



## **Translation of the Culture-Specific Items in Malaysian Children's Animated Movies Subtitles**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Throughout the decades, the significant roles of the Audiovisual Translation (AVT) as the vehicle for interpreting the information and aiding the children's learning process of other cultures through the films have been widely discussed and studied. However, numerous scholars of the translation field agreed that transferring a language mainly one that is heavily influenced by Culture-Specific Items (CSI) proves to be the most complex issue faced by the translators. Most of the studies reported that applying unsuitable translation strategies to translate cultural items has resulted in the lack of consistency, accuracy and less impactful translation. This study identified the types of CSI found in Malaysian children's movies and the translation strategies for the CSI in the subtitles of Malaysian children's movies. Using the descriptive research design, this study employed a quantitative approach to reach the findings. The samples used were two Malaysian animated movies namely *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula* and *Keris Siamang Tunggal*. With the application of two theories - Nedergaard-Larsen's (1993) Culture-bound problems in subtitling and Pedersen's (2011) taxonomy of Extralinguistic Cultural References - the types of CSI and the translation strategies for the CSI were identified quantitatively using content analysis. The findings of this study revealed that all types of CSI such as Society, Culture, Geography and History are present in the samples. As for the translation strategies, it has been found that the translators favored the source language-oriented translation strategies such as Retention and Direct Translation when translating cultural items. In conclusion, the overall translation of the cultural items in the films can be said to be appropriate in terms of the simplicity of the structure and comprehensible usage of vocabularies that can resonate well with the targeted group of viewers for this type of genre, which is children. In addition, the

application of various translation strategies showed that the translators did not only intend to give the target audience the accessibility to the source culture but also produce the translation that is able to promote Malaysia's cultural identity as well as its artistic values to the world.

Keywords: *Audiovisual translation (AVT), Source Language (SL), Target Language (TL), Culture-Specific Item (CSI), translation strategies, Malay animated movies*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the years, the entertainment industry has become one of the most demanded industries that successfully gained millions of followers globally. With the formation of complex societies over the years, people are more exposed toward different cultures and languages through various forms of entertainment provided by the industry, for instance movies, television series, video games or music. Therefore, one of the fields of translation studies namely audiovisual translation (AVT), which specialized in screen translation, has been largely developed and explored to accommodate the need of international audiences in terms of interpreting and transferring information worldwide (Mahmood, 2021).

Moreover, the increasing amount of domestic and foreign movies being produced has caused people to spend hours in front of the television. Children, even more so than the adults, have become ecstatic viewers of television, especially when it comes to animated shows or cartoons (Ghilzai et al., 2017). Halim (2020) mentioned that AVT, specifically subtitling, has become significant in children literature as it opens the door for them to uncover the beauty of other cultures through their own languages or foreign languages. In order to achieve that, the translator must consider a few important characteristics of translated texts intended for younger audiences which usually consist of simple vocabularies and syntactical features (Varga, 2012), but they are not necessarily easier to translate since there is a cultural gap between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). Undoubtedly, language and culture are greatly intertwined which warrant the translator to meticulously choose the appropriate approach to translate the cultural references or terms uttered in the movies as to avoid misleading information and misrepresentation of other cultures to the intended audience. Under this perspective, translating languages that are enriched with cultural values and ones that require specific cultural context for them to be comprehensible by the target audience proves to be challenging.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

The recent translation that exists today is the product of an extensive transformation (Blažyte & Liubiniene, 2016) in which it experienced a 'cultural turn' due to the cross-cultural communication that took place in this globalization era. Numerous scholars and translators have collectively agreed that translating cultural items has been recognized as a complex field to venture into (Blažyte & Liubiniene, 2016) since the translation is no longer a process of merely replacing one lexical with another or finding the closest equivalence; the translation product must also be able to accurately represent the source culture.

Halim (2020) stated that another area of translation study that requires critical analysis is the translation of children's literature which has become a vital field that needs to be further investigated to determine its characteristics and subtitling pattern for this particular target audience. Based on the past studies regarding translation strategies applied in subtitling for younger audiences, it has been found that most of the translators tend to render the cultural items of the SL in children movies by adopting omission or simplification strategy. This is due to the cultural barrier between SL and TL and the simplified languages would be easier to fathom. However, some findings suggested that such strategies often resulted in serious errors and mistranslation which minimized the knowledge and cultural transfer to the target audience. Moreover, in children's movies, the linguistic structure of the subtitles is often simple and comprehensible to the capacity of young minds. Varga (2012) argued that in some cases, such simplification, especially in communication, would not necessarily be the appropriate solution in translation for children. This is because this simplicity can also lead to lack of consistency and accuracy which in turn might result in a childish or less impactful translation.

