother: Come Boy, Bring Boy, Invite Boy, Possess Boy, faster, so slow.

Subtitle	Lai Di, Dai Di, Zhao Di, You Di, faster!
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution elements English subtitles: -

The humour in the above scene is based on the funny names of the daughters. The mother is calling for her four daughters. The names of the daughters indicate special meanings. In Chinese, "弟" (di) means "boy" while "来"(lai), "带"(dai), "招"(zhao), and "有"(you) means "come", "bring", "invite" and "possess" respectively. In olden Chinese society, it is very common for parents to name their daughters with aforementioned names in hopes that they will be able to get a son in the next pregnancy. Nowadays, people normally do not name their daughters this way as the preference over a son in Malaysian Chinese society is not as serious as before. The use of these names in the film is believed to be an intention to bring a humorous effect. This humour instance is categorised as community-and-institutions elements because the audience need to have relevant cultural knowledge in order to understand the humour. The strategy used in subtitling the names is "leaving the humour unchanged", as the names of the daughters are maintained as in the source language. The target audiences did not realise the humour in this utterance as the names do not have any special meanings to them. It can be observed from the survey that this utterance is not humorous for both respondents C and D. The humour in the source language is not presented in the subtitle. In my opinion, a better solution to translate this humorous expression is by translating the name word by word. Following this example, girls' names in the subtitle should be "Come Boy", "Bring Boy", "Invite Boy" and "Possess Boy". The target audience will be able to experience the humorous effect as the names of these girls are in contrast with their identity even without the specific cultural knowledge.

Example 4

	The Journey	
Visual Frame	*He is a singer in the band*	*Stage singer? He must have earned a lot*
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Bee looks at the aunty who is cooking.	The aunty stops frying the vegetables and turns her head to look at Bee.
Music and Sound Effect	The sound of frying vegetables.	
Dialogue	Bee: [Cantonese+English] Koi hai singer in the band. Bee: 他是歌手里乐队。 Bee: He is singer in the band.	Helper: [Hokkien] **Chio gua dai** ar? Tam dua lui lei. Helper: 唱歌台啊？赚大钱勒。 Helper: Sing song stage? Earn big money.
Subtitle	He is a singer in the band.	**Stage singer**? He must have earned a lot.
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: -	

In this scene, the aunty asks Bee about her boyfriend's occupation. Bee replies that her boyfriend is a singer in the band. However, the aunty thinks that singer in the band is a "gua dai" (歌台) singer. This misconception of singer in the band as "gua dai" singer has successfully created the humour for source language viewers. "Gua dai" literally means a song stage. It refers to the live variety shows held during the seventh month of lunar calendar in accordance to the Hungry Ghost Festival, which is common in Singapore and Malaysia. People believe that during this period, the gates of hell will open and the spirits will return to Earth. Therefore, "gua dai" shows are intended to provide entertainment for both the dead and the living. The source language viewers could easily experience the intended humour in this instance as a singer in the band is totally different from a "gua dai" singer. This humorous instance is categorised as the

community-and-institutions elements as the humour is based on a cultural activity, which is "gua dai". In the subtitle, the translator rendered "chio gua dai" （唱歌台）as "stage singer". The translator opted the strategy of leaving the humour unchanged as literal translation to render "chio gua dai" as "stage singer" in the subtitle. The target language viewer will not be able to understand what does "stage singer" refers to. As a result of the loss of community-and-institution element in the subtitle, target viewers are not able to experience the humours resulted from considering a singer in the band as a singer performing during Hungry Ghost festival. In my opinion, the term "chio gua dai" can be rendered as "singer of Hungry Ghost Festival" which can give a better picture for the target language viewers to understand what a "gua dai" singer is as compared to the "stage singer" used in the subtitle. Findings from surveys show that respondents A and B thought that the humour was not preserved in the subtiltle. In the meantime, while respondent D did not consider the subtitle as humorous, respondent C found this instance to be humorous. According to respondent C, she found out that this instance is humorous because Benji does not earn a lot. Based on respondent C's comments, this is an example of irony where the utterance is opposite from the reality. However, to the researcher, there is no display that indicates Benji's income in the film. Thus, this instance is neither an irony nor a humour to the researcher.

Example 5

	Woohoo!		
Visual Frame	Of course can, you send us to Kelantan using the East coast Expressway	After that you can go to Kelantan	Then from Kelantan you can go straight to Penang
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Huat is driving. Ah Rain is looking at Ah Huat while talking to him.	Ah Rain is talking to Ah Huat	Ah Rain is talking to Ah Huat.

Music and Sound Effect	The sound of car engine		
Dialogue	Ah Rain: [Mandarin] 顺路。呐，你看啊。你这里用东西大道这样子载我们去关丹 Transliteration: Shun lu. Na, ni kan na. Ni zhe li yong dong xi da dao zai wo men qu guan dan Ah Rain: It's on the way. You see. You here use East Coast Expressway like this fetch us go Kuantan	Ah Rain: [Mandarin+Malay] 然后关丹那边直上就是 Kelantan 了哦 Transliteration: Ran hou guan dan na bian zhi shang jiu shi Kelantan le o Ah Rain: Then Kuantan there straight up is Kelantan	Ah Rain: [Mandarin+Malay] 然后 Kelantan 那边就是一条路就去到 Penang 了咯 Transliteration: Ran hou Kelantan na bian jiu shi yi tiao lu qu dao Penang le lo Ah Rain: Then Kelantan there is one road go to Penang
Subtitle	Of course can, you can send us to Kuantan using the East Coast Expressway.	After that you can go to Kelantan.	Then from Kelantan you can go straight to Penang.
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged		
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: Community-and-institution element		

The humorous sense in this example is based on a community-and-institution element. In this scene, Ah Huat who is going to Penang from Kuala Lumpur agrees to give Ah Beng and Ah Rain a ride as Ah Rain tells Ah Huat that the place they want to go, which is Pahang is located along the way to Penang. In fact, Pahang and Penang are of opposite directions from Kuala Lumpur. However, Ah Rain tries to persuade Ah Huat that Pahang and Penang are in the same direction so that he and Ah Beng can get a free ride to Pahang. Prior geographical knowledge is needed in order to get the humorous sense. The translator decided to leave the humour unchanged in the translation. It would not be a problem for the target viewers to get the humorous sense as the target viewers are Malaysians who will most probably possess the knowledge on Malaysia's geography. As stated by respondent D, this scene is funny because Kuantan

is definitely not located on the way to Penang. The humorous element is maintained in the translation.

Example 6

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Benji is putting the chicken head into the bowl of Uncle Chuan. The shot moves closer to focus on Uncle Chuan.
Music and Sound Effect	Sound of lion dance instruments
Dialogue	Chuan :[Cantonese] Yao mou gao cou ar? Bei go gai tao ngo sek ar? Chuan: 有没搞错啊？给个鸡头我吃啊？ Chuan: Do you make mistake? Give a chicken head I eat?
Subtitle	You kidding me? You offering me the chicken head?
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: Non-marked element

In the example above, the humour is based on the action of Benji who gives Uncle Chuan a chicken head to eat and the response of Uncle Chuan. There is a saying in Chinese "有头有尾" (you tou you wei), which literally means having a head and a tail. It refers to the meaning of "there is beginning and end, a completion". Although some Malaysian Chinese do eat chicken head, they would normally not eat chicken head during Chinese New Year because keeping the head and feet of a chicken symbolises a good start and end for the new year. At the same time, it is also a good sign of completion where one can complete everything he or she does throughout the year. Therefore, Benji's action of offering the chicken head is unacceptable for Uncle Chuan who thinks that eating it will bring bad luck. This humorous instance is categorised as community-and-institutions element as it is based on the custom of the source language

viewers. The strategy used to translate this verbally expressed humour is "leaving the verbal humour unchanged", as the humour is literally rendered into the target language. The target viewers will still experience the humour because it is uncommon to eat chicken head in other communities. As stated by respondent D, this utterance is funny because offering a chicken head to people is unusual. The humorous load changes from community-and-institution element to non-marked element as the humour in the target language does not refers to a specific culture and it does not depend on other specific elements for the humorous effect.

4.2.1.2 Translating Community-and-institutions Elements by Replacing the Humour with Another Humour

In this section, the examples of community-and institutions elements that are translated by using the "replacing the humour with another humour" strategy are discussed. By replacing the humour in source language with another humour in target language, the meaning, form, or both meaning and form of the source language humour may only be partially preserved within the target language.

