

Intermediate language in the subtitle translation of *Le Grand Voyage* film into Indonesian *Perjalanan Agung*

Bahasa antara dalam penerjemahan *subtitle* film *Le Grand Voyage* ke dalam bahasa Indonesia *Perjalanan Agung*

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KEYWORDS

intermediate language translation, subtitles, film, *Le Grand Voyage*

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the role of intermediate language in translating the dialogue subtitle of *Le Grand Voyage* film from French as source language into Indonesian as target language. This study used intermediate language translation theory from Amal Al Shunnaq (2019), which was a translating process from source language into target language through other foreign language. *Le Grand Voyage* film is a film with religious nuance with the life of *maghrébin* immigrants in France as the background. The film subtitle in Indonesian were translated from English subtitle which were previously translated from French dialogue. English as the intermediate language had a very important role since it determined the subtitle translation final result in the target language. In addition to economic reasons, the role of an intermediate language was to be able to simplify or make subtitle in target language more concise, therefore it could easily adjust the space and time on the screen display, refine the translation result so that the film subtitle in target language becomes more polite, such as the loss of swear words, and determines the message from source language into target language due to cultural influences and the peculiarities of the intermediate language.

KATA KUNCI

penerjemahan bahasa antara, subtitle, film, *Le Grand Voyage*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran bahasa antara dalam penerjemahan *subtitle* dialog film *Le Grand Voyage* dari bahasa sumber bahasa Prancis ke dalam bahasa sasaran bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori penerjemahan bahasa antara atau *intermediate language* dari Amal Al Shunnaq (2019), yaitu proses pengalihbahasaan dari bahasa sumber ke dalam bahasa sasaran melalui bahasa asing lainnya. Film *Le Grand Voyage* merupakan film yang bernuansa religi dengan latar belakang kehidupan kaum imigran *maghrébin* di Prancis. *Subtitle* film dalam bahasa Indonesia diterjemahkan dari *subtitle* bahasa Inggris yang sebelumnya merupakan hasil terjemahan dari dialog bahasa Prancis. Bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa antara mempunyai peran yang sangat penting karena menentukan hasil akhir terjemahan *subtitle* dalam bahasa sasaran. Selain alasan ekonomi, bahasa antara berperan untuk dapat menyederhanakan atau membuat *subtitle* dalam bahasa sasaran menjadi lebih ringkas sehingga dapat dengan mudah menyesuaikan ruang dan waktu pada tampilan layar; memperhalus hasil terjemahan sehingga *subtitle* film pada bahasa sasaran menjadi lebih santun, misalnya hilangnya kata umpatan; serta menentukan keakuratan pesan dari bahasa sumber ke dalam bahasa sasaran karena pengaruh budaya dan kekhasan bahasa antara.

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Introduction

There are two kinds of film translations techniques, namely translation through subtitling and dubbing techniques. The use of these two techniques according to Gottlieb (2001) depends on the country and language that produces it and the country and language of its destination. In addition, the broadcast media and the literacy level of the targeted audience are taken into consideration in the selection of translation techniques.

Subtitling is a translation of film dialogue that is displayed in written form on the bottom of the screen, while dubbing is a translation of film dialogue in sound form (Baker & Hochel, 2001). In Indonesian context, the subtitling technique is widely used for commercial films shown in cinemas and television, particularly films produced from America for best-selling films in English (Ardi, 2017; Cahyani, 2011; Nurlaila & Purwaningsih, 2015; Widyastuti et al., 2017). Subtitling is used due to the literacy level of the Indonesian population is currently good and viewers can watch films according to the dialogue or the original voice due to an increased of Indonesian's foreign language skills (in this case English). This technique can be said to be easier and simpler than the dubbing technique since this technique does not involve many people, is inexpensive, and does not require more sophisticated technology (Pratama, 2018; Sajarwa et al., 2021).

