

# Translation techniques used and its shift in Stranger Things movie

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# Translation techniques used and its shift in Stranger Things movie

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The use of inappropriate translation techniques can cause distortion and a shift in meaning from the source language to the target language. In addition, the limited space for writing words in subtitles is a challenge for a translator. This study reviewed the use of translation techniques for expressions of fear that were realized in the form of sentences and the shifts that occurred as a result of using these techniques. The data were the subtitles of the film Stranger Things season 1. To analyze the data, the researcher used a qualitative content analysis model (Santosa, 2021). In this study, the researcher used the theory of translation techniques (Molina & Albir, 2002). All data were expressions of fear in both English (SL) and Indonesian (TL). In addition, in analyzing the data, the researcher was assisted by two translation experts in analyzing the use of techniques and shifts that occurred in the translation data. In this study, the most widely used technique was established equivalent. With this technique, the translation results sounded natural in the target language. However, the use of reduction and discursive creation techniques distorted the meaning. Specifically, discursive creation distorted meaning in the target language; meanwhile reduction techniques caused a reduction of information. Furthermore, this study found that there was a shift in the function of commanding speech into asking speech due to the use of inappropriate translation techniques. As significance in English language teaching, understanding these translation techniques and their implications can help English language teachers and learners to develop better strategies for communication, particularly when dealing with idiomatic expressions and cultural nuances. Furthermore, the study's findings on the shift in function from commanding speech to asking speech due to the use of inappropriate translation techniques can serve as a reminder for teachers and learners to be cautious when relying on subtitles for language acquisition.

**Keywords:** translation; techniques; shift; fear of expression; subtitle; movie

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## INTRODUCTION

The activity of watching movies via streaming such as Netflix, WeTv, and Catchplay+ has grown rapidly in recent years (Castro et al., 2021; Hadida et al., 2021; Kumar et al., 2020). With so many applications providing these services, various genres of films can be watched easily via our smartphones. One application that is widely used and globally accepted for streaming movies is Netflix (Au-Yong-Oliveira et al., 2020; Ojeda et al., 2022). With this application, we can specify various kinds of film genres as well as choose the subtitles we want. For example, people in Indonesia will get the option to watch using Indonesian subtitles which have been translated by the Netflix team.

Many studies have been conducted on the use of translation techniques in films. This study can be seen through its analysis of subtitles (Abu-Rayyash et al., 2023; Bogucki, 2022;

Hashish & Hussein, 2022), dubbing (Al-Yasin, 2022; Poustchi & Amirian, 2021; Golchinnezhad & Afrouz, 2021), Voice-over (Filanti, 2017; Huber & Kairys, 2021). The study usually analyzes the transfer of meaning from the source language into the target language. In contrast to translations of other literary works such as novels and books, translation studies of films, especially subtitles, have limited space to adapt the words of the characters in the film (Cintas & Remael, 2014; Zhang & Liu, 2009). The results of the previous study found the use of the established equivalent technique to be the most widely used technique (Indriyany, 2019; Masykur et al., 2019; Rianti et al., 2021; Romdhani et al., 2018), Adaptation (Fitria, 2015), Literal (Latif, 2018; Rukmini & Saputri, 2017). Judging from these results, there is a diversity of results related to the use of translation techniques in film subtitles.

Film translation studies have also been carried out in various genres such as cartoons (Anwar et al., 2020; Emam, 2017; Samir, 2022), comedy and humor (Azis, 2021; Yuliasri, 2016; Yuliasri & Allen, 2019), serial films (Syarif, M.R. Nababan, et al., 2020; Tambunan, 2021a). The results of this study indicate that translators from Iran mostly use adaptation and reduction translation techniques (Azis, 2021; Emam, 2017; Samir, 2022). Other findings show the dominance of using different translation techniques in film subtitles such as linguistic compression (Anwar et al., 2020), discursive creation (Istiqomah et al., 2019), literal (Yuliasri, 2016), established equivalent (Syarif et al., 2020), and amplification (Fitria, 2015). These results show that even the same film genre is not always dominated by one translation technique. Although there have been several researchers studying speech acts in a film, no one has specifically studied the translation of speech in the horror genre.