Example 7

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame	Old man, you should go	Otherwise you'll be having gathering in heaven
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	A man is walking into the house.	The man walks and stands next to his father.
Music and Sound Effect	-	

Dialogue	Fatty: [Hokkien] Lao ei, dang mei mei ki lo Fatty: 老的，能快快去咯。 Fatty: Old one, can fast fast go	Fatty: [Hokkien] Em tang ai lok ki **ei dei** liao ho ka tong xue hui mei? Fatty: 难道要下去下底了厚才同学会吗? Fatty: want go down underneath only class reunion?
Subtitle	Old man you should go	Otherwise you'll be having gathering in **heaven**
Strategy	Replacing the humour with another humour	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: Community-and-institution element	

In the above scene, Uncle Chuan is inviting his friend to his daughter's wedding. The friend's son hears about it and encourages his father to go. The son tells the father that he should go while he can and asks whether he wants to have a reunion with his classmates at "ei dei" (下底). "ei dei" means underneath. In this case, it refers to the underworld. Chinese who are practise Buddhism believe that the soul of a person will go to the underworld after death. This joke is based on the community-and-institutions elements as it is related to religious beliefs. Only those who have the specific background knowledge can relate "ei dei" (underneath) to the concept of "underworld". The translator rendered this instance by replacing it with another verbal humour in the subtitle. The term "ei dei" is replaced with "heaven" which is comprehensible for the target audience. Replacing the verbal humour with another verbal humour is a wise choice in this case, as it preserves the humorous sense of the original utterance in the target language. Both respondent C and respondent D agreed that this utterance is hilarious.

Example 8

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame	Hello, how's contestant no 4? Will he win?	This TV can't emit sound, how would I know?
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Beng's parents cover themselves with a blanket and an umbrella while watching the muted television programme.	Ah Beng's parents cover themselves with a blanket and an umbrella while watching the muted television programme.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Ah Beng's mother: [Cantonese] Wei, sei hou coeng seng dim ar? Wui em wui yeng ar? Ah Beng's mother: 喂，四号唱成怎样啊？会不会赢啊？ Ah Beng's mother: Wei, number four sing become how ar? Can or not win ar?	Ah Beng's father: [Cantonese] Dou mou seng，**guai zi** koi dei coeng seng dim yong o. Ah Beng's father: 都没声，鬼知他们唱成怎样哦。 Ah Beng's father: Entirely no sound, ghost know they sing become how.
Subtitle	Hello, how's contestant no 4? Will he win?	This TV can't emit sound, how would **I** know.
Strategy	Replacing the humour with another humour	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: Non-marked	

In the above scene, Ah Beng's mother asks her husband how the singing of

contestant number four was as she is away for a while. Her husband does not know the

singing performance even though he is watching the show as the television is muted.

The humorous effect is created when the husband replies his wife by using the slang

phrase "gwai zi" (鬼知) (ghost knows), which is an exaggerated way to convey the

meaning of "nobody knows". Thus, this is a humorous instance of community-and-

institution element. The translator utilised the strategy of replacing the humour with

another humour as "This TV can't emit sound how would I know" is used as an

equivalent for the utterance "Dou mou seng guai zi koi dei coeng seng dim yong o" (There is no sound, ghost knows how their singing are). It is noteworthy that the slang phrase "ghost knows" disappears in the subtitle. It is substituted with "I know", which causes the loss of humorous load within the community-and-institution element. The humorous load is changed into non-marked element in the subtitle as the humour will be based on the situation of asking the singing performance while the television is muted. It is of no difficulty for the target viewers to understand the humour in this instance. As mentioned by respondent D, it is funny to watch a muted singing competition show.

Example 9

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	The mechanic is repairing the tyre. Uncle Chuan is sitting behind with a serious face.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Mechanic: [Cantonese+Malay] Lei m pongcek ngo dei **wan si sek** mei Mechanic:: 你不爆胎我们找屎吃吗 Mechanic: you not punctured you find shit eat?
Subtitle	How could we **get business** if you don't ever get puncture
Strategy	Replacing the humour with another humour
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: Non-marked element

In the scene above, Uncle Chuan is not happy because he has a flat tyre. The humour arises from the mechanic's unexpected response when he frankly says that they earn money from repairing flat tyre. The phrase "wan si sek" (找屎吃) which in literal definition means "find faeces to eat" also contributes to the humour. This phrase is derived from the Cantonese slang term "wan sek" (找吃)(find eat) that refers to earn a

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living. The meaning of this slang term is changed when the word "si" (faeces) is added. Based on the initial meaning of "wan sek", the term "wan si sek" (find faeces to eat) indicates the meaning of unable to earn a living. The use of the slang term has successfully intensified the humorous sense. As mentioned by respondent A, the term "wan si sek" may sound rude but it is funny in this case. The humour was rendered into the subtitle by using the "replacing the humour with another humour" strategy. The phrase "wan si sek" was replaced with "get business" in the subtitle. The specific cultural reference is lost in the subtitle. There is a shift of humorous load from community-and-institution element to non-marked element. In the subtitle, the humour is no longer based on the slang word, but from the whole meaning conveyed throughout the sentence. The humorous sense in the subtitle is resulted from the unexpected response of the mechanic by frankly saying that they make money from repairing the flat tyre, even though that time Uncle Chuan is not happy because of the flat tyre. It can be noticed that both respondents C and D considered this utterance as being humorous.

4.2.1.3 Translating Community-and-institutions Elements by Ignoring the Humour

The following examples show the community-and-institutions elements that are translated by utilising the "ignoring the humour" strategy where the humorous elements are omitted in the translation.

Example 10

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	The men are resting after the training.
Music and Sound Effect	Background music
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [Cantonese+English] **Zan hai fan syu**. Kam mak bing go wa U-turn gei? Ah Beng: 真是番薯。昨天谁说回转的？ Ah Beng: really sweet potato. Yesterday who say U-turn?
Subtitle	Who wants to U-turn back yesterday?
Strategy	Ignoring the humour
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: -

The humorous sense in the example above arises from Ah Beng who uses the slang phrase "Zan hai fan syu", which is also his pet phrase to make fun of himself. In Cantonese, besides the literal meaning of sweet potato, "fan syu" is also a slang term that refers to an idiot person. After the tiring training, Ah Beng mentions that the one who said "U-turn" last night is stupid. In the previous night, Ah Beng and his friends decided to quit the training team. On their way to leave the village, Ah Beng requested Ah Huat to make a U-turn and back to the village to continue the training. Therefore Ah Beng is making a self-denigrating humour by inferring himself as "fan syu" (stupid). This instance is considered as a community-and-institution element as the source of humour is based on the specific-cultural reference. The translator handled the utterance by ignoring the verbal humour in the translation, in which the phrase "Zan hai fan syu" is omitted. As a result, the humorous load is lost in the subtitle. The findings from the

survey show that both respondents C and D did not consider this utterance to be humorous.

4.2.1.4 Translating Community-and-institutions Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged + Expansion

In this section, the community-and-institutions elements that are translated by using a combination of strategies, which are "leaving the humour unchanged" and "expansion", are discussed. The strategy of expansion is used when extra information is added into the target text normally for the culture-specific references.

Example 11

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Fatty and Benji are sitting and chatting at the jetty.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Fatty: [English] Wa you feel **syiok** you know?
Subtitle	You'll fell very "syiok" (awesome). You know?
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged + expansion
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitles: Community-and-institution element

The humorous sense is generated by the use of the slang word "syiok" in the utterance. "Syiok" is a slang word that is commonly used by Malaysians and Singaporeans. It is used as an exclamation to convey excitement, satisfaction or pleasure. This example is categorised as a community-and-institution element as it is based on the

slang word for humorous effect. Respondent B said that it is funny to use the term "syiok" when talking to a Westerner. The utterance is translated into the subtitle by using "leaving the humour unchanged + expansion" strategy. The word "syiok" is maintained in the subtitle and its meaning is included in the bracket. The humorous sense is preserved in the subtitle as the intended viewers are Malaysians who are familiar with this slang word. It can be observed that while respondent A and respondent B agreed that the humour is conveyed in the subtitle, respondents C and D also found this utterance to be humorous. Thus, the humorous load remains unchanged in the subtitle.

Example 12

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame	I'm Ah Beng, you are Lian Yung?	should be called Tau Sar (Red Bean Bun)
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Beng raises his hand.	Ah Beng is pointing at Lin Yung then moves his hand pointing at the young boy.
Music and Sound Effect	Bird chirping	
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] Ngo hai. Owhh, lei gang hai go go **Lin Yung** la Ah Beng: 我是。噢，你肯定是那个莲蓉啦 Ah Beng: I am. You must be that lotus seed paste.	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] Gam li gao fan xu hai em hai yeng goi giu **Dau Sa** leh Ah Beng: 那这块番薯是不是应该叫豆沙 Ah Beng: Like that this piece sweet potato whether or not suppose called red bean
Subtitle	I'm Ah Beng, you are **Lian Yung**?	So this chubby should be called **Tau Sar (Red Bean Bun)**
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged + expansion	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-and-institution element English subtitle: -	

In the example above, the humour is generated based on the names of "Lin Yung" (莲蓉) and "Dau Sa" (豆沙). "Lin Yung" means lotus seed paste. When Ah Beng met Lin Yung in person, he jokingly said that the boy stood next to Lin Yung, who is Lin Yung's brother should be called "Dao Sa" (red bean paste). This example is recognised as a community-and-institution element as it is based on culture-specific references, which are "Lin Yung" and "Dau Sa" that are normally used as fillings for Chinese desserts such as buns and moon cakes. The translator chose to use the "leaving the verbal humour unchanged + expansion" strategy to translate the humour. The name "Lin Yung" is transliterated as "Lian Yung" while "Dau Sa" is transliterated as "Tau Sar". The translator added extra information "red bean bun" to explain what "dau sa" is, without explaining what "lin yung" is. As a result, the target audience cannot relate "dau sa" (red bean paste) to "lin yung" (lotus seed paste) as they do not understand the meaning of "lin yung". The humorous load is lost in the English subtitle. According to respondent A, the humour fails to be preserved as the meaning of "lin yung" is not presented in the subtitle. Respondent D also did not consider this utterance as humorous. However, respondent C said that this utterance is humorous because the name Tau Sar is cute. It is suggested to add the meaning of "lin yung", which is "lotus seed paste" as well as to change the meaning of "dau sa" to the correct one, which is "red bean paste" in the English subtitle.

