Subtitling Strategies from English to Indonesian in The Imitation Game Movie by Lebah Ganteng

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses subtitling strategies taken by Lebah Ganteng in the Indonesian subtitle of the movie entitled The Imitation Game. The aims of this research were to describe how various subtitling strategies are applied in giving the subtitles to the movie from English into Indonesian and to find out the distribution of the strategies used from the most frequent to the least. This research applied a descriptive-qualitative method. The data were analyzed based on Gottlieb’s subtitling strategies theory. The finding shows that there are eight of the total ten subtitling strategies are applied. Transfer takes 24% of the total, followed by deletion (23%), paraphrase (17%), imitation (11%), condensation (9%), expansion (9%), decimation (6%), and transcription (1%). Two strategies left unapplied are dislocation and resignation. From the comparison, it can be concluded that transfer is the dominant strategy used in the subtitling process of the movie.

Key words: Lebah Ganteng, movie, subtitle, subtitling strategies

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the film industry has become popular entertainment around the world. That industry can catch human interest, not only as entertainment but also as media to get information or to know other different cultures. In Indonesia, more people think that movies are more popular than books so they prefer watching movies to reading books to get the information they need. The data from The National Library in 2015 shows that only about 17.58% of people prefer reading books, news, magazine, and others prefer watching. It claims that Indonesia has a high interest in watching. That interest has led to an increase in movie production. Moreover, movies are everywhere and easy to find. People do not only watch them in the cinema or on television but also find them by buying a CD or downloading them from the Internet.

So that the movie can be watched and understood by Indonesian viewers, film producers in Indonesia present English movies with subtitles, play the movies in the cinema, present them on television, and upload them on YouTube or social media. Those English movies were presented with Indonesian subtitles. Film producers in Indonesia take that as an advantage to attract movie lovers by presenting subtitled movies to invite them to watch.

The subtitling process is not easy, some things have to be considered like kinds of slang, idioms, and cultural terms used in the movie to make the meanings delivered well. These all are difficult to translate because different cultures have different ways of saying something and if these are translated literally, it will result in inaccurate translations and lead to misunderstanding. To produce the best subtitle, a subtitler has to watch movies carefully, understand the context behind the story, and apply subtitling strategies properly. The subtitling phenomenon is interesting to analyzed because nowadays the subtitler has taken an important role, especially for audiences who love watching English movies but do not speak or understand English.
Through this research, it will be explored how Lebah Ganteng, a fansubtitler, translates the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) and what subtitling strategies he uses to produce the Indonesian subtitles from the English dialogues.

Some previous studies have similar topics with this research, such as the research conducted by Hosseinnia (2014) which focuses on finding the dominant strategies used to translate children cartoon into a target language, and Natalia’s (2014) study on the cultural words and their translation strategies based on Newmark’s theory. Two other studies are conducted by Mohammad (2016) and Muliawan (2017). The former tries to classify the translation strategies proposed by Catford, whereas the latter analyzes the translation methods in a movie based on Newmark’s theory.

This research is different from those previous studies in that it literally analyzes the use of written translation strategies proposed by experts. The objects of the previous research are analyzed by using translation strategies or methods and involving written forms for both languages whereas this research analyzes subtitling strategies which is a sort of translation from spoken into written form of language with movie as the material object. Even though Hosseinnia’s (2014) research also focuses on subtitling strategies, the object is a cartoon movie whose genre is different from that of this current research.

The movie discussed as the object of this research is The Imitation Game, an American historical drama produced in 2014 and directed by Morten Tyldum with Graham Moore as the script writer. It is based on a true story and experience narrated on Alan Turing’s biographical book entitled The Enigma that was written by Andrew Hodges. This movie is not only popular in America but also abroad. It has been proved that this movie has received eight nominations and won the People Choice’s Award at the 39th Toronto International Film Festival. Lebah Ganteng gave Indonesian subtitles to this movie shortly after it was produced in the same year. It is not startling that this movie could catch audiences’ interests.

There have been many definitions on the word “translation” as proposed by experts. According to Newmark (1998), translation is giving the meaning of a text into another language in agreement with what the author means in the original text. Newmark (1998) mentions that translation is the way or process of how to find the meaning of source text in the target language (TL) without replacing the message of the original text or source language (SL). Meanwhile, Catford (1965) states that translation is transferring text from the source language into another language that is equivalent to the source language.