Ideally, translation is an activity related to transferring messages from one language to another or from source language into target language directly. However, in film industry, the translation process in the form of subtitles can be performed indirectly, by using intermediate languages, particularly films that are not in English. Translation is carried out from source language through an intermediate language and later translated again into target language, such as a film from French being translated into English and when it will be shown in Indonesia it is translated into Indonesian through English. This is very commonly done, particularly films that are broadcast through digital media on pay film sites such as Netflix, VIU, etc., or films that were previously distributed in the form of film CDs that were sold legally.

The translation uses an intermediate language also known as back translation (Baker, 1992) since the concept is the translation of a translated text. Baker (1992) does not suggest that back translation is used as a practice in translation but rather is used as research material or a tool to see the quality of translation morphologically, syntactically, and lexically. The similar thing is also explained by (Larson, 1980) who states that back translation is used as a measure of the translation results quality and validity as a comparison. It is different with Gamborino (2007) who states that back translation is the process of translating documents originating from documents that have been translated and later translated back into their original language. The concept is certainly different from that described by Baker and Shunnaq, both of whom focus more on retranslation of the translation results into another language not into source language.

In cinema world, the intermediate language that is widely used is English so non-English films generally include subtitles in English from the film official producer. The translation of the intermediate language subtitles is then translated into various other

languages in the destination country. In translation world, a phenomenon like this becomes a natural thing to happen since the limitations possessed by a nation, including the limitations in mastering foreign languages. In this case, English is the language that is often used as an intermediate language because English is a language that is widely studied and mastered internationally. Therefore it is not an exaggeration when Crystal (2003) mentions that the language behind the US dollar is English. Globally, English masters various sectors including film sector (Ndruru, 2017).

Translation using this intermediate language can of course experience larger distortions and deviations compared to direct translation from source language (Al-Shunnaq, 2019). These distortions and deviations are natural in a translation due to there are adjustments related to the language system syntactically, morphologically, and lexically to transfer messages from source language into target language to maintain the source elements and become closer to the target language. However, according to Al-Shunnaq (2019), the intermediate language has a weakness, namely that it cannot convey figurative language and emotional expression, particularly in literary texts.

The film subtitles translation using an intermediate language will of course be different from literary texts translation. Economically, translation using this intermediate language is cheaper and easier since translators can quickly translate films without hearing the conversation or seeing the film dialogue transcription (Nada, 2022). The translator directly translates the subtitles in the intermediate language that has been translated from the source language so that there is time efficiency in the process.

Currently, many of the best-selling and quality films in the world are translated using the subtitling method using an intermediate language, such as French film entitled *Le Grand Voyage* (2004). The title of this film is translated into Indonesian as *Perjalanan Agung*. This film tells the story of a father that performed pilgrimage who was escorted by his son by car from France. For Indonesians, who are mostly Muslims, this film certainly has its own charm due to the feeling of closeness and similarities related to religious issues. The dialogues and conflicts in this film flow naturally throughout the journey, which spiced up by meetings with other characters who depict other sides of the diverse religious and socio-cultural life of the countries they have passed through during the trip (Laayouni, 2012, 2016; Schilt, 2010). Due to its attractiveness, the film has received many reviews and discussions from several communities concerning this film, which indicates that this film is widely watched by the Indonesian people, particularly on digital media sites and is also often shown on Indonesian national television, especially during Eid al-Adha.

The subtitling method used in this film help provide understanding to Indonesian audiences who do not understand French as well as Moroccan Arabic used in this film. Indeed, the visual images in this film can speak volumes. However, the dialogue in the film is important in understanding the full contents of a film (Sajarwa et al., 2021). Therefore, subtitles are very important in a film. Subtitles or translations in films appear no more than two lines consisting of a maximum of 35 characters in each line (Gottlieb, 2001; Hatim & Mason, 1996), so translators must use strategies in translation. The limited space and the limited duration of the pictures are a challenge for the translator, particularly if the translator encounters a vocabulary with cultural nuances (Pratama, 2018).

