

## **Humor analysis of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study entitled Humor analysis of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975) aims to analyzes humor that exists in a British comedy film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), which is directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones, to understand the humor and what the humor implied. Employing textual analysis, this study uses Vandaele's (2002) humor mechanism and film form proposed by Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith (2017) as the tools of analysis. The study indicates that the humor is constructed based on the four contexts as described by Vandaele (2002): (1) (De-) normalization, (2) solution, (3) conditioning, and (4) evaluation. Furthermore, the humor signifies the film author's credibility to deliver humor that is enjoyable to many people, especially those who have been exposed to western culture.

**Keywords:** *film, humor, humor mechanism, incongruity, Monty Python and The Holy Grail.*

## INTRODUCTION

Every day, people from all over the globe are exposed to humor in their lives, whether at school, in their workplaces, their social activities, and even on the internet. Humor is universally recognized by many cultures, as humor is a universal phenomenon that occurred almost everywhere (Sen, 2012). Humor itself is one of the topics that is widely discussed in many fields of study across the history of mankind. As Billig (2005) describes, humor has been discussed since the time of Aristotle and beyond until the present day; humor also has a lot of important roles in society. One such example is described by Meyer (2000) who said that humor is a powerful communication tool, especially for politicians who can use humor as a tool for rallying people into supporting their cause, Nevertheless, humor can have a 'double-edged sword' because if it is used too much and too aggressive, it may drive people away from joining a cause (Meyer, 2000). Furthermore, Meyer also believes that humor can also be used as a form of attack against social misbehavior to drive society back to what it considers itself 'normal' which Billig (2005) also believed in. Humor also has its uses in the health sector, workplaces, and even education (Raskin, 2008). However, people often overlook the deeper meaning and the use of humor, and consider it merely as a form of amusement, especially if the humor lies within a form of entertainment, namely, a film.

Film, also known as motion pictures, is one of the youngest forms of art medium (Bordwell, Thompson

& Smith, 2017). In just a century, film has exploded into something big and sought after by a lot of people that it turns itself into one of modern day's source of entertainment. Humor and film often go hand-in-hand, and this is proven with many genres of film that integrates humor, as a part of its narrative. To name a few, take action-comedy, romantic-comedy, sitcom, parody movie, and satirical movies. Humor in films is quite popular, one example of this statement is *Thor: Ragnarok* (Waititi, 2017). This action-adventure comedy film has a total revenue of USD 853,977,126 worldwide, according to Internet Movie Database (n.d) with an estimated film budget of USD 180,000,000. Through this film revenue, one can assume that the film has achieved some degree of success. Humor in this film is one of the reasons why this film is commercially successful. The humor of this film is described by one reviewer as "sublimely silly, saucy, and refuse to take themselves seriously." (O'Sullivan, 2017). Humor in film is also nothing new. Thousands of comedy films have emerged into cinema for generations. From *L'arroseur arrosé* (1895) to *Jojo Rabbit* (2019), humor in film has been around for a long time. Along with time, the classics of comedy films start to appear, one such case is a film made by Monty Python.

According to their official website, Monty python is a comedy troupe originated from England. They are famous for their unique style of comedy. Their style of comedy often deconstructs its viewers' perception of everything and anything, even how comedy sketches work (Gent, 2014). Monty Python is known for its TV

series, *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969-1974) which is popular in England. Monty Python also won several awards such as BAFTA awards for Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema (1988), AFI star award (1998), and European Film Award Lifetime Achievement Award (2001).

However, studying humor is not as simple as assuming a film's success through its revenue, award, and prestige. Humor is an interdisciplinary theory that spans across multiple bodies of academics, such as psychology, anthropology, philosophy, medicine, communication, education, linguistics, literature, and so on (Veatch, 1998). Three theories always emerge in many articles regarding humor, which are Superiority theory, incongruity theory, and relief theory (Berger, 1993; Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004; Meyer, 2000). According to Superiority theory, people laugh because they feel some kind of triumph over others or feel superior to them (Meyer, 2000 as cited by Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004). The theory suggests that people are amused and joyous when they see themselves as superior to others (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004). Then, relief theory theorizes that humor and laughter are evoked because of the reduction of stress and the release of nervous energy (Meyer, 2000). This reduction of stress may reveal repressed desire and the overcome of social inhibitors (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004).