The various results as the effect of the translation techniques used by previous research are caused by various factors. These factors can be in the form of ideology and translator competencies. Related to the ideology of a translator, this can be seen in the results of translations that tend to be domestic and foreignization (Farisi, 2020; Ghafarian et al., 2016). Nababan et al. (2016) states that the use of translation techniques at a micro level can form an ideology of the translator. Then, the translation results are close to the source language (foreignization) and close to the target language (domestication). The next factor that determines the use of translation techniques is translator competencies. Nababan (2008) mentions the importance of procedural knowledge related to understanding culture and culture in the source and the target language. In addition, a translator can Pacte (Beeby et al., 2003; Beeby et al., 2009; Hurtado Albir & Taylor, 2015).

The existence of various previous studies regarding the use of translation techniques urges researchers to explore further the use of translation techniques on the expression of fear that has not been widely studied. In addition, researchers are also trying to examine the impact of the use of techniques so that there is a shift in the form and function of speech. The purpose of this study is to find out the form and function of the expression of fear and shifts that occur

due to the use of the translation technique.

## METHODS

This research was qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach by collecting data on the type and function of the expression of fear expressed in the serial film called Stranger Things Season 1. This study was conducted in three stages. First, researchers gather all data related to the expression of fear beginning with general data and then narrows focusing on the expression of fear. Second, data analysis was carried out by researchers through three stages such as data reduction or commonly called data selection. Next, the researcher presents data that has been found and ends with a temporary conclusion. In this study, the researcher used the translation techniques theory (Molina & Albir, 2002). All data were the expressions of fear in the form of English (SL) and Indonesian (TL). In addition, in analyzing data, the researcher is assisted by two translation experts in analyzing the use of techniques and shifts that occur in translation data. After obtaining data on the use of translation techniques, researchers re-examine the type and speech function of the fear expression. Third, the researcher writes analytical data with descriptive methods by describing conclusions in the form of paragraphs based on accurate data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study reveals the use of translation techniques and its shift in the expression of fear in the film series called Stranger Things Season 1. The translation results of the expression of fear from English to Indonesian following the Group Discussion that had been carried out by the researcher. It was found nine (9) types of techniques such as established equivalent, reduction, discursive creation, borrowing, modulation, linguistic amplification, explication, compression linguistic, and literal. The following is detailed information related to the use of the translation of fear in the film series Stranger Things.

**TABLE 1** | The use of translation techniques in the film Stranger Things

NO	Translation techniques	Frequency	Percentage
1	Established equivalent	219	74,49%
2	Reduction	28	9,52%
3	Discursive Creation	14	4,76%
4	Borrowing	12	4,08%
5	Modulation	11	3,74%
6	Linguistic Amplification	4	1,36%
7	Explication	3	1,02%
8	Compression Linguistic	3	1,02%
9	Literal	3	1,02%
Total		294	100,00%

The data [Table 1](#) above showed the distribution of the use of translation techniques of fear expression in the film Stranger Things. It was found nine types of translation techniques used. The established equivalent technique is the most applied with 219 (74.49%) and then followed by reduction techniques with 28 (9.54%). Then, the discursive creation technique was 14 (4.76%), borrowing was 12 (14.08%), and modulation was 11 (3.74%). Next, the linguistic amplification technique was 4 (1.36%), as well as the explicitation technique, linguistic and literal, has 3 (1.02%). The following are the detailed description translation techniques used;

#### Established equivalent

Referring to the theory ([Molina & Albir, 2002](#)), established equivalent involved finding a commonly accepted translation for a specific term or expression in the source language and using it consistently in the target language. The following was an example of established equivalent technique.

**TABLE 2** | 046 Example 1

046	
ST	Do you see any more blood?
TT	<i>Apa kau lihat darah lagi?</i>

This technique was often used in technical or specialized fields, where there were specific terms or jargon that had a precise meaning in the source language.

