



Translation Technique and Quality of *Interstellar* Movie Subtitle

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ABSTRACT

Translation techniques play a very important role in translation because the source language often has a different structure from the target language. By changing the form, translators can adapt the translation into the target language to be more flexible and easier to read and understand. Without changing the form, a translation will feel stiff and may even be meaningless because a structure that is not adapted to the target language will be very confusing for readers. Therefore, this study will discuss the relationship between translation techniques and the quality of the subtitles for the film *Interstellar*. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method. The translation technique data was identified and assessed in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. In this study, there were 183 data points, namely: the transposition technique was used in 133 data points (72.6%), the additional explanation technique was used in 36 data points (19.6%), modulation technique was used in 9 data (4.9%), phonological translation technique in 2 data (1.0%), and formal translation technique in 3 data (1.6%) with a translation quality score of 2.7 out of a total score of 3. This means that the translation quality in this study is good.

Keywords: Translation, Translation Quality Analysis, Subtitles

1. Introduction

The entertainment world is growing rapidly. This growth is related to the development of media used to deliver or display entertainment to the general public. Entertainment that certainly has the largest market share is entertainment in the form of films shown on television screens and cinema screens around the world. In fact, the number of film viewers continues to grow every day because the media used to show films is also increasing.

Whereas in the past, films were only shown on television and in cinemas on a scheduled basis, today's film viewers can watch the films they want to see through more modern media that reach more regions or countries, such as YouTube, online streaming, or film streaming applications.

With more and more regions and countries being reached by the world of cinema, it is only natural that film producers or parties providing film screening services must also provide subtitles for the dialogue in films screened in certain target countries so that the language used in the original film can be understood by viewers who use the local language where the film is screened. For example, if a film is from the United States, where English is the everyday language, then when it is screened in Indonesia, it must be subtitled in Indonesian so that Indonesian viewers can understand the storyline.

Because of the above reasons, translation plays a very important role in helping viewers or audiences understand the context or storyline of the film. Film subtitles cannot be provided carelessly so that the message conveyed by the film's story is in line with the storyline of the source material. When translating dialogue in a film, film producers must involve a reliable translator.

A reliable translator must have linguistic competence, cultural competence, research competence, and competence in transferring meaning from the source language or abbreviated as SL to the target language or abbreviated as TL (Bell, 1991; Kridalaksana, 2008).

The above aims to ensure that terms within a particular linguistic context can be translated well by the translator. This also means that a translator must be able to accurately convey the message contained in SL into TL by paying attention to the structure and interconnection between sentences in order to translate linguistic units such as words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. In addition, translators must also pay attention to the relationship between clause elements in a cohesive text in order to create logical relationships for the form and meaning of a language (Putra et al., 2017).

When translating, a translator must use appropriate techniques so that the translation feels natural and does not deviate from the meaning conveyed by the source language. A good translator must also understand the context of the target language (Carroll et al., 1998). All of this must be taken into consideration by the translator so that the translation will be natural.

Larson (1984) states that translation is the transfer of meaning from the source language to the target language through three steps, namely: 1) studying the lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context of the source language text; 2) analyzing the source language text to find its meaning; and 3) re-expressing the same meaning using appropriate lexicon and grammatical structure in the target language.

These steps are essentially related to how translators use translation techniques to produce good target language. Translation techniques are the smallest micro or structural elements in a translation. Molina & Hurtado Albir (2004) state that translation techniques refer to “actual steps taken by the translators in each textual micro unit.”

This means that translation techniques are a way of transferring messages from the source language to the target language used at the micro level. This language transfer certainly has implications that must be considered so that the final translation product can be accepted by the general public.

Furthermore, one way to test the quality of a translation is to analyze the quality of the translation. The researcher analyzed the quality of the translation in terms of acceptability, accuracy, and readability because they wanted to know whether the translation of the *Interstellar* movie subtitles had been conveyed properly.

From the author's observations, there were several unusual translations in the *Interstellar* movie subtitles. One example is as follows:

SL	: Well, my dad was a farmer.
TL	: <i>Ayahku seorang Petani</i>

The conversation example above shows an inappropriate translation technique by the translator, where the phrase “well, my dad was a farmer” in the source language (SL) is translated as “*Ayahku seorang petani*” in the target language (TL). In this case, there is no difference in the tense or time marker used.