4.2.2 Community-sense-of-humour Elements

Community-sense-of-humour elements consist of jokes that rely on topics which appear to be funny and popular only in certain communities (Martinez-Sierra, 2006). It often involves prejudice, stereotype, and racism. Therefore, this type of humour shows the preference of a certain community instead of the cultural specificity.

4.2.2.1 Translating Community-sense-of-humour Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged

The following examples show the humorous instances based on community-sense-of-humour elements that are literally rendered, using the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy.

Example 13

	The Journey
Visual Frame	You come out! Men and women are not allowed to be in one room
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Uncle Chuan opens the curtain. Bee immediately pats Benji's hand that is placed on her shoulder. Benji moves his hand away.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Chuan: [Cantonese] Lei chu lei! Lan loi em dak tong fong. Chuan: 你出来！男女不得同房。 Chuan: You come out! Boy girl cannot same room.
Subtitle	You come out! Men and women are not allowed to be in one room.
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-sense-of-humour element English subtitles: Community-sense-of-humour element

The humour arises from Uncle Chuan who is unhappy that his daughter is alone with her boyfriend in a room. His daughter, Bee who immediately pats her boyfriend's hand on her shoulder when Uncle Chuan is entering the room also contributes to the humour. This example is categorised as a community-sense-of-humour element as it is only humorous for some of the communities. For the communities that forbid unmarried man and woman to be in the same room and seemed this as a serious matter, this scene may not be humorous to them. The translator utilised the strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged" to translate the source language, in which the humour is literally translated

into the target language. From the subtitle, the target audiences are able to know that Uncle Chuan opposes Benji and Bee to stay in the same room sternly. Thus, the humorous elements are preserved in the subtitle. According to respondent C, Uncle Chuan's "old-fashioned" utterance is humorous. In the meantime, Bee's reaction when she sees her father entering the room also helps the audiences to experience the humour. This is in line with the point of view of respondent D, who stated that Bee's reaction when seeing his father is funny.

Example 14

	Woohoo!
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Beng is doing the gesture that represents glasses. Ah Lian covers her teeth.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] Yang wei ngo an zao bei yak go sin ngang gei gong nga mui hak cang. Ah Beng: 因为我下午被一个四眼的钢牙妹吓着。 Ah Beng: Because I afternoon by a four-eyed steel teeth girl frightened.
Subtitle	Because during afternoon, a specky girl with iron braces had upset me!
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-sense-of-humour element English subtitles: Community-sense-of-humour element

In the above scene, Ah Beng is telling Ah Lian that he did not go to work because he was frightened by a girl with spectacles and iron braces. This scene is intended to be humorous by making fun on Ah Lian's appearance. It is identified as community-sense-of-humour element as it is based on the stereotype that girls who wear glasses and braces do not look good. The translator opted for the strategy of "leaving the humour

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unchanged". The source language is literally translated into the target language. The target audiences will know that Ah Beng is making fun on Ah Lian's appearance from the subtitle paired with the gesture of Ah Beng that represents someone who wears spectacles. Respondent C said that Ah Lian's previous sarcasm directed at Ah Beng was upsetting. Thus, it turns out amusing when Ah Beng fights back Ah Lian by making a sarcastic remark on Ah Lian's appearance. The sarcastic effect is presented but diminished in the subtitle as the sarcastic effect from the word "upset" is not as strong as in the word "frightened" in the source language. The subtitle can be modified as "Because in the afternoon, a specky girl with iron braces had frightened me!" in order to keep the sarcastic effect in the target language the same as in the source language.

Example 15

	The Journey	
Visual Frame	Maybe it's a shemale tree	Shemale tree wouldn't bloom as well
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	The kids are sitting under a tree while discussing whether the tree is a male or female.	The kids are sitting under a tree while discussing whether the tree is a male or female.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Kid: [Mandarin+Malay] 哼，你又不给这树是 pondan 树 Transliteration: Heng, ni you bu gei zhe shu shi pondan shu Kid: You don't let this three is a shemale tree	Kid: [Mandarin+Malay] Pondan 也不会开花的 Transliteration: Pondan ye bu hui kai hua de Kid: Shemale also will not bloom
Subtitle	Maybe it's a shemale tree	Shemale tree wouldn't bloom as well
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-sense-of-humour element English subtitles: Community-sense-of-humour element	

In the scene above, a group of children is discussing whether the tree is a male or female. Initially, one of the kids says that the tree is a male tree as they never see it blooms before. The humour arises when another kid replies that maybe it is a "pondan" tree, "pondan" tree will not bloom as well. Respondent A commented that saying the tree is a "pondan" tree is unexpected yet funny. This is an example of retort where the reply is unexpected. "Pondan" is a Malay term that is used to describe a man who behaves like woman. This example is considered as a community-sense-of-humour element since some people may find that making fun on transgender topic is offensive and not funny. In the translation, the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy is used. Although "she-male" is an offensive term for transgender people, it does not influence the intended humorous sense that a "pondan" tree will not bloom. It can be observed that all respondents agreed that this scene is humorous. Therefore, the humorous load is preserved in the English subtitle.

Example 16

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Bee avoids having eye contact with Uncle Chuan while Uncle Chuan talks to her.
Music and Sound Effect	Bird chirping
Dialogue	Chuan: [Cantonese] Lei sek gam dol ho lan syu sek dou sot jor ar? Chuan: 你吃这么多荷兰薯吃到疯了吗？ Chuan: You eat so many Holland potatoes eat till crazy?
Subtitle	Eating too much potatoes must have made you crazy.
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-sense-of-humour element English subtitles: Community-sense-of-humour element

In the above scene, Uncle Chuan is mad about Bee, his daughter who travels back from England to Malaysia by using a motorbike. He asks Bee whether eating too much potato have made her crazy. Potato is known as "ho lan syu" (荷兰薯) in Cantonese. The term "荷兰" (Holland) is used to name foreign goods. For example, "荷兰水" (Holland water) "荷兰牌" (Holland card) and "荷兰豆" (Holland pea) refer to "soda water", "playing cards" and "snow pea" respectively. This instance is categorised as a community-sense-of-humour element as it is based on stereotyping towards Westerner, where they are viewed as a community that likes to challenge and take risk. The translator chose to render the humour by utilising the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy as the humorous instance is literally translated. The humorous sense is preserved in the translation. The target viewers know that Bee just returned from England from previous scenes. Meanwhile, potato is known to be a popular food in western countries. As stated by respondent C, Westerners prefer potato over rice. By using the strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged", target viewers will be able to comprehend the stereotypes towards Westerners as portrayed in the source language. Both respondents C and D found this utterance to be humorous.

4.2.2.2 Translating Community-sense-of-humour Element by Replacing the Humour with Another Humour

The following example shows a community-sense-of-humour element that is translated by adopting the strategy of "replacing the humour with another humour".

Example 17

	The Journey	
Visual Frame	Out of all men, you fall in love with a westerner	You expect me to speak in English?
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Uncle Chuan waves his arm to the direction of Benji.	Bee suddenly lifts up her head and stares at Uncle Chuan.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Chuan: [Cantonese] Hou dai em dai, dai go **gwai** fan lei. Chuan: 好带不带，带个鬼回来。 Chuan: Good bring not bring, bring a ghost back come.	Chuan: [Cantonese] Giu ngo tong koi gong **gwai wa**? Chuan: 叫我同他讲鬼话吗？ Chuan: Ask me with him speak ghost language?
Subtitle	Out of all men, you fall in love with a **westerner**	You expect me to speak in **English**?
Strategy	Replacing the humour with another humour	
Humorous Load	Source language: Community-sense-of-humour element English subtitles: Non-marked element	

In the example above, the humour is based on Uncle Chuan's stereotypical dislike for Westerners. Therefore, it is categorised as a community-sense-of-humour element. Uncle Chuan blames her daughter for bringing a "gwai" (鬼) (ghost) back with her. In Cantonese, "gwai lou" (鬼佬) literally means "ghost man". Initially, it is a derogatory term used to describe Westerners. Now, it is commonly used to refer to Westerners and is generally accepted by foreigners. The term "gweilo" (鬼佬) can be found in Oxford dictionary, which is defined as "a foreigner, especially a Westerner". However, Uncle Chuan used "gwai" (ghost) instead of "gwailo" (westerner) when referring to Benji. The dislike of Uncle Chuan towards Benji is further shown when Uncle Chuan asks whether

they should expect him to speak "gwai wa" (鬼话), which means ghost language. The utterance "hou dai em dai, dai go gwai fan lei" (You do not bring a good one, but bring a ghost back) is rendered into English as "Out of all men, you fall in love with a Westerner" while the utterance "giu ngo tong koi gong gwai wa?" (Ask me to speak ghost language with him?) is rendered as "You expect me to speak in English?". The translator employed the strategy of "replacing the humour with another humour" in the target language. The term "gwai" (ghost) and "gwai wa" (ghost language) are substituted with "Westerner" and "English" respectively. The humorous load is changed in the target text. It is no longer based on the stereotypical dislike towards Westerners. From the subtitle, the audience will understand the humour as Uncle Chuan does not accept Benji because he cannot communicate with him. The humorous load is shifted to non-marked element. Respondent D commented that this scene is humorous because Uncle Chuan is opposing Bee being together with Benji just because he cannot speak in English.

