Subtitle Translation Strategy: Cross-Cultural Translation of Japanese Kuso's Profanity Words

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ABSTRACT

The translation of subtitles in an animation is crucial for understanding the message sent to the viewer. The objective of this research is to determine effective methods for translating Japanese kuso profanities into Indonesian. The utilized data is sourced from Hakyu anime, which prominently features a substantial amount of obscenity, particularly the term "kuso". The data was gathered through the process of observing films and recording instances of just swearing. Subsequently, it is categorized based on its classification. The data analysis reveals that three procedures are employed in the translation of kuso's profane words into Indonesian. Kuso's profane terms are translated as 'excrement,' 'condemn,' 'contemptible person,' and even the intensifier 'very.' The study findings indicate that kuso profanity words are used in informal contexts, directed not only toward the listener but also towards oneself.
Keywords: Translation strategy, kuso, swear words, animation

ABSTRAK

Penerjemahan subtitle dalam sebauh animasi merupakan hal yang utama untuk dapat memahami isi pesan dapat tersampaikan kepada penonton. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi strategi dalam menerjemahkan kata umpatan *kuso* bahasa Jepang ke dalam bahasa Indonesia. Data yang digunakan adalah animasi Hakyu yang banyak memuat kata umpatan khussusnya *kuso*. Data dikumpulkan dengan menonton film dan mencatat kata umpatan *kuso* yang muncul. Kemudian, diklasifikasi sesuai kategorinya. Analisis data menunjukkan tiga strategi digunakan dalam terjemahan kata makian *kuso* ke dalam bahasa Indonesia, Kata umpatan *kuso* diterjemahkan menjadi: 'sial', 'sialan', brengsek', bahkan kata 'sangat'. Hasil penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa kata-kata umpatan *kuso* diucapkan dalam situasi non-formal yang tidak hanya ditujukan kepada lawan tutur tetapi juga kepada diri sendiri.
Kata kunci: Strategi penerjemahan, *kuso*, kata umpatan, animasi

1. Introduction

Anime refers to the artistic technique of creating animation, either by creating or using digital tools, which originated in Japan. Anime is a shortened form of the term "animation," which refers to the animated works that are an integral component of Japanese popular culture. The impact of popular culture on language development is seen in the incorporation of vocabulary and phrases from anime into mainstream society, eventually leading to the emergence of new linguistic trends. Due to the wide range of genres in anime, the vocabulary and idioms utilized in anime are likewise highly varied. If the narrative revolves around adolescents, it is highly probable that the anime will have a plethora of wakamono kotoba (colloquial language) expressions. Nevertheless, in the anime, if the narrative revolves around an aristocratic lineage, one can observe numerous dialogues employing teinei (polite language), sonkei (respectful language), and kenjougo (humble language). The primary means of comprehending the content of an animation is through the translation of subtitles.

An evident language tendency observed in anime is the utilization of kuso slang, commonly employed as a profanity. Nevertheless, the genuine connotation of kuso does not pertain to profanity. Matsuura (1994) defines "kuso" as a noun that refers to filth, excrement, or feces. Kusosuru, in its verb form, refers to the act of defecating. However, due to the coarse nature of this language, Japanese individuals commonly use the term "unko-suru" to describe the broader act of defecating. In contrast, Matsura (1994) also discusses an

alternative interpretation of kuso when it is used in conjunction with another term, such as kuso-majime, which denotes a high level of seriousness. According to the dictionary "Gaikokujin no tame no Kihongo Yoorei Jiten" from 1982, the term "kuso" has a specific meaning. It is used incorrectly when it is used to describe offensive and unpleasant terms. For instance, the term "kuso baba" is used as a disrespectful greeting for older individuals, implying that they are unattractive or undesirable. Additionally, it can be used to express strong disapproval or severe dislike, as in the sentence "Ano otoko wa kuso majime de omoshirokunai" (That person has grown highly disgusting). Engage in tedious study. 's profane words into Indonesian. Kuso's profane terms are translated as 'excrement', 'condemn', 'rude person', and even the intensifier 'very'. The study findings indicate that kuso profanity words are used in informal contexts, directed not only toward the listener but also toward oneself.