Lastly, incongruity theory suggests that people are laughing at things they find surprising or unexpected (Berger, 1976; Deckers & Divine, 1981; McGhee, 1979 as cited by Meyer, 2000). Moreover, the

theory violates the common assumption that people have in their mind to provoke humor (Meyer, 2000). However, the problem with humor studies is that there is no agreement between researchers about which theories that is viable as the answer for humor theory as most of these theories proponent believed that their theory could explain all forms of humor (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004). Although many researchers agree that these theories are complementary, researchers believe that both theories can complement each other to explain humorous occurrences (Veatch, 1998; Meyer, 2000; Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004). Vandaele (2002) combines both incongruity and superiority theory, to constructs a framework called Humor Mechanism, and this framework will be used to answer the research questions in this study.

Previous studies on humor in film are quite plentiful these days. One of the

Studies of film and humor is conducted by Fink (2013). In his study, Fink made a case study on an American animated sitcom *The Simpson* (1989-present) and analyzed the film based on its comic approach. Similarly, Juckel, Bellman, and Varan (2016) analyzed other US-based sitcoms to find an approach to identify its style of humor using a topology of humor. Coincidentally, the framework of the study also uses film as a subject of analysis. However, most of the studies mentioned before mainly focus on the narrative aspect of a film as its primary source of humor analysis. Thus, studies that incorporate film elements and humor theories remain scarce.

This study aims to investigate how humor operates in one of Monty

python's feature films, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975) using the framework of Vandaele's (2002) humor mechanism, and Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith Film Form (2017). This particular film is selected due to the humorous content this film provides, the absurdity of the humor,

## METHODOLOGY

This study is a text-based analysis. According to McKee (2002), textual analysis is a method that is used when researchers want to make sense of a text by making an "educated guess" (p. 1) to make meaning to the said text. In this study, a textual analysis was used to examine the humor that exists in the film's narrative and cinematographic aspects to uncover how humor operates in the film.

The data in this study is collected in the form of a humorous scene represented with screenshots, which include humor that presents from both narrative aspects and cinematic aspects. The film itself, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975) is specifically chosen as this film is one of Monty Python's works that received the most positive response among people. In collecting the data, the film was first watched closely to understand the film thoroughly and to provide a better contextual understanding of the film itself. Then, the film was sequenced based on its humorous scenes. Furthermore, the sequences were broken down into three parts, which were its film aspects, narrative aspects, and its humor aspects. Film aspects include film elements such as *mise-en-scene*, cinematography, editing style, and sounds. Then, the

and since the Monty Python group directly directs, writes, and acts on this film themselves. Monty python's works are chosen specifically due to the troupe's tendency to write and act their sketches themselves and also due to their cult-like popularity.

narrative aspects consist of the remark of the sequences, which explained what happened in the sequence and what does made the sequence humorous. Then the humor aspects include a listing of contexts of humor in each sequence and its superiority/incongruity stimuli.

After the data was collected, the collected data were interpreted and analyzed using Vandaele's Humor Mechanism Framework (2002) to categorize the context of humor in each sequence and its stimuli, and Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith's Film Form (2017) to elaborate the film aspect in each sequence. Furthermore, both theories were used to uncover the relationship between the film elements and the narrative elements with humor.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis, it is found that the context of (De-)normalization appears the most often in comparison to any other humor contexts, appearing fifteen times. The second most frequent context that appeared is Conditioning, with eleven appearances. Solution comes next, with seven appearances, and finally evaluation context with four appearances. The frequency of the humor's contexts is summarized in the table below.

Frequency of Humor's Context				
No	Category context	Sequence		
		Incongruity	Superiority	total
1	(De-) normalization	1,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,14,15,16,17,19,21	1,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,14,15,16,17,19,21	15
2	Conditioning	2,4,5,6,10,12,13,15,16,17,18	2,4,5,6,10,12,13,15,16,17,18	11
3	Solution	8,11,15,16,17,20,21	8,11,15,16,17,20,21	7
4	Evaluation	3,7,12,16	3,7,12,16	4

The table indicates that *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* is a film that (De-) normalized the Arthurian legend to create its humor. The Arthurian Legend is a collection of medieval stories in which King Arthur is the main protagonist (Augustyn, 2020)

Furthermore, the analysis reveals that the humor in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* operates based on contexts, which are made of a mix of incongruity and superiority stimuli (triggers) that are present in the film. The incongruity and superiority triggers are interwoven into four specific contexts: (De-) normalization, Conditioning, Solution, and Evaluation. These triggers, in turn, are used to evoke reactions from the audience.

