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# The Subtitling Of Humour In Deadpool: A Reception Study

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## Abstract

This study sought to examine the reception of subtitled humour via the audience's outlook. The translation of Deadpool as broadcasted by ASTRO GO was selected as the corpus. The data elicitation procedures involved the screening of selected video clips of the corpus, and subsequently, the respondents were asked to fill out a questionnaire. The results showed an array of the audience's understanding and evaluation of the (incorporation) of different types of humour. The audience's levels of general knowledge, English proficiency and also comic reference were encompassed as the main factors underlying the understanding of the reception.

**Keywords:** Reception, Humour, Subtitles, Audiovisual translation, Deadpool

# La Substitución Del Humor En El Deadpool: Un Estudio De Recepción

## Resumen

Este estudio buscó examinar la recepción del humor subtítulo a través de la perspectiva de la audiencia. La traducción de Deadpool emitida por ASTRO GO se seleccionó como el corpus. Los procedimientos de obtención de datos incluyeron la selección de videoclips seleccionados del corpus y, posteriormente, se pidió a los encuestados que completaran un cuestionario. Los resultados mostraron una variedad de comprensión y evaluación por parte de la audiencia de la (incorporación) de diferentes tipos de humor. Los niveles de conocimiento general de la audiencia, el dominio del inglés y también la referencia cómica se incluyeron como los principales factores que subyacen a la comprensión de la recepción.

**Palabras clave:** Recepción, Humor, Subtítulos, Traducción Audiovisual, Deadpool.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Humour is an important social trait. Vandaele (2010) asserts that humour is an exclusive characteristic of human being, although laughter as a form of social responsibility is also found in other animals. According to Ziv (1984), there are at least five functions of humour. Humour may function as a passage for a person to convey taboo messages, criticise a particular organisation, unify

people, discharge fear and anxiety and convey witty messages through wordplay. Therefore it is not surprising that studies on humour are omnipresent in a whole gamut of humanities, such as health, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, economy and linguistics (Chiaro, 2014a; Ershova et al., 2018; Abdeyan et al., 2018).

In the field of translation, the translation of humour remains an important issue. Humour translation is deemed an intricate subject due to both linguistic and cultural constraints (Chiaro, 2008). One central aspect is the varying degrees of reception. A person might perceive a particular translation as humorous, but others might view it differently. The translation process would, without a doubt, be intricated by the ‘embellishment’ of audiovisual (AV) medium as a platform, which indulges the audience with simultaneous multimodal pleasures (sound, moving image, music etc.). Grounded in this premise, the study aims to assess the audience’s reception pertinent to the AV humour translation. As a novel strategy, in this study, *Deadpool* is selected as the corpus. The data collection processes encompass both the screening of selected clips and the session of filling out the questionnaire by the respondents.

### *1.2. DEFINING HUMOUR*

One fundamental issue of humour studies and humour translation (HT) studies is defining humour itself. According to

Ruch (1998), there is no single all-inclusive and universal definition of humour. This is due to the fact that humour may be present through various mediums, physical forms and may be received differently to different individuals. Nevertheless, in general, and for the purpose of the study, humour can still be widely understood as something that can amuse/elate a person's (receiver) emotions (Chiaro, 2010).

Notably, there are three main perspectives in evaluating the presence of humour: speaker, content and receiver. In general terms, the scholars of humour studies were of differing opinions as to whether laughter can be considered a form of the reaction of humour or not. Further discussions subsequently contribute to the examination of the first perspective, i.e. the speaker. Such instance is well-elaborated by Attardo (1994). In this regard, he agrees with the definition given by Kerbrat-Orecchioni which notes that there is a need to define humour via the perlocutionary outlook, i.e. the intention of a speaker. In other words, humour is defined as something that intends to bring about the humorous feel to the receiver, albeit the feelings themselves not experienced by the receiver.

Next is the content of the humour. Nash (1985) is one of the earliest scholars who study and designs the formation of humour systematically. His proposal of Locative Formulae, among others, proves advantageous in illuminating and forming the incongruity theory, which is presently regarded as a core theory of humour

studies. An incongruous situation is deemed to be present when a new script is inserted in the midst of an original script (storyline), thus averting the reception of the audience and resulting in a humorous effect.

