


## Is *Shrek* Still Funny in Turkish? An Analysis of The Strategies Employed During The Turkish Dubbing Translation of Humor in The Animated Film *Shrek*

### Türkçe’de *Shrek* Yine de Komik Mi? *Shrek* Animasyon Filmindeki Mizahın Türkçe Dublaj Çevirisinde Kullanılan Stratejilerin Analizi

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#### ABSTRACT

Thanks to globalization and technology, the interaction among different cultures has disseminated worldwide and translation has taken on a vital role by bridging gaps and maintaining communication. As one of the fast-growing fields of translation studies, audiovisual translation has recently been the subject of a wide range of research. However, the number of studies focusing on dubbing translation in the Turkish context is still limited. Therefore, this study aims to examine the strategies employed by the dubbing translator to contend with the translation of humorous expressions into the target language. The method used is a qualitative descriptive method with the data selected from the film ‘Shrek’ taken from the platform Netflix. The data consists of intentionally collected humorous examples from the film and their dubbed versions. The extracted examples are analyzed with the strategies proposed by Pedersen (2005). Upon identifying the strategies, the results are classified to demonstrate the strategies mostly adopted by the translator. The findings reveal that substitution, paraphrasing, and addition strategies are largely employed throughout the dubbing translation. It can also be stated that a mixture of strategies is used depending on the humorous expression. Overall, this study offers insight for future research in dubbing in the language pair of Turkish-English.

**Keywords:** Audiovisual translation (AVT), dubbing translation, humorous expressions, translation strategies.

#### ÖZ

Küreselleşme ve teknoloji sayesinde farklı kültürler arasındaki etkileşim dünya çapında yaygınlaşmış ve çeviri, bir köprü görevi görerek iletişimi sürdürme konusunda oldukça önemli bir rol üstlenmiştir. Çeviribilimin hızla büyüyen alanlarından biri olan görsel-ışitsel çeviri, son zamanlarda geniş bir araştırma alanına sahip olmuştur. Ancak Türkçe bağlamında dublaj çevirisine odaklanan çalışmaların sayısı halen sınırlıdır. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, dublaj çevirmenin mizahi ifadelerin hedef dile (Türkçe) çevrilmesinde kullandığı stratejileri incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Kullanılan yöntem Netflix platformundan alınan ‘Shrek’ filminden seçilen verilerle nitel betimsel bir yöntemdir. Veriler, filmde kasıtlı olarak toplanan mizahi örneklerden ve bunların dublaj çevirilerinden oluşmaktadır. Seçilen örnekler Pedersen (2005) tarafından önerilen stratejilerle analiz edilmiştir. Stratejiler belirlendikten sonra sonuçlar, çevirmenin çoğunlukla benimsediği stratejileri gösterecek şekilde sınıflandırılır. Bulgular, dublaj çevirisinde çoğunlukla *ikame*, *başka sözcüklerle yazma* ve *ekleme* stratejilerinin kullanıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca mizah içeren ifadeye bağlı olarak farklı stratejilerin bir arada kullanıldığı da ifade edilebilir. Genel olarak bu çalışma, Türkçe-İngilizce dil çiftinde dublaj alanında gelecekte yapılacak araştırmalara ışık tutmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Görsel-ışitsel çeviri (AVT), dublaj çevirisi, mizahi ifadeler, çeviri stratejileri

Submitted / Başvuru : 19.09.2023

Kabul / Accepted : 21.10.2023

Published Online /  
Online Yayın : 15.12.2023



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## Introduction

‘Humor is mankind’s greatest blessing.’<sup>1</sup>

Mark Twain

There is no doubt that the world of animated films has undergone an evolution with the proliferation of technology and its impact on creativity. Today, mostly based in the USA, there are many production companies that have specialized in making animated films such as Pixar, Walt Disney Studios, Universal Studios, Warner Bros., DreamWorks Animation, and Sony Pictures among others. These companies work with a professional team consisting of artists and engineers who have mastered the latest computer technology in order to create popular animated characters and stories.

Developments in technology have also influenced the world of media products by making them more accessible all around the world. Thanks to the advancements of our modern world, today’s viewers are able to dive into the world of media products online through streaming applications (e.g., Netflix, Disney Plus, Amazon Prime Video, YouTube, Mubi, etc.), and they can watch those films in their native language with available alternatives such as subtitled and dubbed versions. These two types of translation are classified under the field of audiovisual translation.