4.2.3   Linguistic Elements

Linguistic elements refer to jokes which are tied to the linguistic aspect of the source language such as rhyme, wordplay, homophony (Martinez-Sierra, 2006).

4.2.3.1   Translating Linguistic Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged

The following examples show the linguistic elements that have been translated by applying the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy, in which the humour is literally translated.

Example 18

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Uncle Chuan is sitting on a chair while the mechanic is repairing the tyre.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Mechanic: [Cantonese] Zao hou ci yang ngam yong ma soi shi dou hui poncek Mechanic: 就好像人一样随时都会爆胎 Mechanic: Just like human same anytime will punctured
Subtitle	Just like human, we might puncture at anytime too
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitle: Linguistic element

The humour is generated by means of a simile. Uncle Chuan is very unhappy because his motorcycle's tyre is punctured. The mechanic is trying to let him know that this is a common phenomenon by comparing tyre with human. The mechanic tells Uncle Chuan that human is just like tyre, in which humans can be punctured anytime. This simile is interesting as a human being could suddenly stops functioning just like a punctured tyre. When human is "punctured", it means that the man mightbe severely sick or about to die. The humour arises as comparing a flat tyre to a human being does not seem to lessen the unhappiness of Uncle Chuan. Respondent A commented that the mechanic's utterance worsens the situation. The translator treated the utterance by leaving the humour unchanged in which the humour in the source language is literally translated into the English subtitle. It is noteworthy that "anytime" is an adverb, thus it should not appear at the back of the preposition "at". The preposition "at" should be deleted in the English subtitle. Although "at anytime" is grammatically incorrect, it does

not affect the message conveyed in the subtitle. It can be observed from the survey that respondent C considered this utterance to be humorous. However, respondent D stated that this instance is a serious topic instead of being humorous.

Example 19

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Shui is driving. The passengers are laughing after hearing what Ah Shui has said.
Music and Sound Effect	Car moving sound and laughter of the passengers.
Dialogue	Ah Shui: [Japanese+ Hokkien] Watashi wa ian dau Ah Shui nei. Sushi, wasabi, ah ma bo cui ki nei. Ah Shui: 我是英俊阿水。寿司，芥末，阿嫲没牙齿。 Ah Shui: I am handsome Ah Shui. Sushi, wasabi, grandma no teeth.
Subtitle	I'm the handsome Ah Shui, sushi, wasabi, toothless grandma
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitle: Linguistic element

In the example above, Ah Shui is introducing himself to Japanese passengers. The humorous sense is created from the repetition of vowel sound "i" in the utterance. The terms "watashi", "Ah Shui" (name of the speaker), "sushi" (sushi), "wasabi" (wasabi) and "cui ki" (tooth) in the utterance have similar ending sound. Respondent B stated that the repetition of vowel sound "i" between Japanese and Hokkien words is interesting and funny. The strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged" is adopted in translating the humour. Even though the repetition of the vowel sound is only shown in three instances in the subtitle, which are "Ah Shui", "sushi" and "wasabi", the repetition is fairly obvious. Thus, the humorous sense is also presented in the English subtitle. Respondents C and D agreed that this utterance is humorous. Respondent D added that

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the character who simply speaks Japanese words that he knew to the Japanese tourists is amusing.

Example 20

	The Journey	
Visual Frame		
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	A stranger is asking Ah Huat to donate money.	A stranger is asking Ah Huat to donate money.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Stranger: [English+Cantonese] Tapi mister, yiu zou sin si zau yiu do **di di**, m oi yak **di di** Stranger: 但是先生，要做善事就要多点点，不要一点点 Stranger: But mister, want do good deed must be more a little bit, don't a little bit	Stranger: [Cantonese] Hou mou yisi o ngam Stranger:好没意思这样 Stranger: Very meaningless like this
Subtitle	But sir, you must give more for good deeds	It's meaningless when you only donate a little bit
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitles: -	

In this scene, a stranger is asking Ah Huat to donate for charity. The humour in the case above is based on the rhyme created by the repetition of the words "di di" (点点) in the utterance, which has the meaning of "a little bit". Based on this specific linguistic feature, this case is considered as a linguistic element. The "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy is adopted in rendering the humour. When the humour is literally translated, the rhyme is lost in the subtitle. Thus, the humorous load of linguistic element is no longer presented. While respondents A and B thought the humour is not

preserved in the subtitle, respondents C and D also did not consider this utterance to be

humorous. In order to recreate the rhyme, the translator can choose to translate the

source language humour as "To do a good deed, you must do your bit, don't just give a

little bit".

Example 21

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Rain raises his eyebrows while talking.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Ah Rain: [Mandarin] 你们就可以做**孝子**，我们就要做**傻子**啦 Transliteration: Ni men jiu ke yi zuo xiao zi, wo men jiu yao zuo sha zi la Ah Rain: You can be filial son, we going to be fool
Subtitle	You can be a dutiful son, but we act like a fool
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitle: -

The example above is another humorous instance that is generated by the rhyme

creating from the same word in the sentence. In this case, the rhyme comes from the

repetition of the word "子". Both of the term "孝子" (filial son) and "傻子" (fool)

contain a similar word "子". The translator decided to leave the humour unchanged. The

terms are literally translated as "filial son" and "fool". As a result, the subtitle suffers a

loss of the humorous rhyme. Thus, the humorous load is lost in the English subtitle. It

can be observed from the survey that both respondents C and D did not consider this

utterance as a humorous expression.

Example 22

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame	Don't worry, that is an A38 model.	it's toilet is bigger than your house!
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Beng's parents are wearing winter wear and standing behind Ah Beng.	Ah Beng is pointing to the direction of Ah Lian's house.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] Lei fong sam la, ngo teng gong go ga meh A38 fei gei leh Ah Beng: 你放心啦，我听讲那架什么 A38 飞机 Ah Beng: you rest assured, I heard that what A38 airplane	Ah Beng: [Cantonese+English] Seng go toilet dai guo lei gei fan syu uk. Ah Beng: 整个厕所大过你的番薯屋。 Ah Beng: Entire toilet bigger than yours sweet potato house.
Subtitle	Don't worry, that is an A38 model	it's toilet is bigger than your house
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitles: Linguistic element	

The humour in the example above is based on the hyperbole where an exaggeration is made by Ah Beng in the utterance "Seng go toilet dai guo lei gei fan syu uk" (the entire toilet is bigger than your sweet potato house". Ah Lian's mother questions Ah Beng about the airplane his parents will be taking, suspecting they are taking the low cost airline with limited legroom and no food provided. Ah Beng says that the airplane is an A38 model where the toilet of the airplane is bigger than Ah Lian's house. This example is a linguistic element known as hyperbole, a figure of speech used to emphasise that the airplane is big. The source language is translated into the target text through the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy. In Cantonese, "fan syu" (番薯) is a derogative term used to scold people and to describe an individual as dumb. In this

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case, "fan syu uk" (番薯屋) is used to belittle Ah Lian by describing her house in a negative way. Although the term "fan syu" is omitted in the translation, it does not affect the intended exaggeration to be presented in the subtitle. As stated by respondent C, the exaggeration in the utterance is humorous. There is no difficulty for target viewers to understand the exaggeration and thus experience the humour. Therefore, the linguistic element is well preserved in the target language.

Example 23

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	The seller passes the shirt to Uncle Chuan.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Seller: [Cantonese] Tong lei gong ho lei wo meng seng dou zhok koi ga
	Seller:同你讲好莱坞明星都穿它的
	Seller: with you tell Hollywood stars wear it
Subtitle	The Hollywood stars wear it too
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element
	English subtitle: Linguistic element

The excerpt above is another example of a linguistic element that is based on hyperbole. In this case, the seller at a local market who wants to persuade Uncle Chuan to buy the cloth said that Hollywood stars wear the same style of shirt too. As stated by respondent B, this scene is funny because of the exaggeration made by the seller. The humour is translated into the subtitle by leaving it unchanged. The exaggeration in the source utterance is successfully transferred to the subtitle. The target viewers will be able to apprehend the exaggeration that results in humour. In other words, source

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language viewers and target language viewers share the similar humorous force. It can be observed from the surveys that all respondents considered this as a humorous scene.