In addition, Al-Salman (2007) states that English is not and will probably not be the only medium of communication between people of the world so translation seems to be the solution to that problem. It does not only refer to English but also to all languages around the world. This is why translation study takes an important role in communicating.

According to the definitions above, it can be concluded that translation is the process of finding equivalent meaning from original material, or source language, in the target language with the source language in the form of written text. This kind of translation is usually called a written translation. By the process, the translator may change the grammatical structure of the original text as long as it results a close or equivalent meaning. To produce a good translation, a translator has to watch the language of the source language, analyze its form and structure first, and find the best way or strategies to translate it. The process of
translation can be considered successful when the translator is able to deliver the message, thoughts, and ideas that exist in the source language into the target language as a whole.

**Audiovisual Translation**

In the field of translation, there is audiovisual translation (AVT) as a new type of translation. Audiovisual translation is a process of translation which uses audio and/or video devices to transfer the meanings. The process of audiovisual translation is managed by changing the original pictures and sounds/voices in the source language to the target language in written form. Coelho in Aveline (2015) states that there are two methods used in AVT, namely subtitling and dubbing. These two methods are applicable for audiovisual communication media, such as television and film. Nevertheless, the researcher only focuses on subtitling in this study.

**Subtitling**

Subtitling is a process of transferring the voice of a movie into another language in written form or texts. The translation will be shown on the screen as a subtitle or caption at the bottom of the screen to convey the meaning to the audience. Subtitling is shown with utterances, pictures, music and sound effect, written text, and alteration from spoken to written (Gottlieb 1997). According to Shuttleworth & Cowie (1997), subtitling is the process of making captions that are synchronized with the dialogue of television or film. Subtitling can also be defined as a presentation of text or dialogue translation in a movie in the form of titles. It is usually at the bottom of the image or shot on the screen. In addition, Luyken (1991) states that subtitling is translating process of text film. Whereas according to, Cintas and Remael (2001) subtitling is part of a linguistic practice that wishes to offer a written text, usually at the bottom of the screen, informing for the dialogs going on among the actors or for monologues.

Based on the definitions above, we can conclude that literary translation and subtitle translation (subtitling) are the same in meaning, that is transferring meaning from one language to another but they are different in the actions.

**Subtitling Strategies**

The goal of all subtitlers is to be successful in giving subtitles. To achieve it, they need to know strategies and rules for subtitling. Although subtitling is a part of translation and both share similarities, they are different in action. Subtitling has certain rules such as the length and duration of the subtitle that must appear on screen. The result of translation tend to have no limit in the target language but subtitling does. It is because the subtitle will be shown on the video screen, so it would be better if the subtitle is made as short as possible without ignoring the the accuracy of its meaning to the source language. Baker (2001) states that a subtitle usually contains one or two lines of an average maximum length of 35 characters. It means that there are certain strategies for making subtitles.

Gottlieb (1992) proposed ten translation strategies in the subtitling process. The strategies are as follow.

1. Expansion
   Expansion is the use of additional explanation or information by subtitler in TL because the target language may not be retrievable with that word.
   SL : I’m attempting to **defraud**
   TL : *Aku berniat defraud (menipu)*
   *(Translated by Corozilla AKA Gin/quoted from Dharma 2011)*

2. Paraphrase
   A paraphrase is used when the subtitler does not translate the phrase based on syntactical rules, but it still produces the phrase that has the same
meaning as the original text. In other words, this strategy changes the structure of the original and makes it easier to understand by the audience.

SL: She's black-hearted whore and I'm done with her.
TL: Dia pelacur berhati jahat dan aku sudah tak mau berurusan dengannya.
(Corozilla AKA Gin/Dharma 2011)

3. Transfer
Transfer means translating the source text completely and accurately. Subtitler did not use the additional or deletional words because she/he translates the dialogue literally or word to word. This strategy maintains the structure of the source text.

SL: I need your help.
TL: Aku perlu bantu anmu.
(Sang Pangeran/Isnaini 2016)

4. Imitation
Imitation is used to keep the similarity of forms. This strategy is typically used when a phrase contains names of people and places.