The presence of the AV medium further complicates the tasks of a translator. This is because the formation of humour is not merely shaped by the existence of two opposing scripts. Multimodal discourse clearly expounds this issue. Based on the account of Pérez-González (2014), an AV message can be dispensed through (the incorporation of) sound, music, image and language. The notion is further underpinned by the study of Martínez-Sierra (2006). His research postulates that a particular joke can be formed through the incorporation of eight (8) elements, namely community-and-institution, community-sense-of-humour, linguistic, visual, graphics, paralinguistic, non-marked and also sound.

The evaluation of the receiver/audience is another substantial standpoint in determining the presence of humour. According to Veiga (2009b), the nature of humour itself is multifaceted; hence the diverse reception. This, among others, is caused by the audience's varying degrees of the sense of humour, which is predominantly caused by their level of general knowledge, source language knowledge and the complexity of humour itself (see also Schauffler, 2015; Veiga, 2009a). It is, therefore, possible that A may think (receive) that a particular joke is funny, and B may perceive it otherwise. C may consider it suitable for all, and D may

perceive it as offensive. Surely this would set hurdles to the already intricate works for an AV translator to determine the boundary of what is regarded as humorous or not empirically.

## **2. RECEPTION STUDIES OF AUDIOVISUAL HUMOUR TRANSLATION**

The degree of reception studies of HT is far-reaching. The studies feature a wide range of focuses and are equipped with various data elicitation methods and analyses. From the literature, it is notable that the majority of the reception studies concentrate on dubbing rather than subtitling (Antonini et al., 2003; Chiaro, 2014b). There are also studies which compare the audiences' reception in relation to the quality of the translation of both dubbing and subtitling of similar corpora (Fuentes Luque, 2003).

The difference in research objectives also implies different data collection methodology. The study by Orrego-Carmona (2015), for instance, applies the eye-tracking technology in order to identify the subtitle reading pattern and the dependency of the respondents towards the subtitles of the popular television series *The Big Bang Theory*. Although studies opting for this data collection method is increasing, the data of the reception studies of AVHT were largely recorded from screening procedures, which are

followed by filling out questionnaires and interviews (Bucaria, 2008; Fuentes Luque, 2003).

### *2.1. CORPUS*

The study selects one of the X-Men film series, i.e. *Deadpool* (2016) as the corpus. For this purpose, the Malay translation of the film as broadcasted by ASTRO GO is chosen. *Deadpool* is directed by Tim Miller. Essentially, the film revolves around the journey of an anti-hero i.e. *Deadpool/Wade Wilson* (Reynolds et al. 2016). Depicted as a mercenary, Wade is initially diagnosed with cancer and later agrees to be a part of an underground experiment to treat it. In the lab lead by the villain, *Ajax/Francis* (Ed Skrein), Wade is repeatedly tortured as a part of the treatment procedures. His cancer is subsequently cured, but Wade suffers permanent skin damage on his entire body. Later plots present *Deadpool's* revenge towards *Ajax/Francis* to obtain the formula to restore his skin condition.

As per the local distribution of the DVD of the film, ASTRO GO also classifies *Deadpool* to only be suitable for viewing for adults (18 years old and above). Basically, selected content of the film by ASTRO GO is censored. Apart from DVD and ASTRO, the same age classification is also placed for the local cinema screening (Cinema Online, 2016). As a comparison, the R classification is regulated by the Motion Pictures Association of America (MPAA) (filmRatings.com, 2016). This indicates that the film viewing

requires parental/adult supervision for 17-year-old and below audiences in the United States cinemas.

The selection of *Deadpool* as the research corpus rests on several factors. Firstly is its comedy genre. This is imperative in ways to establish the first perspective in evaluating the presence of humour, i.e. the speaker. In this context, the speaker mainly refers to the director of the film who certainly intends to amuse the audiences with comedy. The second factor is of the content of humour, which is distinctive to other films' humour. Predominantly, the types of humour in *Deadpool* can be classed into two: Dark/Black humour and specific references. Dark humour refers to humour which lingers on social taboo/sensitivity. Specific humour references refer to ubiquitous references ranging from other films, celebrities and pop culture. As *Deadpool* itself is one of the X-Men series, the majority of the references refer to X-Men's films and characters, particularly Wolverine. Similar to other X-Men films, *Deadpool*, too, is originally illustrated as comics. In the comics, *Deadpool* is depicted as a "merc with a mouth". Thus, many of the jokes render sarcastic and sexual connotations. The presence of this type of humour is also widely discussed in various social media platforms. For example, the video clip by Mr Sunday Movies (2016) lists down more than a hundred specific references in the movie.