Chiaro defines these two terms as the most common modes of translation applied for translating products for the screen. Dubbing means the process of translation that uses ‘an acoustic channel’ and subtitling is another modality of screen translation that is ‘visual’ and consists of written translation. (Chiaro, 2009, p. 141)

As Chaume puts forward, dubbing is one of the main modalities of audiovisual translation all around the world and it can be defined as interchanging the dialogue of the source language in the film with the translated dialogue in the target language. As a type of screen translation dubbing is predominantly utilized in Europe. (Chaume, 2020, p. 1)

It was not until very recent years that research into audiovisual translation spread and became more visible. *Dubbing* has also been one of the major research areas within the scope of audiovisual translation. Scholars have examined the topic of dubbing from various perspectives such as the perception of dubbing by the viewers (Antonini and Chiaro, 2009), (Giovanni, 2018), dubbing of culture-specific references (Cavusoglu, 2022), (Ranzato, 2015), (Karunaratna, 2015), (Slamia, 2022), the comparison of dubbing and subtitling (Cintas, 1999) (Tveit, 2009), (Perego et al., 2015), (Wissmath et al., 2009), (Fong et al., 2009) and dubbing of humor (Jankowska, 2009), (Bucaria, 2017), (De Rosa et al., 2014), (Dore, 2019), (Perego, 2014), (Chiaro, 2005). As evidenced by the long list of studies, dubbing of humor has been commonly examined.

This present study aims to examine how humor is conveyed through dubbing translation with the hopes of contributing to the area of research conducted in translation studies in the context of Türkiye. Although the main reason has not yet been proven, until very recently, Türkiye has been one of the countries where dubbing has been preferred as the common mode of screen translation throughout history (Okyayuz, 2017, p. 141). Driven by this fact, hopefully, the results obtained from this current study will carry value in terms of triggering future studies. This study also calls attention to one of the many challenging parts of the translation process, namely the translation of humorous expressions since it is vital to convey the comedic elements to the viewers in the target language so that they can enjoy the film in their native language as well.

Along with the objective of the study, the concept of ‘humor’ is presented with its relation to the field of translation, and in the following section, humor elements in the audiovisual material are examined under the categories of verbal and non-verbal humor. After that, the selected animated film *Shrek* will be introduced briefly before moving on to the strategies applied by the translator during dubbing. As the methodology, a purposive selection of humorous expressions is performed, and qualitative research is conducted through the analysis of these examples in order to compare their English originals with their Turkish dubbed versions. Later, the strategies adopted are pinpointed under each category with references to the examples from the film and the strategies that are primarily used will be clarified. Finally, the results will be discussed with the data in hand.

## Humor and Translation

‘Humor’ is defined as “the quality that makes something seem funny, amusing, or ludicrous; comicality” according to the Collins Dictionary (n.d.). Although it is not an easy task to define the essence of humor, it can generally be assumed that what makes people laugh has a humor component to it. Raskin also pinpoints the difficulty of defining humor and refers to humor as a phenomenon by calling attention to the nature of it as being dependent on society and culture (Raskin, 1979, p. 326).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/69144-humor-is-mankind-s-greatest-blessing>

Translation is an area that works with language and culture. It fills in the gap in communication globally and the obvious fact is that it is intertwined with many other disciplines. Hence, humor is one of those areas that has a link with a translation, however, it is not studied sufficiently according to Zabalbeascoa, and the translatability of humor needs to be approached from both areas. Through the overlap of both fields, translators can see a great advantage of beneficial tips and suggestions in order to ‘decode’ and ‘reconstruct’ humorous patterns. Also, humor studies can have a perception of linguistic, psychological, and social elements of humor by *resorting* to the test of translation. All in all, there are benefits to both translation and humor studies when approaching a given subject. (Zabalbeascoa, 2005, p. 186).

It is certain that the element of humor is in our daily lives, and it is a part of communication. Spanakaki emphasizes the difficulty in defining the concept of humor and states that there exist many efforts from various disciplines, however, it has never been studied as an issue in translation, and ‘the level of applicability’ usually turns it into a complication for the translator. (Spanaki, 2007, paras. 2)

Apart from existing in daily communication, humor is also a component that is widely encountered in the field of media. Today, with fast-growing media products such as entertainment programs, TV series, and films, humor is an indispensable part of an intercultural context. Therefore, subtitle and dubbing translators face difficulty in translating humor, so it would not be wrong to say that among the most challenging issues in translation like poem translation, the translation of humor is difficult to manage.

During the translation process of certain types of expressions, translators face various difficulties when there are expressions in the source language that are challenging to render into the target language since there is no equivalent expression. Then he/she must decide on what type of strategy to adopt. As Chiaro (2017) pinpoints:

“The subject of equivalence is especially relevant to the translation of verbal humor, because humor, like poetry, takes language to its extremes so that interlingual solutions are difficult to find. . . In the case of humor, when the going gets tough the translator could insert a completely new instance of verbal humor (p. 421).”