The back translation of subtitles using an intermediate language will of course affect the translation results due to after all the translation results from the original source can be ascertained to be more accurate and closer to the meaning of the source text. Even so, the massive use of intermediate languages in the cinema world today, including dramas that are not in English, of course, it is advantageous, particularly from an economic point of view. Intermediate languages play an important role in the subtitle translation industry. Thus, the purpose of this study is to analyze the accuracy of the intermediate language in subtitles translation in the dialogue translation of *Le Grand Voyage* film (2004) whether the message in the dialogue of the film can be conveyed properly in the subtitles considering that there are cultural differences and linguistic systems from source language (French), intermediate language (English), and target language (Indonesian).

Method

The data in this study is the French dialogue of *Le Grand Voyage* film (2004) as the source language, the subtitles in English as the intermediate language, and Indonesian as the target language. The original French dialogue was obtained from listening and watching the film directly, later it was recorded and adjusted to the transcription that appeared in the film. The film is watched directly from a CD issued by Pyramide Distribution which is distributed in Indonesia through Jive International with distribution license 1057/DVD/R/PA/07.2011/2007 on September 10, 2007 with a duration of 108 minutes. On the film, audio is in French, English, and Arabic, whereas subtitles is in English and Indonesian. The subtitle translation was conducted by a professional translator who is in the circle of the distributor or film production house.

Data analysis in this study was conducted by comparing source language, intermediate language, and target language in dialogue and subtitles at the levels of form and semantics. This comparison aims to see the extent to which intermediate language subtitles can convey the message conveyed in the dialogue and compare it with the message in the target language, how the changes that occur have the potential to change the message or not. At the level of form, the deviation, among others, is seen from the word, type of sentence, tense, etc. or more towards the structure. At the semantic level, the deviation is seen from the level of word selection, meaning differences, meaning omission, additions, etc. or how the meaning conveyed in the subtitles in, both the intermediate and target languages, is compared to the source language.

Results

Simplification in Translation

The subtitles in this film as a whole follow the rules in film translation, which only consist of two lines with not many characters. This is done by the translator so that the audience of this film can follow the visuals of the film and at the same time understand the dialogues spoken by the characters. In general, film subtitles can be understood easily even though there are subtitles that in fact confuse the audience if you look at it in more detail. Adjustment to the target language system and culture are made to make the subtitles easy to understand by the audience.

Ease of understanding subtitles is an important thing in the process of translating film dialogue. The limited space on the screen and the large amount of information that may be conveyed make the translator must be observant in translating the film's dialogue so that the message in the source language can be conveyed and transferred properly into the target language. In fact, subtitles that represent the source language dialogue and appear on the screen in a timely manner and sufficient for the reader or viewer to finish reading only appear a maximum of 6 seconds or less than 6 seconds (Diaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the spatial and temporal limitations due to the change in mode from speech to written form with a limited duration of time (Massidda, 2015).

There is an attempt to summarize or simplify the film's dialogue into subtitles in an intermediate language as in example on Table 1 and simplified again in the target language. This simplification relates to the limited number of subtitles, which are only two lines with a maximum of 35 characters in each line. These two simplifications or summaries can certainly produce shorter sentences so that they can be more easily understood by the audience in the target language. As a written text which is translation of an oral text, certain lingual units in the intermediate language are omitted as a strategy to qualify as a subtitle with the limited space and time without eliminating the message conveyed in the source language. The lingual unit's omission in intermediate languages is a common thing and can apply to the target language at the level of words, phrases, and clauses. Example of the omission of the translation in the intermediate language is the omission of clause *pour le reste tu te démerde* 'for the rest you manage' in the intermediate language. The omission also occurs in the target language. The missing information in the intermediate language will not appear in the target language because the target language is guided by the intermediate language. Although it is not the main information and is in the form of an explanation of the previous clause, this clause strengthens the information or emphasizes the meaning of the previous sentence and clause.