## (DE-) NORMALIZATION

(De-) normalization Contexts arises when both superiority and incongruity triggers appear in the text that causes a cognitive violation, also known as an *unexpected moment that caught people off guard*. The moment refers to a situation where an event is expected to happen but in reality, something else happens, or in some cases, the event does not occur at all. In this film, (De-) normalization contexts appear the most frequently with 15 sequences from a total of 21 sequences. An example is given in Sequence 1, the opening sequence. In this sequence, the opening credits show the people who are involved in the creation of this film. Besides a list of names, this credit also showed a Swedish subtitle



Figure 1 Opening credit with Swedish Subtitle

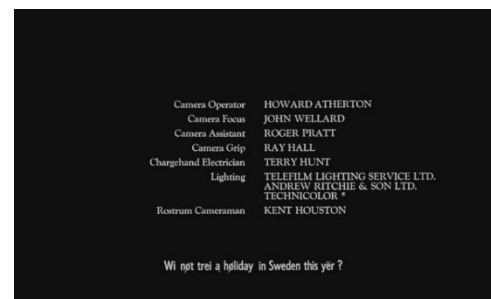


Figure 2 the Swedish subtitles start to show irrelevant things

However, several seconds later, the subtitle starts to turn weird as the subtitled begins to talk about

other things, like visiting Sweden (Fig.2), telephone system, etc. which causes the subtitler to be sacked or fired (Fig.3).

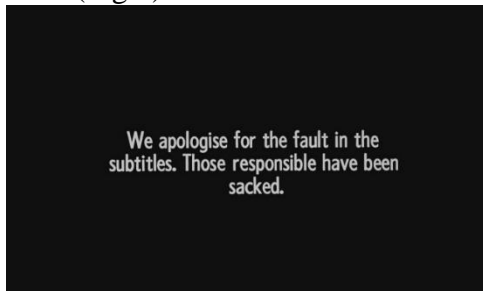


Figure 3 the Swedish Subtitler fired mid-credit

Since the addition in the credits is not expected, this sequence indicates (De-) normalization context because both incongruity and superiority triggers work together to form the humor.

In this sequence, three types of incongruity triggers appear on the sequence: narrative, linguistic, and pragmatic incongruity. Narrative incongruity triggers appear when the audience realized that the opening credit has a mini-plot that is not part of the story, instead of just credit the people who made this film.

Meanwhile, linguistic and pragmatic incongruity triggers appear when the audience realized that the Swedish subtitle is mainly "Swedish accented" English (Fig.2) and the fact that the subtitler breaks a maxim of conversation, which is to *be relevant*.



Figure 4 Despite losing 3/4 of his limbs, The Black Knight insist to fight King Arthur

(De-) normalization context also appears in the other fourteen

sequences throughout the film. In Sequence 5, (De-) normalization context appears when King Arthur has to fight the Black Knight. During their fight, King Arthur manages to dismember the black knight's arm, which the Black Knight manages to shrug it off as a "scratch wound". This continues until all of the Black Knight limbs are severed. The fight between the Black Knight and King Arthur is the indication of (De-) normalization context in two ways. First, it has an incongruity triggers, which is absolute incongruity, as it is logically impossible for anyone to lose their limb and shrug it off as a flesh wound. Second, superiority triggers, which is affirmative superiority, which is a type of superiority trigger that affirms the feeling of superiority instead of creating a target that is ridiculed, with a subcategory of cueing, which relies on timing to create humor. These combinations of superiority and incongruity then create humor when the viewer sees that the black knight's arm just casually severed and the black knight just shrug it off which is a cue for the audience that "it's the joke".

It can be seen from the above figures that the Monty Python group applies (De-) normalization context in various ways, ranging from its narrative aspect to its cinematic aspects, such as *mise-en-scene*, camerawork, and its editing. In its narrative sense, (De-) normalization appears in how outlandish the story goes, as it is outlandish to see a modern police car in supposedly 932 A.D. England, a coconut shell that is used as a joke to mimicking a horse galloping turn into an actual plot point, and many more. The narrative also does not shy away from breaking the fourth wall as there are many

instances where the character addresses the audience or acknowledging that they are inside of a film.