An evident language tendency observed in anime is the utilization of kuso slang, predominantly employed as a profanity. Nevertheless, the actual connotation of kuso does not pertain to profanity. (Matsuura, 1994) defines "kuso" as a noun that refers to filth, excrement, or feces. Kusosuru, in its verb form, refers to the act of defecating. However, due to the coarse nature of this language, Japanese individuals commonly use the term "unko-suru" to describe the general act of defecation. In contrast, Matsura (1994) also notes an alternative interpretation of kuso when it is used in conjunction with another term, such as kuso-majime, which conveys a sense of utmost seriousness. According to the dictionary "Gaikokujin no tame no Kihongo Yoorei Jiten" from 1982, the term "kuso" has a specific meaning. It is used incorrectly when it is used to describe offensive and unpleasant terms. For instance, the term "kuso baba" is a derogatory greeting used to insult older individuals, specifically referring to them as "ugly grandmothers" or "lousy grandmothers."

Additionally, it can be used to express a strong negative sentiment or intense dislike. For example, one might say, "Ano otoko wa kuso majime de omoshirokunai," to convey that the man in question is extremely serious and not at all interesting. (That individual has undergone a significant decline in physical attractiveness.) I study diligently despite finding it monotonous. However, it is acknowledged that the term "kuso" can also be paired with a favorable adjective to convey a good connotation, serving as a complement denoting "extremely" or "highly." This implies that the emphasis on the word intensifies, thereby altering the meaning of "kuso" from its original usage as a profanity with a negative connotation. The meaning of the statement might differ according to the speaker's intonation. For instance, the phrase "kuso urayamashii" might be interpreted as "damn, I'm jealous" or "I'm really jealous". Similarly, "kuso kawaii" translates to "very cute" or "extremely adorable." The disparity between negative and positive connotations in Kuso slang highlights the presence of cultural elements that must be comprehended while translating it into the desired language. Translating situations that involve cultural components requires both knowledge and precision. It is intriguing to analyze the usage of Kuso slang and its translation in subtitles.

When translating a film or animation into subtitles, a translator must carefully consider elements of intercultural communication. Failure to recognize this characteristic will lead to an inability to effectively communicate the message from the original language. According to Widyamartaya (1989:11), translation is the act of transferring a message from one language (source language, or SL) to another language (target language, or TL), with the primary goal of conveying the meaning and the secondary goal of reflecting the linguistic style. The language style being discussed here pertains to the overall tone or ambiance of the original text. A translation that fails to accurately reflect the content of the message in the source language or its intended significance of the writer or speaker is referred to as a false translation. The phrase used to describe translation faults as communication gaps is anything. In his book titled "Translation Problems and Indonesian-Japanese Translations," Tjandra (2005:23-25) identifies two elements that contribute to translation errors: 1. Indonesian-Japanese translations do not employ any translation theory. Translation errors may arise when the cultural aspects of the source language are not accurately conveyed, including customs, thought patterns, social norms, community characteristics, and similar elements.

Suryawinata and Hariyanto (2003:163) discuss several translation challenges, such as the translation of prose fiction. The issue at hand is the cultural impact of the target language, including its grammatical rules, attitudes, and style, as influenced by the SL culture and the moral message delivered by a prose writer. The challenge lies in effectively communicating the moral message of the Idiolect or the distinctive linguistic features of the author. Translating phrases that only focus on their individual meanings without considering the overall message leads to a loss of the intended breadth and meaning of the message. Furthermore, translators are capable of assessing not only linguistic disparities but also many cultural variations. Subtitling is a component of the semiotic composition in films that is used to deliver messages to the audience (Baker,