Table 1. The omission of lingual unit in intermediate language

Time stamp	Source Language	Intermediate Language	Target Language
00:02:34,854 → 00:02:37,789	<i>Je suis pas ton esclave. Papa m'a juste parlé de la portiere, pour le reste tu te démerde</i>	I'm not your slave. Papa said it was just for the door	<i>'Aku bukan budakmu. Papa memintaku membantu untuk pintunya.'</i>

Table 2. Grammatical change in lingual unit omission during subtitle translation process

Time stamp	Source Language	Intermediate Language	Target Language
00:02:00,253 → 00:02:02,744	<i>Surveille ton langage, c'est moi qui te le dit</i>	Watch how you talk to me!	<i>'Jaga bicaramu!'</i>

The simplification is not only related to meaning, but the grammatical linguistic system also plays a role. In this case, there is a grammatical change with the lingual units omission in the form of simplifying sentences. In example on Table 2, there is the lingual unit omission of the sentence which previously consisted of two clauses into a single sentence in the intermediate language and the target language. The imperative sentence structure in the source language is maintained in the intermediate language as well as the target language.

Simplification by omitting the lingual unit by the intermediate language is followed by the lingual unit removal in the target language. The lingual units omission is done

to shorten the information without losing the message. The lingual unit can be omitted if it does not affect the meaning or message conveyed so that the audience does not lose information from the dialogue in a film. In example on Table 3, the clause *faut que j'y aille* 'I have to go there' is omitted due to the clause *j'ai rendez-vous* 'I have an appointment' already contains the meaning that requires the perpetrator to leave. In addition, the visuals displayed in the dialogue scene show the actors getting ready to leave the place for the previously promised place. Thus, the omission of the second clause in the dialogue does not affect the message conveyed from the source language with a supporting visual appearance. In addition to the clause omission, the translation in the intermediate language in example on Table 3 also removes the subject and its verb which is more indicative of an informal situation in spoken. In intermediate language, the subject and the verb is lost, but there is preposition addition *to* and the article *an*.

The translation from the intermediate language into the target language changes nouns in the intermediate language to sentences as in the source language since the verb is present, namely the present of lexicon **ada** of the word **berada** which states the situation. The target language translation in the first sentence shows an informal situation of spoken language with the structure and lexical used, namely the subject is at the end of the sentence and the use of the term *kau* (you) is for the second person singular, while in the second sentence it tends to be more formal with the use of the term appointment. There is no lingual unit omission to indicate an informal situation., but the addition of the lingual unit, namely the word *temu* (meet), makes the sentence more formal than without the word *temu* (meet). However, if the lexical promise is added with the suffix *-an*, the informal situation will feel more like **ada janjian** (there is an appointment).

Simplification in the form of omitting the lingual unit in language translation can change the structure grammatically and lexically and can change the meaning of the subtitle, but the message can still be maintained with the visual appearance of the film (Ningtyas, 2017). The simplification that occurs in the intermediate language is more about the limitations of space and time in the subtitle display. These changes can be followed by further changes so that there is another simplification of the target language subtitles or no more changes and still follows the structure or pattern of the intermediate language. The target language is more likely to follow the pattern of the intermediate language in its translation and is more likely to make changes lexically than in its grammatical structure. The addition or omission of lingual units in the target language is more about adjusting to the target language system itself so that the subtitles are more easily understood and accepted by the audience.

