

TABOO EXPRESSIONS AND SUBTITLING STRATEGIES USED IN *THE EXORCIST* MOVIE

I Wayan Restu Indra Darmawan

Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Sastra dan Budaya, Universitas Udayana

Abstrak

Studi penerjemahan telah banyak berkembang hingga saat ini. Salah satunya adalah dengan munculnya metode penerjemahan audiovisual. Penerjemahan audiovisual mengkhususkan pada terjemahan-terjemahan objek suara dan gambar seperti film. Salah satu teknik dalam penerjemahan audiovisual adalah 'subtitling'. 'Subtitling' merupakan proses penerjemahan dari bentuk tulisan ke bentuk suara. Salah satu tantangan dalam penerjemahan dengan teknik 'subtitling' adalah menerjemahkan ekspresi tabu. Tabu merupakan hal-hal yang dilarang untuk diucapkan atau dilakukan. Film 'The Exorcist' merupakan sumber data dalam studi ini. Tujuan studi ini adalah untuk menemukan tipe ekspresi tabu dan strategi 'subtitling' yang digunakan dalam film 'The Exorcist'. Hasil dari studi ini adalah terdapat enam puluh satu ekspresi tabu yang ditemukan pada film 'The Exorcist'. Keenam puluh satu ekspresi tabu tersebut termasuk ke dalam delapan tipe ekspresi tabu diajukan oleh Jay (1992) diantaranya 'cursing', 'profanity', 'blasphemy', 'obscenity', 'vulgarity', 'epithets', 'insult and slurs' dan 'scatology'. Selain itu, keenam puluh satu ekspresi tabu tersebut diterjemahkan menggunakan strategi 'subtitling' diajukan oleh Gottlieb (1992) diantaranya 'paraphrase', 'transfer', 'imitation', 'condensation', 'decimation', dan 'deletion'.

Kata kunci: penerjemahan, subtitling, tabu

1. Background

In recent years, the imports of foreign movies are high. Hollywood, as one of the biggest movie industries in the world takes this chance to enlarge their business. As a global product, Hollywood's movies used English as the main language. However, a problem comes as not all countries put English as their first or second language. Some countries such as Indonesia, Korea, Japan, etc. study English as foreign language. Therefore, it will be hard for non-native speakers to understand and enjoy the movies. The only way to solve this problem is by translation. Translation is transferring meaning from source language (SL) to the target language (TL). Many things can be the object of translation study including movies. However, a special technique is needed in order to translate a movie as it

is an audiovisual product. It is because the regular translation usually takes written text to be translated into written text. Therefore, in translation study there is a technique that is called as Audiovisual Translation (AVT). AVT has three modes, namely dubbing, voice-over, and subtitling. Subtitling is the most interesting one since it is not only translating one language to another language, but also from one mode to another mode, spoken to written form. One of the biggest challenges in subtitling is a cultural item. One of them is taboo. Taboo is something that is forbidden to say or to act.

2. Problems

Based on the background, there are two problems of which answers need to be found in this study. The questions are:

- (1) What types of taboo expressions are found in *The Exorcist* movie?
- (2) What subtitling strategies are used in translating taboo expressions into Indonesian subtitles in *The Exorcist* movie?

3. Aims

According to the problems, the aims of this study can be considered as follows;

- (1) To identify and analyze the types of taboo expressions uttered by the characters in *The Exorcist* movie.
- (2) To analyze subtitling strategies used in translating taboo expression into Indonesian subtitles in *The Exorcist* movie.

4. Research Method

As the data source of the study, a movie entitled *The Exorcist* was chosen. *The Exorcist* is a horror movie published in 1973. The movie describes the exorcism process of a young girl. *The Exorcist* won Oscars in 1974 for Best Screenplay Best Study, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium and Best Sound. The movie provides many taboo expressions which are needed to this study. The data of this study were the taboo expressions uttered by the characters and also the Indonesian subtitles of the movie. In collecting the data of the movie,

observation and note-taking techniques were needed. Several steps were applied in order to support the observation and note-taking techniques. In order to analyze the data, qualitative descriptive method was used. This method was supported by several steps. The first step in analyzing data by categorizing the taboo expressions based on their types proposed by Jay (1992: 2-9). The next step was comparing the taboo expressions and their translation in the Indonesian subtitle in the form of a table. In addition, the time (duration) when the taboo expressions were being uttered by the characters in the movie were also inserted in the table. Finally, analyzing the subtitling strategies proposed by Gottlieb (1992).

