Subtitling Strategies and Translation Accuracy in the Malay to English Translation of "Ejen Ali: The Movie"

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Abstract

Previous studies on audio-visual translation indicate that there is a gap in the exploration of translation strategies in the Malaysian movie subtitling context and the quality of Malay to English subtitle translations. This study aimed to explore the strategies used in the subtitle translations of the Malaysian movie *Ejen Ali: The Movie* and evaluate the accuracy level of the translations associated with the identified strategies. Ten translation strategies developed by Gottlieb (1992), and the parameter of "accuracy" was purposefully selected out of the three criteria of the translation quality assessment proposed by Nababan et al., (2012) as the

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theoretical framework of this study. The three main strategies used in the most accurate translations were "transfer", "paraphrase", and "expansion". The subtitling of this movie was generally found accurate. In most of the accurate translations "transfer" strategy was utilized, whereas "dislocation" was identified in most of the inaccurate translations. Moreover, the findings revealed that there were inaccuracies in the translations which could have been avoided by using other relevant strategies. Gottlieb's nine of 10 strategies (except transcription) in addition to the nine mixed strategies were identified and described in the process of analysis.

Keywords**:** accuracy, English, Malay, strategy, subtitle, translation

1. Introduction

Translation is the process of restating the ideas between the source text (ST) and target text (TT) (Safei, & Salija, 2018; Yaqubi et al., 2018), and the transfer of information from sender to receiver of written texts (Rahmatillah, 2016). Likewise, movie translations usually involve the transfer of language, culture, and knowledge between human communities; an art that comprises the endeavour of replacing a written idea or statement of one language with the same idea or statement in a different language (Newmark, 1988). In other words, it is the reproduction of a message from one language to the receptor's language by retaining the meaning and the style of the source (Nida, & Taber, 1969).

One of the important areas in audio-visual translation is subtitle translation (Tee, et al, 2022). It is a type of communication in the form of written language that is synchronous and additive to a temporary and polysemiotic text (Gottlieb, 2001) Using subtitles is a time and cost-effective method of translating content, and it allows the audience to hear the original dialogue and voices of the actors. Subtitling helps in retaining the visual and aural aspects of the ST while including some additional pieces of information (Cintas, 2012), such as those that make the content more accessible, e.g., using captions for the deaf. Subtitling plays an important role in not only delivering the dialogue but the emotions and cultural elements as well (Chai et al., 2022).

Subtitles can be available in different forms such as pop-on and pop-up subtitles, roll-up and roll-on subtitles, open and closed subtitles, as well as pre-prepared and real-time subtitles

(Cintas, 2012). These subtitles are bound to mainly three types of constraints which are technical constraints, textual constraints, and linguistic constraints (Georgakopoulou, 2009).

Several procedures need to be considered when translating subtitles. Cintas (2012) listed spatial consideration (font size and type, number of characters per line), temporal considerations (the timing of subtitles where synchronization process such as spotting, cueing, timing, and originating are involved), and linguistic considerations (the semantic equivalence of the subtitles to the actual dialogue). As translations can only be acceptable and successful if it is comprehensible by the users of the translation (James, et al., 2018), subtitles need to fulfill quality criteria. Some of the criteria of a good translation are cohesion, readability and clarity, accuracy, and naturalness (Daud et al., 2021). There are several scales in determining the level of accuracy, clarity, and readability (Rosita, 2018), in the translation quality assessment model proposed by Nababan, the Indonesian Translation researcher.

The subtitles of *Ejen Ali: The Movie* were analyzed in the present study. *Ejen Ali* was first broadcast in 2016 as a Malaysian animated series with a mixture of action and comedy genres in two seasons and 26 episodes. The series was rated 8.3/10 on Internet Movie Database (IMDb) (IMDb, 2019). This animation was popular in 50 countries (Chua, 2019). The series was later made into a movie titled *Ejen Ali: The Movie* in 2019. It was a "U" rated movie of 97 minutes. In addition to winning the *Anugerah Meletop* Era award in 2019 (Omar, 2020), the movie gained popularity locally and internationally (The Malay Mail, 2020, January 11). The multicultural movie involves foreshadowing and flashbacks, with an equal number of male and female characters.

The subtitles were obtained from *Netflix*. *Netflix* uses machine translation (MT) in subtitling, namely the "black-box" machine translation system. The model, also known as the simplification or automatic pre-processing (APP) model, is created by taking previous human translation and back-translating it to the source with the help of MT and those simple sentences are used as a base for forming English sentences.

Nababan's (2012) framework was selected for this study because the Indonesian and Malaysian languages belong to the same language family. It was initially created to explore the translation quality of Indonesian movies (Nababan, Nuraeni, & Sumardiono, 2012).

