

US HEGEMONY IN THE INDONESIAN SUBTITLE OF THE ACT OF VALOR? A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Any text, actually, has a hidden intention owned by the author, meanwhile, a translator also has beliefs and values in their mind. This article aims at describing US racism and discrimination in the American movie ‘The Act of Valor’ and its translation into Indonesian. Analysis is focused on the main characters by applying 5 key elements proposed by Wodak’s DHA theory. Data were taken from the subtitle of the movie ‘The Act of Valor’ and its translation. Firstly, the racism issues are identified. Then, its translation into Indonesia is compared to source text (ST). The result shows that the translator transfers the ideology delivered in the movie, racialism and also discredit a religion and some nations. This ideology is transferred into Indonesian context. The translator does not manipulate the message to suit with Indonesian context where *jihad* does not mean terror.

Keywords: CDA, AVT, ideology, terrorist, racist.

Introduction

As a big country which has open policy, Indonesia usually becomes world target market. That is why; some Hollywood films are often released in Indonesia earlier than other countries even U.S., such as, Minion, Fast and Furious 7, Avenger: Age of Ultron etc (Irwansyah, 2015). This phenomenon, of course, becomes a big chance for the subtitlers or Audiovisual Translation (AVT) practices. Even, many fun subs also grow that published some free Indonesian subtitle for new movie.

Films might also function as medium to influence others. Through films, people or organization can build a positive image, strong nationality; or gain sympathy. Actually, film as a multimodality product can be regarded as a discourse which consists of verbal and also nonverbal elements arranged to communicate certain ideology. As stated by Fairclough (1989) language is considered as the primary domain and the material form of ideology (Mansourabadi & Karimnia, 2013). This ideology might be the reflection of ideology of the film writer or director, or the society.

As a language phenomenon, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) research is commonly used to explore the relation of language, power, and ideology behind a discourse (Fairclough, 1995). CDA does not merely describe the linguistic aspect or language form but also the aspects behind the production of the text. It can disclose how the language is used in certain social and political context for a certain ideology. CDA discovers the underlying and often implicit ideological and power relations reflected in spoken and written discourse.

Currently, there are some CDA researches which have discovered power struggling in various political texts, business, and news. For instance, some researchers have implemented CDA research related to business (Maros, Nadia, & Nasharudin, 2016; Rajandran, 2014), mass media (Abdullah, 2014; Fauzan, 2014) which view how people or institution manage their power in language. Related to translation studies (TS), some researchers have used CDA to analyze the ideology in the translation of political texts (Hosseini & Zonoozi, 2011), business (Valdeón, 2009) which show how translators manipulates for national or business interest. However, there are still limited CDA researches on AVT.

One of the films which promotes American patriotism but regarded to have racist propaganda is The Act of Valor released on February 2012 (Rodis, 2012). This film performed 16 Filipinos tried to attack U.S. through suicide bombing. This action was planned by a Russian terrorist (Abu Shabal) and helped by a Jewish smuggler (Christo). This movie also mentioned Philippines and Indonesia as the places of terrorist training camps which have been visited by Abu Shabal many times. Although this film had been remained top 5 for several weeks (Rodis, 2012), this movie becomes controversy since Rudy Asercion, the head of the San Francisco Bataan Post of American Legion, launched global petition to stop stereotyping Filipinos as terrorist in American movies. His petition can be seen in online petition (<http://www.change.org/petition/the-president-of-the-united-states-stop->

stereotyping-filipinos-as-terrorist-in-american-movies). This film also makes some Jews irritated. Therefore, it is interesting to analyze how translator translates some racial issues and power abuse in this movie into Indonesian language and Indonesian context.

The study was conducted by the following questions: (1) how was the racist issue being exposed in the film?, (2) how does the translator deal with racist ideology in the movie? This article aimed at discussing how language is used as medium of war ideology by using CDA Approach in TS.