1998). There are four channels that are involved in transmitting the message in the film, specifically: 1). The verbal auditory channel (VAC) encompasses dialogue, background voices, and potential lyrics. 2). The non-verbal auditory channel (NAC) encompasses natural sounds, sound effects, and music. The verbal visual channel (VVC) integrates subtitles with written elements found inside cinema sequences, such as letters, posters, books, newspapers, graffiti, or ads. The non-verbal visual channel (NVC) encompasses the composition of visuals, camera angles, transitions, and editing techniques that govern the overall progression and atmosphere of the film. This composition distinguishes film translation from other kinds of translation, such as translating textbooks, novels, and similar works. Subtitling translation necessitates a distinct approach to effectively communicate the film's concept to the viewers. Therefore, studying the translation of films that encompass several intricate cultural notions through the use of subtitles is a fascinating endeavor.

Armellino (2008) conducted empirical research in this field, specifically examining the Italian subtitling of an English language film. The source text contained many elements of American culture, which were classified into three categories: historical, social, and mythological traditions. The translation of these aspects is accomplished by three specific techniques: substitution, paraphrase, and deletion. The interpretation of translation correctness in the translation of this film varies slightly according to the opinions expressed by Larson (1984). Larson asserts that a precise translation is one that effectively communicates the intended message from the source language to the target language. Accuracy in text-to-text translation can be comprehensively evaluated based on the translation outcomes.

This research will analyze the translation of the anime subtitle 'Haikyu' by Mitsunaka Susumu, which was released in 2016. 'Haikyu' is an anime that revolves around the sport of volleyball, featuring a cast of schoolchildren, predominantly boys. As a result, the show contains a significant amount of slang and obscene language. One frequently used word is "kuso". This study examines the translation of Kuso slang to determine whether the cultural and linguistic elements of the cartoon are effectively communicated. This study investigates three main aspects: firstly, the translation of the corresponding expression of the profanity "kuso"; secondly, the employed translation approach; and thirdly, the accuracy of the translated term. The research problem was examined in a descriptive manner, utilizing the cultural classification outlined by Newmark (1988:94). Next, the second issue was examined in a descriptive manner utilizing the translation approach outlined by Davoodi (2009). The third issue is examined through a qualitative analysis based on the theory proposed by Larson (1984: 6) about the assessment of translation outcomes, particularly focusing on correctness in conjunction with subtitling theory as an element of semiotic composition.

2. Method

The employed research methodology is qualitative descriptive study. The primary data source utilized for this research is the animated series 'Haikyu' created by Natsuki Takaya. This research specifically examines the translation of cultural words that are conveyed through subtitles in films. Three instruments, specifically a transcription sheet, selection sheet, and synthesis matrix, are utilized for data collection. The analysis is presented via tables and explanations. Suryawinata and Hariyanto (2003) categorize Newmark's translation strategies into three types: semantic strategies, pragmatic strategies, and structural strategies. This research use semantic methodologies to directly analyze data in relation to meaning.

In his study on the translation of forbidden language, Davoodi (2009) identifies four ways to translate swear words: (a) Suppression of information: Using this approach, the translator disregards offensive terms in the original text and eliminates them while translating the desired text. Despite its seeming simplicity, this method can occasionally lead to confusion in the translated lines, as profane terms in the source text may serve as crucial elements for conveying the intended meaning or context. For instance, the act of omitting or censoring information might alter the intended meaning of the original text; (a) Substitution refers to the act of replacing or exchanging something with another thing.

This method employs vulgar language in the original text, which is then substituted with alternative terminology that is not considered vulgar in the translated version. However, these translations occasionally alter the original meaning communicated in the source text. At times, the translation appears highly ridiculous. (c) Prohibited for Prohibited (Prohibited for Prohibited) In the taboo-taboo approach, the translator deliberately incorporates offensive language from the source text into the target text, although being aware of its inappropriate nature. Appeal to the intended audience of the writing. For instance, the English term "fuck" is rendered as "sial" in Indonesian. Euphemism, on the other hand, is a tactful form of speech that substitutes a banned phrase or statement in order to avoid causing offense. Euphemism serves the

purpose of safeguarding the reader or audience from potential offense (Davoodi, 2009). For instance, the phrase "he died" can be translated as "he went to heaven." Translators have the option to incorporate profanity while translating euphemisms in order to accurately convey the underlying profane meaning from the original language, but in a manner that is appropriate and polished for the translated content.