To date, a combination of Gottlieb's translation strategies, and Nababan's translation quality assessment model in analyzing Malaysian movies has not been utilized. This study is the

first to do so. By analyzing the translation strategies used in the subtitling of *Ejen Ali: The Movie*, the translation "problems" (Goh et al., 2022), and the "strategies" (Hee et al., 2022) that contributed to the accurate/inaccurate translations were identified. The two research questions that were proposed for this study are:

> 1. How are the translation strategies used in subtitle translations of *Ejen Ali: The Movie* from Malay to English?
> 2. What are the translation inaccuracies in the Malay subtitle translations of *Ejen Ali: The Movie* from Malay to English?

In this study, Malay refers to the language of the Malay people and the language used in the ST of the movie.

2. Literature Review

Subtitling strategies are procedures that can be both conscious and unconscious in verbal or non-verbal forms and are used by translators to solve issues when translating (Farista, 2020). In this study, quality refers to the "accurate" translation needed by the viewers.

The Malay and English languages are widely spoken and used in many official and unofficial situations by Malaysians after their mother tongue as the former is the national language whereas the latter is the second language (Ismail, Ismail, & Ramakrishnan, 2007).

Malay and English are from different language families with different syntax and lexical systems (Yap et al., 2018). For example, the Malay language uses time adverbs in describing the past, present, and future, while the English sentence structure will sound incomplete without a "finite" verb. Hence, the translator may have to rely on contextual clues in translating (Wong et al., 2019). Moreover, Malay is a genderless language, i.e., without a specific pronoun for male and female. According to Mustapa (2013), Malay texts are usually wordier compared to English. Such differences between Malay and English would cause challenges for the translator. Mistranslations or ambiguities in the subtitles could affect the comprehension of audience such as affect such as the children, the deaf, and those who do not understand the ST. Lee (2015) claims that colloquial language in Malaysia is a "potpourri of Malay and other ethnic languages", and it is necessary for a translator to retain this cultural sense. The process of film translation further intensifies the translator's work as they are expected to retain the SL in the TL despite the language barriers and

at the same time keep in mind the technical constraints such as limited time and spacing for the subtitles (Bak and Gwozdz, 2016).

2.1 Gottlieb's Subtitling Strategies

Subtitling strategy is a prepared communication with the use of written language that acts as an additive and synchronous semiotic channel as part of a transient and polysemiotic text (Gottlieb, 2005).

The ten subtitling strategies proposed by Gottlieb (1992) are transfer, imitation, transcription, expansion, paraphrase, dislocation, condensation, deletion, decimation, and resignation. Despite the arguments about the overlapping strategies, and the difficulty in distinguishing them (Jaskanen, 1999), these strategies are used as a framework for analyzing subtitling in many studies.

Koponen (2018) and Simanjuntak (2013) used these strategies in their attempt to analyze movie subtitling and found that only six strategies out of the ten proposed by Gottlieb were used in translating the subtitles of *Real Steel Movie*. No usage of dislocation, resignation, decimation, and condensation was identified. The higher frequency of using the deletion strategy indicated that removing "useless words which are not in [the] TT to make it sound more natural" was necessary. Deletion and expansion were described as strategies to increase the readability and preserve the naturalness of the ST in the TT.

Gottlieb's argument on the most typical strategies was also supported in Koponen (2018). Condensation is considered the most apt strategy in subtitling as it allows the translators to retain the ST messages in the TT while reducing the sentence or phrase. Gottlieb (1992) suggested that deletion and decimation strategies should be avoided as much as possible. However, when required, the audience can decipher the message of the ST using the other elements, such as the 'motive of the story' (Yap and Amini, 2020).

Bak and Gwozdz (2016) explored subtitle translation strategies in English to Polish movies and found that, unlike previous studies which adapted Gottlieb's strategies, the *Hatak* translators used dislocation and resignation strategies. These translators also combined the strategies when translating a lengthy and complicated portion of the ST.

Gottlieb's (1992) ten subtitling strategies were used in this study for identifying and describing the translation strategies in *Ejen Ali: The Movie* from Malay to English.

2.2 Nababan's Translation Quality

Translation quality can be examined by assessing several criteria and comparing the ST and TT (Nababan et al., 2012). Nababan et al.'s (2012) translation quality assessment instrument has three scales for measuring the accuracy, acceptability, and readability of translation. In the present study, only the accuracy scale was adopted from the scale proposed by Nababan to analyze the subtitles of *Ejen Ali: The Movie*.

Table 1: Translation accuracy parameters proposed by Nababan et al. (2012)

Levels	Scale	Parameter
Accurate	3	Meaning of word, terms, phrase, clause, sentence, or the ST is translated accurately without any meaning distortion.
Less Accurate	2	Most of the components are accurately transferred with some meaning distortion or omission of meaning that disrupts the integrity of the message.
Inaccurate	1	Meaning of word, phrase, terms, clause, sentence or ST is not accurately transferred in the TT or is deleted.

