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The Adjustments of Linguistic in the Indonesian Dubbing of SpongeBob SquarePants Movie

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Abstract –*The purpose of this study is to examine linguistic characteristics and adjustments in Spongebob Squarepants movie by taking a closer look at Indonesian dubbing.It is conducted in the hope that people have a better understanding of the differences which are sometimes found when dealing with dubbing.As this study mostly concerns the use of language used by the characters in the SpongeBob SquarePants and to what extent the translation version differs, the researcher needs qualitative data for the analysis. The transcript data, both English and Indonesian was analysed on the basis of linguistic features, namely lexical and semantic features.As seen from the data obtained and explained the researcher concluded that the dubber does not translate the speech of the characters in order to keep the natural flow of the target language. It can be stated that principles which are applicable to translating text are merely the same as those used by the dubber.*

Keywords:*dubbing, dubber, linguistic adjustments*

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I. Introduction

A. Background

To judge from the rapid growth in motion pictures industry, there comes a need for a dubber to translate utterances in a movie.Dubbing is known to be the method that modifies the source text to a large extent and thus makes it familiar to the target audience through domestication. It is the method in which "the foreign dialogue is adjusted to the mouth and movements of the actor in the film" (Dries 1995: 9 qtd. in Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997: 45) and its aim is seen as making the audience feel as if they were listening to actors actually speaking the target language. Being a dubber is not that easy sincea dubber has to pay attention to rules which govern a good translation result. This workload will become such a constraint for a dubber, especially when dubbing a voice of a cast in an animated film, namely SpongeBob SquarePants. The dubber, in this case, has to pay attention to the cultural aspects, emotional speech and style of a language, which are actually fundamental to other kinds of dubbing movies. Similar to a practice of translating text, dubbing exactly hinges upon the source language, which in this case, is in a form of audio-visual. However, a recent publication (Cintas, 2009) said that the study about audio-visual translation, particularly dubbing, is relatively unknown which eventually gets us to raise this issue. However, it seems that linguists do not touch upon the linguistic adjustment which relies on the word deletion in the given dubbing. This research is meant to be a contribution to the body of knowledge in providing the reader with ample opportunities to learn the linguistic adjustments in SpongeBob Squarepants" by taking a closer look at Indonesian dubbing.

B. Research Questions

Following are the research questions of this study,

1. To what extent does the original version of Sponge Bob Square Pants: Squidward's School for Grown-Ups differ from its Indonesian counterpart in terms of language adjustment?
2. Why does this language adjustment occur?

C. Significance of the Study

This study is conducted in the hope that people have a better understanding of the differences which are sometimes found when dealing with dubbing. We mostly arrive at a fact that a source language which is dubbed into its target language cannot be fully taken for granted. It means that a translator, or herein a dubber, is required to see the context of the target language since every language is unique and cannot be equalised from one to another. The principle of dubbing a visual medium is basically similar to that of translating a text. When dubbing a voice, a dubber, however, also needs to pay attention to whether the result correctly 'fits with' the lip movement, a contributing factor, produced by the original characters or so-called lip sync (Cintas, 2009:49) albeit not always. Common people may not feel the slight difference, but it is a concern needed when one works

on dubbing. At last, this research is conducted to show the audience that language works differently, particularly in motion pictures industry. People are getting more sensible to movies selected for their children's viewing pleasure in the sense that a lot of movies broadcast on television do not comply with age restriction already established. It is mostly caused by the language spoken by the actors in the movie which is condemned inappropriate. Then a censorship board, including a dubber, works together to deal with this issue. The first thing they can do is to screen the film thoroughly and check whether it contains words considered inappropriate for the target viewers, namely kids, before they release it to the public. However, the censorship board with the dubber are expected not to lose 'the beauty of the movie language', so that the viewers would be able to take pleasure in watching the movie.

II. Literature Review

One may think that translating a text is such a laborious job, and this statement is true. When it is related to audio visual translation (AVT), there is a fundamental principle either a translator or a dubber has to rely on. Some translators would rather preserve the localism in a source language, but consequently, the natural flow tends to be lost in translation (Cintas, 2009:22). Since a practice of dubbing is not quite clear-cut compared to a conventional translation practice in terms of the way a dubber voices a character in a film, there is, however, a sort of codification which applies only in the audio visual translation (AVT); three of them are addition, specification and reformulation (Cintas, 2009:59) Addition is used to insert linguistic elements which are not found in the source language (Cintas, 2009:59). As translation is mostly affected by the social factors, such as target language and culture norms, self-censorship, and so on (Baños, 2013:483), a dubber also needs to insert elements which suit the target language in the hope that the result remains linguistically vivid. In addition, a dubber may substitute certain lexicons which are still close in meaning to the source language, but sound more natural in the target language (Cintas, 2009:59). In certain cases, a dubber may also change the overall phrase or sentence in order to get a more informative sentence or phrase. This process is called as reformulation. In this research, we shall be seeing those above-mentioned principles that occurred in one of the episodes of SpongeBob SquarePants on the basis of comparative study. The researcher would find out the difference which is obvious in the translation result, namely Indonesian, and have it compared with the original version voiced in English. Based on the theories explained earlier, the differences may be established in terms of lexicon substitution and reformulation, semantically and syntactically.