4.2.3.2 Translating Linguistic Elements by Replacing the Humour with Idiomatic Expression

The example shown below is a case where the linguistic element is translated by using the "replacing the humour with idiomatic expression" strategy.

Example 24

	The Journey
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Uncle Chuan strikes the table and stands up.
Music and Sound Effect	The sound of fireworks.
Dialogue	Chuan: [Cantonese] Mou **gei gu** la。 Chuan: 别叽咕了。 Chuan: Don't mumble.
Subtitle	**Cut the crap**
Strategy	Replacing the humour with idiomatic expression
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitle: Linguistic element

The humorous effect in the example above is based on an unexpected action from Uncle Chuan, who asks Benji to stop talking. According to Xiandai Hanyu Guifan Cidian, a dictionary of standard Chinese, "叽咕" means talking in a low voice (叽咕, 2014). As Uncle Chuan does not understand English, he does not know what Benji is talking about. Therefore, he uses "gei gu" (叽咕) to describe that Benji speaks in a low

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voice and it is incomprehensible for Uncle Chuan. This is an example of a linguistic element as the humour is based on the linguistic feature. In the subtitle, the humorous expression is rendered by using an idiomatic expression. The idiom "cut the crap" used in the subtitle often has the meaning of stop talking nonsense or asks people to shut up. "Cut the crap" is normally perceived as rude. The use of this idiom in the subtitle perfectly portrayed the unhappiness of Uncle Chuan. As a result, this idiom successfully keeps the humorous effect in the translation as it contradicts from what is expected to be said by Uncle Chuan. Respondent C commented that this scene is humorous because Uncle Chuan's sudden reaction is unexpected yet amusing. The target language viewers will be able to experience the humorous effect from the idiom. The humour in the source language and the English subtitle are both based on linguistic elements.

4.2.3.3 Translating Linguistic Elements by Ignoring the Humour

The following examples of linguistic element are rendered by adopting the "ignoring the humour" strategy where the humorous element is omitted in the translation.

Example 25

	The Journey
Visual Frame	 Of course your Chinese zodiac is tiger!
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	The young man, Alan and Lian Ba Ji are moving their head backwards after listening to what has been said the head of village
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Village Head: [Chinese+Hokkien] 你不是**肖虎**，难道你 **xiao za bo ah?** Transliteration: Ni nu shi xiao hu, nan dao ni xiao za bo ah Village Head: 你不是肖虎，难道你疯女人啊？

	Village Head: You not zodiac tiger, you are crazy woman?
Subtitle	Of course your Chinese zodiac is tiger!
Strategy	Ignoring the humour
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitle: -

The example above illustrates the use of pun to create humour. It is an interesting example of homophony that is based on Chinese and Hokkien words. The Chinese word "肖" (Chinese zodiac) and the Hokkien word "xiao" (疯) (crazy) have a similar pronunciation "xiao". In this example, the village head wants to assure Lian Ba Ji that his son, Ah Rain's Chinese zodiac is tiger, so that his son can take part in the tiger dance performance. The utterance "你不是肖虎，难道你 xiao za bo ah?" (If you are not a Tiger in the Chinese zodiac, you are a crazy woman?) is uttered by the village head with the intention to stress that his son was born in the Year of Tiger. This example presents the affirmation in a funny way. Certainly, it is impossible that the son is a crazy woman. In the translation, the utterance "你不是肖虎，难道你 xiao za bo ah?" is translated as "Of course your Chinese zodiac is tiger!", in which "难道你 xiao za bo ah" is totally ignored in the translation. It is worth noting that the translator has utilised the use of exclamation mark to intensify the degree of affirmation. Although the affirmation that Ah Rain was born in the Year of Tiger is preserved in the subtitle, the translation fails to resemble the pun the same as in the source language. As a result, the linguistic element and humorous sense are lost in the English subtitle. It can be observed from the survey that both non-Chinese respondents did not consider this utterance as being humorous.

Example 26

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame		
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Fei Ma is talking.	Fei Ma is pointing to the ceiling.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Fei Ma: [Cantonese] Hai la. Lei zi ma? Yat ngau lok hoi, koi gei zap zau wui bit cot lei Fei Ma:是啦。你知吗？一咬下去，它的汁就会 bit 出来 Fei Ma: Yes. You know? One bite go down, its juice will bit out	Fei Ma: [Cantonese] Yat go m siu sam zao wui tan soeng tin fa ban hoi ge la Fei Ma: 一个不小心就会弹上天花板去的啦 Fei Ma: one accident will hit up ceiling to
Subtitle	Right! Do you know? The meatballs are so tasty,	The fillings of the meatballs will burst in your mouth
Strategy	Ignoring the humour	
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitles: -	

The humorous sense in the example above is generated by exploiting hyperbole. In this scene, Fei Ma wants to point out that the meatball is very juicy. She says that if a person were to bite the meatball, its juice may accidentally hit the ceiling. As hyperbole is a figure of speech, this instance is identified as a linguistic element. The "ignoring the humour" strategy is applied when translating this humour. This is because there is no translation done for the latter of the sentence, which is "Yat go m siu sam zao wui tan soeng tin fa ban hoi ge la". Consequently, the exaggeration disappears in the subtitle, resulting in the loss of humorous load. As shown in the survey, both respondent C and D did not consider this utterance funny. The exaggeration can be preserved by using the strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged", in which the elements that constitute to the

exaggeration is literally translated. By applying this strategy, target viewers can easily
comprehend the exaggeration expressed by the character.

4.2.3.4 Translating Linguistic Elements by Paraphrasing

The following example shows the linguistic element that is translated by utilising the
strategy of "paraphrasing" as proposed by Gottlieb (1992). When an utterance is
paraphrased, its meaning is maintained while the sentence structure is changed.

Example 27

	The Journey	
Visual Frame		
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Uncle Chuan is praying at the temple. A lady walks towards him and talks to him.	Uncle Chuan looks at the lady.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Lady: [Cantonese] Aiya Cyun sok teng gong lei cam mang ye uk kei fong pau zoeng wo Lady: 哎呀全叔听说你昨天夜家里放炮仗 Lady: Uncle Chuan heard you yesterday night home let off firecracker	Lady: [Cantonese] zung xiu dou pi ling pa lang tim Lady: 还烧到噼里啪啦添 Lady: still burn till pi ling pa lang
Subtitle	Uncle Chuan, I heard you let off firecrackers last night	And it was loud.
Strategy	Paraphrasing	
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitles: -	

The humour is generated based on a metaphor that compares quarrelling to setting
off a firecracker. In this scene, two ladies make a sarcastic remark to Uncle Chuan, who
had an argument with her daughter in the previous night. The two ladies use a metaphor

to create sarcasm, in which "fong pau zoeng" (放炮仗) (letting off firecracker) refers to the argument between Uncle Chuan and Bee while the sound of firecracker "pi ling pa lang" (噼里啪啦) infers that it was a heated argument. The argument had taken place during the eve of Chinese New Year, where setting off firecrackers is a common phenomenon in this night as a celebrative activity. Thus, using firecrackers as a comparison to an argument is a wise choice to create humorous sense. This utterance is translated by using the "paraphrasing" strategy, in which the source language is translated as "Uncle Chuan I heard you let off firecracker last night and it was loud". Although the meaning of the original utterance is presented in the subtitle, it is very likely that the humorous sense is lost in the subtitle. This is because the sense of sarcasm from the metaphor is not as obvious as in the original utterance. It can be observed that respondents C and D did not consider this utterance to be humorous. To make the metaphor more apparent in the subtitle, the utterance can be translated as "I heard you let off firecrackers in your house last night and it was loud".

Example 28

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame	Ah Lian, you should eat more of those,	so that your teeth will be nicer!
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Lian who is wearing braces smiles widely and showing her braces.	Ah Beng is looking and talking to Ah Lian. Ah Lian stops smiling.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] Ah Lian gam lei ying goi sek dou di hoi, Ah Beng:阿莲，这样你应该吃多点，	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] bok koi yak bau bau peng lei pai sau nga Ah Beng: 博它一爆爆平你排暴牙

	Ah Beng: Ah Lian, like this you should eat more.	Ah Beng: hope it one burst burst flatten your row buck teeth
Subtitle	Ah lian, you should eat more of those,	So that your teeth will be nicer!
Strategy	Paraphrasing	
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitles: -	

In the previous scene, Ah Lian and her mother were showing off the delicious meatballs they had eaten during their vacation. They said the fillings of the meatballs will burst in the mouth. Then, Ah Beng asks Ah Lian to eat more meatballs so that the 'explosion' in her mouth can flatten her teeth. The words "bok" (博) and "bao" (爆) in the utterance "bok koi yak bao bao peng lei pai sau nga" (hope your teeth will be flatten because of the burst) is similar to the sound of bursting. The humorous effect is created by the exaggeration made by Ah Beng as well as the use of words that resemble bursting sound. Therefore, this example is categorised as a linguistic element. When translating the the dialogue, translator used the "paraphrasing" strategy. The translator directly rendered the dialogue as "so that your teeth will be nicer", without mentioning the burst which causes the teeth to be nicer. As a result, the exaggeration is lost in the subtitle. In addition, words that have similar sound as bursting are absent in the translation. The linguistic element is lost in the subtitle. However, while respondent D felt this this scene is not funny, respondent C found this it hilarious because Ah Lian immediately stops smiling following Ah Beng's utterance.