Table 3. Omission of a clause in source language to intermediate language

Time stamp	Source Language	Intermediate Language	Target Language
00:02:25,745 →	- <i>Tu vas où là?</i>	- Where are you going?	- ' <i>Mau ke mana kau?</i>
00:02:29,181	- <i>J'ai un rendez-vous, faut que j'y aille</i>	- To an appointment	- ' <i>Ada temu janji</i> '

Politeness in Translation

The role of intermediate language is very strong and the target language translator does not seem to use the source language or film as a reference in the translation of this film, especially for cultural words such as swearing. In the intermediate language, the swear word is still translated, for example the word *putain* is translated into 'damn it',

but the word *merde* in the second sentence is not translated into the intermediate language. There is an omission or swear words omission in the intermediate language makes the message conveyed in the target language is different. In the source language, it is clear that the utterance has the meaning of being angry since it shows the emotions of the speaker by swearing which is shown with different swearing in the same scene at the beginning of the first sentence and at the end of the second sentence. The character's emotion can not only be seen visually, but also can be felt verbally. In the intermediate language subtitle, which uses a swear word, the character's emotions are not felt verbally so that in the target language the curse is absent or eliminated in the scene. In fact, the curse word can show the character's emotions so that the omission of the curse word makes the scene flat. Sentences in the subtitles also become more polite due to the absence of swear words such as in the source language and in the intermediate language.

This film is a film with religious nuances. Therefore elements outside of religious norms tend not to be highlighted in the subtitles even though they are in the dialogue (Sumartini, 2016). The swear words that are often spoken by the characters in this film tend not to be translated. If translated, the lexicon used tends to be normal (Sajarwa, 2021b).

In the film this element cannot be removed since it has become a culture of French society today, particularly the youth and they consider it not a curse but something that is common and usually appears automatically when communicating or expressing their thoughts and to signify intimacy or closeness with opponents (Sajarwa, 2021a). Words like *putain* 'whore', *merde* 'dirt', and *bordel* 'brothel' are swear words that often appear among young French people and if these words are lost, the film becomes unnatural. There is a tendency for young French people today to use these words liberally for things that should be "not appropriate" to curse, for example when a pencil drop, they say *putain* to themselves. *Putain* literally means 'a whore' and of course it is not appropriate if she/he drops her/his own pencil then she/he curses her/himself with this vocabulary.

In the Indonesian subtitles, the curse only appears once, namely when cursing *merde* which translates to *sialan*, *sial*, or *brengsek*. This does not mean that young people in Indonesia never or rarely swear, but in the subtitles, there is a tendency that swear words are not a mandatory lexicon and are arbitrary. If you attend, you will use a lexicon which means "more polite" or tend to be neutral so it does not seem like the film is disrespectful, particularly for films with religious nuances (Sajarwa, 2021b).

There is a decrease in the number of swear words that are present in the example on Table 4 (time stamp 00:01:20,113 → 00:01:22,013) in the source language there are two swear words, in the intermediate language it becomes once and in the target language there are no swear words at all. In example on Table 4 (time stamp 00:01:24,584 → 00:01:26,950) there is one swearing and it is not translated in the intermediate language so that in the target language the swearing will not appear. If the audience does not understand French, the swearing that is present in the speech is not felt by the target language audience. In this case, the audience is only presented with the voice of the character screaming without knowing that the scream is an overflow of emotion conveyed by swearing spoken in a loud voice.

The emotion expression is not always reflected in the film subtitle translation through intermediate language even though the audience knows that there is an outburst of anger in the expression that comes from the visual and audio of the film. Translation through intermediate language is less able to express the meaning of figurative words or cultural words as well as emotional expressions due to distortions that do not present the true meaning as in the source language. This is in line with what was explained by Al-Shunnaq (2019) that intermediate languages are less able to present cultural nuances and emotional expressions in their translation into the target language, particularly in literary texts. Thus, there is an advantage in translating film subtitles compared to literary texts translation because the emotion expression can be conveyed to the target language audience, although not through the subtitles.

The problem of politeness in film subtitles is not only from the presence or absence of swear words, but is also influenced by other factors, such as the influence of censorship institutions that issue film distribution permits in Indonesia. In Indonesia, the film genre, such as the religious-themed film *Le Grand Voyage*, also affects the use of swear words that presented in the film. Therefore, swear words are considered impolite and become taboo in a religious film. However, it should be possible to present an emotional expression that is commensurate with the source language and the language in which swear words can also be present with more or less the same meaning to emphasize the expression of anger, for example using an interjection such as the word ***dong*** at the end of a sentence such as “hati-hati dong!” (be careful) or the word ***woi*** at the beginning of a sentence like “woi hati-hati!” (hey, be careful).