In addition, Malay language is considered to be one of the under researched domains in translation studies. The language itself is deeply rooted in the values of beliefs, ways of thinking and culture (Mahmood, 2021) that have been constructed for decades. Therefore, it will be a complex process and challenging for translators to convey the ambience of the Malay culture to the foreign setting through audiovisual translation. Other than that, since Malay culture is also under-represented in international cinema, there is a need for the translators to determine the pattern of translation strategies used to render the cultural items included in the movies that will resonate well with the foreign audiences.

Due to these gaps and issues, there is a need for extensive information regarding the audiovisual translation within the context of Malay language and children's literature that may contribute to bridging the sociocultural gap. This study investigates culture specific items used in Malaysian children's movies

namely *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula* and *Keris Siamang Tunggal*, as well as the translation strategies applied by the translator to translate those terms. The research questions of this study are: 1) What are the types of culture-specific items found in Malaysian children’s movies? and 2) What are the translation strategies of the culture-specific items in the subtitles of Malaysian children’s movies?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The perpetual advancement of technology combined with the growing need for translation practice have led to the emergence of one of the vital and thriving branches of translation studies namely Audiovisual Translation (AVT). AVT can be viewed as the translation of messages from either verbal or non-verbal acoustic codes into verbal or/and non-verbal visual codes (Neves, 2005, as cited in Cintas & Remael, 2007). Subtitles can be considered as one of the complex modes of AVT. Ever since the first sound film was introduced in 1929, subtitling and dubbing have been the most dominating methods of film translation (Gottlieb, 2001, as cited in Tekin, 2019).

Generally, the process of subtitling involves transferring the verbal messages of the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) that occurs within the filmic media whereby “one or more lines of written text presented on the screen in sync with the original message” (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 87, as cited in Chiaro, 2008). As any translation practice, subtitling also deals with some constraints that might restrict the maximum transfer of the source language. One of them is social restrictions, which involve the transfer of cultural items including religious terms or ethical terms. In this study, the term culture-specific items and its acronym, CSI, is chosen as the fundamental term throughout the paper and its synonyms might be utilized to avoid redundancy.

The taxonomy of CSIs proposed by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) distinguishes four main categories of CSIs namely geography, history, society and culture and each of their subcategories are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Culture-bound problems types as proposed by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993)**

Geography	Geography, meteorology, biology	Mountains, rivers, weather, climate, flora, fauna
	Cultural geography	Regions, towns, roads, streets
History	buildings	Monuments, castles etc
	events	Wars, revolutions
	people	Well-known historical persons
Society	Industrial level (economy)	Trade & industry, energy supply

	Social organizations	Defense, judicial system, police, prisons, local and central authorities
	politics	State management, ministries, electoral system, political parties, politicians, political organizations
	Social conditions	Groups, subcultures, living conditions, problems
	Ways of life, customs	Housing, transport, food, meals, clothing, articles for everyday use, family relations
Culture	religion	Churches, rituals, morals, ministers, bishops, religious holidays, saints
	education	Schools, colleges, universities, lines of education, exams
	media	TV, radio, newspapers, magazines
	Culture, leisure activities	Museums, works of arts, literature, authors, theaters, cinemas, actors, musicians, idols, restaurants, hotels, nightclubs, cafes, sports, athletes

The sub-categories that fall under geography are divided into meteorology, biology as well as cultural geography which refer to specific places or weather mentioned in the SL. Moreover, buildings, events and people are elements that can be included within the history category. As for the society category, it encompasses the industrial level which is related to the economy, social organizations, politics, social conditions and customs or ways of life of the source culture. Lastly, religion, education, media and leisure activities are included within the culture category of CSI.

Renowned translation theorist and practitioner such as Pedersen (2011) has suggested practical translation strategies that are applicable in transferring cultural units within the audiovisual mode. Pedersen (2011) presented six translation strategies that are based on the study of CSIs or also defined as Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECR) translation in subtitles of TV shows. This taxonomy is then divided into two parts namely Source Oriented and Target Oriented translation as well as its sub-categories as illustrated in table 2.

**Table 2: Pedersen (2011) taxonomy of ECR transfer strategies**

Source Oriented Translation	1) Retention I. Complete II. TL-adjusted
	2) Specification I. Completion II. Addition

	3) Direct Translation I. Calque II. Shifted
Target Oriented Translation	4) Generalization I. Superordinate term II. Paraphrase
	5) Substitution I. Cultural II. Situational
	6) Omission

The strategies that are classified under Source Oriented Translation are Retention, Specification and Direct Translation. Retention refers to a situation where the cultural items in the source text are kept unchanged in the subtitle or they can be complete or slightly adjusted to meet the target language requirements. Usually, the intended text will be marked off from the rest of the text by using italics, for instance, the word ‘*Cadillac Fleetwood*’. Next, specification strategy can be applied when further information needs to be added, thus making the subtitled CSIs more specific than the CSIs in the source text. This can be achieved by providing extra details of a name or an acronym (completion) or “adding more semantic content such as adding someone’s occupation or evaluative adjective (addition)” (Pedersen, 2011, p.76).