4.2.3.5 Translating Linguistic Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged + Expansion

The following example shows a linguistic element that is translated by using two strategies, which are the "leaving the humour unchanged" and "expansion" strategies.

While the source humour is literally translated, extra information is added to the humorous linguistic element in the target language.

Example 29

	The Journey	
Visual Frame		
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Benji's parents are trying to greet Uncle Chuan in Chinese. Benji's mother raises her hand up when her tone is increased.	Benji's parents are trying to greet Uncle Chuan in Chinese. Benji's mother lowers down her hand.
Music and Sound Effect	Sound of lion dance instruments	
Dialogue	Benji's parents: [Mandarin] 你妈好？ Transliteration: Ni ma hao? Benji's parents: Your mother good?	Benji's parents: [Mandarin] 妈你好。 Transliteration: Ma ni hao Benji's parents: Mother you good.
Subtitle	"Ni ma hao" (Your mum's ok?)	"Ma Ni Hao" (Hi mum)
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged + expansion	
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitles: Linguistic element	

In the above scene, the humorous sense is created when Benji's parents fail to greet Uncle Chuan with the correct phrase in Chinese. They try to greet Uncle Chuan with a common Chinese greeting "你好吗？" which means "how are you?". However, Benji' parents forget how to say it correctly and speak the words in the wrong order, in which different meanings are conveyed. In the first attempt, they say "你妈好？". In Chinese, "吗" and "妈" have the same pronunciation but different meanings. "吗" is an interrogative particle adding to the end of an affirmative sentence to convert it into a yes-no question. When "吗" does not appear in the end of the sentence as in the first

attempt, listeners will perceived the "吗" in the middle of the sentence as "妈" which means mother. Benji's parents say the phrase "你妈好" in a rising intonation which is a common practice when asking a yes-no question in English. Therefore, the expression "你妈好" will be interpreted as a question. In the term "你妈好?", "你" means "your", "妈" means "mother", "好" literally means good and the expression means "How is your mother?". In the second attempt, Benji's parents move the word "吗" into the first place and speak the expression "吗你好" in a monotone. Once again, listeners will perceive "吗" as "妈" and interpret the expression as "妈你好。", which means "Hello mother.". Both of the expressions are translated into the English subtitles using "leaving the humour unchanged" and "expansion" strategies. The original utterance is maintained as it is in the subtitle, while the explanation for Chinese utterances is provided in a parenthesis. The humorous load will still be presented in the subtitle as it is clear for the target language viewers to notice that Benji's parents have spoken the Chinese greetings wrongly, where it is impossible and weird to ask about other people's mother when meeting them for the first time. Besides, it is highly likely that the target audiences know the correct greeting should be "你好吗？" (ni hao ma) in Chinese. As stated by respondent D, the correct expression should be "ni hao ma". Both respondents C and D found this utterance to be humorous.

4.2.3.6 Translating Linguistic Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged + Condensation

The following example presents a linguistic element that is translated by using the "leaving the humour unchanged" and "condensation" strategies. As discussed in the

literature review, condensation is used when the source text is translated into a shorter text without missing the important message.

Example 30

	Woohoo!
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Beng is looking at the note left by Lin Yung.
Music and Sound Effect	**-**
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] Lam zyu ngo dei zan hai zou gai gei meh, hou ci gai gung ngam gok gok gok gok gok gok gok gok giu seng yang a Ah Beng: 想着我们真是做鸡的吗，好似鸡公这样 gok gok gok gok gok gok gok gok 叫醒人? Ah Beng: Think we really are cock, such as cock gok gok gok gok gok gok gok gok wake up people
Subtitle	She thinks we are cock? Can wake everybody up?
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged + condensation
Humorous Load	Source language: Linguistic element English subtitle: Linguistic element

The humour in the example above derives from the simile of comparing human to cock and also the imitation of cockcrow's sound. Ah Beng is complaining about Lin Yung who requests them to wake up early in the morning for training. In order to express his dissatisfaction, he said that Lin Yung thinks they are cocks that wake up early in order to wake other people up. Respondent B stated that the series of the sound "gok" contributes to the humour. The humorous effect is intensified by the sound of "gok", which resembles the sound of a cockcrow. By using the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy, the translator preserves the simile, which then creates humour in the subtitle. Meanwhile, the strategy of condensation is used as the chain of the

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onomatopoeic words is removed in the translation. Even when the chain of the cockcrow sound is omitted, the simile is sufficient to show the comparison between a human and a cock. According to respondent D, he found that it is funny to compare a human to a cock. In the meantime, respondent C stated that the imitation of cockcrow's sound is humorous. In short, the humorous sense is preserved in the English subtitle.

4.2.4   Non-marked Elements

Non-marked elements are jokes that cannot be categorised into other categories of elements as proposed by Martínez-Sierra (2006). In this study, non-marked elements include humorous instances that do not fall into other categories of humour such as community-and-institution elements, community-sense-of-humour elements and linguistic elements. For instance, humorous utterances that are not tied to any specific linguistic and cultural features often do not belong to any of the other elements as suggested by Martínez-Sierra (2006).

4.2.4.1   Translating Non-marked Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged

The following examples show the non-marked elements which are treated by using the strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged" where the humorous elements are literally translated.

Example 31

	The Journey
Visual Frame	 Granpa, why are your friends all animals?

Visual Image and Kinesics Action	All the men laugh after listening to the boy's question.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Grandchild: [Mandarin] 阿公，做么你的朋友全部都是动物的？ Transliteration: A gong, zuo me ni de peng you quan bu dou shi dong wu de? Grandchild: Grandpa, why your friends entire all are animals
Subtitle	Granpa, why are your friends all animals?
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Non-marked element English subtitle: Non-marked element

The humour in the scene above is based on an unexpected question asked by the kid. The grandfather asks the kid to greet his friends, Uncle Ox, Uncle Black Rooster and Uncle Doggie. The names of his friends are all related to animals. Apparently, these are their nicknames. The kid wants to know why they are named after animals. However, the kid asked why all of them are animals instead of why are they named after animals. The humorous effect is created here as the friends are perceived as animals based on the question asked by the kid. Everyone in the scene laughs after listening to the question. The strategy used to translate this dialogue is "leaving the humour unchanged" as the utterance is literally translated into the subtitle. The translation preserves the meaning of the question asked by the kid. Therefore, the humour load is maintained in the subtitle. It can be seen from the survey that both respondents C and D considered this utterance as a humour.

Example 32

	The Journey	
Visual Frame	 Please let me go, I'm old	 How am I capable of such thing?
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Uncle Chuan is handcuffed while walking out from the hotel.	Reporters are taking photos of those who are arrested. Those who are arrested are getting into the police car.
Music and Sound Effect	Camera shutter sound.	
Dialogue	Chuan: [Malay] Jangan tangkap saya. Saya sudah tua. Chuan: Don't arrest me. I already old.	Chuan: [Malay] Saya mana boleh? Chuan: I how can?
Subtitle	Please let me go, I'm old	How am I capable of such thing?
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Non-marked element English subtitles: Non-marked element	

In the above scene, the police are arresting those who are in the hotel because they are suspected in the involvement of prostitution. Uncle Chuan who stays at that hotel is also arrested by the police. He is trying to ask the police to let go of him. Although he does not explicitly say his incapability, based on the context and his previous speech, viewers can understand "Mana boleh" (How can) in the source language refers to sexual intercourse. The speaker actually means that he is unable to have sexual intercourse as he is old. This utterance of Uncle Chuan generates the humorous effect. This is because Uncle Chuan is a conservative and traditional man. It is very unlikely for him to talk about sex in the public. What he has said is unexpected and opposed to his characteristics. The translator chose to leave the humour unchanged in the translation. The word "such thing" is added so that the viewers of target language can better

understand what the speaker means. Both respondents C and D found this scene humorous. In this example, the humorous element is preserved in the target language.