Monty python group also applies (De-) normalization context in the cinematic aspects of a film such as *mise-en-scene*, cinematography, and editing. In the *mise-en-scene*, for example, because most of the roles in this film are acted by the Monty python themselves, some character's costumes might seem incongruous. The reason some of the costume choices are incongruous is that in addition to the knights, they also play other characters, including some of the women in this film. Although the practice of cross-dressing is a common practice in a theatrical play, it is seldom seen in a cinematic film. Therefore, seeing the practice done in a film is surprising to most of the audience, unless they already knew Monty Python, as they quite frequently do cross-dressing in their previous work.

Then, in the cinematography aspect, Monty python utilized (De-) normalization context in the use of a camera angle. In Sequence 4, lordless castle, Monty python uses low angle shot of King Arthur, to show his power as the king of the Briton, and a high angle for Dennis, a dirt peasant.

## CONDITIONING

Meanwhile, conditioning context arises when incongruity and superiority triggers work together to create humor by stimulating certain preconditions that we learn in the text/film and/or outside of the text that we read/ film that we watch, such as a social stereotype that we often experience. This precondition is then reinforced or altered using superiority

However, in this scene, the target of ridicule is in fact, King Arthur. Because King Arthur's tale is considered silly by the peasant who explains how a body of government is elected in real life. This misuse of camera angle usage is done to evoke a sense of incongruity in the viewer's mind, especially those who understand about cinematic terminology, which means it adds another layer of humor.

Moreover, Monty python also applies (De-) normalization onto its editing technique, on Sequence 16, the tale of Sir Lancelot, there is a scene where a guard looking at sir Lancelot approaching their castle to "save" the "princess". However, Monty python reuses the same shot where sir Lancelot approaching the castle and loop it several times, which creates a humorous sense of impending doom. After several repetitions, then this shot is edited to where Sir Lancelot appears and kills one of the castle guards. The timing of the cut and the previous shot made it look like sir Lancelot just moves fast from the open field to the front gate. Thus, Monty python utilization of (De-) normalization context is not only seen in the text or dialog, but also through its cinematic aspects.

and incongruity triggers. The result is a burst of laughter in the audience when they find out that a certain thing they know (in this case, stereotypes) exaggerated in this text/film (which is an Aggressive superiority triggers as the stereotype become a target of ridicule) or acknowledge how silly the stereotypes are presented in the text/film (which is an affirmative

Superiority trigger). In total, 11 sequences have conditioning context, slightly less than (De-) normalization with 15 sequences.

Monty python uses the conditioning context to challenge the audience's pre-existing conditioning. In Sequence two, the audience can hear the sound of a galloping horse; however, a few seconds later, King Arthur revealed only pretending to ride horses using two halves of a coconut shell. Then throughout most of the film, the audience is conditioned to associate banging two halves of the coconut as riding horses, which then is challenged again when a knight with an actual horse appears to kill the famous historian. This ever-changing conditioning made the audience always be surprised by the humor that is delivered by the Monty Python group.

Monty python also challenges the audience's pre-existing conditioning. The behavior of Frenchmen in Sequence 10 and the disregard of the established lore of King Arthur by Dennis the peasant in Sequence 4.

In Sequence 10, King Arthur encounters a castle full of Frenchmen. In the real world, The Frenchmen are often stereotyped as rude people, which is a stereotype that is known among other westerners as studies conducted by Ferber (2008) and Larrivé and Longhi (2012) confirm. Ferber's research suggests that the American stereotypes French people as an arrogant and rude person, which happen due to past disagreement between American and French people in the Iraqi war, and the American media portrayal of the French after the fact. Furthermore, in Larrivé and Longhi's (2012) research, they confirm that the British stereotyping

the French as rude in their research. Then, back to the film, the stereotype that exists in the real world is then exaggerated by the group to challenge the audience's pre-existing preconditioning of the French people. In this sequence, the Frenchman admits that he has an outrageous accent, while also mocking King Arthur and his Knights ("I'm French! Why do think I have this *outrageous* accent, you silly king!") After no so long ago lying to them about having a holy grail in their possession.

Frenchmen: (To King Arthur): "Oh, yes, it's very *nice-a*"

Frenchmen: (To his French fellow): "I told him we already got one (giggle)".

Although the Frenchman spoke with a silly accent all the time, the words such as "outrageous" and "nice-a" are so heavily accented that it sounds ridiculous.