## 2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study utilises Gambier's (2010) notion of reception for questionnaire formulation and analysis. According to Gambier (2010), reception can be assigned into three Rs, viz. response, reaction and repercussion:

- i. Response refers to the convenience of information interpretation in AV texts, or the process of perceptual decoding. In the context of the present study, this aspect refers to the degrees of readability and dependency of respondents to read the given subtitles.
- ii. Reaction denotes the convenience to read elements of AV texts. This aspect is predominantly correlated to psychology-cognitive issues, i.e. the long and short-term memory and the audience's understanding. In the context of the study, reaction refers to the degree of understanding of the respondents to the screened humour.
- iii. Repercussion refers to the issues of attitude and beliefs. This aspect is related to the feedback and evaluation of the audience pertinent to the applied strategies and translational conventions. The examples include the tendency to favour a particular AV translation mode, as well as the embedded values and ideology in the translation. In the context of the study, this refers to the feedback of the respondents regarding the level of funniness and the inclination towards certain types of humour.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The study aims to evaluate the reception of subtitled humour from the audience's standpoint. As previously elucidated, the study is grounded in the Gambier's (2010) reception framework, thus the data collection method and analysis are also shaped by the aforementioned three Rs. A total number of 22 undergraduate students from two local (Malaysian) universities, namely Universiti Utara Malaysia (10 students) and Universiti Sains Malaysia (12 students) have participated in the study.

The data elicitation process encompasses two main phases, which are the screening and the filling out questionnaire sessions. The screening phase is performed two times. The first consists of the plot screening (approximately 10 minutes). This is done to enable the respondents to gain comprehensive plot understanding, apart from communicating the initial depiction of the types of humour in *Deadpool*. The second screening is done during the questionnaire answering session. For this purpose, three scenes (six jokes in total) are selected, like the following:

- i. Scene 1: Weasel compares Wade's ugly face to a sexual relationship between two avocados.
- ii. Scene 2: Weasel and Wade discuss potential superhero names for Wade.

- iii. Scene 3: Deadpool, who initially apologises for hitting a lady subsequently throwing another lady while calling her spider monkey.

As previously noted, one basis of humour is its relativity. Veiga (2009a) asserts that each individual has his/her own distinctive sense of humour. In order to assess this ability, the respondents are tasked to identify jokes (if any) in each of the screened scenes. The questionnaire is of two main sections. The first section (demography) encapsulates the respondents’ basic profiles (age, sex, gender, present mood, Malaysian University English Test (MUET) results and also general knowledge on Deadpool and X-Men). The MUET test ranges from Band 1 to 6, as follows:

Table 1- The MUET test ranges from Band 1 to 6

Band	Description
6.0	Excellent user
5.0	Very good user
4.0	Good user
3.0	Modest user
2.0	Limited user
1.0	Extremely limited user

(Malaysian Examinations Council, 2016)

The second part of the questionnaire includes questions based on Gambier’s (2010) notion of reception:

- i. Response: Due to limited access to the eye-tracking method, the respondents are required to self-evaluate their levels of readability and dependency of the subtitles.
- ii. Reaction: The respondents are asked to underline and explain the identified jokes from each scene. The evaluation of reaction is done based on two aspects, which are the ability of the respondents to identify the jokes and also the comprehension test, i.e. whether they can correctly explain the identified jokes.
- iii. Repercussion: The evaluation is completed regarding the marked funniness level, and whether the jokes are received as sensitive, offensive etc. A comparison between both aspects of reaction and repercussion are subsequently initiated to determine the underlying factors of such evaluation.