This assessment was adopted by several researchers such as (Kuswardani, & Septiani, 2020) and (Prasetya, Hartono, & Yuliasri, 2019) in analyzing the translation quality of movies, a smartphone guideline, a cartoon, and short stories.

Using Nababan's (2012) rubric, Nurhidayah (2013) investigated the techniques and quality of expressive speech in the movie *Life of Pi*. She found that out of 24 texts, 19 texts were "accurate", and five data were less accurate. The translations were mostly found "acceptable" (21 out of 24 texts), and all the translations were "readable".

In Pratseya et al.'s (2019) study, the frameworks from Nababan et al. (2012), and Goff-Kfouri's (2004) were applied to examine the accuracy of translations of a smartphone guideline. Pratseya et al. (2019) found that the overall translation quality (readability, accuracy, and acceptability) of the smartphone manuals is less than satisfactory.

Farista (2020) analyzed the strategies in the Indonesian subtitled movie *Tomb Raider* and examined the accuracy of the translations using Nababan's scale to rate the translations. The overall translation accuracy was found to be "high". The imitation strategy contributed to the most accurate translation whereas the transcription strategy was used in the least accurate translations.

Kuswardani, and Septiani (2020) explored the translations of the *Maleficent* movie from English to Indonesian. Using a purposive sampling and "investigator triangulation method" and having three translation experts check the validity of the data, the researchers found that the subtitle translations were 77% clear, 19.8% less clear, and 3.2% unclear. The translations were "highly accurate" and "natural". Therefore, the overall translation quality of the movie was high.

The reviewed studies mostly conclude that translations should be more "natural and communicative" rather than a mere linguistic transfer of meaning.

In the present study, Nababan's "accuracy" principle was used because of the resemblance between Indonesian and Malay languages at many levels, as well as the feasibility, relevance, purpose, and the availability of the framework.

3. Methodology

This study used an inductive approach (descriptive qualitative design) to explore and identify the types of strategies before explaining and interpreting the data by relating it to the result gathered on the quality assessment (Nassaji, 2015). This research design allows for the gathering of a vast amount of relevant information and explaining it in-depth (Noerjanah, 2017). The ST and TT were transcribed and analyzed based on the frameworks chosen, i.e., Gottlieb's subtitling strategies and Nababan's translation accuracy parameters to answer the research questions. Gottlieb's model was employed in several subtitling studies on English-Indonesian language pairs (Simanjuntak, 2013). The frequency of strategies, as well as the percentage of accuracy of the translation are provided with descriptions. The descriptive statistics were only used to supplement the findings (Maxwell, 2010).

3.1 Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The subtitles for *Ejen Ali: The Movie* for both the ST and TT were transcribed by and back-translations were provided for the Malay ST. Then, the ST and TT were analyzed sentence by sentence using Gottlieb's (1992) subtitling strategies. The frequency of translation strategies was counted to determine the most and least used strategy in subtitling the movie. The translation inaccuracies were then described by referring to the parameters proposed by Nababan et al. (2012). To enhance the credibility of the data, the analysis was validated by three bilinguals with a background in translation studies (B.A. students who have completed two Translation and

Interpretation courses and two experts with PhD qualification and professional translation experience. A native speaker of the Malay language with a background in linguistics validated the backtranslations. The types of translation strategies used in *Ejen Ali: The Movie* were subsequently explained with reference to the translation accuracy to identify the strategy that contributed most effectively to the quality of translation.

3.2 Validity and Reliability

Reliability and validity are the trustworthiness, quality, and preciseness in a qualitative model (Golafshani, 2003). A native Malay language speaker checked the accuracy of the backtranslations (BT). Backtranslation is one of the popular validation tools, as a process of retranslating a translated text by a participant without seeing the ST (Tyupa, 2011). The validation of the data was further enhanced based on peer debriefing strategy. The debriefers were chosen based on the criteria of trustworthiness and their availability to validate the findings. The validators were provided with a complete version of the findings and backtranslations, and their feedback was carefully considered and implemented in the analysis and reporting. One main reason for the validation is to reduce the research bias in the sampling or interpretation of data (Noble & Smith, 2015).

4. Results

The first findings were the types of strategies used in the subtitling. Examples were extracted to elaborate on the extent of the strategy used, followed by translation accuracy analysis. The type of strategy was linked to the level of accuracy to identify which strategy led to accurate/inaccurate translations.

4.1 The Strategies Used in Subtitling *Ejen Ali: The Movie*

Nine strategies of dislocation, transfer, resignation, decimation, condensation, paraphrase, deletion, expansion, and imitation were identified. In addition, nine combined strategies of translation + imitation, expansion + imitation, deletion + imitation, deletion + paraphrase, dislocation + imitation, paraphrase + imitation, deletion + expansion, paraphrase + expansion and condensation + imitation were also found.