Figure 5 The french rudeness is exaggerated in this film to the point that it looks silly

Furthermore, as shown in Figure 5, the French are seen doing physical mockery to King Arthur and his knights, this physical mockery consists of tapping his helmet repeatedly and extending both hands and placing his thumb on his temple while making "pffffrt" sounds to mock King Arthur and his knights. The Frenchmen also verbally mock king Arthur with ridiculously offensive words like "English pig-dogs", "empty-headed animal food trough wiper", and another



ridiculously offensive name-calling, including intentionally mispronouncing knights as “kniggits”. This portrayal of The Frenchmen is incongruously exaggerated, people who know the stereotype may laugh at the fact that it is exaggerated to point of it being silly, or they may laugh because they acknowledge how silly the stereotype looks in this film.

Besides the exaggeration of stereotypes, the disregard of King Arthur lore in the film is also breaking people's precondition, as usually in any type of literary works, there are some lore or rules that have to respect. In the original story of King Arthur, it is said that the lady of the lake gives King Arthur the Excalibur, a magical sword, which is the reason king Arthur becoming a king. However, in Sequence 4, shown in figure 6 below, the original story of how King Arthur can reach kingship is made to be a

target of ridicule by a peasant who believes in a more relatable, modern system. The act of disregarding the lore of a story is highly incongruous and rarely seen, especially at the time this film premiered.



Figure 6 Dennis Blatantly disregard the established lore of King Arthur tale and mocking it

In conclusion, Monty python's ability to mess with the audience's pre-existing conditioning is interesting as not only did they use it to evoke humor, but also made a social commentary/criticism about a certain topic such as stereotype, government system, etc.

## SOLUTION

Context of solution is composed of incongruity and superiority triggers that require further knowledge to be obtained before the humor appears, otherwise, the humor will be missed. Fortunately, in this film, most of the further knowledge is given as the film plays. In total, there are seven contexts of solution, four of which are connected to the end sequence of this film.



Figure 7 the famous historian murdered by a knight with a real horse

In Sequence 11, as seen in Figure 7, a historian in modern clothes is narrating the steps King Arthur and his knights will take to obtain the Holy Grail. Unfortunately for him, after he almost finishes narrating the story, a knight appears on horseback and kills the historian. The appearance of the knight creates a cognitive violation as it can be interpreted that both the historian, which come from the modern times, and the knight who supposedly come from 932 A.D. exist at the same time, which is impossible, thus this scene alone is a (De-) normalization context.

However, as the film goes on, the audience is given additional context about what happened after the

historian's death at the end of several sequences, namely Sequence 15, Sequence 17, and Sequence 19. In Sequence 17, as shown in figure 8, the police are seen in the same scene where King Arthur and his knight have been previously seen, which is shown through the use of the *mise-en-scene* element, setting. The use of setting is indicated by the broken picket fence from where the shrubbery used to be in Sequence 15. This additional information is important as it tells the audience that the police are onto King Arthur and his knight.



Figure 8 Police investigating the last known locations of King Arthur

A similar pattern is shown at the end of Sequence 19, where the police are near the cave entrance that King Arthur and his knights previously enter. In this scene, one can see that the cave entrance is littered with a body of dead knights. The dead knight's body is important as it

informs the audience of the timeframe between the last time king Arthur was there and the arrival of the police to the location. These two scenes act as additional knowledge that indicates that the police are a part of the overall plot and not randomly placed. This additional information is then used by the audience to create a new understanding of Sequence 11.



Then, at the end of Sequence 20 and Sequence 21, shown in figure 9, the police are seen apprehending Sir Lancelot and King Arthur, in two different locations. After the arrest of King Arthur, the film then ends *Figure 9 police arresting the knights*

abruptly, leaving only a blank screen and background music. These two sequences act as the final piece of information that reveals another purpose of Sequence 11, which is a tie-in for the film ends. Without the additional information that is given throughout Sequence 11 and onward, the final sequence will not be as humorous and absurd as it currently is. Even though these sequences is not remotely humorous initially, it becomes increasingly humorous each time the scene gets revisited and explored.

In conclusion, Monty python is utilizing solution context by adding more information to existing humor to extend the value of that particular humor and rewarding those who pay attention to the film.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation context is made from incongruity and superiority triggers that come through indirect communication to form an irony, an expression when someone says something that has contradictory meaning to what they say, which causes the audience to reevaluate its meaning. In the film, Monty Python uses evaluation context in four sequences, which is the least of all types of contexts.