Translation is an interdisciplinary study that involves many other sciences in its activities, either linguistics, psychology, even social science (Ardi, 2015). The translation has a function as a bridge in the communication between two communities who have different language (Bell, 1991; Hanrahan et al., 2015) with different cultural background. In fact, a translator does not only transfer messages from a text into another language, but he/she might also transfer the author's ideology. Meanwhile, translator him/herself also has some beliefs and values that he/she might want to share with others (Hamerlain, 2005; Kruger, 2012). Thus, translator is not tabula rasa (Nida & Taber, 1982).

Moreover, language is not used in a context less vacuum, rather, it is used in a host of discourse contexts; contexts which are impregnated with the ideology of social systems and institutions (Nida in Hamerlain, 2005). It means any text has its own ideology which tied by the context of social system and institution of the host. Based on this condition, there might be a conflict of interest between translator and movie writer/author whenever they have different view or ideology about the text being translated into target language.

The critical term in CDA is often related to exploring power relations in a discourse (Fairclough, 1989). A discourse, actually, negotiates, manipulates, expresses, rejects and challenges power interpersonally in based on institutional and social context. It means CDA may disclose the ideological behind specific ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie to be more visible. Besides, there is a relation between textual construction and social condition, institutional, and ideological within the production of a discourse.

Similarly, van Dijk (2008, p. 352) defines that CDA studies the way of social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. Power behind discourse is the social order that holds the power to create, force, and distribute conventions and enforce action against the object. Actually, there are some major schools in CDA. One of them, Fairclough (1989) proposes a framework of three dimension analysis; a discourse as a text, a discourse as a discourse practice, and a discourse as social practice. Secondly, van Dijk proposes socio-cognitive approach in disclosing ideology behind the text. Then, Wodak uses the context of history in interpreting a discourse. Next, van Leeuwen focuses on the how social-actors are shown in a text that can be through inclusion or exclusion from the discourse. Lastly, Mills emphasizes on the feminist-discourses.

Since The Act of Valor has controversial issues related to racism & antisemitism, this analysis applies Wodak's theory by using Discourse-Historical Approaches (DHA). Wodak and Meyer (2001, pp. 72–73) proposes some elements in analyzing text related to race, ethnicity, and nationhood. There are at least five elements, which can be summarized into the following purposes: (1) Describe how persons are named and referred to linguistically. (2) Describe the traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to the main characters. (3) Identify the means of arguments and argumentation schemes use to justify and legitimate the exclusion, discrimination, suppression, and exploitation of others. (4) Identify the source of perspective or points of view of naming, attributions and arguments expressed. These information are describe in this paper.

Method

This research used qualitative methods. Sources of data were the English and Indonesian subtitle of the movie The Act of Valor (2012). This American war film was chosen since it deals with racist issues about a deadly terrorist plot against the U.S. elite team of Navy SEALS (Rodis, 2012). This film was released on 24 February 2012 and nominated at the 70th Golden Globe Awards for Best Original Song (Wikipedia). Data were collected purposively by comparing the utterances regarding to American and Jihad issues spoken by the narrator (Dave chief of the team), protagonists and antagonist characters and secondary data from relevant documents. The next step is the analysis of translation into Indonesian produced by a funs sub published online at <http://dl.opensubtitles.org/>. The data then were compared and the areas of similarity and difference between the ST and TT will be identified to understand in which categories the translator deviated from the dominant ideology of the ST.

Moreover, Silverman (in Wodak & Meyer, 2008, p. 32) suggests triangulation procedures to ensure validity in DHA. DHA's triangulatory approach is based on the concept of context which takes into account four levels: (1) the immediate language- or text-internal co-text; (2) the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses; (3) the extra-linguistic (social) level, which is termed the 'context of situation' and explained by middle-range theories; and (4) the broader sociopolitical and historical settings.

Results and Discussion

Ideology behind a text can be analyzed by using CDA. The data revealed that there were some racist issues as the way of social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are built in The Act of Valor film. This American war film was released in 2012 directed by Mike McCoy and Scott Waugh (Wikipedia). This film is written by Kurt Johnstad and produced by Bandito Brothers in the United States. This American film uses language to abuse power and discrimination toward certain group religion and nation that can be seen through labels & description given to certain group of people.