In the SLA, it is known that the tense used is the past tense, but in the translation in the STA, the translator does not indicate the past tense. This will certainly affect the level of acceptability of the translation. Whether the acceptability of the translation can be said to be good or not.

Based on the reasons mentioned above, research on the analysis of translation techniques and the quality of the subtitle translation of the film *Interstellar* is considered important, given that the use of a translation technique affects whether the translation has a good level of acceptability.

2. Method

2.1 Research Approach

The approach used in this study is a descriptive-qualitative approach. This study aims to understand an issue that leads to practical and theoretical benefits (Sutopo, 2006). This is also in line with this study, which aims to describe the translation techniques used in the subtitles of the film *Interstellar* and analyze their relationship with the quality of the translation.

This research is considered qualitative because it analyses data in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. As stated by Sutopo (2006), in qualitative research, the data collected can be words or sentences that have more meaningful meanings and can provide a more concrete understanding than just numbers and frequencies.

In addition, this research is also considered descriptive research because it describes and identifies a linguistic phenomenon, namely the translation techniques used in the subtitles of the film *Interstellar*, which

will ultimately assess the quality of the translation in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, referring to the theory of translation quality assessment by Nababan et al. (2012).

The data in this study is analyzed from SL and TL in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. This study is also essentially a study of a product because it focuses on the results of a translation, not the translation process itself.

2.2 Data Sources

The data used in this study includes words, phrases, clauses, and sentences found in the subtitles of the film *Interstellar*, which were translated using specific translation techniques. These translations were used as objective data, along with expert readers' responses regarding the accuracy, acceptability, and readability of the translations, particularly with regard to the words, phrases, clauses, and sentences used as data.

The data sources for this study were obtained from documents used in the subtitles of a film in the form of TL and SL. The subtitles in English are SL and the Indonesian translations are TL. In addition, informants were also sources of data in this study, namely expert readers in the field of translation and film viewers.

2.3 Data Analysis Technique

The analysis technique used in this study refers to the analysis technique proposed by Miles et al. (2014). This technique consists of four steps, namely data collection, data condensation, display and conclusion drawing, and review. This technique was chosen because it is in line with the research flow plan in the discussion of film subtitle analysis discussed in this study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The data for this study was obtained from the subtitles of the film *Interstellar*. This film is an adventure science fiction film that was released in 2014 and directed by Christopher Nolan and produced by Emma Thomas, Christopher Nolan, and Lynda Obst. The film's screenplay was written by Jonathan Nolan and Christopher Nolan. The subtitles were translated by Rizal Adam.

All data in the form of words, phrases, and sentences used as research objects were then analyzed using Hoed's (2006) theory of translation techniques, which include Transposition, Modulation, Descriptive Translation, Additional Explanation, Footnotes, Phonological Translation, Formal Translation, No Equivalent Provided, and Cultural Equivalent. After the data was obtained, it was analyzed again to see the acceptance factor.

In analyzing the quality of the translation, the author used the theory of Nababan et al. (2012). Thus, the data obtained will show the translation technique process that occurred and how it affects the acceptability, accuracy, and readability of the translation for readers or viewers of the film.

3.2 Data Description

The data analyzed from this research object consisted of 183 data points from a total of 1,216 subtitle data points in the film *Interstellar*. This data was divided into five groups. These groups of data showed the translation techniques used in translating the subtitles of the film *Interstellar*. The five techniques are transposition, modulation, additional explanation, phonological translation, and official translation.

In this analysis, the author refers to the translation technique theory proposed by Hoed (2006). The translation techniques used in this study are divided into transposition technique, additional explanation technique, modulation technique, official translation technique, and phonological translation technique.

The results of the data analysis show that the transposition technique was used in 133 data (72.6%), the additional explanation technique was used in 36 data (19.6%), the modulation technique was used in 9 data (4.9%), the phonological translation technique was used in 2 data (1.0%), and the official translation technique was used in 3 data (1.6%). The percentage distribution of the techniques used can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Classification of Translation Techniques

Translation Techniques		Number of Data	Percentage (%)
Transposition Technique	Downward Rank Shift	52	28,9%

Structure Shift	33	18,0%
Intra System Shift	19	10,3%
Level Shift	11	6,0%
Upward Rank Shift	9	4,9%
Class Shift	9	4,9%
Transposition Technique Total	133	72,6%
Additional Explanation Technique	36	19,6%
Modulation Technique	9	4,9%
Official Translation Technique	3	1,6%
Phonological Translation Technique	2	1,0%

3.3 The Relationship Between Translation Techniques and Translation Quality

Not all translations are acceptable to the public. Most translations prioritize quantity over quality. According to Nababan et al. (2012), a quality translation must fulfill three aspects, namely accuracy, acceptability, and readability.