Table 4. Form of politeness in translation from intermediate language to target language

Time stamp	Source Language	Intermediate Language	Target Language
00:01:20,113 →	<i>Putain oh fais fais gaffe.</i>	Watch out, damn it!	<i>'Hati-hati!</i>
00:01:22,013	<i>Tu va la rayer, merde!</i>	You'll scratch it.	<i>Kau bisa menggoresnya.'</i>
00:01:24,584 →	<i>Lève la putain !</i>	Hold it higher!	<i>'Pegang yang lebih tinggi!'</i>
00:01:26,950			

Accuracy in Translation

Each language is unique in the use of certain terms or related to cultural words (Malenova, 2015), such as in terms of distance measures. If in French, distance is measured in kilometers, in English it tends to use the term miles, and in Indonesian it uses kilometers. The difference in the use of this term affects the translation so that there are differences in the translation results. In this case, intermediate language plays an important role in translation due to it provides information on film dialogue in the source language before being translated into the target language. The target language translator only sees the dialogue subtitles and does not listen to the dialogue or does not even know the source language. Differences or changes in messages can occur especially if the message is in the form of definite information, such as information related to distance.

Example on Table 5 shows that the unit of length used in the source language is 10,000 km translated into an intermediate language to 6000 miles and back to the target language to 9,656 km. *This is show* different results between the source language and the target language. There is a difference between information from the source language to the target language by 344 kilometers. The difference is not a small number since the distance is very large. The language translator between made an estimate

with an uncertain value and translated it into the target language as is so that the figure of 9,656 km appeared. If the translator understands the speech in the source language, of course the information conveyed will be more accurate or the same so there is no difference between what is conveyed in the source language into the target language. The role of intermediate language in this case becomes very important due to inaccurate information will have an impact on the target language, namely the message conveyed is not the same and less accurate.

Table 5. The inaccuracy of translating distance from intermediate language to target language

Time stamp	Source Language	Intermediate Language	Target Language
00:01:33,593 → 00:01:37,859	<i>Eh si tu fais le calcul, ça va nous faire plus de 10000 km aller-retour</i>	I worked out the distance... over 6,000 miles both ways.	' <i>Aku pernah berhasil menempuh jarak sejauh 9.656 km bolak-balik.</i> '

Conclusions

Film translation in the form of subtitles does not only translate dialogue from source language into target language, but also must be able to convey messages through texts which have limited space and time. Changes in the form of transformation in the translation process cannot be avoided, particularly if the translation uses an intermediate language which is currently very popular in the film industry, particularly those that use non-English as the source language. English as an intermediary language plays an important role due to non-English films can be spread with English subtitles. The current target language tends to translate directly from the intermediate language subtitles, namely English since it is more economically profitable. The use of intermediate language will of course make the subtitle translation into target language distorted twice, namely from the source language into intermediate language and from intermediate language into target language (Al-Shunnaq, 2019). The intermediate language has a very important role because from subtitle translation, the target language can adapt easily regarding the use of space and time. In addition, the translation becomes more concise and simple due to the intermediate language has transformed from audio text into written text in the form of subtitles. In terms of politeness, the intermediate language bridging the meaning of speech becomes a more polite text and becomes even more polite after being translated into target language, such as the loss of swear words even though it causes the speaker's emotions is not the same as the source language. In terms of accuracy, cultural factors or the peculiarities of intermediate language play a role as a determinant of messages from source language into target language, namely the message changes depending on the terms used by intermediate language which are later used as a source by target language. Thus, intermediate language plays a very important role in film translation from source language speech text into target language subtitle since target language depends entirely on the intermediate language subtitle.

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