Another example of Research () that is suitable with this strategy:

SL: Berringer, this is still my town
TL: Berringer, kota ini masih milikku
(Lebah Ganteng/Anggraeni 2016)

5. Transcription
Transcription is the strategy used when there is a usage of unusual terms found in the source text. A usual term, in this case, is like the use of a foreign language (third language) in TL.

SL: Railroad Pinkertons are hot on our trail, amigo.
TL: Jalur kereta Pinkertons sasaran kita, teman.
(Corozilla AKA Gin/Dharma 2011)

6. Dislocation
Dislocation is used by the subtitler to translate the dialogue of the movie when the effect of translation is more important that the content of the dialogue. Generally, this strategy can be found in a silly song in a cartoon movie.

SL: Spider-pig, spider-pig, can be swing from a web? No, he can’t he’s a pig!
TL: Babi labalaba, babi labalaba, dapatkah dia berayun dari jaringnya?
Tidak bisa, dia seekor babi!
(The Simpsons Movie 2007)

7. Condensation
Condensation refers to using shorter utterances and briefing the text to miss unnecessary utterances in the source language as long as it does not lose the real meaning of the source text intended by the author. The pragmatics effect generally can be lost if this strategy was used so the real meaning of the source text must be conveyed well.

SL: I’m not talking to him. There’s no way.
TL: Aku tak mungkin bicara padanya.
(Ghaemi and Benyamin 2011)

8. Decimation
Decimation is a form of condensation strategy, shortening SL by taking the risk that an important element may be lost. Decimation was used when
characters of the movie speak too fast and the utterance was difficult written text.

SL: Put your hand on it, keep pressure on it.
TL: Pegang, tekan.
(Sang Pangeran/Isnaini 2016)

9. Deletion
Deletion is omitted expression, no verbal content. This strategy aims at making a simple utterance as long as it still delivers the same information as SL.

SL: I’ll be back soon.
TL: Aku akan segera kembali.
(Lebah Ganteng/Anggraeni 2016)

10. Resignation
Resignation is used when the subtitler did not find any solution to translate the source text so its meaning was lost inevitably.

SL: What? Who shoot her?
TL: -
(Munawaroh 2008)

The Imitation Game

The Imitation Game is a movie produced in 2014. It is an American historical drama. This movie is directed by Morten Tyldum while the script is written by Graham Moore. This movie is based on a true story and experience from Alan Turing’s biographical book written by Andrew Hodges entitled The Enigma. This movie is popular, not only in America, but also abroad. It has been proved that this movie has received eight nominations and won the People Choice’s Award at the 39th Toronto International Film Festival.

This movie tells the true story of Alan Turing (Benedict Cumberbatch), a code man expert, and alumnus of Cambridge Mathematics. Around 1941, when World War II happened, Alan Turing took a part in secret mission from British Intelligence Agency. Alan Turing liked to crack secret codes since he was young. The secret mission was to crack the message code of the enigma machine from Germany. This machine had an unbreakable code. It was used to send order messages of the Nazi Army as the biggest enemy of Britain. Alan Turing and his team had to crack a coded message that has 159 million possibilities every day. To break that mission, Alan created a machine that can crack the enigma code. Turing and his team finally succeed and became heroes, but in 1952, the quiet genius encountered disgrace when authorities revealed he was gay and sent him to prison.

Lebah Ganteng

Lebah Ganteng is one of the film subtitle makers who are popular in Indonesia. Besides him, there are also Pein Akatsuki, Abhinmayu, Faridusman, and Mumetndase. However, an article on Dafunda.com entitled Ternyata Inilah Sosok di Balik Lebah Ganteng, si Pahlawan Penerjemah Subtitle Film Terkenal says that Lebah Ganteng is more productive and his writing style is more preferable by the audience. His process of subtitling is easy to read and makes a lot of people choose his subtitle. His works can be found on his personal site, Lebahku.com, or subtitles provider sites like subscene.com.

Lebah Ganteng, also known as Tawon is an alumnus of Indonesian Language and Literature of a university at Surabaya, East Jawa. He chooses that name without any serious purpose. Philosophically, lebah is a very useful animal whereas ganteng refers to a man with good looking face. He uses that name until now and has made his name well-known by movie lovers in Indonesia. He is
interested in subtitling because one day, around 2011, he looked for a serial film but it did not have any subtitles, so it made him upset and he admitted that he watched it with heart language (bahasa kalbu). Since that day, he is interested in subtitling until now.