In data [Table 2](#), do you see any more blood? was translated into *Apa kau lihat darah lagi?*. This translation result sounded natural in the target language. In this case, it happened because one of the characters was frightened to see a lot of deer blood around him as a result of the monster's attack.

**TABLE 3** | 098 Example 2

098	
ST	Get out of here!
TT	<i>Pergi dari sini!</i>

In data [Table 3](#), Get out of here? was translated into *Pergi dari sini!*. This translation result sounded natural in the target language. From the context, this speech occurred due to the sudden appearance of monsters who tried to attack them in the house. So, one of the frightened characters invites another friend to leave the house.

#### Reduction

The reduction translation technique involved condensing the source text to a shorter length while retaining the essential meaning. This technique was useful when the source text contains redundant or unnecessary information that could be omitted without affecting the meaning.

**TABLE 4** | 066 Example 1

066	
ST	Go, go, go, go, go!
TT	<i>Ayo!</i>

In data [Table 4](#), the utterances go, go, go, go, go! in English was translated into Indonesian as *Ayo!*. The results of this translation indicated a shorter form of meaning from the source language to the target language. Viewed from the context, this speech occurred due to the police chasing

several characters. The main character then invited all his friends to run.

**TABLE 5** | 0101 Example 2

0101	
ST	Jesus! Jesus!
TT	<i>Astaga!</i>

In data [Table 5](#), the utterances Jesus! Jesus! in English was translated into Indonesian as *Astaga!*. The results of this translation indicated a shorter form of meaning from the source language to the target language. Seen from the context, this speech is performed by one of the characters who has just seen a monster for the first time. The monster appears right in front of the character.

#### Discursive Creation

The discursive translation technique involved translating not only the content and meaning of a source text but also the social and cultural context in which the text was situated. This approach recognized that texts were not simply isolated pieces of language, but were part of a broader discourse or conversation within a particular cultural and social context.

**TABLE 6** | 043 Example 1

043	
ST	Oh, God!
TT	<i>Astaga!</i>

In data [Table 6](#), Oh, God! in English was translated into Indonesian as *Astaga!*. The speech in the source language was translated very differently from the context into Indonesian. From the context, this utterance was made because one of the characters heard a strange sound followed by a deer that died horribly.

**TABLE 7** | 0116 Example 2

0116	
ST	Oh, Jesus!
TT	<i>Demi Tuhan!</i>

In data [Table 7](#), Oh, Jesus! in English was translated into Indonesian as *Demi Tuhan!*. The speech in the source language was translated very differently from the context into Indonesian. Looking at the context, this utterance was made by one of the characters who found a body part of a monster that was still moving after being shot many times.

#### Borrowing

This technique was usually used because similar terms were not found in the target language. Thus, translators usually borrow words or terms. The following was an example of data of the borrowing technique.

**TABLE 8** | 060 Example 1

060	
ST	They know about Eleven!
TT	<i>Mereka tahu tentang Eleven!</i>

In data [Table 8](#), they know about Eleven! in English was translated into Indonesian *Mereka tahu tentang Eleven!*. The speech in the source language was translated the same as the target language because Eleven is the name of one of the main characters in the film Stranger Things. Seen from the context, this speech occurred because Eleven as a child who had run away from the research camp. Later, Eleven was



sought after by the government because she had special spiritual abilities. Meanwhile, Eleven has been hidden for several days by one of the main characters.

**TABLE 9** | 0140 Example 2

0140	
ST	<b>Fireball</b> him!
TT	<i>Fireball Dia!</i>

In data [Table 9](#), Fireball him! in English was translated into Indonesian Fireball Dia!. The speech in the source language was translated the same as the target language. In fact, the word fireball in the speech is the weapon used by the main character to attack the monster that is approaching them. This speech occurs because some of the main characters are being pressured by the arrival of the monster in front of them.

### Modulation

This technique is also known as "translation shift" and focused on modifying the sentence structure and using a different language style in the translation to maintain the same meaning as the original text. This technique involved adapting the source text's grammatical and syntactical structure to suit the target language, resulting in a translated text that was different in wording but conveyed the same meaning as the original text. The following was an example of data of modulation technique.