Concisely, translation and humor are two areas that are linked in many ways in various types of translation that contain comical features. At this point, the translation strategy employed can be examined from various theoretical points of view as well. In this specific case, the approach during the translation process is essential to create an end product that will accomplish the purpose of making the viewer laugh by applying different strategies with the aim of preserving or omitting humorous instances in the target text.

All in all, the translator deals with a strenuous task while translating humor and there is no doubt that certain skills are required to handle the task. As regards the hardship of the translation task involving humor and the certain tenets of translators, Perego also puts forward that managing the endless *humor-making resources* from numerous languages is arduous. Nevertheless, *losses* can be reduced, humorous examples can be replaced, and further *layers of meaning* can be brought into the target texts. The main focus here is the talent of the translator as *a creative problem solver* and *adapter*. (Perego, 2014, p. 12)

In this respect, there are endless variables that affect the translation process, and specifically in the instance of dubbing translation of a humorous source, the process, the translator’s decisions, and strategies may be evaluated from numerous perspectives.

## **What creates humor and/ or laughing really matters!?**

### **Verbal and Non-verbal humorous expressions**

It is essential to detect the humorous features of an audiovisual text before moving on to the strategies applied in the case of translating humorous expressions and therefore to elucidate what can be referred to as humor in the source material.

The complexity of translating Verbally Expressed Humor (VEH) requires translators to have adequate knowledge of both the source and the target culture even in a wider sense. These humorous expressions not only force the translator to find the equivalence of the source expression in the target language but also identify the humorous expression that is needed in the first place. Detecting VEH may be a hard job to do and the vague nature of some specific forms of VEH may not be noticed, such as irony so there exist many variables in the process of reproducing VEH into another language from the personality of the translator (comedic talent or not/ having a sense of humor) or the particular mood of a translator during the translation process. (Chiaro, 2005, p. 135)

During the translation process of humorous expressions, the translator is faced with either culture-bound (linguistically) or universally verbally expressed humor. In fact, Raphaelson-West (1989, p. 130), classifies jokes under three categories as follows and adds that going from top to bottom it is increasingly easier to translate:

- linguistic jokes (e.g., puns)
- cultural jokes (e.g., the ethnic jokes), and
- universal jokes (the unexpected)

Azeez and Turki (2019) touch upon the concept of humor in the context of translation and argue that:

“In general, humor is of two kinds: universal humor and culture/language-bound humor. Universal humor is that which can be understood by all humans, no matter what culture they belong to. Cultural and language-bound humor; however, constitutes a rough mission for translators (p. 1).”

*Jokes* are the most prominent medium for the humor factor and some jokes are anchored within the dialect so, especially in dubbing translation, preserving the accent is another problem to consider. Davies affirms this fact and states that dialect is possibly utilized in ‘jokes’ and ‘humor’ more than the other types of writing, especially in spoken jokes it is particularly dominant. Therefore, it is important to consider the type of approach employed (to preserve or discard) during the translation process. (Davies, 2009, p. 1)

Included under the category of jokes, wordplay or puns are considered among the commonly used tools to create humorous expressions. As it is defined in the Collins Dictionary (n.d.), the word “pun” is a clever and amusing use of a word or phrase with two meanings or of words with the same sound but different meanings. In other words, the pun is also considered as a type of wordplay that is intentionally produced to present a comic effect. Since puns are embedded in a certain language by playing with words and sounds, it is often claimed as untranslatable. On the contrary, Delabastita (1993, pp. 192-226) claims that there are methods available for translators to translate puns and presented as follows:

- PUN > PUN (pun conveyed as a pun)
- PUN > PUNOID (pun conveyed with another figurative medium)
- PUN > NON-PUN (pun conveyed as non-pun)
- PUN > ZERO (pun conveyed with a zero pun)
- NON-PUN > PUN (a new pun created)
- ZERO > PUN (a totally new pun is added)

Irony is another term that can be classified under the taxonomy of humorous devices used in creating humor and yet again it is another term that is quite hard to define, as well as to notice. As Attardo suggests, comprehension of irony is a two-folded phase in which the *literal* sense of vocalization is *discarded* for the sake of *implied (ironical)* meaning (2008, p. 122).

In the context of audiovisual translation, the element of humor is not maintained simply with words. As the name suggests, audiovisual material has a tenet of *visuality* in it. Therefore, the image plays a significant part in conveying humorous expression as well. As Chiaro delineates, the translation of humor within the audiovisual text creates more issues because the humor element may be visually attached, meaning that a joke can be carried with verbal content that leads to a specific component embedded in the image. (Chiaro, 2014, p. 19) Although this is not a common situation, in such cases since the graphics cannot be manipulated the translator’s job gets even more challenging.