Parallel to the data collection method, the method of analysis is also done based on Gambier's (2010) reception. The analysis was commenced by illuminating the audience's profiles and the first aspect of reception, i.e. response. The analysis of the remaining aspects is done based on the sequence of jokes. For this purpose, the analysis further classes reaction to two aspects, namely Correct Reference (correct reference is given) and Incorrect Reference (the wrong reference is given). As for repercussion, four categories are established, which are Funny (Correct Reference), Funny (Incorrect Reference), Not Funny (Correct Reference) and Not Funny

(Incorrect Reference). The answer patterns are then graphically and descriptively explained.

#### 4. ANALYSIS

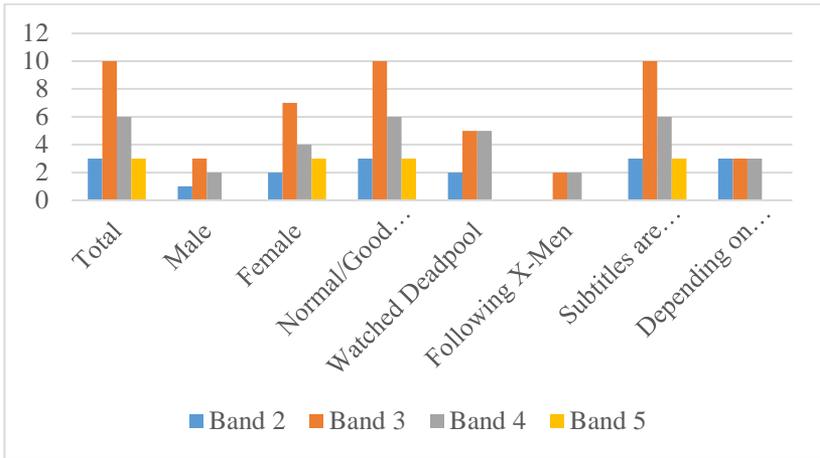


Figure 1. Demographic Profile and Response

Table 1 exhibits the audience’s demographic profiles. All 22 respondents are placed into four groups according to their MUET scores. Based on the table, three respondents are respectively assigned to the lowest (Band 2) and the highest groups (Band 5). The Band 3 group features the highest number of respondents, i.e. ten.

In general, the total number of male respondents is higher than females. All respondents record normal/good mood during the study. This is essential to ensure the given answers are not

subjected to or influenced by external factors, particularly the personal emotions of the respondents.

The table also presents the general knowledge ranks of the audience in relation to *Deadpool* and *X-Men* films. Based on the graph, the knowledge levels are of medium and low levels. Besides the English proficiency level, the postulation of the corpus-related knowledge is also of importance due to the omnipresence of the specific references throughout the film. In this regard, only four respondents are equipped with the familiarity of *X-Men*, and no respondent from the Band 2 and 3 groups note familiarity with the film series. As for *Deadpool*, out of the total amount of 12 who have watched the film, no Band 5 respondent note that they have previously done so.

The last two clustered bar graphs depict one major focus of the study, viz. response. As mentioned earlier, the aspect refers to self-evaluated answers by the participants regarding both readability and dependency of the subtitles. All responses note that the subtitles are easy to be read. This suggests that no technical complications are notable throughout the screening procedures, such as the timing (in and out), subtitle segmentation, font and size of typeface and also punctuations. It has to be mentioned too, that although almost half of the research participants (nine) note their dependency of the subtitles to understand the storyline, only 30% respondents with average English scores (Band 3) record similar answers.

### **Scene 1:**

The 16-second scene contains two jokes. The first humorous instance refers to Weasel's utterance once he sees the condition of Wade's face. The utterance is subtitled into Malay as "Rupa awak seperti dua avokado yang sedang berasmara" (back translation: Your face is similar to two avocados having sex). The formation of the humour can be clearly recognised through the similarity between the unattractiveness of Wade's face and the physical appearance of avocados. The depiction is further underlined by the emphasis on the sexual reference, although the Malay translation of the source text (...an avocado had sex with an older, more disgusting avocado) is, to some extent, mitigated and simplified (berasmara). The formation of the humour does not solely refer to the dialogue, as it is also fashioned simultaneously with the muted background sound and Weasel's unpretentious facial reaction.