Quoted from an article posted on Vice Indonesia, Lebah Ganteng admits that he makes subtitles as his hobby and just for fun. He explains that he does not have any background in English education. He really learns English autodidact and as an Indonesian, he often faces difficulty in finding an equivalent word and translating idiomatic expression but it still makes him interested in becoming a professional translator.

What interesting is in the process of translating subtitles, he translates subtitles manually. He watches the movie first to know the context well, finds its official subtitle to know the utterance, and types its Indonesian translation into NotePad. Sometimes he opens the dictionary if needed. He does not use any translator machine to translate them. He just uses it to color the subtitle.

Based on the article published by VICE Indonesia, from 2011 until 2016, Lebah Ganteng has translated more than 500 titles of movies, largely Hollywood movies. Lebah Ganteng chooses to hide his personal identity even his face, but he is active on social media Instagram by using the user name @dokter_ngesot. Through his Instagram account, he usually updates information about Hollywood movies or actors.

This research was conducted using the descriptive qualitative method. The aim of this research was to classify and describe the phenomena of translation, particularly the subtitling strategies proposed by Gottlieb that are taken by Lebah Ganteng in the Indonesian subtitle of The Imitation Game (2019) movie.

The data of this research were the utterances or sentences containing subtitling strategies in the movie subtitle that involve two different languages, English as the source language (SL) and Indonesian as the target language (TL).

In collecting data, the researchers used documentation and went through the following process: (1) watching the movie and understanding the story; (2) transcribing the dialogues (SL) of the characters to obtain its written form. (3) downloading the Indonesian subtitle translated by Lebah Ganteng; (4) Putting English (SL) and Indonesian subtitles (TL) in a table side by side; and (5) Coding the data containing subtitling strategies.

Meanwhile in the process of analyzing the data the researchers were: (1) comparing SL (English) and TL (Indonesian) texts; (2) classifying each sentence or phrase based on ten subtitling strategies proposed by Gottlieb; (3) describing and drawing conclusions about the use of subtitling strategies in the Indonesian subtitle; and (4) calculating the percentage of each strategy used in the movie subtitle.

After analyzing 122 pieces of data sampling taken from SL and TL of The Imitation Game movie dialogues and subtitles, the researchers found that there are only eight out of ten subtitling strategies applied by Lebah Ganteng as the subtitler. The eight strategies are expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation transcription, condensation, decimation, and deletion, whereas the two strategies left are dislocation and resignation. The distribution of the strategies can be seen in Figure 1.
As shown in Figure 1, the strategy that is mostly used by the subtitler is transfer. From the total 122 data of the strategies used, 30 or 24% of them are transfer. It means that the subtitler uses transfer 30 times in subtitling the movie. Meanwhile, the second most frequent subtitling strategies used is deletion. It occurs 28 times or 23% of all the strategies. This strategy was used because the translator wanted to eliminate parts of a texts which have less semantic meaning. Under deletion, there is paraphrase with 21 applications and it shares 17% of the total. The last strategy which takes portion more than 10% is imitation with 13 data or 11% share. The other strategies take less portions, like condensation and expansion which share 9% or 11 occurrences for each. Especially for condensation, this strategy was used because the translator wanted to make the text shorter by leaving unnecessary parts of utterances without losing the whole message. Under these two strategies is decimation with 7 appearances or 6% of the total strategies. Finally, the least strategies used is transcription with only a single datum or 1% share. However, it remains above two other strategies, dislocation and resignation, which are not found to be used at all in the subtitles.

The following discussion is about how subtitling strategies are applied in the translation of subtitles in *The Imitation Game* translated by Lebah Ganteng. Those strategies are expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, condensation, decimation, and deletion. The researchers only took one data of each type of strategy that was found in the movie.

**Transfer**

Transfer means translating the source language completely and accurately without any additional or deletional words. There are 30 cases of transfer found in the movie subtitles and it is the most frequent strategy used.

SL: *I like solving problem, Commander.*
TL: *Aku suka memecahkan masalah, Komandan.*
From the example above, it could be seen that the subtitler translates the source language literally and completely. There is no additional or deletional word used and the subtitler keeps the same structure between the source and the target language.