Apart from the image, there are other aspects that may also be assessed under the concept of non-verbal humorous components. Bucaria refers to the non-verbal humor elements and claims that even being considered as the synonym of visual humor, non-verbal humor can generally include other components such as ‘songs’ and ‘sounds’ (Bucaria, 2017, p. 433). In this respect, songs can also be evaluated as a non-verbal humorous constituent since they may include figurative language, and rhymes that have the purpose of creating humor.

As much as it is a debatable topic to define the phenomenon of humor and what creates it, Vandaele posits a quite straightforward definition by emphasizing its explicit relation to laughter and states that humor is “what causes amusement, mirth, a spontaneous smile, and laughter.” (Vandaele, 2010, p. 147)

In that sense, the corpus of the study consists of the purposeful selection of humorous instances from the film *Shrek* that revolve around the features of the examples that make the viewers laugh with different abovementioned mediums such as jokes, puns, irony, and wordplay.

Prior to presenting the strategies for dubbing translation, the source material, *Shrek*, will be briefly introduced, as well as the rationale behind the choice of this specific film.

### **The Film *Shrek*’ (2001)**

It would not be wrong to say that Shrek is one of the most popular characters among animated film characters. The film is inspired by the book of the same name by American author William Steig. DreamWorks Animation Company

produced the first *Shrek* film in the year 2001 and after that, it has since become a series of six films in total. It has not only attracted young viewers but also has been watched by older generations internationally. Moreover, this production gained global popularity when nominated for an Academy Award and was selected as the Best Animated Feature in 2001. (Butler et al., 2010, p. 59)

Apart from being internationally famous, the reason this specific film was chosen is the fact that it is among animated films that have been dubbed in many languages worldwide. Within the scope of this study, since the dubbed version of the first film is more commonly available and the number of humorous expressions existing in the film can create a sufficient basis for the present study, only the first film is examined. The film involves a wide range of examples in terms of humorous expressions with the recurring use of linguistic puns, irony, songs, and so on. (Minutella, 2014, p. 67)

When it comes to the title of the film, which is the name of the protagonist, the meaning of *Shrek* as a fictional ogre character is "fright" derived from Yiddish as described in the WordSense dictionary. (n.d.) In the Turkish translation, the original name of the film is left as it is since it is a universal character. This matter is not included in this present study, however, the skopos in the translation of film titles may be a subject for future studies.

The dubbed version that is used in this research is extracted from one of the globally recognized streaming services *Netflix* which includes a wide variety of media products from films to documentaries and TV shows. Therefore, it undoubtedly has a very large database of translated film dialogues both in subtitled and dubbed form.

The genre of the film is comedy; thus, humor is the key element in the storyline of the film. Accordingly, the translation of the humorous expressions throughout the film is quite significant. Like many animated film productions, *Shrek* appeals not only to children but also to adults. Furthermore, it is full of frequent jokes and expressions of irony that are presented in an implied manner with verbal and non-verbal humorous elements.

Throughout the film, humorous elements are commonly encountered in the dialogue between the main character *Shrek*, and his newly made friend *Donkey* as they travel on their adventure to rescue *Princess Fiona*. These two funny characters *Shrek* and *Donkey* are voiced by two very famous Turkish comedians in the Turkish dubbed version which makes the humor elements in the source language transferred into Turkish form in an easier way. From this point of view, it would be proper to mention the importance of another phase of dubbing translation which is the voicing process.

In the following section, the strategies during dubbing translation are discussed before analyzing the humorous instances compiled from the film and categorizing them based on strategies applied by the translator.

## Translation Strategies

While universal humor may be considered easier when it comes to conveying meaning, culture-bound humor requires both a high command of the source language and culture, as well as creativity on the translator's part so that the humorous nature of the dialogue is carried to the target culture.

In this study, "strategies" refers to the decisions made by the translator upon facing a challenge regarding the humorous elements that are present in the source material. Lörşcher (2005) focuses on the process of translation and describes the translation strategies as follows:

"Translation strategies are procedures for solving translation problems. They range from the realization of a translational problem to its solution or the realization of its insolubility by a subject at a given moment (p. 600)."

Especially, the complicated nature of humorous elements puts the translator in a position of being a problem-solver by making decisions on how to translate those challenging parts in the process of dubbing translation. The earliest translation strategies go back to Bible translation and set forth by Nida (1964) deriving from the theory of equivalence, meaning the translator either approaches the ST objectively and strives to retain the original as much as possible (formal equivalence), or the translator opts for focusing on the target culture and conveying the message (dynamic equivalence). When there are situations of non-equivalency the translator must reach a decision revolving around this fundamental theory. For years, there have been several sets of strategies proposed by many scholars.

Molina and Albir are among the scholars who emphasized the need for a systematic approach to translation techniques that can be applied to different branches of translation. (Molina and Albir, 2002, p. 501) Clearly, there have been scholars pointing out the fact that as a decision-maker, in the process of translation, translators apply various strategies. Thus, there have been a wide range of studies working on these strategies under different concepts.

