Equivalence in French-English Subtitles' Translation of La Vie Scolaire

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Abstract
Translating movie subtitles can be challenging, especially in finding the equivalence between French and English as both languages have their own structure and writing style. However, equivalence translation can still be achieved by employing the Addition, Deletion and Category Shift strategies. This study helps translators to tackle the problems in subtitling to create a 'natural' translation despite the distinction between source language (SL) and target language (TL). Generally, the aim of this study is to explore the dominant strategy used to achieve equivalence in subtitle translation based on the movie *La Vie Scolaire*. The qualitative method is utilized by transcribing the movie subtitles and comparing the subtitle transcription of the SL (French) and the TL (English). The subtitles that were translated using the Addition, Deletion, and Category shifts strategy to achieve equivalence translation. The subtitles are, then, classified according to the respective categories that it belongs to. Findings indicate the most dominant strategy used by the translator to achieve equivalence is the Addition strategy that occupies 51% meanwhile the second and third most used strategy is Deletion and category shifts that occupies 31.3% and 17.7% respectively. Since there is less study that uses French movie as sample data, it is hoped that more research will be conducted related to subtitling strategy analysis by employing popular French films.
Keywords: Equivalence Translation, Movie Subtitling, Addition, Deletion, Category Shifts.

Introduction
As one of the applied linguistics domains, translation studies play a significant role in our life. According to the Cambridge Dictionary Online (n.d.), translation refers to a process of translating words of a language into another language. Similar with communication process, subtitling also intends to aid people in understanding the message. In this context, if the subtitling was done carelessly, the audience may have misunderstood the intended message. Abdul Halim (2019) defined subtitles as written form of dialogues, in a movie and television programs, either in a foreign or in the source language, and are forecasted at the bottom of the screen.

Over many decades, movie subtitles have always been a 'starter pack' if one were to watch a foreign language movie. If we were to be honest, not everyone would want to watch such a movie without subtitles unless they can understand and speak the same language. On

another note, many language learners tend to directly translate the foreign language according to how their mother tongue system works.

Moreover, translating foreign language subtitles especially French to English can be very complicated and difficult as both languages carry a different language system in terms of its morphology (system structure in a word), syntax (sentence structure), grammar, semantic (meaning of words) and so forth. Therefore, the limitations that exist in between one language and another is a driving force for translators to refine the translation, while sustaining the meaning of source language (SL) as closely as possible to the target language (TL) which is known as equivalence in translation; similarity or parallelism between two different things.

According to Marzukee (2020) equivalence means "a parallel word between two different languages". However, achieving equivalence in subtitling is effortful due to language systems complexity. Translators, thus, may add, delete words or phrases and modify the text (category shift) to achieve the equivalence in translation.

Literature Review
Translation and Equivalence in Translation

Mohd and Hassan (2008) mentioned that communication can be considered as effective if it contains the five (5) elements; comprehension, excitement, impact towards attitude, improvement in relationship and further actions afterwards. Thus, the significance of translation is not just about aiding people to understand the message, it also involves the ability of the translator to be able to influence the reader.

Mohd and Hassan (2008) also added that authors write because they want to influence the reader. Their artworks such as books, articles, novels and so forth has become the medium of communication to deliver the ideas, opinion, argument, and propaganda. To imply, translation is important because readers would not be influenced by something that they do not comprehend. In this context, if the subtitling process was done carelessly, the audience may misunderstand the intended message.

On the other hand, equivalence is when SL and TL share the 'sameness' value in meaning. Nida (1969) proposed that there are two types of equivalence which are *formal equivalence* and *dynamic equivalence*. The definition of both types of equivalence according to Nida are as follows:

1) Formal equivalence : the form and content of ST and TT should be compatible as much as possible
2) Dynamic equivalence : the message of ST should be translated in TT as natural as possible, thus, an effort is required

(As cited in Panou, 2013).

According to Nida (1969), there are 'four (4) basic requirements in translation' that needs to be followed to achieve the equivalent effect, which are: -
1. Making sense;
2. Conveying the spirit and manner of the original;
3. Having a natural and easy form of expression;
4. Producing a similar response
(As cited in Munday, 2008)

Koller (1995) proposed that translator who encounters with 'intra-textual', socio-cultural' and 'interlinguistic' problems while translating the ST into TT, can opt to revise the sentence structure in achieving equivalence translation (as cited in Hatim, 2013).