*Figure 10 Sir Robin feeling uneasy after hearing a song from his minstrel*

In Sequence 12, the tale of Sir Robin, the audience is shown an individual tale of King Arthur's Knights, Sir Robin. In his tale, he is seen venturing into a forest along with his favorite minstrel. Along the way, the minstrel chants a song about how Sir Robin is a brave knight who is not afraid to die in a nasty way. However, the song is scaring Sir Robin to the point he asks them to stop. After a while, Sir Robin encounters a three-headed knight which blocks anyone who wants to pass. After knowing that Sir Robin is the Knights of Camelot, the Three-headed Knight decided to kill him. Scared, Sir Robin then decides to run when the Three-headed Knight is arguing with each other head, which Sir Robin Minstrel sarcastically celebrates him with another song. In this sequence, the Minstrel songs are loaded with irony,

as the first song is causing Sir Robin to be anxious and scared, while the second song is full of ironic remarks. The first song is listed below.

“Bravely bold Sir Robin, rode forth from Camelot.

He was not afraid to die, O Brave Sir Robin.

He was not at all afraid to be killed in nasty ways.

Brave, brave, brave, brave Sir Robin!

He was not in the least bit scared to be mashed into a pulp,

Or to have his eyes gouged out, and his elbows broken.

To have his kneecaps split, and his body burned away,

And his limbs all hacked and mangled, brave Sir Robin!

His head smashed in and his heart cut out,

And his liver removed and his bowels unplugged,

And his nostrils raped and his bottom burned off,

And his penis...”

In the first song, it can be considered ironic as this song is chanting about Sir Robin's bravery, which the audience will disagree with as he is already introduced as a coward in the previous sequence. Furthermore, the song itself is also incongruous as instead of singing a tale of valor or achievement, it sings about how unfazed Sir Robin is about killed in an incongruously gruesome way, which is not true as Sir Robin become more anxious as he takes a glance at his minstrel every time the song gets more gruesome and finally asks them to stop the song before it

was finished as he can't take it anymore.



Figure 11 Sir Robin visibly scared while his minstrel sang a song about him

In their second song, Sir Robin's minstrel is mocking Sir Robin using ironic statements, which are listed in this exchange below.

MINSTREL: Brave Sir Robin ran away

ROBIN: No!

MINSTREL (singing): Bravely ran away away

ROBIN: I didn't!

MINSTREL (singing): When danger reared its ugly head, He bravely turned his tail and fled

ROBIN: No!

MINSTREL (singing): Yes Brave Sir Robin turned about

## HUMOR IN FILMS

The findings show that humor in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* operates based on the four contexts, which are (De-) normalization, Conditioning, Evaluation and, Solution contexts. These contexts helped me to identify the types of humor appearing in the film. In this film, Monty Python utilized the four contexts by breaking people's expectations about how a film should be, as the film does not look like a typical film at all. From start to finish, the film is full of incongruities that stimulate people to laugh.

Therefore, the humor in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*

ROBIN: I didn't!

MINSTREL (singing): And gallantly he chickened out bravely taking to his feet

ROBIN: I never did!

MINSTREL (singing): He beat a very brave retreat

ROBIN: Oh, lie!

MINSTREL (singing): Bravest of the brave Sir Robin

ROBIN: I never!

In this exchange, the minstrel uses two conflicting words, which are "brave" and every other word that is synonymously associated with "runaway". Therefore, it means that the minstrel is indirectly mocking Sir Robin, who has fled away from danger, instead of praising him, which is then easily re-evaluated by the audience.

In conclusion, to show the context of evaluation, the Monty Python group utilizes the use of ironic statements to evoke humor by showing Sir Robin, which is a target of ridicule in this sequence, getting bullied by his minstrel repeatedly using irony-loaded songs.

signifies Monty Python's effort to show their capability as comedy authors. The troupe can create humor from complex source material such as The Arthurian Legend. Furthermore, Monty Python is also capable of making a diverse set of humor, from simple jokes such as the absurdity of a killer rabbit in sequence 19 to more complex humor, where Monty Python criticizes mob mentality by ridiculing it in Sequence 6. In addition to the complex and diverse humor, the inclusion of cinematic aspects in their humor is also notable, such as the incongruous use of editing to invoke humor in Sequence 16 and the

acknowledgment of non-diegetic sound which satirize musical film in Sequence 16. Ultimately, the humor in this film is made to entertain people, especially those who are exposed to western culture, as King Arthur is a part of European Literature. Therefore, American, British, and European people might catch on with the humor as they are the main audience for their film as Monty Python only Premiered their film in the UK and US (Internet Movie Database, n.d. ). It also means that other people such as those who live in Asia and Africa might not be able to enjoy the film as much as the western people do unless they have the necessary knowledge to understand the film.

