

## AN ANALYSIS ON TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES IN THE SUBTITLE OF THE MOVIE “AVATAR”

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**Abstract:** This study investigated the intricate process of translating thoughts and ideas between different languages, which goes beyond mere linguistic proficiency. Successful translation requires a deep comprehension of cultural nuances in both the source and target languages, as well as a thorough understanding of the text and the intended audience. The aim is to achieve accurate and effective translations while avoiding literal interpretations, potential misunderstandings, and inaccuracies. The focus of this study is the specific translation techniques employed in subtitling the renowned film "Avatar." To conduct this research, a qualitative approach using descriptive methods is adopted, utilizing dialogue and subtitles from the movie as the primary data source. The analysis involves the identification of translation techniques based on Newmark's framework (1988) and references Larson's classification of translation types (1945). Through this study, a comprehensive exploration of the diverse translation techniques used in subtitling "Avatar" is undertaken. The findings emphasize the significance of cultural knowledge in achieving successful translations. It is encouraged that future research delves into other films to gain a broader understanding of subtitle translation, encompassing various translation methods, procedures, and other pertinent aspects of translation.

**Keywords:** *Translation, Translation Technique, Subtitle, Movie, Avatar*

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## INTRODUCTION

English is undoubtedly an international language, serving as a global medium for communication and information dissemination. A significant portion of information, from scholarly articles to entertainment content like movies, is presented in English. This prevalence underscores the importance of accessibility and inclusivity, especially in reaching a diverse and widespread audience. Translation plays a pivotal role in this regard, as they bridge language barriers and allow a broader audience to engage with content that might not be in their native language. In the context of movies, translation in a form of subtitles enable individuals from various linguistic backgrounds to fully immerse themselves in the narrative, emotions, and nuances conveyed by the film.

The essence of translation lies in transforming the form of the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). Larson (1984) succinctly states that "translation is basically a change of form, where the form of the source language is replaced by the form of the receptor (target) language." The Oxford Advanced Learner's English Chinese Dictionary (6th Edition)

defines subtitle as “words that translate what is said in a film/movie into a different language and appear on the screen at the bottom”. According to Mark Shuttleworth and Moira Cowie, Subtitling can be defined as “the process of providing synchronized captions for film and television dialogue and more recently for live opera”. Subtitle translation can be regarded as a written, immediate, and synchronous translation. According to these definitions, it can be concluded that subtitle translation refers to giving interpretations of the original words appearing at the bottom of the film or television screen.

The main function of subtitle translation is to convey the precise message to the audience in an effective way and make them understand and appreciate the film and television limited by time and space. To achieve this goal, translators must obey some principles and adopt some techniques and strategies, as well as lay much emphasis on the cultural phenomenon. The exploration of translation theories and techniques will draw upon the insightful perspectives of Peter Newmark and Mildred Larson theory.

In this article, the focus shifts towards a comprehensive exploration of the intricacies embedded within the translation technique employed in the subtitles of the cinematic masterpiece, "Avatar". Directed by James Cameron, "Avatar" is a visually stunning science fiction epic set in the year 2154 on the distant planet of Pandora. The story follows Jake Sully, a paraplegic former Marine who is given the opportunity to inhabit an "avatar" a genetically engineered body resembling the native Na'vi people. As Jake becomes integrated into the Na'vi culture, he faces moral dilemmas as he becomes torn between the corporate interests of the human military and his growing connection to the Na'vi and their harmonious relationship with the planet's ecosystem. The film explores themes of environmentalism, cultural clash, and the pursuit of profit at the expense of nature. As Jake's loyalty wavers, he finds himself at the center of a conflict that will determine the fate of Pandora and its inhabitants. The film is celebrated for its groundbreaking visual effects, immersive 3D technology, and its thought-provoking narrative. The film was released on 2009 and starred by Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Sigourney Weaver, , Stephen Lang, Michelle Rodriguez, Giovanni Ribisi, Joel David Moore, and many more.

The choice of "Avatar" as the subject of this study on translation techniques in movie subtitles stems from its iconic status and multifaceted narrative. This film's intricate storytelling, combined with its immersive fictional universe, provides a rich terrain to explore various translation strategies. The film's interplay between human and Na'vi cultures, complex dialogues, and the unique terminology of Pandora present an ideal opportunity to dissect how translation techniques are employed to ensure linguistic and cultural fidelity. By delving into the subtitled version of "Avatar" the intention is to unveil the ways in which language barriers are transcended while capturing the essence of characters, plot intricacies, and the movie's underlying themes.

Within this journal, several examples of previous research with topical similarities to the current study are elucidated. The instances drawn upon include several journals, namely: a journal titled “An Analysis of Subtitle Translation of *Hello, Mr. Billionaire* from the Perspective of Skopos Theory” written by Yucheng Sheng, Xiaohui Gao, Honglei Ma, Yaorui Zhuang in 2019 and published on Scientific Research an Academic Publisher (Open Access Library Jurnal Vol. 6 No. 7), a journal titled “Postmodernisme dalam Film Avatar The Way of Water” by Ratri Rizki Kusumalestari in 2023 and published on Bandung Conference Series: Communication Management Vol 3 No. 2, a journal titled “ Konsep Skopos dan Aspek

Fungsionalnya” written by M Masduki in 2011 and published on Prosodi, a Trunojoyo Madura University Journal Website, Vol. V No. 2, a journal titled “Penerjemahan Idiomatis Peter Newmark dan Mildred Larson” by Yusniaty Galingging and Gunawan Tambunsaribu in 2022 and published on Dialektika Jurnal Bahasa Sastra dan Budaya Universitas Kristen Indonesia, and a journal titled “Analisis Teknik Penerjemahaan Subtitle Dalam Film Inside Out Karya Pete Docter dan Ronnie Del Carmen” by Muhammad Ali Ghufron, Novia Yolanda, Mutmainatul Mardiyah in 2022 and published on Sinastra Website Volume 1.