5. Results And Discussions

5.1 Types of Taboo Expressions

In order to analyze the types of taboo expressions found in *The Exorcist* movie, theory of types of taboo expressions proposed by Jay (1992) was used. After analyzing the data, there are 61 taboo expressions found in the movie. They are included in the eight (8) types of taboo expressions proposed by Jay (1992) such as cursing, profanity, blasphemy, obscenity, vulgarity, epithets, insult and slur, and scatology.

5.1.1 Cursing

The core of cursing is to invoke harm on another person. Those words are related to religious or social demarcation which has power (Jay, 1992). There are four (4) expressions that are considered cursing such as one *damn* (1) and *goddamn*(3).

5.1.2 Profanity

Profanity is based on a religious distinction. It deals with to be secular or behaving out (Jay, 1992). There are eighteen (18) expressions that are considered profanity such as *Oh my God!*(6), *Jesus Christ!*(4), *Christ's sake*(3), *God's sake*(2), *Oh God!*(2), and *Oh Christ!*(1).

5.1.3 Blasphemy

Blasphemy usually deals with the church. The attack on religion or religious doctrine can be called blasphemy. There are two (2) expressions that are considered blasphemy such as *priest* (2).

5.1.4 Obscenity

Obscenity usually deals with sexual terms in American English (Jay, 1992). There are nine (9) expressions that are categorized as obscenity such as *Fuck* (3), *Ass* (1), *Fucking* (1), *Lick* (1), *Cunting*(1), *Cocksucker* (1), and *Sucks cock* (1).

5.1.5 Vulgarities

Vulgarity means the language of the common person, particularly person who spend most of their time in the street, or the unsophisticated, un-socialized, under educated (Jay, 1992). There is one expression that is categorized as vulgarity such as *Bloody*.

5.1.6 Epithets

Epithets are short and brief word or phrases, but it is forceful burst of emotional language (Jay, 1992). There are fourteen (14) expressions that are considered as epithets such as *Shut up!* (3), *Fuck* (1), *Christ's sake* (1), *My ass* (1), *Goddamn* (1), *Oh Christ* (1), *Shit* (1), *Hell* (1), *Bullshit* (1), *Fucking* (1), *Jesus Christ* (1), and *Son of a bitch* (1).

5.1.7 Insult and slurs

Slur deals with racial, ethnic or social which denote the physical mental or psychological qualities of the target while children's insults comes from abnormal physical, psychological or social characteristics (Jay, 1992). There are twelve (12) expressions that are considered as insult and slurs such as *Bastard* (6), *Pig* (1), *Cunting Hun* (1), *Sow* (1), *Crazy* (1), *Bitch* (1), and *Faggot* (1).

5.1.8 Scatology

Scatological terms refer to human waste products or processes (Jay, 1992). There is one expression that is considered scatology such as *Shit*.

5.2 Subtitling Strategies Used in Translating Taboo Expressions

The subtitling strategies of the data were analyzed by theory of subtitling strategies proposed by Gottlieb (1992). After analyzing the data, there are six (6) subtitling strategies applied such as paraphrase, transfer, imitation, condensation, decimation, and deletion.

5.2.1 Paraphrase

Paraphrase strategy is used to translate a non-translatable SL and tend to use different sentences into the TL, Gottlieb (1992).

Time	Duration (second(s))	SL (English)	TL (Indonesian Subtitle)
2.01.14 -2.01.16	2	Karras : <i>God damn you!</i> Take me! Take me!	Karras : <i>Brengsek,</i> ambil diriku!

The subtitler tends to paraphrase the phrase '*God damn you*' into '*brengsek*' because phrase '*God damn you*' was uttered for the purpose of mentioning someone annoying. In addition, paraphrase strategy is used in order to fit the translation to the situation when the utterance uttered.

5.2.2 Transfer

Transfer strategy is used when the subtitler is able to translate the full SL item to the TL without reducing the meaning, Gottlieb (1992)

Time	Duration (second(s))	SL (English)	TL (Indonesian Subtitle)
43.07 – 43.09	2	Chris : Regan, <i>my God</i> honey.	Chris : <i>Ya, tuhan,</i> sayang.