Table 2: Frequency of use of translation strategies

Translation Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Transfer	480	37.01
Decimation	2	0.15
Resignation	3	0.23
Transcription	0	0
Expansion	172	13.26
Paraphrase	197	15.19
Deletion	36	2.78
Condensation	19	1.46
Dislocation	238	18.35
Imitation	44	3.39
Transfer + Imitation	47	3.62
Expansion + Imitation	7	0.54
Deletion + Imitation	6	0.46
Deletion + Paraphrase	3	0.23
Dislocation + Imitation	14	1.08
Paraphrase + Imitation	21	1.62
Deletion + Expansion	2	0.15
Paraphrase + Expansion	3	0.23
Condensation + Imitation	3	0.23
TOTAL	1297	100

Eighteen strategies were identified in the subtitling. The most common strategy was "transfer" (37.01 %). However, Farista (2020) was found "deletion" as the most frequently used. "Decimation" and "deletion + expansion" each consisted of only 0.15 % of total strategies. "Transcription" was not identified.

4.1.1. Transfer

Gottlieb (1992) described the transfer as a full expression and adequate rendering in translation. In other words, "Transfer" refers to the translation of ST by retaining the form as well as the intended message into the TT accurately, completely, and correctly (Simantunjak, 2013). Koponen (2018), explains "transfer" as a "nearly identical" translation of ST.

Example 1

Transfer

ST	TT	BT
Macam mana dia boleh masuk	Hey, how did he even get in?	Hei, macam mana dia boleh masuk?

 The pronoun *dia* refers to both male and female in the Malay language. It is translated correctly in the TT as *he*, following the contextual clues from the movie. The word "hey" helped to connect to the listener at a more personal level.

Example 2

Transfer

ST	TT	BT
Jangan bergerak!	Don't move!	Jangan bergerak!

Obligatory grammatical shifts or transposition take place between the SL and TL for most language pairs. Removal of prefix is not considered as deletion here because it is done through stemming which is usually applied in machine translations and refers to the process of removing affixes to create the root word (Sankupellay, & Valliappan, 2006).

4.1.2 Decimation

Decimation was characterized by Gottlieb (1992) as an abridged expression, and reduced content. The strategy is used when certain words of the ST are cut down in the TT. It can result in the loss of the intended message (Koponen, 2018). The analysis showed that the intended message can be lost regardless of the length of removed words.

Example 3

Decimation

ST	TT	BT
yang akan dibiayai penuh oleh Yayasan Peneraju.	Fully funded and supported	Dibiayai dan disokong sepenuhnya

The ST is about the scholarship that is *fully funded* by the organization. It happens during a ceremony held to highlight the contribution of the organization. Hence, removing the organization in the TT did not convey the actual message. However, it should also be noted that the English language tends to work on ellipsis especially when the subject or doer has already been mentioned earlier.

4.1.3 Resignation

Resignation is characterized by deviant expressions, and distorted content (Gottlieb, 1992). This strategy is used when the translator could not translate the ST (Koponen, 2018), and that results in unavoidable loss of meaning (Simanjuntak, 2013).

Example 4

Resignation

ST	TT	BT
Apa itu?	[indistinct chatter]	[perbualan tidak jelas]

In this example, the translator chooses to avoid translating "ap itu" literally, which means "what is that?" Instead, the phrase "indistinct chatter" was used. A possible reason for using the phrase "indistinct chatter" is that the conversation lacks articulation or clarity, and/or the translators could distinguish what was being said.

4.1.4 Dislocation

Gottlieb defined dislocation as strategies that can be used for differing expression, and adjusted content (Gottlieb, 1992). As explained by Nababan (2008), the use of dislocation strategy would only be able to produce a similar effect as in the source, but not the similar message. Dislocation is "adopted when the SL employs some sort of special effect, for example a silly song in a cartoon

film, where the translation of the effect is more important than the content." (Simanjuntak, & Basari, 2016, p.24). Despite delivering the content in a   style to   the source, this strategy tends to deliver the intended message in a different manner (Ng, & Amini, 2019).

Example 5

Dislocation

ST	TT	BT
Lari!	Ah! We are all gonna die!	Ah! Kita semua dah nak mati!

Lari! (run) is translated as *Ah! We are all gonna die!* The above utterance is produced by a passerby in the movie when an airplane malfunctioned and flew towards them. The panic feeling, the message that both these texts conveyed are different. Here, the translator tried to recreate the panic situation effect by   creating a dramatic sentence "We are all gonna die!" to depict how stressful and scary the situation was.