Example 33

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame	Quick, chase them	Sir, this is only bicycle
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	A villager is cycling. The village head is sitting at the back. The bicycle moves slowly.	A villager is cycling. The village head is sitting at the back. The bicycle moves slowly.
Music and Sound Effect	Brisk background music	
Dialogue	Village Head: [Mandarin]快点快点追上他们 Transliteration: Kuai dian kuai dian zhui shang ta men Village Head: Faster faster chase them.	Villager: [Mandarin] 村长，这个只是脚车啊 Transaliteration: Cun zhang, zhe ge zhi shi jiao che a Villager: Village head, this is only bicycle
Subtitle	Quick, chase them.	Sir, this is only bicycle.
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged	
Humorous Load	Source language: Non-marked element English subtitles: Non-marked element	

In the above example, the village head who is sitting at the back of a bicycle, is asking the villager to chase a van and a motorcycle in front of them. The humour arises as it is mostly impossible to chase the car and motorcycle by cycling. This example is identified as a non-marked element as it cannot be categorised into other categories. The strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged is adopted" where the utterances are literally rendered into the subtitle. This humorous example can be understood easily by the target viewers as there is no specific cultural or linguistic element in the utterance. As stated by respondent D, it is humorous to chase a car by cycling. By using the strategy

of leaving the humour unchanged, the translator is able to maintain the humour in the translation without any difficulties.

Example 34

	Woohoo!
Visual Frame	Dad, you still have time to shower?
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	The son is looking and pointing at the face of the father.
Music and Sound Effect	Brisk background music
Dialogue	Alan: [Mandarin] 阿爸，你还有时间去冲凉啊？ Transliteration: A ba, ni hai you shi jian qu chong liang a Alan: Dad, you still have time go shower?
Subtitle	Dad, you still have time to shower?
Strategy	Leaving the humour unchanged
Humorous Load	Source language: Non-marked element English subtitle: Non-marked element

In this scene, everyone is rushing to see a big snake that has been caught by the firemen. The non-marked element is based on Alan, who is curious about his father who seemed like just took a shower before going to the destination. In fact, the father's hair is wet because he is sweating from cycling, which make him looks like he just showered. The translator chose to use the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy to translate the utterance into English. The utterance "阿爸，你还有时间去冲凉啊？" (Dad, you still have time go shower?) is rendered into English as "Dad, you still have time to shower?", in which the literal translation is involved. The humorous effect is created in the English subtitle as in the target language. It can be observed from the survey that respondents C and D considered this utterance as a humour. Humour is easily preserved in this type of

humour by literally translating it because the humorous effect that is based on the context related to the actions of the actor can be comprehended by the target viewers.

4.2.4.2   Translating Non-Marked Element by Paraphrasing

The following example shows the non-marked element that is translated by using the "paraphrasing" strategy, where the meaning of the utterance is conveyed in the subtitle with a change of sentence structure.

Example 35

	Woohoo!
Visual Frame	Seems like mom is in menopause period, and you can't see clearly
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Beng's parents are hiding while Ah Lian and her mother are peeping from the outside of the house.
Music and Sound Effect	Ah Lian's laughter
Dialogue	Ah Lian: [Cantonese] Yang dei gong lou zol gang nin kei go di hei gun wui teoi fa ga Ah Lian:人家讲老了更年期那些器官会退化的 Ah Lian: People say get older menopause those organs will degenerate.
Subtitle	Seems like mom is in menopause period, and you can't see clearly
Strategy	Replacing the humour with another humour
Humorous Load	Source language: Non-marked element English subtitle: Non-marked element

The humour in this segment arises from Ah Lian who teases her mother by, relating her mother's weak vision to menopause. In the previous scene, Ah Lian's mother claims that she cannot see clearly. Ah Lian then teases her mother that menopause causes organs to degenerate. This is considered as a non-marked element as it cannot be categorised into other categories proposed by Martínez-Sierra (2006). The phrase "hei

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gun wui teoi fa" (器官会退化) (organs will degenerate) is rendered as "can't see clearly", utilising the strategy of "paraphrasing". The original meaning is successfully transferred into the target language. There is no difficulty for the target viewers to realise the humour. Both respondents C and D agreed that this utterance is humorous. The humorous load of non-marked element is maintained in the subtitle.

4.2.4.3 Translating Non-marked Elements by Leaving the Humour Unchanged + Condensation

In this section, the discussion will be on the instances with non-marked elements that are translated by using a combination of strategies, which is "leaving the humour unchanged" and "condensation".

Example 36

	Woohoo!
Visual Frame	
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Beng is pointing at the mother then moving his hand pointing the daughter.
Music and Sound Effect	-
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [English + Cantonese] Sorry, m hai lei bou yong dak hou, hai li gao fan syu bou yang dak m hou. Ah Beng: 对不起，不是你保养得好，是这块番薯保养得不好 BT: Sorry, not you keep well, is this piece sweet potato keep not well
Subtitle	I'm sorry, actually is this fool who doesn't know how to keep well.
Strategies	Leaving the humour unchanged + condensation
Humorous Load	Source language: Non-marked element English subtitle: Non-marked element

In the example above, the humour is generated by the sarcastic comment given by Ah Beng. In the previous scene, Ah Beng said that the two ladies who are mother and

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daughter that look like siblings. The mother was happy and said that all the money she spent to maintain her appearance is worth it. Then, Ah Beng sarcastically says that it is not because of the mother knows how to take good care of her skin. In fact it is because the daughter does not take good care of her skin. Ah Beng sarcastically implies that the daughter looks older than her mother. The term "fan syu" (番薯) is generally understood as sweet potato. In Cantonese, it is also used to refer to someone who is dumb. Although "fansyu" is a specific-cultural reference, in this case it is not the source of the humour. Thus, this example is categorised as a non-marked element as the source of the humour is a sarcasm that is not tied to cultural or linguistic specificity. The translator rendered the source language by using the "leaving the humour unchanged" and "condensation" strategies. Although "m hai lei bou yong dak hou" (不是你保养得好) (is not you who keep well) is deleted in the translation, the phrase "actually is this fool who doesn't know how to keep well" is sufficient to preserve the meaning and sense of sarcasm from the source language in the subtitle. Although, as pointed out by respondent B, the expression "keep well" in English is more likely defined as to keep well in the terms of health, the target audience will be able to know that it refers to the appearance following the previous scene. The non-marked element remains the same in the English subtitle. Findings from the survey show that respondents A, B and C found that the humour is conveyed in the subtitle, with an exception of respondent D.

Example 37

	Woohoo!	
Visual Frame	 How come there's such a big sea cucumber?	 This is sea lion! How about this one?
Visual Image and Kinesics Action	Ah Rain is editing the picture of Ah Beng's parents.	Ah Rain is pointing the picture while talking.
Music and Sound Effect	-	
Dialogue	Ah Beng: [Cantonese] Bin yao gam dai tui hoi sam ar? Ah Beng: 哪有这大条海参啊？ Ah Beng: Where got such big sea cucumber.	Ah Rain: [Cantonese] Sei con hoi shi lei gei. Ah Beng: 死蠢海狮来的。 Ah Beng: Idiot sea lion
Subtitle	How come there's such a big sea cucumber?	This is sea lion!
Strategies	Leaving the humour unchanged + condensation	
Humorous Load	Source language: Non-marked element English subtitles: Non-marked element	

The humour in the case above arises from Ah Beng who mistook a sea lion as a sea cucumber. Apparently, this instance is a non-marked element that can be understood easily. In order to translate this humorous instance, the translator used a combination of strategies that include the strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged + condensation". The strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged" is used to translate the utterance that directly convey how the character mistaken the sea lion. On the other hand, "condensation" is used when the term "sei con" (死蠢) (idiot) is omitted in the translation. Even though this term is removed from the subtitle, the message conveying the mistaken of a sea lion for a sea cucumber is not affected. As stated by respondent D, this scene is funny because the character cannot differentiate between a sea lion and a sea cucumber. In short, the humorous load is remained in the subtitle.

4.3   Humorous Element in the Subtitle

As discussed in the previous section, the humorous elements are found to be preserved, changed or lost in the subtitles by comparing the humorous elements in source language utterances and English subtitles. The humorous load identified in the source language and the target language of each instance can be referred in Appendix A. Table below shows the number of cases of the humorous instances that are preserved, changed and lost in the subtitle in each category of humour.

Table 4.3: Humorous Load in the English Subtitle

Humorous Load in the Subtitle	Community-and-institution elements		Community-sense-of-humour elements		Linguistic elements		Non-marked elements		Total	
	Number of cases	% within category	Number of cases	% within category	Number of cases	% within category	Number of cases	% within category	Number of cases	Percentage (%)
Preserved	8	40.00	4	80.00	8	53.33	19	100.00	39	66.10
Changed	6	30.00	1	20.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	10.17
Lost	6	30.00	0	0.00	7	46.67	0	0.00	14	23.73
Total	20	100.00	5	100.00	15	100.00	21	100.00	59	100.00

In the translation, the humorous elements are successfully preserved in 39 (66.10%) of the humorous instances, changed in 6 (13.56%) and lost in 14 (23.73%). In the category of community-and-institution elements, the humorous load is successfully preserved in 8 (40.00%) of the humorous instances, changed and lost in 6 (30.00%) respectively. For the 7 humorous instances that has undergone a change of humorous load in the translation, their humorous load shifts from community-and-institution elements to non-marked elements. In the category of community-sense-of-humour elements, the humorous load is preserved in 4 (80.00%) humorous instances and changed in 1 (20.00%). Among 15 cases of linguistic elements, the humorous load is preserved in 8 (53.3%) cases and another 7 (46.67%) cases suffer a loss of humour. In

the category of non-marked elements, the humorous load is preserved in 19 (100.00%) humorous instances.