For the present study, the extracted examples are analyzed with the strategies proposed by Pedersen (2005). With its certain peculiarities, in the field of audiovisual translation, Pedersen offers a model for the translation of Extra

Linguistic References (ECR), which includes seven categories. Figure 1 below represents the model in detail, divided into two main classifications, TT (Target -Text) - oriented and ST (Source-Text) -oriented.

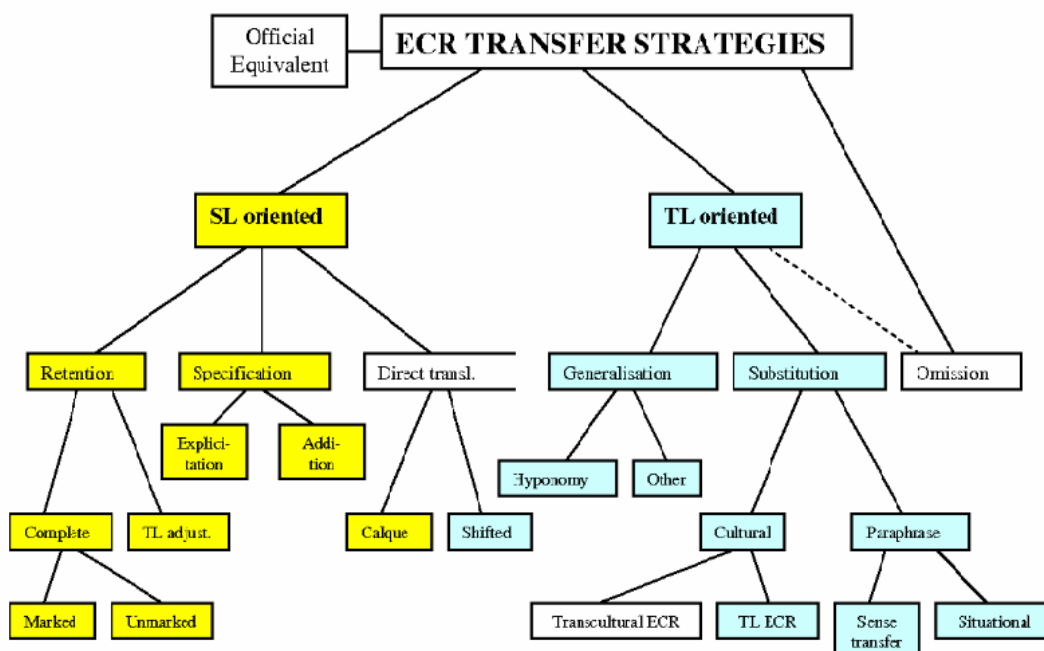


Figure 1. Taxonomy of ECR Transfer Strategies (Pedersen, 2005, p. 116)

With the model suggested, Pedersen explains that ‘The taxonomy is based on descriptive observations of norms underlying subtitling, but it could easily be adapted to suit other forms of translation as well.’ (Pederson, 2005, p. 115)

The main strategies can be explained as follows:

**Official Equivalent:** an equivalence of (ECR) in the SL already exists in the TL.

**Retention:** the element of SL enters TL, whether marked or unmarked.

**Specification:** under two categories Explicitation and Addition, this strategy means keeping the ST element in an untranslated form.

**Direct Translation:** semantically the SL element is retained unchanged either by using two sub-strategies: Calque and Shifted.

**Generalization:** includes Hyponymy meaning specific reference of ECR is replaced with the general one.

**Substitution:** refers to the replacement of the ST element with another one in the TL either with a strategy of Cultural Substitution or Paraphrasing.

**Omission:** removing the SL element and replacing it with nothing.

With the proposed models for the strategies of translation, there are different techniques that can be applied depending on the choice of the translator. Even though the terms for the strategies may differ as to their methods, techniques, or procedures, it is undoubtedly clear that whichever type of translation is being done, the translator goes through a serious decision-making process, especially in cases where it is strenuous to render the SL element to TL by striving to retain a similar effect.

### Analysis of Examples

The current study bases its corpus on the humorous elements that carry a comical essence along with the translator’s strategies in the phase of rendering these elements into the target material. Apart from all the linguistic elements, the analysis is focused more precisely on verbally and visually expressed humor that is a combination of songs, idioms, culture-bound expressions, and so on.

The main objective here is to study the strategies employed during the dubbing translation of the humorous elements in a descriptive manner to set an example for gaining insight into the transfer of non-equivalent cases in audiovisual

materials. To conclude, the main points that are aimed to be highlighted are the translator's approach to conveying the items that create hardship to translate, how creative the translator may need to be, and how much the manipulation of the source is acceptable for the sake of ensuring that the audiences in the target culture can understand. The final evaluation of an animated film full of comical elements may prove to be instructive for other translators and researchers who would like to work in the dubbing area from another point of view and pave new paths for further research.