Baker (2011), however, argued that the term equivalence is always relative as it is influenced by the cultural and linguistic factors. This is due to non-equivalence problems that may occur as both SL and TL have different language system. Several strategies that are suggested by Baker to tackle the non-equivalence problems are as follows:

1) Translation by a more general word (*superordinate*)
2) Translation by a more neutral/ less expressive word
3) Translation by a cultural substitution
4) Translation by omission

Movie Subtitle Translation

Translating movie subtitle is not something that simply can be created. The nature of doing movie translation is always tricky and can be very difficult due to the restrictions, for instance limited time frame that exist in between one language and another. In this case, translator need to use short yet concise words, as much as possible. If the translator fails to do so, the viewers may be annoyed when their focus are diverted to the long-translated subtitle, which may then result in poor comprehension as they are not able to grasp the meaning properly.

Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) discussed in his book regarding the complexities of translation when it involves cultural elements. In aiding translator to tackle this kind of problem, he also illustrated the appropriate strategy that can be used by featuring the four (4) French films that were translated into Danish.

According to Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997:161), subtitling is "the process of providing synchronized captions for film and television dialogue" (As cited in Muhammad, 2016).

Translation Shifts in Subtitling

According to Catford (1965) translation shifts indicate "the changes of small linguistic form that occur between ST and TT." (As cited in Herawati et al., 2016). Translation shifts occurs whenever the formal equivalence cannot be achieved. Translators can opt to use this strategy when the ST and TT appears to be not compatible.

Catford (1965) divided the translation shifts into two major categories; (1) level shift; (2) category shifts which comprises *class shifts, structure shifts, unit shifts* and *intra system shift.* Below is the definition for each type of category shifts: -

Table 1
Category Shifts and its Definitions

Types of category shifts	Definition
Class shift	changes of word class
Structure shifts	changes of sentence arrangement
Unit shifts	changes of language unit hierarchy
Intra system shift	changes from singular to plural term (or vice versa)

Previous Research in Subtitle Translation

Recently, there has been an increasing amount of research in subtitling strategies. One of the notable research projects was done by (Suwandi and Leonie, 2021). Based on

Schjoldager's theory, this paper emphasizes on the six strategies comprises direct translation, oblique translation, paraphrase, deletion, addition, and condensation strategies that can be used to translate the complex sentences in English to Indonesian. The results from this research shows that 37.1% of the whole data used the *text reduction strategy* which proves that translator *deleted, condensed, or omit* some words due to the difficulties faced while translating the complex sentences.

This finding is further supported with another research journal that was done previously in 2018 by Pratama. The paper highlighted on the types of deletion that was applied in subtitling and the impacts in delivering message to viewers. His analysis is relevant to the current study that implies deletion in translating movie subtitle is unavoidable as it will divert viewers' attention to focus on the movie scenes.

Apart from the deletion and addition strategy, translation shift is also one of the most common strategies in translation and subtitling. Another relevant research is found by Herawati et al (2016) where an analysis based on "The Twilight Saga: New Moon" novel was done focusing in translating English participial adjectives into Indonesian. The category shifts strategy that includes class shift, structure shift, unit shift and intra-system shift is also used in translating the novel.

Methodology
Sample Data
This study is done based on the French movie entitled *La Vie Scolaire* which is also known as "School Life" in English. This 2019 teen comedy drama depicts the story of a new school counselor, named Samia who moves to a school in a suburb area in Paris. Even though she faces many challenges dealing with the rebel students, she tries to help them, especially when she gets to know Yanis, who is actually an excellent student but due to his family's problem, he becomes unmotivated to study and pursue his dream in film career ("*La Vie Scolaire,* 2019; Film," 2022)

Generally, this study will be based on the whole movie of which the duration is one hour and 52 minutes. This movie contains a total of 1407 transcription lines in French (ST) and 1407 of English subtitles translation (TT).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework
This study is carried out by relying on Nida's (1969) theory of equivalence where he emphasizes that there are two types of equivalence which are dynamic and formal equivalence. Dynamic equivalence signifies that the message of ST and TT should be compatible whereas formal equivalence can be achieved by making an effort so that the message of ST can be translated in TT as natural as possible. (As cited in Panou, 2013).