Moreover, Pedersen (2011) also suggested the direct translation strategy whereby the translated text has no semantic alteration and only the structure of the language may have some changes. Pederson then further divided direct translation into calque which refers to the loan translation and shifted translation means that the text is fairly direct but has been adjusted to fit the target language (Peltomaa, 2021).

As for the second part which is Target Oriented Translation, there are Generalization, Substitution and Omission strategies. In the Generalization strategy, the translator will render the CSIs in the target text less specific than the CSIs in the source text by utilizing a Superordinate Term or a Paraphrase. With regard to Substitution, Pedersen (2011) stated that the CSIs in the source text will be replaced by another cultural term, either from the source or target culture. Otherwise, if there is no option, the CSIs could be substituted by an entirely different concept. Lastly, the omission strategy is when the CSIs are not being produced at all in the target text. Toury (1995 as cited in Pedersen, 2011), claims that this strategy is the most frequent strategy applied in subtitling than in any other forms of translation because the constraints that followed in subtitling forced translators to omit certain elements.

Past research has addressed translation strategies applied in rendering CSI in the subtitles of children's movies. Xie (2012, as cited in Ting & Yuying Foreign, 2017), proposed five major characteristics of children's audience which are insufficient cognitive competence, immature logic and mental ability, shortage of life experience, curiosity about the world and tendency to worship heroes, and being more interested in authentic, virtuous and delightful things of life. In the domain of subtitling for younger audiences, Xie added that translators need to take these characteristics into consideration when producing subtitles and abide by principles that align with the features of animated films. The vocabulary used should be simple and interesting, the sentence structure should be easy to comprehend, repetition, rhythm and musical sound are encouraged and positive emotion, as well as value, should be embedded in the language (Xie, 2012, as cited in Yuying & Ting, 2017).

Although these characteristics and principles suggested that it would be suitable to apply a simpler structure for translation in animated films, findings from Qasim et al. (2020) say otherwise. The study investigated variations of meanings while converting English text (ST) into Urdu text (TT) in English animated films and the result showed that the translators have changed the subtitles from their original sense to more localized and generalized versions in Urdu. While the structures of the translated text are indeed found to be much simpler and rather literal in terms of meaning, it also leads the text to lose its actual meaning.

Exploring more on the context of children's genre, Abuarrah (2018) conducted research on the relationship between the cognition development of children and specific linguistic and cultural constraints when translating science fiction movies for Arab children. Their findings showed that in terms of linguistic and cultural constraints, the translator has applied different strategies when translating for children of different stages of age, according to their ability to comprehend every linguistic and cultural unit included in the movies.

Halim (2020) on the study of translation strategies in Malaysian children's film subtitles reported that the most dominant strategies used are omission, elaboration and paraphrasing. The omission strategy is mostly applied when there are exclamatory words or expressions in the source language (Malay). The study also revealed that the translator resorted to elaboration and paraphrasing strategy in order to preserve the contextual meaning of the movie and overcome the cultural barrier.

In another study done by Mahmood (2021) in identifying the Malay cultural items and how they are being depicted in the English subtitles, the findings presented that the Malay customs and culture in the Malay animated cartoons have been realistically portrayed in the target language (English) and the

structures of the language used in the subtitles are easy with mild and common vocabulary that is comprehensible for young viewers. Moreover, in translating royal dialogues, the translator applied the modulation method to convey the concept and knowledge of the Malay cultural items while for translating names of iconic or historical figures, the translators used the retention method.

In the context of translating specific names, Sharei et al., (2017) investigated the translation of anthroponyms in children's cartoons. The study revealed that the Iranian translators mainly adopted the Reproduction or Copy strategy which indicates that there is no translation of the names at all, no consideration of connotations from either source or target culture and the cultural load of anthroponyms was left untranslated. In addition, the study done by Al-Jabri (2017) which also deals with personal names and rendering of culture-bound references from English (SL) into Arabic (TL) showed that most of the strategies employed are largely source language oriented which include retention, direct translation and specification.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed the quantitative approach. Content analysis was done on two Malaysian animated films namely *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula* (2009) and *Keris Siamang Tunggal* (2019). These films were produced by Les' Copaque Production, a local animation studio recognized for their production of popular 3D-animated series, Upin and Ipin along with other children's TV series. They were chosen based on two criteria: 1) the diversity of cultural references; and 2) the wide recognition of the films by local and international viewers. The Malay dialogues (SL) and the English subtitles (TL) in the movies were transcribed to identify the culture-specific items (CSI). For *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula*, the study observed the English subtitles included in the film uploaded on the YouTube channel known as 'odaeyla'. As for *Keris Siamang Tunggal*, the English subtitles provided by Disney+Hotstar, a streaming service operated by The Walt Disney Company were used as a guide to further add the credibility value of the data analyzed in this study.