The second joke is of sexual innuendo. The joke is a continuation of the first joke regarding the depiction of Wade's skin condition. In the scene, Weasel does not end his mockery by comparing Wade's horrid facial condition to the sexual act by two avocados (humour 1); instead, he further adds insult that even the relationship has problems. Similar to humour 1, Weasel's mockery is also delivered with an unpretentious facial gesture.

### **Humour 1:**

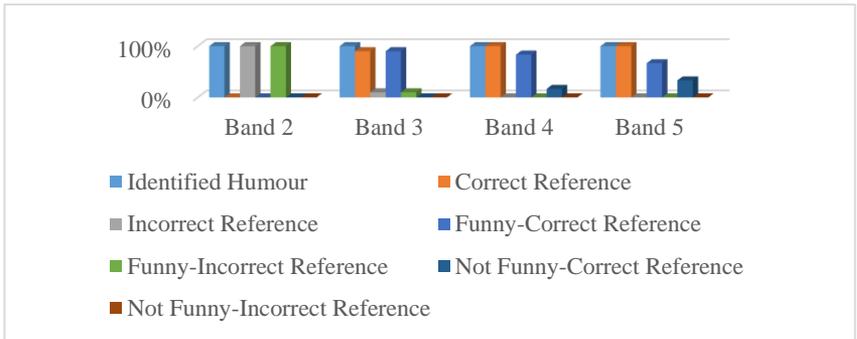


Figure 2. humour 1 (SCENE 1)

Based on Figure 2, the analysis shows that all 22 participants are able to identify the position of humour 1. It has to be noted, however, that the analysis of reaction demonstrates that the Band 2 group portrays a different degree of understanding of the joke compared to the remaining three groups. All three answers of the Band 2 group do not refer to the comparison between the unattractiveness of Wade’s skin condition and avocados. The given answers, among others, include the idea that the avocados refer to male and female as a couple, and also the comparison between animate (Wade) and inanimate objects (avocados). Nevertheless, almost the entire Band 3, 4 and 5 respondents state the correct reference. The analysis of repercussion, i.e. the level of funniness shows marginal differences between the answers. Almost all of the respondents evaluate humour 1 as funny, including the respondents of Band 2 and Band 3 who do not state the reference correctly. One

respondent from both Band 5 and 4 groups respectively states that albeit the reference is clear and understandable, the type of humour is deemed unsuitable and sensitive, thus not appropriate in the local context.

**Humour 2:**

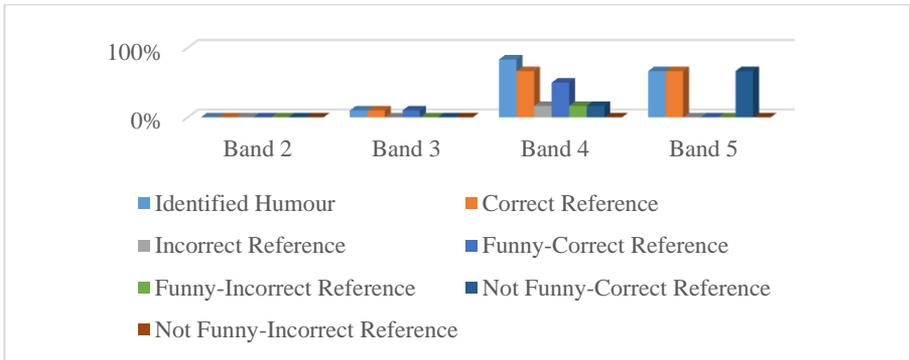


Figure 3. humour 2 (SCENE 1)

As opposed to humour 1, the sexual reference of humour 2 is more explicit in nature. The above figure exhibits significant differences of the humour identification. The most salient is based on English proficiency levels. Even though the Band 3 respondents are large in number, only one participant manages to identify the humour. No respondent of the Band 2 group successfully identifies the humour. In general terms, the findings of the reaction analysis put forth an overall understanding of the respondents who are able to identify the humour. Although the pattern shows a good degree of understanding, the feedback (repercussion) displays different

results. The two respondents from the Band 5 group consider humour 2 as not funny. The justifications, among others, include the cliché paradoxical sub-theme of a film, ‘berasmara tapi membenci’ (back translation: having sex but loathing [one another]). Most of the Band 4 participants consider humour 2 as funny by providing its correct reference, and most of the respondents maintain that Weasel’s unpretentious facial expression and intonation do contribute to the development of the humour.