**TABLE 10** | 055 Example 1

055	
ST	Just keep going!
TT	<i>Teruslah berlari!</i>

In the data sample denoted as [Table 10](#), the English phrase Just keep going! was rendered into its Indonesian counterpart as Teruslah berlari!. The process of translating from the source language to the target language necessitated lexical and grammatical adjustments, resulting in a shift in emphasis and perspective. The statement was contextualized within a narrative in which government agents were in the process of apprehending the protagonists Mike, Luke, Dustin, and Eleven. Using a strategic approach to cycling, the aforementioned characters were able to evade capture by their pursuers.

**TABLE 11** | 0128 Example 2

0128	
ST	Hit him again. Kill him!
TT	<i>Tembak lagi. Bunuh dia!</i>

In [Table 11](#) dataset consisted of the Indonesian translation of the English sentence Hit him again, kill him!, culminating in Tembak lagi, Bunuh dia!. The translator utilized lexical choices consistent with prevalent usage in Indonesian, explicitly selecting the term tembak lagi. Dustin uttered the aforementioned statement to Lucas, who was actively using a slingshot to launch projectiles at malevolent entities, while Lucas was the intended recipient. Despite the numerous instances of Lucas being discharged, the entity in question successfully approached their proximity.

### Linguistic Amplification

In this strategy, the original text is linguistically expanded in order to convey the semantic substance in the target

language. This method involves an in-depth analysis of the source document to determine its underlying semantic principles, which are then refined to produce a more exhaustive translation.

**TABLE 12** | 0136 Example 1

0136	
ST	I need you to wake up now
TT	<i>Ibu ingin kau sadar sekarang</i>

I need you to wake up immediately... was translated into Indonesian in record [Table 12](#) as Ibu ingin kau sadar sekarang. The source-language utterance was translated by incorporating linguistic elements into the target-language text. Will's mother uttered these words to her son, who had been discovered but was still incapacitated. Will's mother attempts to awaken him so that he will awaken shortly. In order to accomplish this, his mother struggles to locate Will in a parallel dimension populated by creatures.

**TABLE 13** | 034 Example 2

034	
ST	Mom, please!
TT	<i>Ibu, kumohon!</i>

In data [Table 13](#), the utterance Mom, please!. In English was translated into Indonesian as Ibu, kumohon!. The utterance in the source language was translated by adding linguistic elements to the text in the target language. This utterance is performed by Will who is trapped in a parallel dimension. Through momentary communication, Will tries to call and ask for help from his mother.

### Explicitation

This approach involved making information that was implicit in the source text explicit in the target text. The purpose of explicitation was to make the source text more transparent and understandable for the intended audience by clarifying any implicit or ambiguous information. The following is an example of Modulation technique data.

**TABLE 14** | 029 Example 1

029	
ST	Please...
TT	<i>Kumohon...</i>

In data [Table 14](#), the English phrase Please... was translated to Indonesian as Kumohon.... This utterance in the source language was rendered in the target language by making the implicit information in the source text explicit. This statement is made by Will, who is attempting to converse with his mother. Will, who is in another dimension, has limited time to communicate with his mother.

**TABLE 15** | 0139 Example 2

0139	
ST	Something is coming.
	<i>Something angry.</i>
TT	<i>Ada sesuatu yang datang.</i>
	<i>Dia marah</i>

In data [Table 15](#), the utterance Something angry... in English was translated into Indonesian as Dia marah.... This utterance in the source language was translated by adding implicit information in the source text becomes more explicit

in the target text. This utterance was made by Nancy to Jonathan. Those who are in another dimension feel confused to find a way out. Hearing a strange sound, Nancy felt that there was a monster, and it was angry with them.

### Compression Linguistic

This method involved reducing the quantity of information in the source text in order to produce a more concise and effective target text. The purpose of compression linguistics was to make the text more accessible to the intended audience by simplifying it.

TABLE 16 | 033 Example 1

033	
ST	And it's cold!
TT	<i>dan juga dingin!</i>

In data Table 16, the English phrase And it's cold was rendered as *dan juga dingin!*. The translation of speech in the source language involves the simplification of linguistic elements in the target language. This statement is uttered by Will, who is located in an alternate dimension. He feels very frightened and the weather is very cold. Will is conversing with his mother in the present.