**Deletion**

In deletion, certain part of the source language is omitted because the subtitler believes that its meaning is not important. 28 cases of deletion are found in the subtitles.

**Paraphrase**

A paraphrase is used when the subtitler does not translate a phrase or clause based on syntactic rules and the available vocabulary but he/she relies on his interpretation. 21 cases of paraphrasing are visible in the movie subtitles.

SL: Mother says I’m just an **odd duck**.
TL: *Ibu bilang aku orang aneh.*

Translating idiomatic expressions is one of the challenges in the subtitling process. The phrase “odd duck” is an idiomatic expression referring to an unusual person, especially an individual with an idiosyncratic personality or peculiar behavioral characteristics. Rather than translating the phrase word by word, the subtitler chooses to use his own interpretation that it resembles *orang aneh* in TL which means an unusual person.
**Figure 4: Paraphrase**

**Imitation**

The imitation strategy is used to keep the similarity of form. This strategy is typically used for translating names of people or places. 13 cases of imitation appear in the subtitles.

**Figure 5: Imitation**

SL: *Newton* discovered binomial theorem aged 22.
TL: *Newton* menemukan Teorema Binomial saat usia 22.

Newton is the name of an English mathematician who discovered the theorem and gave a big contribution to the world. The subtitler does not need to translate the name because it has no equivalent in TL.

**Condensation**

Condensation refers to using shorter utterances and briefing the text to miss unnecessary utterances or eliminate unimportant elements in the source language as long as it does not lose the real meaning of the source text.

**Figure 6: Condensation**

SL: *Take a step back*, and don’t breath heavily
TL: *Mundur, dan jangan tarik napas dalam-dalam*
The subtitler chooses to make the TL text shorter rather than translates it word by word. He turns the phrase “take a step back” into a single word *mundur* to minimize the number of words displayed on the screen.

**Expansion**

Expansion means giving additional meaning to the target language. It is used when the subtitler adds extra information or explanation. This strategy appears in 11 cases in the movie subtitles.

SL: Don’t know what you mean  
TL: *Aku tak paham maksudmu*

**Decimation**

Decimation is an extreme condensation. This strategy is usually used in translating the characters’ conversations or utterances when they have quarrels, especially when they speak loudly and in quick manner.

SL: Well, you didn’t. You just read it on that piece of paper.  
TL: *Tak boleh, baca saja kertas itu.*

In the translation above, the subtitler applies the decimation subtitling strategy by extremely condensing the utterance because it is difficult to absorb all the elements of SL that are numerous and spoken quickly. This happens when Turing comes to see Denniston and makes an agreement.

**Transcription**

Transcription is a strategy used when there is an unusual or foreign language term in the source language. There is only one case of transcription occurring in the movie subtitles.
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CONCLUSION

From the research on the subtitling strategies used in The Imitation Game movie, it can be concluded that not all the subtitling strategies proposed by Gottlieb are applied by the subtitler, Lebah Ganteng. There are only eight out of ten strategies taken, namely: transfer, deletion, paraphrase, imitation, condensation, expansion, decimation, and transcription. The two strategies unused are dislocation and resignation.

From the total 122 data, the strategy which mostly occurs is transfer with 3030 times (24%) of appearances. It is then followed by deletion 28 data (23%), paraphrase 21 data (17%), imitation 13 data (11%), condensation and expansion each 11 data (9%), decimation 7 data (6%), transcription with only 1 datum (1%), and no datum (0%) representing dislocation and resignation.

It has been proved that transfer is the dominant strategy used in the process of subtitling. It means that transfer is a most common subtitling strategy compared to the others. According to Mahendra (2019), transfer is frequently applied because it does not need a higher level of background knowledge from the subtitler to spot the difference in meaning equivalence from SL to TL.

REFERENCES


SL : Rain the evening, Heil Hitler.
TL : “Hujan terjadi malam hari.”
“Hidup Hitler”

There is a foreign language in SL text above, that is heil. The word heil comes from German language representing German greeting of respect. It was adopted in the 1930s by Nazi Party to signal the obedience towards the party’s leader, Adolf Hitler, and to glorify the German nation. In the example, heil is translated into hidup. The word hidup is considered the equivalent of heil since it is also the greeting of respect in Indonesian culture.
Asrima & Serliah Nur

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