4.1.5 Expansion/Extension

Often used for culture-specific references, expansion is characterized with expanded expression, and adequate rendering (Gottlieb, 1992). The expansion strategy is used to add extra information to make the ST culturally appropriate for the target audience (Koponen, 2018) and if something in the ST needs a clarification. The expansion of the ST can sometimes change the intended mood or meaning.

Example 6

Expansion

ST	TT	BT
Membeli-belah?	You shopping?	Kamu beli-belah?

The "expansion" here was in the addition of *you*. The TT clarifies who the question is addressed to.

4.1.6 Deletion

Often used for fast speech with high redundancy, Deletion strategy happens in omitted expressions, and/or no verbal content (Gottlieb, 1992). Therefore, "Deletion" refers to the exclusion or omission of a part of the ST (Farista, 2020). It is the intentional exclusion of information that is considered less important in ST messages.

Example 7

Deletion

ST	TT	BT
Tak dapat datang misi.	He can't make it.	Dia tak dapat datang.

Misi (*mission*) is deleted in the TT. The eliminated word acted only as an explanation to the words preceding it. This deletion could be because English often uses a pronoun to refer to an earlier mentioned subject or object noun. It is noteworthy that the SL and TL work differently on various linguistic levels, specifically in subtitling.

4.1.7 Transcription

Transcription refers to the process of translating non-standard expressions, in which intended speech defects occur, but an adequate rendering happens (Gottlieb, 1992). Transcription strategy is used to translate unusual terms (Farista, 2020), abnormal elements, and peculiarities in the ST (Koponen, 2018). No transcription strategy was identified.

4.1.8 Paraphrase

Often used, for non-visualized language-specific items, paraphrase strategy is utilized for translating altered expressions with adequate content (Gottlieb, 1992). Paraphrasing is the strategy of reconstructing the sentence due to differences in the TL syntax (Sharif, & Sohrabi, 2015). Similarly, paraphrase refers to the alteration of the ST to an acceptable version in the TL.

Example 8

Paraphrase

ST	TT	BT
Siap ajak pak cik masuk sekali.	She even asked me to join her.	Dia ajak saya untuk sertai dia.

Pak cik is changed to *me* and the sentence is restructured to suit the TT. Malay speakers often refer to themselves according to the name the speaker addresses them. Here, paraphrasing is used to adapt the meaning to the target text users, i.e., English-speaking audience.

4.1.9 Imitation

Often used in translating proper nouns, international greetings etc., "Imitation" strategy is used with Identical expressions with equivalent rendering (Gottlieb, 1992). Imitation strategy is the retention of phrases or words from the ST (Koponen, 2018), usually proper nouns, such as names, place, or brands (Farista, 2020).

Example 9

Imitation

ST	TT	BT
Ali!	Ali	Ali!

4.1.10 Condensation

Condensed expression is used for concise rendering to reduce or remove the redundancy (Gottlieb, 1992). Condensation strategy refers to the reduction of parts of the ST without reducing the meaning of the ST. Farista (2020) added that this strategy allows the translator to solve the space problem, i.e., limited character space problem that arises due to the limited subtitle lines. The exclamation mark in the ST indicates strong feelings and shows   emphasis here.

Example 10

Condensation

ST	TT	BT
Lagi banyak mereka nak robohkan!	They're going to tear down!	Mereka nak robohkan!

Lagi banyak is condensed in the TT. Instead. The translation only focused on the important part of the message from the ST. This condensation did not affect the meaning and was able to transfer the intended message clearly.

4.1.11 Transfer + Imitation

The combination of transfer and imitation strategies shows that the TT is identical to the ST (Koponen, 2018) retaining certain words such as proper nouns.

Example 11

Transfer + imitation

ST	TT	BT
Tak apa, Ali.	It's okay, Ali.	Tak apa, Ali.

Here, transfer strategy was used in translating *tak apa* to *it's okay*. *Ali* is retained again.

4.1.12 Expansion + Imitation

The mixed strategy of expansion + imitation allows translators to include extra information while retaining certain words that are acceptable in both ST and TT.

Example 12

Paraphrase + imitation

ST	TT	BT
kalah juga dengan Niki	I still lost to Niki	Saya masih kalah dengan Niki

The translation is expanded by including the pronoun *I*. This clarifies that the speaker is talking about himself and not referring to someone else.

4.1.13 Deletion + Imitation

The mixed strategy of deletion + imitation involves the deliberate exclusion of parts of the ST and the preservation of the original word in the ST.

Example 13

Deletion + imitation

ST	TT	BT
pastikan jantung ini sampai kepada Mak Yah	make sure this gets to Mak Yah.	pastikan ini sampai kepada Mak Yah.

Jantung is removed and *this* is used, which could not result in the loss of the intended message. No meaning will be lost as the visuals in the movie will show that 'this' refers to the heart. Next, imitation can be seen in translating the name *Mak Yah*.