TABLE 17 | 089 Example 2

089	
ST	Hey, <i>what happened to your hand?</i>
TT	<i>Hei, Kenapa tanganmu?</i>

In data Table 17, the phrase Hey, what happened to your hand? is spoken also translated into English as Hei, Kenapa tanganmu?. The translation of speech in the source language involves the simplification of linguistic elements in the target language. This remark was made by Steve, who was startled to observe Nancy's bandaged hand. Steve is concerned for Nancy, who is at Jonathan's residence and is unaware of the creatures.

### Literal

This method entailed word-for-word translation of the source text, without any modifications or adaptations. The objective of literal translation was to produce a text that faithfully reproduces the language and structure of the source text, disregarding any cultural or linguistic differences between the source and target languages. The accompanying information was an example of literal translation.

TABLE 18 | 084 Example 1

084	
ST	Gone! Gone!
TT	<i>Meninggal! Meninggal!</i>

In data Table 18, Gone! Gone!. It was rendered as Meninggal! Meninggal! in Indonesian. The utterance in the source text was rendered in the target language by simplifying linguistic elements. This was said by Eleven, who had traveled to another dimension in search of Will and Barbara. However, Eleven only witnessed Barbara's death at the hands of creatures.

TABLE 19 | 084 Example 2

084	
ST	Getting the rocks!
TT	<i>Mengambil batu!</i>

In data Table 19, Getting the rocks!... It was translated into Indonesian as *Mengambil batu!*... The utterance in the source text was translated by simplifying linguistic elements in the target language. This utterance was made by Dustin to Lukas. They were facing a monster that was about to attack them and Dustin was having trouble finding a stone for his slingshot.

The use of translation techniques also caused a shift in the type and function. In this study, the researcher only found one shift in the function which is from commanding speech to ask speech. Below was an example of that shift.

TABLE 20 | 0134

0134	
ST	Come on, kid!
TT	<i>Ayolah, Nak!</i>

In data Table 20, the utterance Come on, kid! in English represents a commanding speech to speech partners yet it was translated *Ayolah, Nak!* in Indonesian. *Ayolah* represents a shift in the speech function from commanding to asking. This utterance was made by Will's mother who was waking up her son. Will had been missing for a few days because he was being held captive by a monster in another dimension.

The study aimed to analyze the translation techniques used in translating expressions of fear in the TV series Stranger Things Season 1 from English into Indonesian. The study found nine different translation techniques were used, with the most commonly used technique being "established equivalent" (74.49%). Other techniques included "reduction," "discursive creation," "borrowing," "modulation," "linguistic amplification," "explicitation," "compression linguistic," and "literal." The established equivalent technique involved finding a commonly accepted translation for a specific term or expression in the source language and using it consistently in the target language. On the other hand, the reduction technique involved condensing the source text to a shorter length while retaining the essential meaning. The discursive creation technique involved translating not only the content and meaning of a source text but also the social and cultural context in which the text was situated. On the other hand, the borrowing technique was employed in cases where equivalent terminology were absent in the target language. The modulation technique involved modifying the sentence structure and using a different language style in the translation to maintain the same meaning as the original text.

Finally, the linguistic amplification technique involved expanding the meaning of a source text to convey its full meaning in the target language, while the explicitation technique involved making implicit information in the source text more explicit in the target text. In line with these findings, several previous studies had also found the use of the established equivalent technique as the most used technique in subtitle translation (Indriyany, 2019; Masykur et al., 2019; Rianti et al., 2021; Romdhani et al., 2018). However, several other studies had also found translation techniques such as adaptation and literal to be the most used translation techniques in film subtitles (Fitria, 2015), Adaptation (Latif, 2018), literal (Budiana et al., 2017).