## **Scene 2:**

The duration of the scene is twenty-four (24) seconds. The reference of the first humour is of the array of possible superhero names for Wade by Weasel. The first is translated as ‘Wade si Pelawak’, which is the word-by-word rendering of the source text ‘Wade the Wisecracker’. Apart from the connotation of the word that implies Wade’s comic character, the source text reference is also shaped by alliteration, viz. the recurrence of the prefix phoneme /w/, which facilitates its pronunciation. Both of these do, in fact, contribute to the delivery of the humour. The second name, Scaredevil evidently refers to the superhero character/film who has failed in 2003, namely Daredevil (Brown, 2015). The transfer of the humour is also formed by the shot on Wade’s astonished face as a reaction to Weasel’s suggestion.

Similar to Scaredevil, the second humour is dispensed sarcastically. This humour directly refers to the DC superhero, Captain America. After agreeing with Deadpool as his superhero name, Wade subsequently prefixes it with Captain, but instantaneously rejects it. In this scene, the development of humour 2 is also facilitated with the background sound effect, slow-paced shot and disagreeing facial reaction of Weasel upon hearing the word captain. It has to also be noted that the findings show that one participant (Band 2) is not able to identify a single joke from the scene.

**Humour 1:**

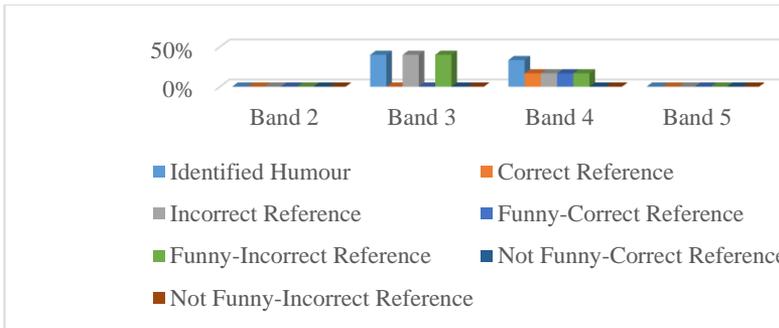


Figure 4. humour 1 (SCENE 2)

Figure 4 exhibits a very low percentage of both the identification and understanding of humour 1. Although as high as 40% and 33% respondents from the respective Band 3 and Band 4 groups manage to identify the humour, only one participant

successfully gives the correct answer, which is the Scaredevil/Daredevil reference. Almost the entirety of the remaining participants states that the humour is formed due to the similarity (also dissimilarity) between the name and Wade's physical/facial appearance. This certainly tells that the majority of the respondents do not understand the joke's reference. The figure also notes that no respondent from the Band 2 and 5 groups successfully identify the joke. Even though the given answers are chiefly incorrect, the analysis of repercussion shows that all six respondents consider the humour as funny. The one respondent who provides the correct reference also pens that the humour is a sarcastic remark to note the failure of Daredevil (Fatihudin, 2019).

**Humour 2:**

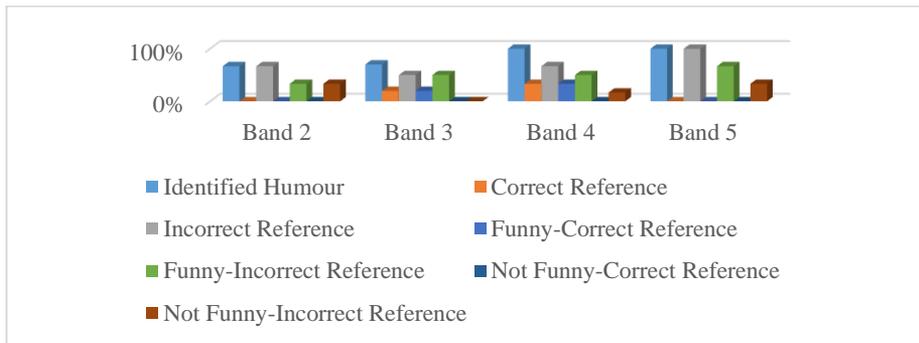


Figure 5. humour 2 (SCENE 2)