4.1.14 Deletion + Paraphrase

Combination of deletion + paraphrase often produces a translation that is shortened and altered to be syntactically appropriate in the TL.

Example 14

Deletion + paraphrase

ST	TT	BT
program yang menjadi punca ketidakstabilan Ambil Alih.	the direct source of the override instability issue	punca langsung isu ketidakstabilan Ambil Alih itu.

Here, deletion is used to eliminate the word *program* while the main idea of the ST is retained. By "paraphrase", the translator restructured the sentence to maintain the "naturalness". Thus, the

message conveyed to the audience has   the same   effect. A translation is natural when it does not sound like a translated work.

4.1.15 Dislocation + Imitation

Example 15

Dislocation + imitation

ST	TT	BT
Walaupun ejen M.A.T.A tak berhenti	Even with the countless MATA agents	Walaupun dengan ejen MATA yang tak terkira

The intended message is to say that the agents of *MATA did not stop*, however, the TT is translated to explain about the number of *MATA agents* involved. Therefore, the change in the content has deprived the target audience from the actual message. Moreover, imitation strategy was used in the translation of the organization's name (*MATA*) too.

4.1.16 Paraphrase + Imitation

Below is an example of paraphrase + imitation strategy.

Example 16

Paraphrase + imitation

ST	TT	BT
IRIS akan guna semula data mama	IRIS would access my data	IRIS akan mengakses data saya

In the ST, *mama* is the main character's mother. In the TT, it is replaced with *my*. Besides, imitation strategy is used to convey the organization's name in the TT.

4.1.17 Deletion + Expansion

The deletion + expansion strategy allows certain information from the source to be deleted while other relevant extra information is added.

Example 17

Deletion + expansion

ST	TT	BT
tak lama nak susun.	It didn't take me that long.	Ia tak mengambil saya masa yang lama

Here, *arrange* was "deleted" in the TT. However, by using the expansion strategy, the TT receives new information; *it* to refer to the things the character was arranging and *me* to explain who was arranging.

4.1.18 Paraphrase + Expansion

By paraphrase + expansion strategy, translations can be reconstructed along with the inclusion of extra elements or information.

Example 18

Paraphrase + expansion

ST	TT	BT
yang akan berlangsung sekitar Dataran Cyber malam ini.	taking place somewhere in Cyber Square, later tonight.	Ia akan berlangsung di suatu tempat di Cyber Square, lewat malam ini.

The ST is expanded with *later* to emphasize the estimated timing whereas paraphrase strategy is used to describe the place. *Sekitar* is used to convey the place of incident (*around*). This is paraphrased to "somewhere". Thus, the word choice is adapted according to the TT without a change in the meaning.

4.1.19 Condensation + Imitation

Example 19

Condensation + imitation

ST	TT	BT
MATA dah tahu Ali	MATA knows Ali	MATA tahu Ali

MATA and *Ali* remain unchanged in the TT. However, condensation strategy can be seen in the word *dah tahu* translated as *knows* instead of *already knows* because they both have the same meaning in English. The word "already" seems redundant here.

4.2 Accuracy of the Subtitles in *Ejen Ali: The Movie*

The accuracy levels proposed are numbered as 3 for accurate translation, 2 for less accurate translation and 1 for the inaccurate translations.

Table 3: Translation accuracy rate per strategy

Strategies	3= accurate		2=less accurate		1=inaccurate		less accurate + inaccu...	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Paraphrase	124	9.56	71	5.47	2	0.15	73	7.47
Transfer	480	37.01	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imitation	44	3.39	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expansion	113	8.73	47	3.62	12	0.93	59	4.55
Dislocation	2	0.15	15	1.16	221	17.04	236	18.20
Decimation	0	0	1	0.08	1	0.08	2	0.16
Resignation	0	0	0	0	3	0.23	3	0.23
Deletion	13	1	23	1.77	0	0	23	1.77
Condensation	1	0.08	5	0.4	13	1	18	1.39
Transfer + Imitation	47	3.62	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expansion + Imitation	4	0.31	2	0.15	1	0.08	3	0.23
Deletion + Imitation	4	0.31	2	0.15	0	0	2	0.15
Deletion + Paraphrase	0	0	3	0.23	0	0	3	0.23
Dislocation + Imitation	0	0	6	0.46	8	0.62	14	1.08
Paraphrase + Imitation	18	1.39	2	0.15	1	0.08	3	0.23
Deletion + Expansion	0	0	2	0.15	0	0	2	0.15
Paraphrase + Expansion	1	0.08	2	0.15	0	0	2	0.15
Condensation + Imitation	0	0	2	0.15	1	0.08	3	0.23
TOTAL (rounded)	851	65.6	183	14.1	263	20.3	446	34.3

The rounded percentages of accurate strategies, less accurate and inaccurate subtitle translations are 65.6%, 14.1% and 20.3% respectively (Total: N=1297=100%). Therefore, the accumulation of "less accurate" and "inaccurate" rates is 34.3% (N=446). In other words, approximately 34% of

the total strategies were identified as "not accurate" in this study. The strategy that contributed to the most "accurate" subtitle translations is "transfer", while the most frequent "less accurate" and "inaccurate" subtitle translations were related to "paraphrase" and "dislocation", respectively. The findings indicate that most of the subtitle translations are accurate.