3. Result and Discussion

This debate focuses on conversation samples from Haikyu anime that contain Kuso swear words, along with their corresponding translations in Indonesian. The data is examined and categorized based on the strategy. The citations included in these statements were additionally examined utilizing the theoretical framework proposed by Davoodi (2009). Euphemism refers to the use of a mild or indirect expression in place of a more direct or harsh one.

(1) Excerpt from Dialogue Episode 4, specifically from the time stamp 12:27 to 12:33.
The opposing team initiates the serve.
Team member Opposing team: Naissa-   Excellent service!
Team member of Karasuno: Daichi! Daichi
Daichi: *Kuso*! *Mijikai*!
        Damn! Short!

Oh, no! Brief! The English term "fuck" is translated into Indonesian as "sial." Euphemism is a form of speech that replaces a banned phrase or statement in order to avoid causing offense. Euphemism serves the purpose of safeguarding the reader or audience from potential offense (Davoodi, 2009). For instance, the phrase "he died" can be translated as "he went to heaven." Translators have the ability to incorporate profanity into their translations of euphemisms in order to accurately convey the original profane meaning from the source language, but in a manner that is considered appropriate and more sophisticated in the target text. In the aforementioned conversation, Daichi had the intention of executing a shot that would propel the ball into the opponent's net. However, he was unsuccessful in his attempt, as his shot fell short and did not reach the opponent's side. Upon analysis, a shot that is insufficiently long results in the ball landing within the team's own playing area, hence granting points to the other team.

This occurs because the distance of the shot makes it challenging for the team members to execute a subsequent shot. During that moment, Daichi used the word "kuso," which translates to 'damn.' However, it is important to note that this profanity was not aimed at his adversary but rather at himself. Daichi employed this curse as a result of his frustration with his own failure to successfully serve the ball. (Matsura, 1994) asserts that the precise definition of kuso is filth, specifically filth. Nevertheless, these profanities are not employed in the intended language. In this scenario, the translator substitutes the offensive language with words that are perceived as less explicit in the language being translated to, specifically the word 'damn' in this example. The term 'damn' is regarded as a more suitable rendition of the word 'kuso.'

(2) Excerpt from Episode 5 of the Dialogue, namely from the time stamp 2:03 to 2:15.
Scenario: while the match is on a temporary pause.
Tendou: *Aitsu, wazato nuke michi tukutte yagatta. Wakatoshi kun ni ikeru to omowase, tojiru. Kuso megane kozo*
I intentionally created an escape route, didn't I? I believe that I can go to Wakatoshi's place so that I will close it.

Tendou: He intentionally yielded (allowing the ball to pass). This deceives Wakatoshi into believing that he possesses the ability to forcefully penetrate the adversary's defensive barrier, only to intercept and nullify his attempted attack. The child wearing glasses is quite bothersome.

The preceding exchange depicts a scenario in which Tendou is closely monitoring and analyzing Tsukishima's actions. During the time out, he engaged in self-talk, while Tsukishima consistently thwarted Ushijima's punches in order to reverse the course of the game. Tendou expressed his frustration at Tsukishima's tactics, which hindered their ability to score points, by uttering a curse directed towards him. In addition to employing the term "kuso" as an expletive, Tendou also adopts the moniker "megane," which means "glasses" in Japanese, due to Tsukishima's eyewear. The term "kuso megane" is a curse that specifically conveys the meaning of "you damn glasses." In this discussion, the term "kuso" is translated as "damn" to convey Tendou's frustration with Tsukishima, whom he perceives as obstructing his victory in the

match. Translating the profane term "kuso" as "damn" is an example of employing the euphemism translation approach. This strategy aims to safeguard the reader or audience from potential offense (Davoodi, 2009).