Compared to humour 1, the percentage of the audience who successfully identify humour 2 is higher. A total of eighteen (18) respondents manage to identify the humour, with all groups score more than 50%. Nonetheless, the analysis of reaction shows a variety of the level of understanding. The Captain America reference is only known to four respondents. Most of the provided answers refer to the function of a captain, which is a leader. The other responses refer to the physical appearance (such as the change of Wade's facial expression and intonation) and also the muted sound effect as ways to help the establishment of the humour. An array of answers is also found from the feedback analysis. Almost all audiences deem the humour as funny. One salient feature of Figure 5 is the evaluation of a couple of respondents that deem the joke as not humorous by providing incorrect references. The given answers, among others, include the reference of other (unrelated) superheroes, such as Spiderman and Joker.

### **Scene 3:**

The duration of the final scene is only five (5) seconds. The first humour refers to the sarcastic apology by Deadpool to a woman after hitting her. The joke's reference is of the issue of sexism. The formation of the humour can be inferred by reviewing the overall plot. In general, the plot depicts Deadpool's pursuit of Francis by killing his men. In a subsequent scene, Deadpool clearly voices out the theme of sexism by uttering "This is confusing. Is it

sexist to hit you? It is more sexist to not hit you? I mean, the line gets really blurry”. Apart from this storyline, the formation of the humour is also underpinned by the use of sarcastic tone by Deadpool while apologising.

The second humour refers to name-calling/insult, which is linked to the incongruity of Deadpool’s apology (humour 1) and action. After apologising to the woman, another woman promptly jumps on Deadpool’s back in her attempt to hit him. Deadpool instantly throws her away whilst shouting “Oh! You little spider monkey!”, which is translated into Malay as “Beruk tak guna!” (back translation: [you] damn monkey!). Overall, there are four respondents (respectively three and one from the Band 3 and 5 groups) who fail to identify any humour from Scene 3.

### **Humour 1:**

In general terms, only four respondents successfully identify humour 1, viz. one from the Band 3 group, and three from the Band 4 group. The analysis of reaction demonstrates that all of the answers show an overall understanding of the reference. It matters to note that one of the respondents from the Band 4 group deems the joke as not funny.

### **Humour 2:**

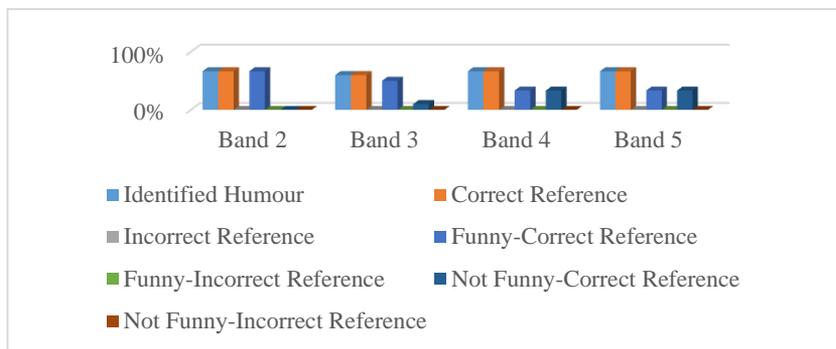


Figure 6. humour 2 (SCENE 3)

As opposed to humour 1, a total number of fourteen research participants (more than 50% for every English proficiency group) accurately identify the humour. Akin to humour 1, all answers demonstrate a 100% rate of understanding from the audience. It has to be mentioned, however, that the scores of the level of funniness show different results. Half of the total participants of the Band 4 and 5 groups (33% of the total number of the audience of each group) mark the humour as not funny. According to the provided answers, the name-calling is deemed offensive. Due to the direct reference of the humour and female-related issues, a quick comparison between the audience’s responses and their gender is done. The observation finds that a number of female respondents (6 out of 14) do consider the joke as humorous.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Due to spatial constraint, this section only discusses the three main features of the reception study, i.e. response, reaction and repercussion. Firstly is the response. The respondents' self-evaluation of this aspect is proven justified, as supported by the analysis results of Scene 1 and 3. Apart from the reference of Scene 2 which requires the audience's knowledge of superhero films, the high percentage of the audience's degree of understanding of Scene 1 and 3 postulates that the jokes are successfully translated and delivered in the target text. However, it still matters to note that it is essential for the two aspects of readability and dependency of subtitles to be empirically studied (via the eye-tracking method etc.) to further look at the differences scientifically.