Apart from Nida's (1969) theory, this study also employed the Catford's (1965) model of category shifts. Achieving formal equivalence can be challenging when ST and TT appear to be not compatible in terms of the writing style and cultural terms, hence, the translator can also use translation shifts strategy as proposed by (Catford, 1965). According to him, translation indicates the "the changes of small linguistic form that occur between ST and TT." (As cited in Herawati et al., 2016). Apart from that he also has divided the translation shifts into two major categories; (1) level shift; (2) category shifts which comprises *class shifts, structure shifts, unit shifts* and *intra system shift.*

The writer, thus, came to a conclusion that achieving equivalence translation means "modifications" need to be made for certain cases especially when French and English have

their own language system especially in writing style and culture terms that can be incompatible. In fact, modifications in this study refers to the Addition, Deletion and Category Shifts strategy that are used to achieve equivalence in translating the subtitles of School Life's movie.

Method and Procedure

This study employed a qualitative method where a content analysis is done based on the transcribed subtitles of the French movie, *La Vie Scolaire* in which French is the ST, meanwhile English is the TT. After doing a comparison between both ST and TT transcriptions, only the related subtitles that used Addition, Deletion and Category Shifts strategy will be tabulated accordingly for the data analysis.

Furthermore, under each strategy, an extra column on type of sentences (for Addition and Deletion Strategy) and types of shifts (for Category shifts strategy) were added to categorize the word.

Data analysis template are as follows

Table 2

Strategy Analysis Template

No.	Movie Transcription (ST)	Subtitle Translation (TT)	Added / Deleted phrases	Part of Speech/ Type of sentences
Addition Strategy				
1	*Tu peux les faire entrer?*	***Can you please leave and ask them to come in?***	***Can you please leave***	Interrogative
2.	*s'te plait.*	***Come on**, please?*	***Come on***	Phrasal Verb
Deletion Strategy				
1.	*Je **cours** pas*	*I'm not*	***Cours** (running)*	Verb
2.	*Calme-toi, **calme-toi***	*Calm down*	***calme-toi***	Imperative

Types of sentences that were classified in the addition and deletion analysis template (additional column) are based on four English's types of sentences which are:

1. Imperative sentence (command)
2. Interrogative sentence (question)
3. Declarative sentence (statement)
4. Exclamatory sentence (exclamation)

For category shifts strategy, an extra column on the types of shifts (Catford, 1965:73) is added to categorize what types of translation shifts strategy that are used.

Table 3

Category Shifts Strategy Analysis Template

ST	TT	Types of Shifts
Musique	*Music room.*	Unit shift (word-phrase)
Ses fesses	*His butt*	Intra system shift (plural-singular)

Once the data of each strategy is tabulated, the author will count the total of data from each strategy and its percentage.

Total of Addition / Deletion data
─────────────────────────── ✖ 100

Figure 1: Formula to count the percentage of each strategy

After the author acquired the percentage of each strategy, a histogram to portray the dominant strategy used to achieve equivalence will be presented.

Result and Discussion
Finding shows that out of the 1407 subtitles, there are 288 subtitles that used the Addition, Deletion and category shifts strategy to achieve equivalence in translation.

Analysis of The Dominant Strategy Used to Achieve Equivalence
Chart 1 below demonstrates the strategies used in the film.

Strategies Used to Achieve Equivalence in Subtitle Translations

Percentage (%)

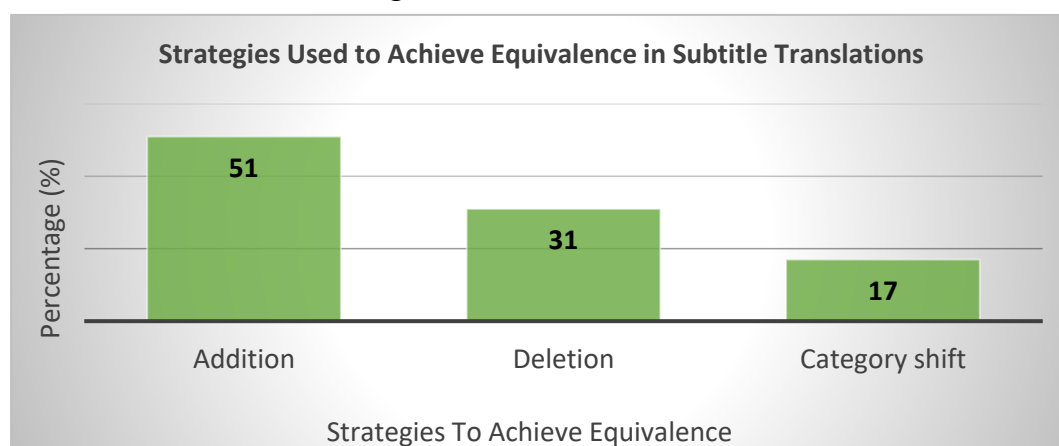| Addition: 51 | Deletion: 31 | Category shift: 17 |