Before moving on to the analysis of specific examples in context, in general, among the findings, it can be said that the song lyrics are translated only when there is a humor element embedded in the lyrics, otherwise, it is left in the original form, untranslated.

Moreover, as one of the non-verbal humor elements, in the introduction and in different parts of the film, the signs appearing in the image such as 'Beware of Ogre', 'Wanted Ogres Reward', 'Wanted Fairy Tale Creatures', and 'Welcome to Du Loc' are translated and dubbed.

Regarding the warning expressions or exclamations, the translator seems to prefer a target-oriented approach and selects more culturally bound and colloquial expressions that may be considered funnier in a sense. The examples for this case are as follows:

Table 1. <sup>2</sup>

Warning expressions or exclamations
Examples
'I warn you!'
Bak karışmam! (back translation: Don't come to me running!)
'Stay out!'
Sakın geri dönmeyin! (back translation: Don't you dare to come back!)
'Keep Quiet!'
Kapa çeneni! (back translation: Shut up!)
'Wow'
Helal olsun be! (back translation: Bully for you/ well done!)

In terms of the strategy applied here, these examples may represent *substitution* in the sense that the source text element is replaced with another element in the target text with the objective of leaving a more humorous impact on the viewer.

Another strategy to produce a humorous effect which is encountered in several parts of the film is in the manner of addressing. The translator chooses to add addressing words that are humorous in the target language. Also, these addressing words create a comical effect with the local accent by the voice actor. For instance, Donkey, a funny character calls Shrek 'Kardeşim! (My brother!) but the pronunciation of the word is 'Kardışim' in order to make the expression funnier with a certain accent as well. In this respect, it can be said that the strategy applied here is *addition* with the aim of helping the target viewer to enjoy the film by adding a completely new word that exists in the target language.

**Example 1: Context:** Donkey and *Shrek* arrive at the town called Du Loc and at the entrance, there stands a machine with wooden puppets singing a song to welcome newcomers.

In the example above the humorous effect is conveyed by changing the rhymes in order to create harmony with the visual as well. For instance, 'önemli, etmeli', 'koşmaya, gezmeye, gülmeye' 'siz, eşsiz' create rhymes, and the pauses in the singing make the synchronization fits with the visual so the rhythm of the original song and the length of the lines are kept as well. The content of the song is retained as much as possible including not voicing the vulgar expression. Therefore, here it can be said that the strategy used by the translator is *retention* by keeping the structure and the content of the song as they are in the source language.

**Example 2: Context:** Upon entering the castle, Shrek sends Donkey to go and find the stairs. On his way up the stairs Donkey talks to himself.

The above-presented example represents another humorous element of wordplay. The synonyms 'step' and 'stair' and the verb 'step' are used in a rhyming way to create humor. The strategy of equivalence and in a way *direct translation* is used here since the synonym words 'basamak' and 'merdiven' and the verb 'basmak' work here in the same way by creating the rhyme and presenting the same type of wordplay.

<sup>2</sup> Provided by the author.

Table 2.

English source	Turkish translation
Welcome to DuLoc such a perfect town	Burası Du Loc
Here we have some rules Let us lay them down	Burada önemli kurallar vardır
Don't make waves, stay in line	Dikkat etmeli
And we'll get along fine	Koşmaya, gezmeye, oynayıp gülmeye
DuLoc is a perfect place	Du Loc ne eşsiz bir yer
Please keep off the grass	Basmayın çimlere
Shine your shoes, wipe your... [Visuals: wooden	Dikkatli olun siz...
puppets turn and show their bottom, then they turn back and	Du Loc çok, Du Loc çok
show their face]	Du Loc çok eşsiz bir yer
... Face	
DuLoc is, DuLoc is, DuLoc is a perfect place.	

Table 3.

English source	Turkish translation
I am gonna take drastic steps.	Ciddi adımlar atacağım.
Kick it to the kerb.	Basamağa bir tekme.
Don't mess with me.	Bana karşı gelme.
I'm the stair master.	Ben efendimim.
I've mastered the stairs	Merdiveni ele geçirdim.
I wish I had a step right here	Keşke karşımda basamak olsaydı üstüne basıp
I'd step all over it.	geçerdim.

**Example 3: Context:** While they are trying to run away from the dragon, Princess Fiona tells Shrek that he is taking the wrong way and she points to the exit.

Table 4.

English source	Turkish translation
F: Wait! Where are you going?	F: Durun! Ne yapıyorsunuz?
The exit is over there.	Çıkış bu tarafta.
S: Well, I have to save my ass!	S: Herhalde salak değiliz değil mi?