The analysis of the first humour in Scene 1 shows that all respondents manage to identify the joke. This posits that the reference is easily understood and delivered in the translation. Even though the analysis results of Figure 2 presuppose a diverse rank of comprehension based on the English proficiency levels, the difference is minimal and thus deemed insignificant as the majority of the Band 3 audiences provide correct joke references. This argument is also strengthened by the fact that avocados are not locally found. Therefore, this indicates a probability that some participants are not familiar with the fruit, albeit this matter is not specifically examined in the study.

The results of the second humour (Scene 1) exhibit a whole gamut of responses. The sexual humour is notably not deemed as

funny by a large number of the respondents, although a number of them are competent in the English language. In a number of ways, this does signify that the audience's level of knowledge and comprehension of the humour are not directly associated with their sense of humour. In other words, the respondents might completely understand the humour but deem it not funny and offensive. The assertion of some participants that the second humour is inappropriate in the local context also justifies this notion. This is parallel to the findings of Antonini et al. (2003) which put forth the notion that sensitive humour in *Father Ted* is deemed inappropriate and not funny by some Italians.

Overall, the analysis of Scene 2 shows that the references of films' characters are hardly understood by the audience, particularly the Scaredevil/Daredevil characters (Scene 2, Humour 1). This, among others, might be a result of the film's failure to reach a global audience (Brown, 2015). The analysis of the second humour, on the other hand, tells a different narrative. Although many are still unable to correctly mention the accurate reference in their answers, there are a few others who do. The success of the DC film undoubtedly plays its part in relation to this finding. The revenue of *Captain America: Civil War* (2018), for example, is more than 1.5 billion USD – mostly (64.4%) from its global audience.

Another important aspect is the creative adaptation as a part of the audience's degree of comprehension. Although the provided answers for the second joke were mainly incorrect, more than a few

respondents attempt to explain the joke based on their creativity, and all view the joke as funny. This is in fact mentioned in the account of Antonini et al. (2003) as well, which notes the presence of the respondents providing their own interpretation of the joke, albeit incorrectly.

As for Scene 3, the audiences show 100% understanding of the first humour, although only a few manage to identify it. Even though the underlying factor for the phenomenon is not a concern in the present study, the analysis shows a present correlation between the degree of English proficiency and the audience's level of understanding of Humour 1. Only one respondent from the low intermediate groups (Band 2 and 3) successfully provide the right reference. This, to some extent, also posits that the sarcastic remark by Deadpool is not entirely understood by the respondents.

Lastly is the analysis of Humour 2 (Scene 3). The findings prove that the formation of humour via name-calling/insults is easily understood by the participants, although they record varying level of funniness. The expression using name-calling/insults is a part of the local linguistic and cultural tradition, as embedded in numerous tales, idioms and proverbs. In the context of Humour 2, this indirectly contributes to the understanding of the humour, although those who understand it might view it as not funny, inappropriate and offensive.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

All in all, although the study only scrutinises a small volume of humour (six), their reception varies extensively. This is partly due to the selection of scenes which embodies notable references of humour. The jokes in Scene 1 are a mainly physical mockery and sexual innuendos. The humour in Scene 2 mainly refers to specific film characters, and the jokes in the final scene are linked to another scene in *Deadpool* and also of name-calling/insults.

Furthermore, the results also reveal a direct relationship between the audiences' comprehension of humour and humour references. The general and salient jokes are easily comprehended as opposed to the specific jokes. In the AV framework, the audience's degree of comprehension is deemed more challenging because the jokes are not only dispensed on their own; rather they are formed via the incorporation of other AV modes, such as the music, special effect, moving images and also utterances. This implies the importance of assessing humour from the outlook of multimodality, as mentioned by both Martínez-Sierra (2006) and Pérez-González (2014).

Finally, the reception analysis based on Gambier (2010) is able to positively illustrate the reception aspect of humour. However, it should be noted as well that further studies are necessary to encompass the entirety of *Deadpool* as the corpus and larger number of audiences.

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