In the first part of the data analysis which seeks to identify the types of culture-specific items found in Malaysian children's movies, each of the CSIs of the SL was classified according to the categories of CSIs proposed by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993). The second part analysed the CSIs in terms of the translation strategies. This study utilized the taxonomy of Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECR) transfer strategies proposed by Pedersen (2011). In addition, in assessing the translation as well as defining the cultural items in both Malay and English to provide a better context of the terms, two dictionaries were utilized in



this study including *Collins Dictionary* and an online bilingual dictionary known as *Pusat Rujukan Persuratan Melayu*.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings will be presented and discussed to answer each research question.

### Research Question 1: what are the types of culture-specific-items found in Malaysian children's movies?

#### *Geng: Pengembaraan Bermula*

A total of 36 CSIs of various types have been identified in this sample. The classification of these categories and examples are further demonstrated in table 3.

**Table 3: Types of CSI in *Geng: Pengembaraan Bermula***

Types of CSI	SL Examples	n	%
Society	Nasi lemak, Teh tarik, pulut panggang, Atok	21	58.3
Geography	Durian, Kampung Durian Runtuh, Batu Lima & Kelip-kelip	4	11.1
Culture	Wayang kulit, toyol & surau	3	8.3
Others (personal names and proverbs)	'Sediakan payung sebelum hujan', Pakcik, Pak Mail, abang	8	22.2

Among the 36 cultural items found in *Geng: Pengembaraan Bermula*, the most common type of CSIs identified was Society. Other types of CSI found were Geography and followed by Culture. The study also discovered other categories beyond Nedergaard-Larsen's taxonomy of CSI that include personal names and proverbs. Other than that, family relation, which is one of the divisions of the Society category is also portrayed in the film which includes the term of address between family relations.

In the Geography category, the cultural items identified can be further divided into different sub-categories of geography. For instance, '*Durian*' and '*Kelip-Kelip*' can be described as geography while '*Kampung Durian Runtuh*' and '*Batu Lima*' are related to cultural geography. Referring to the context of the film, '*Kampung Durian Runtuh*' is the name of the village where the characters reside and '*Batu Lima*' is one of the streets in the village and also a regular name of the streets used across states in Malaysia.

As for Culture type, only a few items have been mentioned throughout the film such as ‘*wayang kulit*’ and the introduction to one of the creatures from Malay mythology namely ‘*toyol*’. Moreover, the item ‘*surau*’ can be divided into one of the Culture sub-categories which is an item that is related to religion. Other than the types of CSI mentioned in the Nedergaard-Larsen taxonomy, the study also found an abundance of cultural items such as the usage of personal names and terms of address for the elderly, and also the Malay proverb.

***Keris Siamang Tunggal***

In *Keris Siamang Tunggal*, the study managed to extract a total of 28 CSIs. The categories of CSI in *Keris Siamang Tunggal* are divided as illustrated in table 4.

**Table 4: Types of CSI in *Keris Siamang Tunggal***

Types of CSI	SL Examples	n	%
Culture	Raja Bersiong, Nujum Pak Belalang, Bawang Putih and Bawang Merah, Gambus	11	39.3
Society	ABCD (Air Batu Campur), ayahanda, Satay	9	32.1
History	Hang Ipin, Nakhoda Ragam	2	7.1
Geography	Kura-kura kuih	1	3.6
Others (Personal names, traditional weapons and royal language)	Keris Siamang Tunggal, Tuanku, ‘Bersatu teguh bercerai roboh’	5	17.9

Culture is identified to be the dominant type of CSI while the second common type was Society. The category of History consists of two cultural items and the least amount of items was found under Geography. Other cultural items such as proverbs, traditional weapons, personal names and royal language were also identified.

This movie brings forward several well-known figures from Malay folktales and literature namely ‘*Nujum Pak Belalang*’, ‘*Raja Bersiong*’, ‘*Bawang Putih*’ and ‘*Bawang Merah*’ which explained the high frequency of the Culture type as compared to other types of CSI. Besides, the classical musical instrument known as the ‘*Gambus*’ is also recognized as part of the Culture category. While in the Society category, the cultural items involved are mainly family relations such as ‘*opah*’, ‘*akak*’ or ‘*ayahanda*’. Other than that, there are also cultural items related to food, for instance ‘*Satay*’ or ‘*Air Batu Campur*’.

Moreover, only a few historical figures are mentioned throughout the film namely ‘*Nakhoda Ragam*’ and ‘*Hang Ipin*’. The item ‘*Hang Ipin*’ is a fictional name created based on the reference to the renowned historical figure ‘*Hang Tuah*’, thus its inclusion under the history category is emphasized by the word

'*Hang*'. Next, the amount of items identified under the Geography type is significantly lower with only '*kura kura kuih*' as the item. The rest of the cultural items are categorized as others which consist of proper nouns such as '*Mek Min*', traditional weapons namely '*Keris Siamang Tunggal*', the usage of royal language, for instance, '*Tuanku*' and the proverb '*Bersatu teguh bercerai roboh*'.