In order to find the answer of the research questions above, how racist issues are exposed 5 basic elements in the movie and its translation were analyzed based on Wodak's theory. One of the important elements is how character named in the discourse. There are two characters which play as troublemaker in this movie is Abu Shabal and Christo. Abu Shabal is described as a Russian which has converted and labeled as terrorist. Meanwhile, Christo is a Jewish smuggler. Here one of the quotations:

Datum 1

ST	TT
00:18:45,374 --> 00:18:47,083	00:18:45,374 --> 00:18:47,250
We are not separatists.	<i>Kami bukan separatis.</i>
00:19:16,822 --> 00:19:18,906	00:19:16,822 --> 00:19:19,073
LT: Abu Shabal is a Chechen terrorist	<i>Abu Shabal adalah seorang teroris Chechen.</i>

The data above were taken in the SEAL meeting when they try to understand what they are going to face. In this meeting, there are two people mentioned, Abu Shabal and Christo or Mikhail Troykovich, a Jewish smuggler. Abu Shabal reflects the name of Islam name. Although Abu Shabal claimed that he is not a separatist, he is labeled as terrorist rather than fighter for the independence of Chechnya after they watched the recorded video. In the examples Target Text (TT) used established equivalent that transfer the American beliefs or perspective into TT.

In this movie Abu Shabal (Russian) is described as a Chechen terrorist who has visited Philippines and Indonesian terrorist camps by U.S. Navy SEAL officer. Of course, by mentioning Philippines and Indonesia, it will discredit both countries as the terrorist camps or sources of terrorism by using this film. Abu Shabal was also attributed as intellectual actor who planned suicide bombing to kill U.S. ambassador and his son at an International School in Philippines in the beginning of the film and suicide bombing to U.S. as the main plot of the movie (minute 19:19 and minutes 49:35 & 49:43) as seen in the following quotations:

Datum 2.

00:49:37,189 --> 00:49:43,687	00:49:35,889 --> 00:49:37,723
That is exactly what I'm thinking. Shabal wants to kill Americans, Christo knows how to get fuckers inside America.	Shabal ingin membunuh orang Amerika,
00:49:43,688 --> 00:49:49,187	Christo tahu bagaimana menyelundupkan bedebah ke Amerika.
This could be big trouble in little timing fellas. They're gonna hit us at home.	Ini adalah ancaman keamanan, kawan.

Mereka bisa menyerang kita di rumah sendiri.

This quotation shows that Shabal is attributed a man wants to kill American by sending some Philippines people (which are called as fuckers) to commit suicide bombing into U.S. (minute 49:43).

Moreover, this movie depicted Abu Shabal threat the U.S. as a part of Jihad as quoted in his speech, as shown in the following data:

Datum 3

00:18:33,895 --> 00:18:38,683	Segala puji bagi Allah, Tuhan semesta alam yang telah menciptakan kita sebagai Muslim
Glory to Allah, Lord of the world, that has created us as Muslims and delivered us with jihad	dan mengamanahkan kita jihad di Jalan-Nya.
on His direct Path	Izinkan aku jelaskan pada kalian, orang

Let me explain this to you Americans.

00:19:08,522 --> 00:19:14,360
 America will never be safe until safety
 becomes a reality for us.

Amerika.

Amerika, kalian tidak akan pernah selamat,
 sampai keselamatan menjadi milik kami.