The phrase '*My God*' is translated directly into '*Ya Tuhan*' in Indonesian since they have the same meaning. Therefore, in accordance to the context of the conversation above, the phrase '*My God*' can be translated literally to '*Ya Tuhan*' in Indonesian subtitle.

5.2.3 Imitation

Imitation strategy is used when there is any possibility to translate the SL item with an identical expression in the TL item, Gottlieb (1992).

Time	Duration (second(s))	SL (English)	TL (Indonesian Subtitle)
40.53 – 40.58	5	Burke : <i>Cunting Hun</i> . Bloody, damned, butchering <i>Nazi</i> pig..	Burke : <i>Cunting hun</i> . <i>Nazi</i> keparat yang biadab

The phrase '*Cunting Hun*' in the SL was translated into '*Cuntinghun*' in the TL, as the word '*Nazi*' in the SL was translated into '*Nazi*' in the TL. It can be concluded that the subtitler did not want to translate the phrase and word since they still make sense if those were translated to their original expression.

5.2.4 Condensation

In using condensation strategy, the SL items will be shortened yet still cover the contents, Gottlieb (1992).

Time	Duration (second(s))	SL (English)	TL (Indonesian Subtitle)
47.22 – 47.23	1	Regan : You <i>fucking bastard!</i>	Regan : Kalian <i>brengsek</i>

The phrase '*fucking bastard*' was translated into '*Kalian brengsek*' used condensation strategy. It can be seen that the subtitler has an intention to make the subtitle brief and short to keep the audience read the subtitle in only 1 second

5.2.5 Decimation

Decimation strategy reduces the content of the dialogue, Gottlieb (1992).

Time	Duration (second(s))	SL (English)	TL (Indonesian Subtitle)
53.47 - 53.48	1	Regan/Demon : Keep away! <i>The sow</i> is mine!	Regan/Demon :Jangan mendekat! <i>Dia</i> milikku

The taboo expression ‘*sow*’ was not translated into ‘*babi betina*’ since the subtitler used decimation strategy in which the content of the SL was reduced.

5.2.6 Deletion

Deletion strategy is concerned with the speed of the dialogue, Gottlieb (1992).

Time	Duration (second(s))	SL (English)	TL (Indonesian Subtitle)
59.32 – 59.34	2	Chris : What the <i>hell</i> do you mean going off and leaving Regan by herself?	Chris :Kenapa kau tinggal Regan sendirian?

The subtitler deleted some unnecessary information including the taboo expression ‘*hell*’. In addition, in the data subtitle above, the utterance ‘*What the hell do you mean going off and leaving Regan by herself?*’ needed 2 seconds to be uttered. The subtitler considered that not all of the content should be translated.

6. Conclusion

After conducting the study and analyzing the data, it can be concluded that there are 8 types of taboo expressions found and 6 subtitling strategies used in translating taboo expressions in *The Exorcist* movie. The results of data of types of taboo expressions found can be presented as four (4) cursing, eighteen (18) profanity, two (2) blasphemy, nine (9) obscenity, one (1) vulgarity, fourteen (14)

epithets, twelve (12) insult and slur and one (1) scatology. Profanity is the most type occurred in the data source. In addition, the results of subtitling strategies used are twenty three (23) paraphrase, twenty one (21) transfer, one (1) imitation, two (2) condensation, two (2) decimation and (12) twelve deletion. Paraphrase strategy is the strategy that used most in the data source.

7. Bibliography

Gottlieb, H. 1992. *Subtitling: A new university discipline*. In C. Dollerup, et al. (Eds.), *Teaching translation and interpreting*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Jay, Timothy.1992. *Cursing in America: A Psycholinguistic Study of Dirty Language in the Courts, in The Movies, in the Schoolyards, and the Streets*. USA: John Benjamin Publishing Co.

Larson, Mildred L. 1988. *Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence (2nd edition)*. Lanham: University Press of America.

Pedrsen, Jan. 2011. *Subtitling Norms for Television*.Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company

Susbscene. 2014. Retrieved September 11, 2014, downloaded at <http://subscene.com/subtitles/the-exorcist/indonesian/770482>