**Research Question 2: what are the translation strategies for the culture-specific items in the subtitles of Malaysian children's movies?**

In this section, the translation strategies of the CSI are analyzed in accordance with the taxonomy of Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECR) transfer strategies by Pedersen (2011). The findings suggested that there are two types of variants of translation strategies involved in both of the films. The first variant is the single variant translation strategies which consists of Direct Translation, Retention, Generalization, Substitution and Specification. In the second variant which is the couplet variant of translation strategies, the translators utilized the combination strategies of Direct Translation and generalization, Direct Translation and Retention, Direct Translation and Omission and Retention and Omission. Table 5 illustrates the differences of translation strategies used in *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula* and *Keris Siamang Tunggal*.

**Table 5: The division of data in the translation strategies of the CSI**

Strategies	<b>Single Variants</b>				
	<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i> (n)		%	<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i> (n)	
	Direct Translation	16	25.0	6	9.4
	Retention	10	15.6	17	26.6
	Specification	2	3.1	1	1.6
	Generalization	3	4.7	1	1.6
	Substitution	1	1.6	1	1.6
	<b>Couplet Variants</b>				
	Direct Translation and Omission	1	1.6	1	1.6
	Direct Translation and Retention	-	-	1	1.6
Direct Translation and Generalization	1	1.6	-	-	
Retention and Omission	2	3.1	-	-	

In the single variant category, the data demonstrates that Direct Translation is significantly higher in *Geng: Pengembaraan Bermula*. On the other hand,

Retention strategy as the mostly applied strategy in *Keris Siamang Tunggal*. Other than that, Specification, Generalization and Substitution are the minor translation strategies used in both movies. In the couplet variants, Direct Translation and Omission occurred at least once in both of the movies. Direct Translation and Retention are applied once only in *Keris Siamang Tunggal* while Direct Translation and Generalization occurred once only in *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula*. Lastly, Retention and Omission are the strategies found to be applied twice in *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula* but absent in *Keris Siamang Tunggal*. The analysis of each strategy is provided in the following sections.

### Single Variants of translation strategies

Single variants of translation strategies refer to the data that consist of one strategy. This study has identified four translation strategies that can be classified under this variant which are *Retention*, *Direct Translation*, *Generalization* and *Specification*. The examples and the usage of each strategy is discussed as follows.

#### Retention

In the data collected, it was found that the most common types of CSI to be translated with retention are Society and Culture. Among 64 CSIs collected, a total of 27 data are identified by using retention in the subtitles. The examples are shown as follows.

**Table 6: Retention: Example 1**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i>	Ini Ros ada bawa <i>Pulut Panggang</i> ...	I’ve brought some <i>Pulut Panggang</i> ...	Ros, Upin & Ipin sister, brought over some traditional Malay snacks to Uncle Muthu’s stall

Based on the example above, it can be seen that the translator chooses to adopt a retention strategy, mainly on the cultural items that involve food that is heavily influenced by the source culture. In the example, the item *Pulut Panggang* remains unchanged in the English subtitles. The word *Pulut* refers to the glutinous rice while *panggang* can be described as the act of burning or grilling (Pusat Rujukan Persuratan Melayu, 2017). Moreover, other cultural foods that are also being translated through retention are items such as ‘*Teh tarik*’, ‘*Durian*’ and ‘*Nasi Lemak*’.

**Table 7: Retention: Example 2**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i>	Batu Belah Batu Bertangkep!	Batu Belah Batu Bertangkep!	<i>Batu Belah Batu Bertangkep</i> is the magical rock that transports Upin, Ipin and their friends to a magical world <i>Inderaloka</i>

In the second film, the item '*Batu Belah Batu Bertangkep*' is retained in the TL instead of translating it to 'The Devouring Rock', which is the informal English title of the original film that was released in 1959.

### Direct Translation

It was discovered that a total of 22 data were translated using the direct translation strategy, which makes it the next most used strategy in the study. Furthermore, Society is the common type of CSI to be translated with Direct Translation. In addition, it was identified that in *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula*, this strategy is frequently applied as compared to other strategies. One of the examples of its application is illustrated as follows.

**Table 8: Direct Translation: Example 1**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i>	Eh, ini <i>Atok</i> aku!	Hey, my <i>grandpa</i> 's on TV!	Badrol's was taken by surprise when his grandfather, Tok Dalang made an appearance on the TV news.

Based on the data above, the application of Direct Translation can be identified in the word '*atok*' which is referring to the term of address to a family member. It has been translated literally to '*grandpa*' in the target text. The word '*atok*' is the alternative term of address for '*datuk*' which also means grandfather.

**Table 9: Direct Translation: Example 2**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i>	Nak <i>pisang salai</i> ?	Want some <i>smoked bananas</i> ?	Ehsan was eager to eat smoked bananas at Mak Deruma's stall when

			he was interrupted by a scary looking pirate at Megah Harbour.
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In this case, the source text presents another CSI related to food item which is ‘*pisang salai*’ which is translated literally to ‘*smoked bananas*’. The translation ‘*smoked bananas*’ is still very direct but there is a shift in the word order. Instead of ‘banana smoked’ that sounds awkward and will have a different meaning in the SL, the translator shifted the word order in accordance with the syntactic feature of the English language in which the verb ‘*smoked*’ precedes the direct object ‘*bananas*’ which makes it Shifted Direct Translation.