This speech firstly started with Muslim praise to God and ended with this threat to show and reflect Abu Shabal as Muslim. Then, he stated that 'Muslims ... and delivered us with jihad on his direct Path.' By using this statement, this movie builds justification that the Muslims society do Jihad. However, this movie uses American's perspective to builds the perspective to the viewer that jihad means war to kill others, especially American, or terrorism. Of course, this statement discredits all Muslims and labels all Muslims as terrorists since it uses Islamic attributes, as mentioned in minutes 18 jihad (several times), 19:41 Allahu Akbar, 56:46 praying to Mecca. These words translated into *jihad, Allahu Akbar, sembahyang menghadap ke Mekkah* which discredited Muslims as terrorist religion, and do terrorism as part of Islam. These utterances were translated by using established equivalent that discredit Muslims as in ST without any manipulation into Indonesian context. Of course, it might cause hatred to Muslim society.

Related to the choice of name, Abu Shabal is related to the name of South Philippines terrorist leader, Abu Sayyaf. Actually, Abu Shabal is a Russian man named as Yuri Yevgeny as seen in minutes 46 in the movie before converted. Meanwhile, based on the history, Chechnya is a Muslim country that wants to be an independent country or join Turkey (Wikipedia). The war between Chechnya and Russia had started since 18 century since Chechnya did not want being annexed by Russia. After being occupied for a long time, Chenchen separatists committed guerillas and suicide bombing in 2000 to Russia (Wikipedia). As a result, Russia conducted ethnocide of Chechnya until 2004. This war finally ended in 2009. Chenchen people are not Russian who was converted but they were Muslim community. Therefore, this fact is different from the image created by the film since Abu Shabal was told as a converted, and become a terrorist after become a Muslim. Moreover, U.S. position was actually, helping Chechnya or supporting the separation of Chechnya from Russia (Wikipedia). However, this movie put Chechnya versus America. Of course, it might cause hatred to Chechnya, or Muslim society in general.

Furthermore, this film misleads the concept of Jihad which means as terror to others. This film builds it by repeating the term jihad and jihadist several times and mostly translated into jihad and jihadis which are attributed to terrorist group. For example, it can be seen in following data:

Datum 4

Tsu	Tsa
00:08:03,566 --> 00:08:06,026	00:08:03,566 --> 00:08:06,193
to a jihadist network out of Southeast Asia.	dengan jaringan Jihad di Asia Tenggara
00:49:25,523 --> 00:49:29,251	00:49:22,709 --> 00:49:26,587
He's an old jihadi, that couldn't give a rest-ass about money or drugs.	Dia jihadis yang tidak peduli sama sekali tentang uang atau narkoba.

The first example (minute 08:03) was uttered by Mr Ross, a U.S. intelligent. In Source text (ST) context, jihad and jihadist were used with negative connotation that refers terrorist. Even in the second example Abu Shabal is labeled as jihadi which also attributed with immoral traits by Navy SEAL officer. This word repeated through the movie. In the TT, Jihad Network is translated literally into 'jaringan jihad'. Linguistically, in Islam jihad means the true effort to achieve a good things, or Islamic holy war that refers to war to control the passion. Therefore, jihad does not mean terror to other countries or other societies. Even in Indonesia, actually, there is a group of Muslims who commit education and do good things to other that is named as 'Kelompok Jihad' (jihad group). However, this movie has misinformed the term by repeating jihad as terrorist activities and terrorist group and Muslims have to do jihad. This racial issue is delivered in the subtitles since it is transferred by the translator without any correction into TT.

Moreover, this film also builds the image or put that the Muslims believe that Jihad or kill other by suicide bombing will bring them to heaven. It can be seen in the following data:

Datum 5

00:56:58,290 --> 00:57:02,088	00:56:55,694 --> 00:56:59,392
Drop one of these and <u>you</u> are all going to heaven	Kalian jatuhkan salah satu dari ini, dan <u>kita</u> semua akan masuk surga.
01:28:53,234 --> 01:28:55,881	01:29:56,575 --> 01:29:57,974

You will meet your husband in heaven

Kamu akan bertemu suamimu di surga.