In this section, the researcher will discuss the levels of accuracy, acceptability, and readability of the five techniques used in translating the subtitles of the film *Interstellar*. The theory used in discussing the level of translation quality is the theory proposed by Nababan et al. (2012)

3.4 Accuracy Level

The accuracy level of the transposition, modulation, additional explanation, phonological translation, and official translation techniques in the translation of the *Interstellar* movie subtitles has three categories, namely accurate, less accurate, and inaccurate. Of the 183 data analyzed, there were 108 (59.0%) data in the accurate category, 74 (40.4%) data in the less accurate category, and 1 (0.5%) data in the inaccurate category. The following is Table 2, which contains a recapitulation of the accuracy level.

Table 2. Translation Techniques Accuracy

No.	Accuracy Level	Total	Percentage (%)
1.	Accurate	108	59,0%
2.	Less Accurate	74	40,4%
3.	Inaccurate	1	0,5%
	Total	183	100%

3.5 Acceptability Level

The level of acceptability of transposition, modulation, additional explanation, phonological translation, and official translation techniques in the subtitles of the film *Interstellar* can be categorized into three categories, namely acceptable, less acceptable, and unacceptable. Of the 183 data analyzed, there were 169 (92.3%) data in the acceptable category, 13 (7.1%) data in the less acceptable category, and 1 (0.5%) data in the unacceptable category. The following is table 3 about the recapitulation of the level of acceptability.

Table 3. Translation Techniques Acceptability

No.	Acceptability Level	Total	Percentage (%)
1.	Acceptable	169	92,3%
2.	Less Acceptable	13	7,1%
3.	Unacceptable	1	0,5%
	Total	183	100%

3.6 Readability Level

The readability level of transposition, modulation, additional explanations, phonological translations, and official translations in the subtitles of the film *Interstellar* has three categories, namely high readability, medium readability, and low readability. Of the 183 data analyzed, there were 176 (96.1%) data with a high legibility category, 5 (2.7%) data with a medium legibility category, and 2 (1.0%) data with a low legibility category. The following is table 4 about the recapitulation of the acceptance level.

Table 4. Translation Techniques Readability

No.	Readability Level	Total	Percentage (%)
1.	High Readability	176	96,1%
2.	Moderate Readability	5	2,7%
3.	Low Readability	2	1,0%
	Total	183	100%

3.7 Quality Level of Interstellar Movie Subtitle Translation

To assess the quality of a translation, several aspects must be considered, as explained by Nababan et al. (2012), namely that a quality translation must be accurate, acceptable, and readable by the target audience. Each of these three aspects has a different weighting.

Data analysis to obtain the average quality score of the translation in the Interstellar movie subtitles used the formula proposed by Nababan et al. (2012) as follows:

Table 5. Translation Quality Score

Average Score				
Accuracy	Acceptability	Readability	Total	Average
$2,5 \times 3 = 7,5$	$2,9 \times 2 = 5,8$	$2,9 \times 1 = 2,9$	16,2	$16,2 : 6 = 2,7$

The analysis in the table shows that the average score for the translation quality of the Interstellar subtitles is 2.7. Therefore, it can be concluded that the translation quality of the Interstellar subtitles is in the good category. A score of 2.7 is close to the 3 for perfect translation quality.

4. Conclusion

In this study, the translation techniques used were 1) Transposition, 2) Additional Explanation, 3) Modulation, 4) Official Translation, and 5) Phonological Translation. A total of 183 subtitles from the film Interstellar were used. Transposition was found in 133 (72.6%), additional explanation was found in 36 (19.6%), modulation was found in 9 (4.9%), phonological translation was found in 2 (1.0%), and official translation was found in 3 (1.6%). The relationship between the application of transposition techniques, additional explanation techniques, modulation explanation techniques, official translation techniques, and phonological translation techniques in the subtitles for Interstellar is categorized as good. This is because the average score obtained from the sum of accuracy, acceptability, and readability scores is 2.7 out of a total translated quality score of 3.

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