III. Methods

A. Research Design

As this study mostly concerns the use of language used by the characters in the SpongeBob SquarePants and to what extent the translation version differs, the researchers need qualitative data for the analysis.

B. Instruments and Data Collection

The transcript data, both English and Indonesian, will be analysed on the basis of linguistic features, namely lexical and semantic features. The researcher will break off the ten-minute scene into segments so as to aid the process of figuring out the differences of each.

IV. Results

The data obtained can be shown as follows.

#1 segment

English and Indonesian

Patrick: Yeah! I love boat screaming! Oh! Oh! Hey! Hey! Here comes another one!

Patrick: Yaa, aku suka permainan teriak di perahu. Oh, hei hei! Ada lagi! Lihat itu!

(Addition)

#2 segment

English and Indonesian

Squidward: Would you two mind stopping with your baby games!? Didn't anybody tell you it's the break of dawn!?

Squidward: Bisakah kalian berdua berhenti main permainan bayi itu? Apa tak ada yang memberitahu kalian permainan itu sudah kuno!?

(Substitution)

#3 segment

English and Indonesian

Squidward: That's what I thought you-[Gets hit in the face by a tomato] No! No! No! I didn't mean it like that! It was-[Gets hit by many fruit and vegetables]
Squidward: Dasar tidak berpendidikan! Aw ! Tidak, tidak! Maksudku bukan begitu!

(Substitution)

The dubber is likely to insert an interjection in the first segment. The sentence 'Lihat itu!' cannot be spotted in English version. The dubber also tries to simplify an utterance 'Here comes another one!' by replacing with 'Ada lagi!'. This simplification is necessary only if the dubber feels that translating word-by-word does not accommodate the natural sense of a language use, particularly Indonesian. There is an obvious contrast in the second segment in which the dubber substitutes 'it's the break of dawn!' for '… permainan itu sudah kuno?' in Indonesian. Semantically, English has 'dawn breaks' which signals a time when a sun is about to appear, but the Indonesian dubber has another perception of the meaning of the phrase by seeing the context. The dubber once again substitutes the sentence 'That's what I thought you -…' for 'Dasar tidak berpendidikan!..'. Rather in awe of the substitution, the researchers never thought that the dubber would replace the original sentence with the translation which is socially unacceptable. The prediction may say it would be less frontal, but the fact tells otherwise. The dubber does not seem bothered to replace the sentence with a less polite translation. However, linguistically speaking, it is still somewhat distant compared to the original version. In the Indonesian version, there are lots of speech acts which are deleted and this may be caused by factors, such as duration of the broadcasting on television limited to several minutes only. However, the deletion of the scenes do not fully contribute to the change of the film interpretation of the viewers.

V. Discussion And Conclusion

As seen from the data obtained and explained above, the researcher can say that the dubber does not translate the speech of the characters in order to keep the natural flow of the target language. It can be stated that principles which are applicable to translating text are merely the same as those used by the dubber. To prevent creation of such a weirdly-sounding utterance from occurring, the dubber, at least, employs techniques of insertion, substitution and deletion for some reasons. In a certain example, we can establish that the substitution from the translation process of the English version of SpongeBob SquarePants is rather distant from the English version. Sometimes the dubber employs substitution to find out the equivalence of certain lexicons in Indonesian, but this attempt is likely to fail due to a language differences in terms of vocabulary. In addition, these three principles included in adjustment aspect may be employed in order to save the running time of an episode of a film. This time constraint frankly does not either give considerable influence on or limit the dubber to selectively dub the film.As shown by the basis of comparative study, the researcher concludes that there are differences established in terms of lexicon substitution and reformulation which is still somewhat distant compared to the original version. In consequence, we suggest the dubber provide a better translation to avoid any failed substitution of the equivalence of certain lexicons in Indonesian regarding the speech context. In addition, we are eager to encourage readers to continue or even start another study related to speech translation. Hence, any problem related to a failed speech translation might contribute to the change of the film interpretation by the viewers as well as a weirdly-sounding utterance.

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