These statements were made by Abu Shabal to persuade the Filipinos to commit suicide bombing. The first statement was told toward 16 Filipinos who would go to U.S. and the second to a Filipinos woman to kill herself as the way to come to heaven and met her husband. In the first statement, translator applied modulation technique by translated ‘you’ into ‘kita’. It builds an argumentation that it is Muslim beliefs (compared with subtitle in minute 18:33). Even, it change the image that it is only an allure since there is an exclusion in ST while in TT in become inclusion of Abu Shabal. Then, in the second statement, it creates the image that Muslim is not gentle or use woman for a bad things, terrorism. This also translated by establish equivalent technique. This also creates image that Muslims was uneducated people who just believed that kill others is part of devotion to God. Filipinos was depicted as poor and uneducated people.

On the other hand, different image was made to Christo, Jewish smuggler who helped Abu Shabal to send bomber into U.S.

Datum 6

00:07:51,999 --> 00:07:58,442

Yeah, and he gives back a lot to this community over here with medical clinics, schools, political donations, you name it

00:07:41,961 --> 00:07:44,463

Ya, dan dia banyak menyumbang pada masyarakat di sini berupa klinik-klinik kesehatan, sekolah-sekolah, sumbangan politik, pokoknya banyak.

00:07:58,723 --> 00:08:01,496

So this is the deal, they are extremely loyal to him over here.

00:07:49,719 --> 00:07:51,720

Masyarakat di sini sangat loyal pada Christo

00:08:06,194 --> 00:08:09,237

Apparently, Christo and one of the guys running the network,

00:08:06,194 --> 00:08:09,404

Sepertinya Christo juga salah seorang yang mengelola jaringan itu.

At the beginning of the movie, the conversation between Mr. Ross and Ms. Morales (U.S. Intelligent) in Costa Rica, both talked about Christo. As a smuggler, he was described as a good man. He did donation for many social acts so that the society loyal to him. Even, since there are number social acts that cannot be mentioned one by one that is expressed ‘you name it’ and translated into ‘pokoknya banyak’. This scene exposed the humanity side of Christo that is never exposed to Shabal.

In another scene, as he was caught by U.S. army, he was interrogated on his boat when he was about to escape.

Datum 7

01:03:44,009 --> 01:03:45,336

You're Jewish, right?

01:03:47,073 --> 01:03:48,573

Kamu Yahudi, kan?

01:04:15,342 --> 01:04:18,718

So, he came up with his incredible idea because of his beliefs

01:04:18,729 --> 01:04:23,108

Jadi dia datang dengan ide luar biasa ini karena keyakinannya.

01:03:38,055 --> 01:03:41,611

So, how is you think you working with these jihadi folks then?

01:03:41,609 --> 01:03:45,820

Jadi bagaimana kamu bisa bekerja dengan kelompok jihad ini?

01:04:20,715 --> 01:04:22,352

I don't necessarily share his beliefs

01:04:23,109 --> 01:04:27,571

aku tidak perlu percaya keyakinannya. tapi dia orang yang pintar.

In this dialogue, he was depicted as a Jews and has the same interest with Abu Shabal, but he did not have the same belief as Abu Shabal. He stated that ‘I don’t necessarily share the belief’ that is Jihad (in this context means terror) is the way they get into heaven. Again, it is the way to build exclusion to Abu Shabal activities by Christo (Jews). Moreover, at the beginning of the movie, Christo’s traits was described as a good father, loves children since all children know and like him, and also love his family very much. Meanwhile, Abu Shabal life was never exposed. In another dialog between Christo and Abu Shabal, it was also described that Christo wants to stop doing crime, but Abu Shabal forced him to smuggle the 16 Filipino to U.S. Although this movie has depicted that as a criminal Christo’s trait not totally bad by showing his humanity side, it triggered protested in U.S. since it shows that the people who commit terror to U.S. are the Jews.