Moreover, it can be seen that the translator opted for direct translation to stay true to the source language and its culture. Although it may be unintentional, the term ‘*smoked bananas*’ also holds familiarity in the target culture since in Western culture, ‘*smoked bananas*’ is considered a dessert while in Asian culture, it is consumed as a dried snack.

### Generalization

The study managed to determine four data, with different types of CSI namely Society and Culture that are translated with Generalization strategy. The examples are shown in table 10.

**Table 10: Generalization: Example 1**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i>	Atok nak pergi <i>surau</i> dulu	I’m going to the <i>mosque</i>	Badrol’s grandfather, Tok Dalang wanted to go to the mosque for obligatory prayer.

The example above illustrates an occurrence of generalization on the word ‘*surau*’ in which it is translated to a more generic term in the TL which is ‘*mosque*’. This translation is considered to be generalized as ‘*surau*’ refers to the communal prayer building used for religious practices that is smaller in terms of its physical structure compared to the mosque. However, since ‘*surau*’ is a foreign term to the target audience and might only be familiar in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra, the translator chose to generalize it to the term mosque to clarify the meaning of the SL word. Not only that, but the term is also more accessible to the target audience and known to refer to the place of worship for Muslims.

**Table 11: Generalization: Example 2**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i>	Jom atok belanja makan <i>abcd</i>	I'm treating you all to some <i>ice-cream</i>	Tok Dalang offered to treat Upin, Ipin and their friends a dessert known as Air Batu Campur (abc) or shaved ice, after they helped him organize his old things.

Another example of generalization can be seen through the word ‘*abcd*’ as presented in table 11. The word ‘*abcd*’ is an acronym for the word ‘*Air Batu Campur*’ in the source language but the letter ‘d’ in the dialogue was added as part of the humor from Tok Dalang in which he includes the said letter that usually follows ‘abc’ in alphabetical order. ‘*Air Batu Campur*’ is a dessert commonly found in Malaysia that is made of shaved ice and other ingredients such as red beans. Instead of translating the term to shaved ice, which is the closest equivalent to ‘*Air Batu Campur*’, the translator opted for generalizing it by using the Superordinate Term ‘ice-cream’ that can be used to stand for an entire class of ice-based dessert.

### Substitution

In this study, Substitution is among the least used strategies in translating CSI in both of the materials with a total of two data.

**Table 12: Substitution: Example 1**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i>	Salleh! Takmau tunggu <i>kuih</i> lagi ka?	Salleh! Don't you want to wait for the <i>snacks</i> ?	Uncle Muthu has a stall where he sells some traditional snacks including <i>pulut panggang</i> and curry puff. He asked Salleh whether he wanted to wait for the snacks which will be sent later.

The item ‘*kuih*’ has been substituted with ‘*snacks*’. Due to a cultural difference between SL and TL, the translator chose the word snack because it is more common and considered standardized to convey or represent the concept of ‘*kuih*’ to the target audience. ‘*Kuih*’ in the source language can be associated with different types of Malay traditional delicacies. For instance, by referring to the

context in the film, the item ‘*kuih*’ referred to ‘*Curry Puff*’ and ‘*Pulut Panggang*’. Snacks, however, can bring a different connotation to the target audience, such as chocolate bars, potato chips or crackers. Through this strategy, it seems that the translator tried to give the TL audience access to the source culture by replacing the SL item with another TL item that would be more comfortable and natural for the target audience to read.

**Table 13: Substitution: Example 2**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i>	Intan payung!	Cutie pie!	Ehsan, one of Upin and Ipin best friend, is known for his nickname given by his friends which is ‘intan payung’

Example 2 illustrates another item that is being translated with substitution strategy. ‘*Intan payung*’ is a term of endearment commonly used to show that a person is precious and greatly loved (Pusat Rujukan Persuratan Melayu, 2017). Instead of rendering the term literally to ‘*diamond umbrella*’ which sounds unnatural in the TL and does not effectively represent the term given by the source language, the translator substituted it with the term ‘*cutie pie*’ which is also a term of endearment to address lovers or a cute person.

### Specification

In a single variant of translation strategies, there were three instances that indicated the utilisation of the Specification strategy.

**Table 14: Specification: Example 1**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i>	Nasi Pattaya	Pattaya Fried Rice	Uncle Muthu gives a rundown on what kind of food is on his menu and nasi pattaya is one of them.

One of the occurrences of the Specification strategy can be found in the translation of the item ‘*Nasi Pattaya*’, which has been translated to ‘*Pattaya Fried Rice*’. Although there is an absence of the word ‘*goreng*’ in the source language that requires the translation of the word ‘*fried*’, the translator still finds it necessary to



add this specific information to explain the nature of the food. This is because, in Southeast Asia, ‘*Nasi Pattaya*’ is referring to a fried rice dish that is wrapped up with an omelet.