In example 3, the humorous vulgar expression 'saving one's ass' is translated to a completely different meaning that matches the situation as 'I am not stupid, right?' with an attitude, and the word '*Herhalde*' means something similar to an idiom 'Does a bear crap in the woods!'. Here, the translator opts for *substitution* in order not to utter the vulgar expression, perhaps due to censorship reasons or to soften the expression by considering young viewers.

**Example 4: Context:** The dragon falls in love with Donkey and flirts with him. However, he is extremely scared, and he tries to mumble and get away from her.

Table 5.

English source	Turkish translation
We really should get to know each other first as friends or pen pals.	Arkadaş olmalıyız önce, hatta istersen sana mesaj bile çekerim, sonra da kart atarım.

In the example above, the word 'pen pals' refers to someone with whom a person can exchange letters, however, this concept is neither well-known nor common in Turkish culture or today's technological world, hence the translator here prefers to substitute the word with a more common expression as 'I can even send you a text message' by adding another



sentence saying that ‘after that, I can send you a card.’ The translator here uses *substitution* and/ or *paraphrasing* by maintaining the cultural reference and replacing it with a more culture-oriented equivalence and also adding an extra sentence to keep the meaning of the source language element.

**Example 5: Context:** Donkey sleeps in the morning while he and Shrek are guarding Princess Fiona in the forest. Princess Fiona is already up and cooking eggs. Shrek wakes up and tries to wake Donkey up while Donkey is dreaming.

Table 6.

English source	Turkish translation
Mmm, yeah, you know I like it like that. Come on baby. I said I like it.	Evet, evet. Bundan çok hoşlandığımı biliyorsun. Oh! Hadi bebeğim. Üstüme otur da seni gezdireyim.

Example 5 above includes an implicit expression of sexual humor with visual humor accompanying the verbal one. The translator chooses to translate the expressions here in a smoother way by adding a comical feature as ‘Üstüme otur da seni gezdireyim’ meaning ‘Hop on my back and let me take you around’. Here again, it can be said that the translator uses strategies of *substitution* and/ or *paraphrasing*.

**Example 6: Context:** Princess Fiona asks about Lord Farquaad and Donkey describes him by referring to Shrek’s ideas about him.

Table 7.

English source	Turkish translation
You know, Shrek thinks Lord Farquaad is compensating for something, which I think means he has a really...Ow!!!	Shrek Lord Farquaad’ın aşağılık kompleksi olduğunu düşünüyor. Yani aslında onun şeyi...Ah!!!

In Example 6 above there is a representation of an implicit joke and it is kept as it is in the target text as well by keeping the sexual humor not verbally uttered. The translator here uses *direct translation* and/or *retention* translation strategies that serve the purpose of rendering verbal humor.

**Example 7: Context:** Once they all arrive at the Du Loc, Princess Fiona does not want to go and she tries to make an excuse by saying that Donkey does not look well and upon the response of Donkey saying he is well, she insists that he does not look that way.

Table 8.

English source	Turkish translation
That is what they always say, and then the next thing you know, you are on your back. Dead.	Zaten her zaman böyle söylerler. Sonra bir de bakmışsın nalları dikip, ölmüş.

In Example 7, the translator adds an idiomatic expression from the target culture, ‘nalları dikmek’ meaning ‘kick the bucket’ and in this scene, adding this expression makes it funnier since the literal meaning in Turkish is to ‘to be horseshoes up’. With respect to the strategies used the translator here prefers addition with the aim of adding a comical feature from the target culture.

**Example 8: Context:** Donkey meets the dragon again and he knows that she is in love with him, and he comments on the reason why she loves him.

**Example 9: Context:** Donkey and Shrek arrive at the castle to stop the wedding because Shrek loves the princess, and he wants to declare his love for her. Donkey gives advice to Shrek by warning him not to be rude.

Example 8 exemplifies paraphrasing since the translator prefers to smoothen the sexual humor with an expression from the target language ‘hayvani çekicilik’ meaning ‘a bestial/ wild attractiveness’. In a sense, Example 9 can be included in the same way of smoothening the vulgar expression and this time *omitting* the word ‘crap’ and by using just the techniques of *paraphrasing* by changing the expression of ‘romantic crap’ into one word, ‘romanticism (romanticism).

Table 9.

English source	Turkish translation
I guess it is just my animal magnetism	Sanırım hayvani bir çekiciliğim var.

Table 10.

English source	Turkish translation
The chicks love that romantic crap!	Kadınlar romantizme bayılır.

**Example 10: Context:** The dragon comes for help to carry Donkey and Shrek to the castle where the wedding occurs. After they all arrive at the wedding, Donkey gives instructions to the dragon.