Then, they are also able to show their authority toward their audience through their comedic vision. Their comedic vision is well known due to their previous work, *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969-1974), which made those who watch their previous work attribute Monty Python's work as funny. Furthermore, their involvement in most of the filmmaking process has helped them maintain the Pythonesque of the film. However, this form of authority might only affect those who are familiar with their previous works. Thus, those who are not familiar with Monty Python's work before might not be affected as much.

Regarding its cinematic aspects, most research on comedy film is rarely acknowledging the impact of a cinematic aspect of a film has on humor. In Fink's (2013) research, for example, although this research also analyzes humor in a comedy film/TV shows, it did not explore the humor concerning its cinematic aspects of the film; rather,

it mostly explores humor that exists in its writing, such as plot and characterizations. While it is not always required for all humor research in a film to include humor analysis regarding its cinematic aspects, it may help in enriching the result of the analysis.

Furthermore, the addition of a cinematic aspect to research humor in a film may help to explain how a film can be humorous. Juckel, Bellman, and Varan (2016) in their study argue that different styles of filming might affect the types of humor that exist in a film, which implied that with the addition of cinematic aspect to analyze, a researcher can explore more about why a film can be humorous.

Similarly, Briandana and Dwityas (2018) briefly mention the importance of cinematic aspects in a humorous film. They implied that it may have enriched our understanding of humor in a film and its implication toward society. However, in their research, the focus of their research is the narrative aspect of the films they analyze, which means that the technical aspect of the cinematic aspect is ignored. Although it not mandatory to include the technical aspect of a film when researching comedic films, it might help to include it as it may have a significant impact on the research, as this research suggests.

In conclusion, Monty Python proves themselves to be a good comedy group by utilizing their humor to be entertaining by diversifying their film with many kinds of humor that are suitable for many people's tastes, especially people with the necessary knowledge about western culture. It is discovered that after analyzing the film narrative

and cinematic aspects that the Cinematic aspect in a comedy film is should also be a consideration when

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research is to analyze how the humor in *Monty Python and The Holy Grail* operates and what the humor signifies. The research drew on Vandaele's Humor Mechanism (2002) and the film form proposed by Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith (2017) as its theoretical and methodological framework.

The study found that the humor operates based on contexts, which referred to Vandaele's Humor Mechanism (2002) comprising of (De-) normalization, solution, evaluation, and conditioning. Furthermore, it is found that (De-) normalization is the most frequently found context in the film, appearing fifteen times. The reason for the abundance of (De-) normalization is because the context is embedded in both the narrative aspects of the film, such as the absurdity of a killer rabbit, or the appearance of police at the end of the film and in the cinematic aspects of the film, such as in the editing technique usage or in the humor that is shown through the use of *mise-en-scene*. Other types of humor contexts also appeared, with evaluation context being the least discovered as it only has four sequences associated with the context.

Furthermore, this study discovers the link between the narrative aspect of a film and its cinematic aspects in the terms of humor. The link is that the cinematic aspect helps to enrich the humor that is found in the narrative aspects of the film, which, in turn, helps the overall value of the humor in this film. The

one analyses a comedic film, as it may enhance our understanding of why a film is humorous.

looped edit of Sir Lancelot approaching the swamp castle in Sequence 16 and the use of *mise-en-scene* elements to indicate that the police are chasing King Arthur are some examples of how a cinematic aspect of a film helps enrich the humor in a film narrative aspect.

In conclusion, Monty Python has shown us a recipe for a great comedy film, by utilizing humor not only in the narrative aspect but also in the cinematic aspect of the film. Their recipe for humor has helped them reach the status of a renowned comedy group in the world, especially in the western world (Calhoun et al., 2020). Furthermore, by analyzing the cinematic aspects of a comedy film, it helps us to understand more about how a comedy film can entertain us, as the cinematic aspect of a film can give us more context regarding the humor that exists in the narrative aspects of the film. This, in turn, can provide us a better understanding of the study of humor in general.

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