**Table 15: Specification: Example 2**

<b>Material</b>	<b>Malay dialogues (SL)</b>	<b>English Subtitles (TL)</b>	<b>Context</b>
<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i>	...ahli nujum yang terhandal di Inderaloka, <i>Nujum Pak Belalang?</i>	...the best soothsayer in all of Inderaloka, <i>the famous Pak Belalang?</i>	Pak Belalang is a soothsayer who works for Raja Bersiong and acts as a messenger for Inderaloka. He is known for his ability to predict the future.

In the next material, the Specification strategy occurs in the translation of the item ‘*Nujum Pak Belalang*’ which has been translated to ‘*the famous Pak Belalang*’. The character *Nujum Pak Belalang* is inspired by one of the well-known classical movies in Malaysia released in 1959. It can be seen that through this example, the term ‘*Pak Belalang*’ is left untranslated but the translator added the specific evaluative adjective of ‘*famous*’. This is because *Nujum Pak Belalang* would be an unknown figure in the target audience, so by adding the word famous, the translator tried to inform and guide the audience on the significance of this character in the source culture.

### **Couplet variants of translation strategies**

This type of variant involves the data that utilizes two translation strategies in the translation process. The couplet variants of translation strategies found in this study are Direct Translation and Generalization, Direct Translation and Omission, Direct Translation and Retention as well as Retention and Omission. Further explanation of each division is provided in the following section.

### **Direct Translation and Generalization**

**Table 16: Example of Direct Translation and Generalization**

<b>Material</b>	<b>Malay dialogues (SL)</b>	<b>English Subtitles (TL)</b>	<b>Context</b>
<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i>	Maggi goreng telur mata	Fried magee with egg	Uncle Muthu gives a rundown on what kind of food is on his menu and <i>maggi goreng telur mata</i> is one of them.

Based on the data presented, it is identified that the translator resorts to two different types of translation strategies for the food item ‘*Maggi goreng telur mata*’ which has been translated to ‘*Fried magee with egg*’. It can be seen that the Direct Translation occurs at the translation of ‘*Maggi goreng*’ that is rendered literally to ‘*Fried Maggi*’. On the other hand, Generalization is applied to the word ‘*telur mata*’ which is being translated to ‘*egg*’. Instead of translating it to ‘*fried egg*’ which is the closest equivalent in describing ‘*telur mata*’, the translator chose the Superordinate Term egg which can be the umbrella term for different types of egg dishes such as soft boiled, omelet, poached or scrambled egg.

### Direct Translation and Omission

**Table 17: Example of Direct Translation and Omission**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i>	Tengok tu! <i>Kura-kura kuih!</i>	And look at all the <i>tortoises!</i>	Upin and Ipin accidentally discovered a place where there are different types of animals that resemble Malay traditional delicacies. The visual shows the tortoises’ shells that look like curry puffs.

As shown in table 17, the study identified a presence of combined translation strategies namely Direct Translation and Omission on the item ‘*Kura-kura kuih*’ which has been translated to ‘*tortoises*’. To explain, the SL item ‘*kura-kura*’ is transferred literally to ‘*tortoises*’ but the word ‘*kuih*’ is omitted by the translator in the target language. This is because, if the translator rendered the item word for word, it would be ‘*tortoises snack*’ or ‘*snack tortoises*’ and both of which might cause confusion to the target audience and result in a stiff translation.

### Direct Translation and Retention

**Table 18: Example of Direct Translation and Retention**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Keris Siamang Tunggal</i>	Kerajaan Siong	The Kingdom of Siong	The Kingdom of Siong is the name of the kingdom in the fantasy world of Inderaloka under the reign of Raja Bersiong, a ruthless king.

Based on the data above, the translator opted for Direct Translation and Retention in translating the item ‘Kerajaan Siong’. It can be seen that the word ‘kerajaan’ is translated directly to ‘the kingdom’ while the personal name ‘Siong’ is retained as it is in the target language. As other personal names that appear throughout the materials, they are often being translated with the Retention strategy for the purpose of maximizing the cultural transfer and giving the target audience the chance to fully acquaint themselves with the exotic elements of the source culture. This is because some of these personal names are associated with figures that are well-known in Malay literature or history.

### Retention and Omission

**Table 19: Example of Retention and Omission**

Material	Malay dialogues (SL)	English Subtitles (TL)	Context
<i>Geng: Pengembaraan bermula</i>	Roti kosong	roti	Uncle Muthu gives a rundown on what kind of food is on his menu and <i>roti kosong</i> is one of them.