Besides using established equivalent techniques, the results also showed the large use of reduction techniques by reducing some of the elements in the source language. This finding was in line with several researchers who found the reduction translation technique to be one of the most widely used techniques (Fitria, 2020; Romdhani et al., 2018; Tambunan, 2021). Consistency regarding the large use of reduction translation techniques can also be seen from the findings of previous researchers in various genres such as drama (Fitria, 2019), cartoons (Pahamzah & Syariifah, 2019), drama (Nugrahani, 2021; Tambunan, 2021). These results also showed that the translation of subtitles in films was different from the translation techniques used in literary works such as novels (Nugrahani, 2021; Poyungi et al., 2021), holy books (Gunawan, 2019; Nababan et al., 2019), and a song (Hartono & Yuliasri, 2019; Simanjuntak et al., 2021). This finding can also be seen from the limited use of subtitles in a film that only contains two lines (Cintas & Remael, 2014).

Other findings in this study indicated that there was a shift in speech function due to the use of translation technique. Several translation techniques could cause a shift in meaning from the source language to the target language such as modulation, discursive creation, and reduction (Romdhani et al., 2018; Tiasadi et al., 2022). In line with previous research, this study found that the use of reduction techniques causes speech shifts. In addition, the shift in function was also inseparable from the competence of a translator. The competence of a translator can be in the form of procedural knowledge and decisions in using appropriate techniques such as commanding speeches which were still translated the same in the target language (Gunawan et al., 2022; Nababan, 2008; Nuraisiah et al., 2018). Overall, in this study, the translator is competent to apply appropriate techniques in transferring messages.

The findings of this study provided theoretical and practical implications for academics and translators. In the theoretical realm, these findings complement previous studies related to the use of translation techniques in films (Fadhilla & Basari, 2022; Lesmana et al., 2022; Sakulpimolrat, 2019; Simanjuntak et al., 2021). Then, the practical implications of the findings in this study were regarding the tendency to use reduction translation techniques in translating subtitles (Romdhani et al., 2018; Tiasadi et al., 2022). This happens due to the limited text in a film (Cintas & Remael, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals Following the results of the analysis, the findings concluded that the translation techniques established equivalent, reduction, and discursive creation were the most widely used in translating expressions of fear in the film series *Stranger Things* season 1. In the use of the established equivalent technique, subtitle translations of expressions fear were translated accurately into the target language. The application of this technique did not shift the meaning and linguistic units of expressions fear into the target language. However, the application of reduction and

discursive creation techniques distorted meaning. One of the reasons is the limited number of words that could be placed on the line in the subtitle. Then, the use of inappropriate techniques also caused a shift in the function of commanding speech to ask. Hence, the task of translating the manifestation of dread poses a significant barrier for translators. In addition to the requisite consideration of the suitable methodology, the translator must also ensure that the sentences in the target language align with the allotted space.

The significance of this study in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) is in its examination of translation approaches and their influence on effectively transmitting the structure and purpose of terror emotions in film subtitles, a domain that has received limited attention within the horror genre. This research expands the comprehension of how translation techniques can be influenced by factors such as translator ideology and competencies, as well as their impact on translation outcomes in terms of domestication and foreignization, through an analysis of the use of translation techniques in different film genres.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the manner in which fear is expressed, as well as the modifications that arise as a result of employing translation techniques. This research underscores the significance of procedural knowledge in comprehending culture and language in both the original and translated texts. This aspect holds special significance within the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), as educators and students frequently come across cultural idioms and subtleties that necessitate a comprehensive comprehension of both languages in order to effectively communicate intended messages. Additionally, this research is a chance for educators and students of English language to acknowledge the impact of translator skills and beliefs on the results of translation. Through an analysis of diverse translation approaches employed across various film genres and their resultant impacts, educators can gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies involved in translation. This understanding can facilitate the development of effective solutions to tackle the inherent obstacles encountered in the teaching and learning of the English language. This study makes a valuable contribution to the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) by enhancing our comprehension of translation procedures, their impact on the structure and purpose of fear-related phrases, and the various elements that influence their utilization. Furthermore, the significance of procedural expertise and cultural understanding in translation is underscored, as these factors are crucial for facilitating successful communication and fostering language acquisition.

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