Strategies To Achieve Equivalence

Chart 1: Dominant Strategy Used to Achieve Equivalence

Based on the final analysis of the data, it is found that the most dominant strategy employed by the translator in achieving equivalence in translation is the Addition strategy which occupies 51% of the 288 total data. The second most dominant strategy is deletion with 31.3%, while the least dominant strategy is category shift that records 17.7% out of the whole data.

Addition Strategy Analysis
Addition is one of the strategies that is used by the translator. In this case, adding word(s) or phrases is necessary for certain scenes in the movie that need further explanation so that the audience can understand the context better. The study recorded that a total of 51% of data used addition strategy, which occupies 147 out of 288 data identified.

Table 6
Addition Strategy Analysis

No.	Movie Transcription (ST)	Subtitle Translation(TT)	Added phrases	Part of Speech/ Type of sentences
1	*Voici Dylan et Moussa.*	*this is Dylan and Moussa,* ***your monitors****.*	***your monitors.***	Noun
2.	*Hé, accompagne-moi,*	***Come on,*** *walk meto class*	***Come on***	Phrasal Verb
3.	*Eh, Oh Yanis pas de ça avec moi.*	***stop that right now****, none of that with me.*	***stop that right now***	Imperative

For Sample 1 (*Voici Dylan et Moussa),* the phrase **your monitors** is added in the subtitle translation to indicate that Dylan and Moussa are the monitors. In the movie transcription, the word 'monitors' were not mentioned, as in the previous scene, Madame Zibra has introduced the team of the School Life Office that includes Dylan and Moussa. However, the translator decided to add the phrase because the audience may have missed it or forgotten the roles of Dylan and Moussa.

For Sample 2 (*Hé, accompagne-moi)* which is transcribed as *(Hey, walk me to class)* in TT, the translator added the phrasal verb *Come on* to emphasize that Yanis wants Fodé to walk him to his class.

In translating Sample 3 (*Eh, Oh Yanis pas de ça avec moi)*, the translator added the imperative sentence *stop that right now* to illustrate that in the scene Madame Zibra wants Yanis to stop fooling around. According to the author's opinion, apart from delivering the message, translating subtitles also needs to deliver the emotion that the character portrays in the movie.

Deletion Strategy Analysis
Deleting word(s) or phrase(s) in translating movie subtitles is also required especially when there are repeated words or pointless phrases that do not need to be included in TT. In this study, there are 90 subtitles that utilized the Deletion strategy which implies the percentage is 31.3%.

Table 7
Deletion Strategy Analysis

No.	Movie Transcription(ST)	Subtitle Translation(TT)	Deleted word/phrases	Part of Speech/ Type of sentences
1.	*C'est quoi? Je comprends pas*	*I don't get it*	*C'est quoi?* (What is it?)	Interrogative
2.	*Mais si... si, c'est un cauchemar*	*This is a nightmare*	*Mais si...* (But yes…)	Conjunction
3.	*Le lundi matin, on vacommencer à 9h par couture. Oh oh les garçons!*	*On Monday morning, you start at 9:00 am with sewing.*	*Oh oh les garçons!* (Oh boys!)	Exclamatory

In Sample 1, the translator only translated the sentence *Je comprends pas (I don't get it)* as it is already enough to imply that Madame Zibra does not understand when her boyfriend told her that he could get him up to six years in prison. The interrogative sentence *C'est quoi?* thus, is considered as an unnecessary information.