Based on the aforementioned premises, the author aims to address and analyze the matter of translation techniques in Indonesian subtitles of the English-language film titled "Avatar" within this manuscript, under the title: **"An Analysis on Translation Techniques in the Subtitles of the Movie “Avatar”**.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology section emphasized the importance of having selected suitable research methods to guide the study. The chosen methods for this research included data collection, analysis, and presentation techniques. The primary source of data for this study was the film "Avatar." The research focused on the utterances of the main character, Jake, comparing the English and Indonesian versions of the film. Qualitative analysis was conducted, specifically categorizing the data based on translation methods proposed by Newmark (1988). The findings were presented using formal tables to display the frequency of translation methods, accompanied by informal explanations to provide further insights into the data. Overall, the methodology section underscored the significance of having carefully selected and applied appropriate methods to effectively address the research objectives.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Sub-heading 1

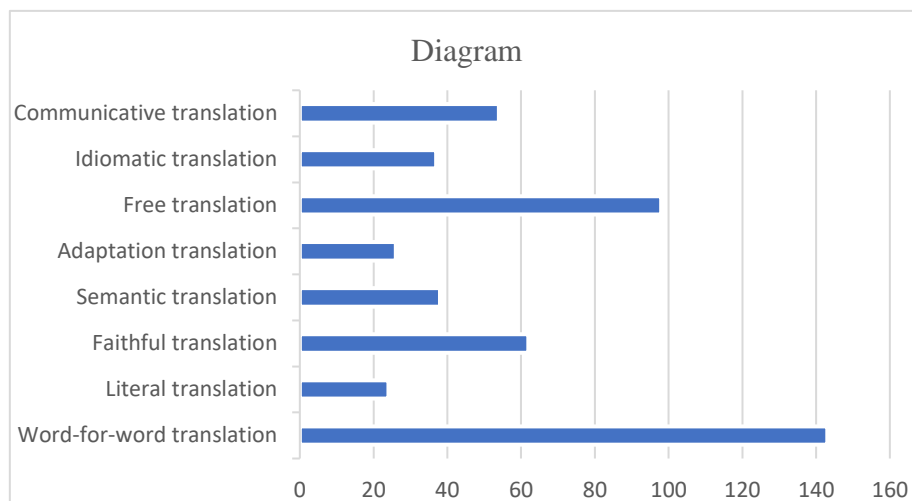
The analysis yielded findings that addressed the research questions. Through the analysis, it was discovered that the translators of the film "Avatar" had utilized one primary technique from Newmark and two additional techniques from Larson. These techniques involved adjustments such as additions, deletions, and modifications. According to Newmark (1988), there were eight translation methods categorized into two perspectives: one focused on the source language (SL) and the other on the target language (TL). Larson's (1954) translation theory, on the other hand, proposed two main types of translation form-based translation and meaning based translation.

Newmark (1988) provided a definition of translation methods as the strategies and approaches used when translating texts from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). These methods involved the careful selection and application of techniques to ensure accurate and effective translation. The choice of method depended on various factors, such as the nature of the text, the intended audience, and the desired translation outcome.

Newmark emphasized the significance of considering the cultural and linguistic disparities between the SL and TL while employing translation methods. He highlighted the importance of capturing the intended meaning and effectively conveying it in the TL, while

also considering cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, grammatical structures, and other linguistic features. Newmark's translation methods served as valuable guidelines and strategies for translators to navigate these challenges and produce high-quality translations that retained the essence of the original text while adapting it to the TL and its cultural context.

The entire translation comprised 1422 units. Among these, 143 words were translated word-for-word, 24 words were translated literally, 62 words were faithfully translated, 38 words were semantically translated, 26 words were adapted in translation, 98 words were freely translated, 37 words were idiomatically translated, and 54 words were translated with a focus on effective communication. For example, can be seen in Table 1 below.



## CONCLUSION

Based on the information provided above, there were three essential criteria that translators needed to consider before embarking on the translation process for the film "Avatar." It was crucial for translators to have possessed a strong understanding of the source language, target language, and the socio-cultural contexts associated with both languages to achieve a high-quality subtitle translation.

1. The study incorporated two theories: the primary theory proposed by Newmark (1988) regarding translation methods, and a supporting theory by Larson (1945) concerning the classification of translation into two types.
2. Out of the total of 1422 words, 143 words were categorized as Word-for-Word Translation, making it the most prevalent translation method employed.

3. The primary purpose of the basic concept was to provide relevant ideas that were interconnected with the research.

Consequently, the successful translation of film subtitles, particularly from English to Indonesian, relied on maintaining equivalence between the two languages to ensure that the intended message was comprehensible to the readers of the target language text. The translator's proficiency in conveying translation equivalence was essential for reader comprehension, along with their adeptness in employing various translation techniques to achieve accurate and understandable translations.

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