The way of describing both of criminals is different since background family of Abu Shabal was not explored and no humanity side was exposed. Even no Muslims ritual he conducted. Meanwhile, Christo's family are exposed, his social action are exposed. Even this movie clarify that he is not drugs dealer but only weapons and drug smuggler. This movie preview American perspective in viewing the terror toward American which was conducted by Muslims. Of course it builds propaganda to hate Muslims and build the image Muslim as terrorist. This movie also relates this terror with controversial 9/11 incident when the twin tower of WTC attacked by Al Qaeda. It is done by the expression:

Datum 8

01:07:19,410 --> 01:07:25,448
It's gonna make 9/11 look like a fucking walking park, the Grand Central Park

01:07:23,289 --> 01:07:26,791
Ini akan membuat kejadian 11 September seperti jalan-jalan di Taman Kota.

By Otto when he interrogated Christo. The dialogues above translated by using established equivalence and transferred and reduced bad word.

As stated previously, this movie also creates bad stereotype to Muslim Filipinos as terrorist by depicting them as the bomber as the Philippines.

Datum 9

00:56:42,103 --> 00:56:46,005
Dude, these like 16 Filipinos down there
00:56:48,254 --> 00:56:50,141
Filipinos definitely not skinnies

00:57:53,981 --> 00:57:56,703
It has Shabal with unknown number of jihadist

00:56:39,354 --> 00:56:43,148
Bung, sepertinya ada 16 orang Filipina di sana
00:56:44,776 --> 00:56:47,736
- Orang Filipina?
- Orang Filipina pastinya tidak kurus-kurus.

00:57:51,050 --> 00:57:54,219
Di dalamnya ada Shabal dan beberapa jihadis

This quotation show how this movie builds stereotyping of Filipinos as terrorist. It also supported by the praying to Mecca to show them as Muslim in next scene as they got out the truck before being sent to U.S. This what make Rudi Asercion create a petition to stop movie stereotyping Filipinos as terrorist (Rodis, 2012). Finally, it builds a final perspective that is said by narrator to respect other religion in the closing of the movie.

Datum 10

01:39:19,273 --> 01:39:20,880
<i>Trouble no one about his religion</i>

<i>respects others and their views</i>
and demand that they respect yours

01:39:58,742 --> 01:40:01,244
<i>Hargai agama orang lain..

<i>Hormati orang lain dan pandangannya..
<i>dan minta mereka menghormati pandanganmu..

This comment shows American's perspective to respect others and do not trouble other about his religion. This expression seems to be pointed to Muslims society to respect other and do not do terrorism. Meanwhile terrorist was not a doctrine of Islam religion.

Based on the discussion above, this study attempted to investigate and analyze some linguistic strategies on both lexical to reveal the creator's and translators' hidden ideological trends in the movie "The Act of Valor". Juxtaposing the original English texts with the translation products, the results of the study at the lexical levels share the same ideology between what the author had meant to convey and what has been rendered in the subtitle. The author used racial issues to build negative image toward Muslims, Chechen fighters, Muslims Filipinos, and Indonesia. However, it mitigated the Jews (Christo) as criminal and terrorist who helped bombing to U.S. by just exposing him as smuggler and exposing him as a good man who loved by children. The translator mostly maintain the message and lexical choice in TT, he only used once modulation technique by translating 'you' into '*kita*' that causes the image of Abu Shabal as a liar is not appeared in TT (inclusion)

Conclusions

Every discourse has an ideology. However, the act of translating a discourse across languages is never neutral. This article has portrayed the way of an American film, The Act of Valor, builds a good image to U.S. as a country that defends for human life, secure their country, and patriotic on one side. On the other hand, this film abuses the power to discredit other nations as the source of terrorist (Philippines, Indonesia, & Russia).

This movie also discredits Muslims by putting the term Jihadist as terrorist. In the translation, which mostly used amplification, established equivalent, and reduction techniques also contributed positively toward the ideology of this film. It has been proven, time and again, that translation can emphasize differences, perpetuate the wrong stereotypes, and deliberately misinformation. The results of the present research prove that subtitlers perpetuate the ideological that is the basic discursive strategy of positive self-presentation toward America and negative other-presentation (Muslims, Filipina, Indonesia, Russia, and Chechnya). The present study also indicates that Critical Discourse Analysis can be an suitable method for detection of unfair and unscrupulous language in the translation.

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