As shown in the previous discussion, when humour is preserved in the subtitle, the target viewers are likely to experience the humour presented in the scene. On the other hand, when the humorous element is absent in the subtitle, the target viewers are likely fail to be amused as what the source language viewers experience. For the cases with a change of humorous elements in the subtitle, the findings reveal that target viewers are able to enjoy the humour conveyed in the scenes.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the major findings to answer the research questions of this study, the implications and also the recommendations for future research.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

The aim of this study is to explore the humour presented in Malaysian Chinese New Year films and their subtitles in English. In accordance with the aims of this study, the researcher had proposed two research questions: (i) What are the subtitling strategies used in translating humour into English in the selected Malaysian Chinese New Year films? and (ii) To what extent are the humorous elements effectively translated in the English subtitles?. The following section includes the discussion to answer the research questions.

5.2.1 Research Question 1: What are the subtitling strategies used in translating humour into English in the selected Malaysian Chinese New Year films?

The analysis of the translation of humour in the selected films revealed that a variation of strategies was used in conveying the humour in the films in the English subtitles. All of the translating strategies of on screen humour proposed by Chiaro (2010), which are; "leaving the humour unchanged", "replacing the humour with another humour", "replacing the humour with idiomatic expression" and "ignoring the humour" were used in conveying the humour evoked in the two selected films. Other strategies identified in this study include "paraphrasing", "expansion" and

"condensation". The analysis reveals that in some cases, more than one strategy was used to translate the humorous utterances. There are two types of combined strategies found, which are; "leaving the humour unchanged" and "expansion", as well as "leaving the humour unchanged" and "condensation".

The analysis shows that "leaving the humour unchanged" is the predominant strategy used for the translation of humorous instances in every category of humour in the selected films. This strategy is easy to apply as the source language is translated literally in the subtitles. By using the strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged", translators can translate the humorous instances directly with little or no creative thinking needed.

The strategy of "replacing the humour with another humour" was mainly used in translating the community-and-institution elements. The community-and-institution elements involve culture-specific references in the source culture for humorous effects. By replacing the culture-specific items with other instances of humour that is familiar to the target viewer, it is hoped that the target viewer can appreciate the humour from the subtitles.

The "expansion" strategy was utilised to render humour in community-and-institution elements and linguistic elements. For the category of community-and-institution elements, this strategy is used by adding extra information to the culture-specific references in a parenthesis. The purpose of adding the extra information is to help the target viewers to understand the culture-specific items from the source culture.

It is worth noting that space constraints most possibly influenced the translator's decision in deciding the strategy used to render humour as the analysis shows that some long utterances were rendered by utilising the "ignoring the humour" and "condensation" strategies. As shown from the analysis, the "condensation" strategy is adopted when

redundant and repetitive messages in the source language are removed in the English subtitles. Meanwhile, the "replacing the humour with idiomatic expression" strategy was rarely used as it is difficult to find equivalent idiomatic expression for specific humorous elements.

The "paraphrasing" strategy was used to translate linguistic elements and non-marked element. Paraphrasing involved translating the humour with a change of the sentence structure, in which another chain of words is used to convey the similar meaning of the humour in the source language. This strategy allows the subtitles to appear natural in English and makes the subtitles easier to understand by the target viewers. However, when this strategy is used to render verbally expressed humour that is based on a linguistic element, it often sacrifices the sense and the stylistic feature of the humour.

Finally, the results of the study also show that a number of strategies were used to translate linguistic elements. Different strategies are needed when dealing with linguistic elements as linguistic elements are generated based on particular linguistic features that are harder to be transferred into the subtitles.

5.2.2 Research Question 2: To what extent are the humorous elements effectively translated in the English subtitles?

With regard to this question, the researcher examined the humorous loads in the source language and target language to determine the effectiveness of the translation. The analysis showed that humorous elements are preserved, changed and lost in the translation. Out of 59 cases, more than half (66.10%) of the humorous loads are

successfully preserved in the English subtitles. Meanwhile, 10.17% of the humorous loads are changed and 23.73% of the instances suffer a loss of humorous loads.

The analysis showed that linguistic elements are the most difficult type to translate. As shown in the results in Chapter 4 (p. 93), 46.67% of the instances in this category suffer a loss of the humorous element. It is hard to recreate the humorous language-specific feature in the translation. When the wordplay that focuses on rhyme and repetition of sounds or words are translated by using the leaving the humour unchanged" strategy, the humorous sense is more likely to be lost in the subtitles. In other words, the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy is usually not satisfactory to translate wordplay. However, for the cases that make use of simile and hyperbole (see Chapter 4, Example 18, Example 22 and Example 23, p. 69, p. 73, p. 74) the humorous loads are easier to preserve in the subtitles by translating them literally. For these cases, target viewers are able to enjoy the amusement as in the source language viewers.

For the category of community-and-institution elements, the humorous effects are preserved in the target language when the translator knows that the target viewers would recognise the humour created by the culture-specific items. The culture-specific items identified in this study include celebrities, cartoon characters, customs, religious beliefs, activities, geographical location and slang words or phrases. As some of these references are related to Malaysian culture, they are also familiar to the target viewers who are Malaysians. Consequently, the humorous elements can be preserved in the translation. For example, as discussed in Chapter 4, Malaysian target viewers most probably possess the knowledge of famous celebrities in Malaysia, common slang words used by Malaysian and the geographical location in Malaysia (see Example 1, Example 5 and Example 11, p. 45, p. 52, p. 59). In the cases where humour is lost, the

references are usually culture-specific items in Malaysian Chinese culture (see Example 3 and Example 4, p. 48, p. 50). For the cases that experience a change of humorous elements, the humorous elements change from community-and-institution elements to non-marked elements. It can be observed that the non-Chinese respondents, who are also the target viewers, have no difficulty to appreciate the humour in these cases (see Example 8 and Example 9, p. 55, p. 57).

All the cases in the category of community-sense-of-humour elements are considered to be effectively translated as none of the cases in this group suffer a total loss of humorous load. The high success rate in preserving the humorous load of community-sense-of-humour elements is due to the use of the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy. By rendering the humour literally, it is sufficient to express the humorous preferences and stereotypes in the target language since they are not rooted in any particular cultural and linguistic features. Moreover, the source language viewers and the target language viewers most likely share the similar humorous preferences and stereotypes.

For the category of non-marked elements, all the humorous elements are successfully preserved in the subtitles. Due to the fact that non-marked elements do not depend on any cultural-specific or linguistic-specific items for the humorous effects, it is easy to maintain the humorous loads in the translation. The analysis revealed that the "leaving the humour unchanged" strategy is satisfactory to translate this type of humour.

It is found that humorous elements are easier to preserve in certain types of humour. As in this study, humour in non-marked elements and community-sense-of-humour elements are mostly maintained in the English subtitles.

Finally, the findings also reveal that humour varies from person to person. It can be seen that respondents have different opinions on whether the utterance is humorous. For instance, as shown in Example 18 and Example 36 (see p. 69, p. 90), while respondent D did not consider the subtitles to be humorous, the other respondents agreed that humour is preserved in the subtitles. In the meantime, there are occasions where all the respondents found that humour is not presented in the subtitles, except for respondent C (see Example 4 and Example 12, p. 50, p. 60).

5.3 Implication

The current study is the first study that looks into humour in Malaysian Chinese New Year films. The result proves that this genre of films is rich in humorous utterances that are made up of different languages and dialects. More attention should be given when dealing with humour in these films, so that the humour can be appreciated by the target audience.

In addition, the study indicates that the effectiveness of the strategies utilised to translate the humour is related to the category of humour. It is easier to preserve the humorous effect for the non-marked elements and community-sense-of humour element. The strategy of "leaving the humour unchanged" often satisfactorily maintains the humorous effects for these types of humour. However, it is worth mentioning that the community-sense-of humour element is easily appreciated only by the community sharing similar stereotypes as in this study. If the translation is meant for other audiences with very different cultural and language backgrounds, the translator may need to opt for other strategies to translate the humour. Meanwhile, the translator would need to be immensely creative when dealing with the cultural and linguistic items that are humorous.

Regarding the methodological implications, this study shows that Taylor's (2003) multimodal description is useful in describing the humorous scenes. Moreover, this method can be combined with other methods, such as Martínez-Sierra's (2006), as proven in this study to research on the translation of humour.

5.4   Recommendations for Further Studies

Malaysian Chinese New Year films are rarely studied in the translation of humour. This study focused on two Chinese New Year films produced by the same person. Therefore, the findings cannot be applied as a generalisation to all Malaysian Chinese New Year films. For future research, a larger sample size of Malaysian Chinese New Year films produced by different producers should be used.

In addition, it is suggested that researchers should pay attention to the meaning conveyed through other semiotic modes such as visual mode and audio mode that include moving images, music and sound effects, in studying the translation of humour. Instead of using the multimodal transcription as the description for the background of the humorous utterances, the meaning conveyed through other semiotic modes that may influence the translation of humour can be taken into account in the study.

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