4.2.1 Transfer

The transfer strategy did not contribute to any less accurate or inaccurate translations.

4.2.2 Decimation

Decimation strategy was used twice. This strategy has resulted in one less accurate and one inaccurate translation (0.08%).

Example 20

Less accurate translation using decimation

ST	TT	BT
..yang akan dibiayai penuh oleh Yayasan Peneraju.	Fully funded and supported	Dibiayai dan disokong sepenuhnya

The "less accurate" translation is due to the elimination of the organization's name from the ST.

Example 21

Inaccurate translation using decimation

ST	TT	BT
...ke atas ciptaan canggih Cyberaya,	of Cyberaya's tech...	dari teknologi Cyberaya

Ke atas ciptaan canggih Cyberaya (*on the sophisticated creation of Cyberaya*) is inaccurate. because of the difference in meaning between the ST and the TT.

4.2.3 Dislocation

The dislocation strategy was associated with the greatest number of inaccurate translations (17.04%) and 1.16% of accurate translations.

Example 22

Inaccurate translation using dislocation strategy

ST	TT	BT
Berani kau!	Come here you!	Datang ke sini awak!

Berani kau! (*How dare you!*) is translated into *come here you!* as in commanding someone.

4.2.4 Resignation

Resignation strategy was linked to only 0.23% of inaccurate translations.

Example 23

Inaccurate translation using resignation strategy

ST	TT	BT
Apa itu?	[indistinct chatter]	[perbualan tidak jelas]

Apa itu? (*What is that?*) is translated as [*indistinct chatter*] asthis line could be heard clearly in the scene.

4.2.5 Expansion

Example 24

Inaccurate translation using the expansion strategy

ST	TT	BT
tapi kami tidak boleh biarkan kesalahan kamu	but we cannot allow such severe mistakes	tapi kami tidak boleh membenarkan kesalahan teruk seperti ini

Tapi kami tidak boleh biarkan kesalahan kamu (*we cannot ignore your mistake*) from the inaccurate TT that has an intensifier *severe*. The ST did not mention about the quality or status of *the mistakes*.

4.2.6 Paraphrase

The second most used strategy was the paraphrase. This strategy contributed to 2 (0.15%) of the inaccurate translations. This shows that paraphrase strategy contributed minimally to the inaccurate translations.

4.2.7 Deletion

There were no inaccurate translations due to the use of this strategy. The less accurate translations were identified in 1.77% of the cases.

4.2.8 Condensation

Example 25

Inaccurate translation using the condensation strategy

ST	TT	BT
Lagi banyak mereka nak roboh ini!	They're going to tear down!	Mereka nak robohkan!

Here, *lagi banyak*" [*even more]* have been condensed. If the word was retained in the TT, the audience would know that the act of tearing down had happened before.

4.2.9 Imitation

The imitation strategy only contributed to the accurate translations. This strategy aims to retain the word in ST to the TT, there were no less or inaccurate translations.

4.2.10 Transfer + Imitation

The mixed strategy of transfer + imitation formed accurate translation in 3.62% of the cases. There were no less accurate or inaccurate translations resulting from the usage of this mixed strategy.

4.2.11 Expansion + Imitation

Example 26

Inaccurate translation using expansion + imitation

ST	TT	BT
Itu Icha?	Is that really you, Icha?	Benarkah ini kamu, Icha?

The ST means *that's Icha?* However, the TT is expanded in a way that it's a question directed to *Icha* herself. The imitation strategy is used in retaining *Icha* in the ST and TT.

4.2.12 Deletion + Imitation

Deletion + imitation strategy contributed to 0.31% accurate translations and 0.15% of less accurate translations.

4.2.13 Deletion + Paraphrase

Example 27

Less accurate translation using deletion + paraphrase

ST	TT	BT
Aduhai, sudah mula dia punya drama Tamil.	There he goes with his drama and antics.	Dah mula dia punya drama dan telatah.

Although in professional or everyday writing, exclamation marks are used sparingly, the exclamation mark could have been used here to emphasise the comment. However, the expression *Aduhai!* was omitted in the TT, whereas the rest of the sentence is paraphrased.