In the translation above, it can be seen that Retention is utilized on the word ‘*roti*’ where it is left untranslated in the English subtitle. The food item ‘*roti kosong*’ or more known as *Roti canai* in the source language refers to a flatbread dish that is served with different types of ingredients and commonly found in countries in Southeast Asia. Referring to the context of the film, ‘*roti kosong*’ means plain flatbread without any additional ingredients. However, the word ‘*kosong*’ was omitted by the translator probably because it is considered as unimportant.

### DISCUSSION

With regard to identifying the types of Culture-Specific Items in Malaysian children’s movies, the findings had proven that the four main types of CSI proposed by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) namely Society, Culture, Geography and History are all presented in *Geng: Pengembaraan bermula* and *Keris Siamang Tunggal*. However, the results also discovered that there are several items that can be included within the domain of Culture-Specific Item, but their classification of types are beyond what is proposed by Nedergaard-Larsen which justify the existence of the category of ‘others’ in the findings. For instance, proverbs, traditional weapons, personal names and honorific terms.

In order to overcome the cultural barrier when rendering Culture-Specific Item into the target language, the findings demonstrate that the translators applied various translation strategies namely Retention, Direct Translation, Generalization, Specification, Substitution and Omission, which follows the taxonomy of Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECR) by Pederson (2011). The finding on the application of Retention strategy on personal names can be compared with the studies from Abdelaal (2019), Sharei et al., (2017) and Al-Jabri (2017) in which their findings indicate that translators consistently choose to leave the personal names untranslated or translate the personal nouns literally in the movies. Referring to the materials of this study, most names of the figures appeared are inspired from Malay fables and by retaining them, it gives the opportunity for Malaysian literature to be introduced more extensively throughout the world (Mahmood, 2021)

Other than that, several findings that were presented by Özbudak (2019) and Qasim et al., (2020) revealed that the translation of the cultural items are usually being domesticated to match with the environment of the target audience. Contrastingly, in this study, the findings showed that the frequent translation strategies are largely Source Language oriented where the translator decided to stay faithful to the source culture by not making much effort in changing the original sense of the source text to more local and general concept in the target language which also supported the findings from Al-Jabri (2017). Such a decision was made probably due to the difficulty to find the parallel words in the target language that are able to accurately deliver the complexity and unique charm of the Malay language.

Moreover, to include additional explanation to make the audience understand each CSI would be impossible, given the constriction of the space and time of the subtitles. Furthermore, since these movies are meant for young viewers, it can be seen that most of the translated texts are simpler in structure with common vocabulary which correspond with the findings from Mahmood (2021) and Qasim et al. (2020). These features of translated texts are also aligned with the principles of animated films as previously mentioned by Xie (2012, as cited in Yuying and Ting, 2017).

## **CONCLUSION**

The study reveals that all types of CSI such as Society, Culture, Geography and History are present in both movies. Society and Culture are the most dominant types to be found seeing that both of the movies projected a strong influence of Malaysian lifestyle. The findings also discovered several cultural items that exist outside of these four main categories such as terms of endearment, proverbs or the Malay honorific terms. Secondly, the translators were found to favor the

source language-oriented type of translation when dealing with cultural references. For instance, Retention strategy is applied when translating proper nouns such as personal names from the Malay literature, terms used for describing family relations or items related to cultural geography such as name of the streets or biological geography which include flora and fauna of the source culture. Moreover, Direct Translation is found to be the second most used strategy mainly in translating cultural food items. It can be concluded that the overall translation of the cultural items in the films can be said to be appropriate in terms of the simplicity of the structure and comprehensible usage of vocabularies that can resonate well with the targeted group of viewers for this type of genre, which is children. On top of that, the application of various translation strategies showed that the translators not only intend to give the target audience the accessibility to the source culture but also produce the translation that is able to promote Malaysia's cultural identity as well as its artistic values to the world.

The study encountered several limitations that are related to different aspects of this study. Firstly, the samples of the study were limited to two children movies for the data collection, therefore the types of Culture-Specific Items found unable to be established or generalized as the common types found in Malaysian children movies. Moreover, the study merely observes one type of audiovisual translation which is subtitling, thus overlooking the possibilities of different outcomes if the study had included the dubbing mode. Lastly, since the study only focused on analyzing the translation on specific cultural words instead of the full context of the spoken dialogue, the findings might not be able to provide detailed information regarding the translation strategies applied in rendering other linguistic elements present in the materials such as exclamatory words and expressions or slang in the source language.

Finally, the study suggested for future research to analyze the visual aspects of the movies which would provide more detailed information on the reason behind the translators' decision to choose a particular strategy for each CSI. Furthermore, since the study did not manage to analyze other linguistic elements in the movies, it is encouraged for future research to expand the analysis on both extralinguistic and intralinguistic elements that exist in the Malay language which might result in a better and enhanced quality of the findings by using other established frameworks such as six translation strategies from Diaz Cintas and Remael (2007) or Gottlieb's translation strategies (1992) that are also specialized in the audiovisual translation. Finally, it is also recommended for future studies to do a comparison between subtitling and dubbing which provides an insight on whether they are similar or different in terms of the translation produced.

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