Taboo for taboo (Tabu for taboo)
(3) Footage from Scene 2 of the episode, captured during the time frame of 02:46 and 02:50.
Situation: The volleyball match has commenced, and the opposition team has gained multiple points due to the initial nervousness and hesitation of the Karasuno team.

> Daichi: *Kuso*! *Hayaku tatenaosanaito teokureni…*
> Damn! If you fix it quickly, it will be on time.
> Daichi: Expletive!

It is imperative that we promptly enhance our teamwork. Otherwise, we will be unable to make up for lost time. The term "Kuso's curse" in the preceding conversation is equivalent to the word "damn" in translation. The preceding discussion portrays Daichi's belief that enhancing teamwork is crucial, as he cannot tolerate his team members' persistent hesitancy to take action, which ultimately allows the opposing team to consistently score points.

Unlike the term "kuso," which is typically used as a curse to express annoyance, the use of the "kuso curse" in this speech refers to Daichi's strong desire for his team to take action and overcome the challenges they are facing. The translator used the taboo for taboo translation approach to rendering the term "kuso," which is akin to profanity in the original language. However, the translator is aware that this translation may not be well-received by the viewers or readers of the subtitles. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the profanity 'unlucky' is believed to elucidate the speaker's initial manifestation of emotions, specifically intense exhilaration. Taboo refers to the prohibition or avoidance of certain actions, behaviors, or topics. Substitution, on the other hand, involves replacing or substituting one thing with another.

Video footage from Episode 10, namely from the time stamp of 04:49 to 05:08.
Situation: Karasuno's defensive unit used maximum effort to counter Ushiwaka's powerful spike, successfully disrupting his movements and forcing him to hastily and ineffectively alter the direction of the spike. As a result, the Karasuno team successfully receives the ball. Nevertheless, Ushiwaka displayed unwavering composure and managed to execute a powerful spike despite the sudden need to alter its trajectory. As a consequence, the Karasuno team could only make contact with the ball, but were unable to successfully send it back to the opponent, resulting in a point for the Shiratorizawa team.

Tsukishima	:	(*Atama no naka ni*) *Taisei o kuzushitetanoni*!
		Despite having shattered my composure (in my mind)!
Hinata	:	(*Atama no naka ni*) *chokuzen de kurosu ni kaeta! Kuso!kuso!kuso kakkee*!!
		I instantly changed the course of the ball in my mind! Damn! Damn! Damn it all!
Tsukishima	:	(internally) Despite the deterioration of his physical condition.
Hinata	:	He abruptly altered his course perpendicular to the original path at the final moment! Unfortunately!
(internally)		Unfortunate! The individual in question is highly impressive and admirable.

The term "kuso" in the aforementioned conversation has two distinct connotations, specifically "misfortunate" and "on a single occasion." The video shows Hinata experiencing a sensation of diminishing in size and strength as Ushiwaka appears as a colossal creature and forcefully presses his head against the ground. Despite her utmost efforts to resist and maintain her composure, Hinata found herself overwhelmed by Ushiwaka's formidable strength, rendering her unable to mount a defense. Therefore, it may be inferred that the purpose of kuso in this passage is to convey emotions of jealousy as well as a sense of powerlessness or danger. The translator employs the translation strategies Taboo and Substitution for the term "taboo." The decision to translate "tabu" into "taboo" was made in order to highlight Hinata's sense of being overwhelmed while also commending her opponent. However, the translator's choice to use the word "damn" as an equivalent for the profanity "kuso," which literally means "taik," plus the intensifier "once," was employed.

4. Conclusion

The translation of the profanity "kuso" in the subtitle into Indonesian is adapted based on the specific context of the speech and the circumstances of the incident. The presence of profanities in the Japanese language indicates the existence of a swearing culture within its society. Nevertheless, every group possesses its distinct manner and application of profanities, as no two cultures are identical. Hence, the process of translating offensive language from the original language to the desired language necessitates the use of a distinct approach in order to establish correlations with the surrounding context and conversation.

Developing a method for translating offensive language is necessary to ensure that the finished translation is well-received by readers or listeners who are native speakers of the target language.

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