4.2.14 Dislocation + Imitation

Example 28

Inaccurate translation using dislocation + imitation

ST	TT	BT
Ali, jangan malu-malu.	Ah, Ali, this plate's for you!	Ali, pinggan ini untuk kamu

Jangan malu-malu [don't be shy] is translated inaccurately as *this plate is for you*.

4.2.15 Paraphrase + Imitation

Example 29

Inaccurate translation using paraphrase + imitation

ST	TT	BT
Bukankah mama antara yang paling hebat dalam M.A.T.A?	I'm one of the best agents to ever come out of MATA!	Saya antara ejen yang terbaik dalam MATA

The ST is a question that implies whether or whether not *Ali* knows if his mum is the best agent in *MATA*. However, the TT is an exclamative sentence that implies mum is the only best agent *MATA* can ever have.

4.2.16 Deletion + Expansion

Deletion + accuracy only resulted in 0.15% of less accurate translations. There were no inaccurate translations identified from the use of these   strategies. As for the expansion strategy, the word *it* and *me* are added to explain *what* and *who*.

4.2.17 Paraphrase + Expansion

There was no inaccurate translation identified from the application of this mixed strategy.

4.2.18 Condensation + Imitation

Example 30

Less accurate translation using condensation + imitation

ST	TT	BT
pelancaran Projek Pembangunan Pinggiran	the Pinggiran Development Program	Program Pembangunan Pinggiran

The word *launch* was removed in the TT while the project's name, *Pinggiran*, was kept. The omission of *launch* resulted in insufficient information for the audience.

Example 31

Inaccurate translation using condensation + imitation

ST	TT	BT
M.A.T.A dah tahu Ali.	MATA knows, Ali.	MATA tahu, Ali.

Here,the translation of *dah* is removed in TT. This scene was one of the most important scenes as this is where the character *Ali* gets exposed for helping others instead of *MATA*.

5. Discussion

This study has some theoretical and practical implications for subtitle translators, researchers, translation trainers, and students.

The application of the framework by Gottlieb (1992) was found relevant in this study, and it provided a deeper insight in analyzing subtitles, built on the existing findings of the previous research. Since no Malaysian movie subtitle translation was explored using this framework, the results could contribute new information to the Malaysian context of the studies on subtitle translation, particularly for subtitlers.

Another framework that was used in this study is the translation quality parameters proposed by Nababan et al., (2012) to assess accuracy in translation of subtitles. This rubric was also found useful in this study and could be the foundation for further studies on the relevant genres and language pairs.

In several cases, the ST was left untranslated, or "poor" translations were provided. To avoid such errors/mistakes, the findings from this study could be utilized as a guide for subtitlers.

As for machine translation, although the human interference is unavoidable, the use of appropriate translation strategies may produce more accurate TTs.

It should be noted that, from a language teaching perspective, the use of subtitles in movies has a positive impact on EFL learner's vocabulary acquisition (Yildiz, 2017).

Accuracy of translation was the only parameter that was taken into consideration when conducting this study therefore the naturalness and clarity of the translations were beyond the scope of this study due to the time limitations. Future research could look into naturalness and clarity of the subtitle translations in the Malay to English language pairs used in movies. This study only focused on the animation genre.

Finally, this type of studies could help to build a more comprehensive translation profile of the language pairs for subtitle translation. Eventually a set of standards and guidelines could be developed based on reliable, valid, and generalizable findings.

6. Conclusion

Analysis of the findings revealed that the transfer strategy produced the most accurate translations, followed by the paraphrase strategy and the expansion strategy. Next, the subtitles translated by using the dislocation strategy resulted in the greatest number of inaccurate translations, followed by the condensation strategy. Therefore, it can be said that accurate subtitle translation of *Ejen Ali: The Movie* could be the result of using transfer strategy whereas inaccurate translation could be the result of using dislocation strategy. In several instances, the inaccuracy in translations could have been avoided using different strategies to achieve the skopos of translation.

All strategies proposed by Gottlieb were identified in the subtitle translations, except for the transcription strategy. Moreover, in nine cases, the ST was translated by combining two strategies (mixed strategies).

The translation of Malay-English subtitles relies largely on the contextual clues. This addresses the earlier concerns regarding the translation of pronouns. For example, in the Malay *dia* is used when referring to another person, unlike the English language that has gender-specific pronouns. Hence, this study confirms that Gottlieb's strategies were found effective in translating Malay-English subtitles.

Therefore, the findings of the present study can be used as a guide in subtitle translation from Malay to English. It can also be concluded that the instrument developed by Nababan et al. (2012) could be efficient in assessing the translation accuracy of Malaysian movies subtitles as well.

Finally, we would like to recommend that the main purpose of a translator should be producing a text that is appropriate, accurate, and acceptable for its end users, i.e., movie viewers here.

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