Table 11.

English source	Turkish translation
Go ahead, have some fun. If we need you, I will whistle. How about that?	Sen git bir yere park et. İhtiyacımız olursa ıslık çalarız.

In Example 10, there is another instance of substitution. Here the translator translates the text as ‘You go and park somewhere. If we need you we will whistle’ in Turkish. From this back translation, it is obvious that the translator uses his/her creativity and maybe refers to the character *Zorro* by the implication of Donkey being a hero in this case. Also later in the scene, we see that *Shrek* whistles and the dragon flies in. The translator takes the initiative and manipulates the text to create a culture-bound expression that appeals to the target viewers.

## Conclusion

The nature of dubbing includes specific limitations such as synchronization, lip-sync, exclamations, the actor being on-screen or off-screen, and so on. The comedic and humorous equivalent is hard to find in the target language and on top of those challenges, these constraints of rendering humor force the translator to find a cultural replacement that would appeal to the target viewer.

As previously mentioned in the study, dubbing as a form of audiovisual translation has been a dominant form in Türkiye for many years just like in some other European countries. In this respect, the market demand is quite high, and the studios are well-equipped with a team of engineers and technicians as well. Regarding the specific film discussed here, it can also be concluded that while the translator may have the most pivotal role in the task of conveying the humorous effect, the voice actor is another fundamental part of the process. In dubbing translation, the tone and the style may be expressed with words, but the actor is nonetheless responsible for delivering the dialogue effectively.

From the analysis of the examples from the Turkish dubbed version of *Shrek*, some general conclusions can be drawn. Overall, as well as verbal humor there appear to be non-verbal humor elements such as songs, practical jokes, and the attitude of the characters. In fact, the songs are one of the main elements of humor in the film and the translator manages to create the *equivalence* effect by retaining the rhyming in the target material.

The examples have revealed that the translator strives to create a similar humorous effect in the target text by showing an effort to add more culturally bound elements into the dialogue to make it even more humorous in some parts.

In terms of strategies applied in this specific film, the findings confirm that the translator tends to use the strategy of *substitution*, *paraphrasing*, and *addition* the most within the scope of Pedersen’s strategies. However, it is hard to conclude that the translator chooses solely one strategy or method, instead, it would be fair to state that there is a mixture of strategies used depending on the humorous expression at hand. In general, what is observed is that the translator’s approach is target-culture-oriented, making the conscious choice to add culturally bound humor expressions in the Turkish dubbed version of the film.

In short, the current study has attempted to shed light on the strategies and tools available for the dubbing translation of humor by establishing a corpus around the intentionally selected examples from the film *Shrek*. The selection was

based on the features of the examples that involve humorous tenets. In dubbing there is more space for the translator to be creative to some extent when compared to subtitling since the source dialogue is not heard. From this fact, another remarkable point can be discerned that the translation of humor is one of the greatest challenges among the myriad of others that the translator faces during the process of translation. Exclusive to dubbing translation of humorous expressions, it seems undeniable that the ability to be creative stands as one of the essential skills that the translator needs to command. Herrero Perucha (2015) addresses the essential role of creativity in the translation of humor and posits that:

“Translating humor, in the first place, is a challenge for the translator, who has to create and adapt the different types of jokes and humor previously explained by using human’s most powerful ability: creativity. The main objective throughout the entire process of translation regarding humor is to maintain the total meaning of the original version, but at the same time with a touch of humor (p. 42).”

As confirmed throughout the study, there is certainly no definite set of rules for the translator to choose from and employ in the dubbing translation process either. As demonstrated throughout the study, there are endless factors and variables that affect the decision-making process greatly, especially in the sense of humor which is a culturally and contextually bound tool.

Attention needs to be paid to the fact that the results obtained from this study derive from a preliminary qualitative analysis of the compiled data in hand. Undoubtedly, future studies can benefit from this study and may conduct quantitative research on the whole series of *Shrek* films. It would also provide a valuable basis to better understand the perspective of viewers and the data obtained can be widened by basing the study on humor reception.

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**Peer Review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

**Conflict of Interest:** Author declared no conflict of interest.

**Financial Disclosure:** Author declared no financial support.

**Hakem Değerlendirmesi:** Dış bağımsız.

**Çıkar Çatışması:** Yazar çıkar çatışması beyan etmemiştir.

**Finansal Destek:** Yazar finansal destek beyan etmemiştir.

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### How cite this article / Atf biçimi

Cavusoglu, E. (2023). Is Shrek still funny in Turkish? an analysis of the strategies employed during the Turkish dubbing translation of humor in the animated film Shrek. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Çeviribilim Dergisi - Istanbul University Journal of Translation Studies*, 19, 95-106. <https://doi.org/10.26650/iujts.2023.1362904>