Meanwhile, Sample 2 shows that the phrase *Mais si...* is deleted as the translation *This is a nightmare* is already enough to deliver Samia's frustrated feelings in the scene. Therefore, the translator might consider the phrase as unnecessary.

In Sample 3, the translator removed the exclamatory sentence *Oh oh les garçons!* as it is also unnecessary to be translated which signifies deleting it would not impact the audiences' comprehension and, though deleting the phrase does not temper the overall meaning, the pragmatic meaning of frustration or anger will not be portrayed through the deletion.

Category Shifts Strategy Analysis
Category shifts or Translation shifts strategy is used when achieving formal equivalence seems impossible due to the incompatibility of ST and TT in terms of writing style and cultural meaning. Result shows that a total of 17.7% (51 subtitles) used the category shifts strategy in translating the movie.

Table 8
Category Shifts Strategy Analysis

ST	TT	Types of shifts
au Mcdo?	***Can we have a*** McDonald's?	Unit shift (word-phrase)
Certifié *par la* street	*Street **certified***	Class shift (Verb-Adjective)
C'est du français ou des maths?	*Is this French or **math?***	Intra system shift (singular-plural)
J'en peux plus J' en peux plus **Subject** object **verb** adverb	***I can't take it anymore*** I can't **take** **it** anymore **Subject** modal verb **verb** **object** adverb	Structural shift (SOV-SVO)

In the first sample, the translator used the unit shift strategy to translate the ST into TT. According to the table above, the line *au Mcdo?* is translated into *Can we have a McDonald's?* which indicates that there is a change of linguistic form from word to phrase.

In contrast, the second example portrays that the translator utilized the class shift type. The word *Certifié* is a French verb, which corresponds to English passive form. In the ST (*Certifié par la* street) means certified by the street in direct translation. However, the translator decided to translate it into *Street certified* that belongs to a different word class which is Adjective.

Apart from that, the translator also used the intra system shift type in translating the movie. Based on the third example on the table, the phrase *des maths* in French is plural but becomes singular as in *math* when it is translated into TT. The translation can be in math (American form) or maths (British form). In this case, however, the translator chose to use the British form.

The last sample of data *(J'en peux plus)* used the structural shift type where there is a change of sentence arrangement. Based on the table, the structure arrangement of ST *(J'en peux plus)* is Subject-Object-Verb (SOV), but when it is translated into TT (*I can't take it anymore)*, the structure was changed into Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). Furthermore, this is considered as the most suitable strategy in translating the above line as it produces an equivalence translation that can be understood by the audience.

Conclusion

Equivalence is one of the most notable theories in the translation domain. It was used in every type of translational work, especially in novel and film subtitle translation. Despite the incongruences in writing style between the ST (French) and TT (English), equivalence in translation can still be achieved by using Addition, Deletion and Category Shifts strategy.

In this study, it is found that the most dominant strategy that was utilized in achieving equivalence translation in the "School Life" movie is the addition strategy. This implies that there were many times where the translator felt the need to add words or phrases so that

the viewers could understand the dialogue and story line better. This is mainly due to the ST and TT are different in language and culture (Abdul Halim, 2022). Apart from that, it is also identified that French uses less words in communicating with each other, yet it can still be understood among them. However, when the translator wants to translate the subtitles, most of it requires him to add words or phrases so that the audience, especially those who do not speak French, can understand the story line.

Based on the movie, the writer identified that French uses less words in expressing their opinions and communicating with each other, yet it can still be understood among them. However, the result of this study portrays that the most dominant strategy utilized in achieving equivalence translation is the Addition.

Despite the numerous previous research and studies in the movie subtitling, there are still loopholes that need to be filled in. Firstly, although there are several studies that were done related to equivalence translation, there is, however, less study that uses French movie as a sample data. In fact, most of the studies conducted that the author has found are related to subtitling strategy analysis of English movies to Indonesian.

To conclude, this study is intended to facilitate those who work in the industry for instance, the translators, subtitlers and those who are keen in broadening and enhancing the understanding of the theory in equivalence translation. Furthermore, junior subtitlers or those who have just embarked in the industry may use the study as a reference on how to tackle the translation from French to English subtitles when they are in charge of any French movies at work. Along with that, the writer also hopes that more study and research in translation domains that employ popular French films or novels as samples will be done in future.

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