



Tenor of discourse in translated diglossic Indonesian film subtitles

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Abstract. This paper examines the challenges posed by the diglossic nature of the Indonesian language in translating film dialogue into English-language subtitles. Indonesian is based on dialects of Malay, which by the 19th Century had become the lingua franca of the Netherlands East Indies. It was adopted by the Indonesian nationalist movement in the 1920s and renamed *bahasa Indonesia* (the Indonesian language) and became the official language of the Republic of Indonesia when that state was proclaimed in 1945. Malay is not a diglossic language but a number of important regional languages of Indonesia (e.g. Javanese and Sundanese) are diglossic. *Bahasa Indonesia* has only assumed diglossic characteristics in the past thirty years and this has gradually been reflected in the mass media, including film. This paper will argue that diglossia presents particular problems in translating tenor of discourse in film dialogue into English-language subtitles. Diglossia in Indonesian and the problems it poses for this form of audiovisual translation are discussed. Then two recent Indonesian films are analysed to ascertain how successful audiovisual translators have been in creating English-language subtitles that convey shifts in tenor of discourse and changes in interpersonal relations in diglossic Indonesian. Some dialogue segments from the films have been selected to emphasise how shifts in tenor of discourse/interpersonal relationships are conveyed by features of diglossic Indonesian and the failure of the subtitles to reflect these shifts. The paper concludes that the relatively recent evolution of Indonesian into a diglossic state has serious ramifications for the international appreciation of Indonesian film and advocates more interest and research in this field.

Keywords: tenor of discourse; subtitling; diglossia; social dialect; geographic dialect; informal variety; code switching

1. Introduction

The focus of this paper will be upon difficulties in developing subtitles that are capable of conveying shifts of tenor of discourse signalled by diglossic means in two Indonesian films from different genres. The first is a teen movie, *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta?* [*What's Up With Love?*] while the second is a nationalistic film, *Nagabonar Jadi 2* [*Nagabonar the Sequel*].

The phenomenon of diglossia and the association of diglossia with tenor of discourse in the Indonesian language will be discussed, before going on to describe how shifts in tenor of discourse enabled by diglossia have been dealt with in the translated subtitles of these two films. A number of dialogue segments will be used to illustrate complex changes in tenor of discourse that are enabled by the diglossic nature of Indonesian and the extent to which these have not been conveyed in the subtitles.-

The paper will argue that some of the challenges arising from the diglossic nature of Indonesian appear to be very difficult and perhaps impossible to overcome when translating into a non-diglossic language like English within the time and space constraints associated with subtitling.

2. Diglossia in Indonesian

In terms of language policy Indonesia is very unusual among the countries that emerged from the post-second world war decolonisation processes. Rather than extensively relying upon the language of the colonial power (The Netherlands) or recognising a number of official languages, it has successfully developed a national language which is the country's only official language. This national language is based on varieties of the Malay language that had become a lingua franca by the time Europeans arrived in the archipelago and which the Dutch had employed to facilitate their colonial administration of the archipelago.

Unlike a number of important regional Indonesian languages (e.g. Javanese and Sundanese), Malay is not a diglossic language. However, since Indonesian nationalists declared independence from the Dutch in August 1945 the Malay language (renamed *bahasa Indonesia* – the Indonesian language – by the nationalist movement in 1928) has developed diglossic characteristics. Spurred on by Indonesian government agencies such as the Department of Education and the Indonesian Language Centre (*Pusat Bahasa*),¹ Indonesian has rapidly and overwhelmingly become the language of education, literature, radio, television and the press. As the larger cities have developed into multi-ethnic melting pots, it has become the first language of many Indonesians.

An unusual and unforeseen development (on the part of the authorities who energetically encourage the use of 'correct' Indonesian) is that in this process it has developed quite distinct high/formal and low/informal varieties in which the high variety is acquired through education and is not used for daily conversation and the low variety (not acquired through education) is used in daily interactions – two important markers of diglossia. While diglossia in the national language has attracted little interest within Indonesia, Professor J.N. Sneddon, a preeminent researcher into the Indonesian language, has convincingly argued that it has evolved into a diglossic state (2003).²

¹ Formerly the *Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa* – National Centre for Language Cultivation and Development. This agency "produces dictionaries and grammars, sponsors research into the formal language, advises schools and conducts campaigns for the use of good language in the press, in television and radio programs and so on." (Sneddon, 2003, p.526).

² In describing Indonesian as a diglossic language Sneddon draws primarily upon a ground breaking paper by Ferguson entitled Diglossia, noting that Ferguson describes diglossia as: A relatively stable language situation in which [...] there is a very divergent, highly codified (often more grammatically more complex) superimposed variety [...] which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (Ferguson, 1959, p.236 cited in Sneddon, 2003, p.519)

Sneddon argues that "Indonesian conforms to a remarkable degree to the [diglossia] concept as described by Ferguson in his examination of four 'defining' languages" it:

Differs in one important way from diglossia as originally described by Ferguson: rather than two distinct forms of Indonesian with a clear boundary there is a continuum between the two extremes. As the social situation becomes more formal L features are gradually replaced by H features, though not at a consistent rate. Some characteristics of the L variety are replaced in semi-formal speech, while others persist even in quite formal situations. (2003, p.520)

Nevertheless, Sneddon notes that "Ferguson (1991) recognized a continuum between L and H in his four defining languages and this may be a general characteristic of diglossic languages." (2003, p.520)

Sneddon points out that the formal language is: “The language of government, administration and the law and of formal situations, such as speeches and lectures. It is the medium of education at all levels” (2003, p.521).

On the other hand, “most Indonesian children have little or no contact with formal Indonesian until they begin their education” (Sneddon, 2003, p.523). This is because the informal variety of the language “is the language of the home and of casual conversation” (Sneddon, 2003, p.521).

It was the success of *bahasa Indonesia* as a national language that gave rise to the informal variety. Although well suited to formal occasions, standard Indonesian (referred to by Sneddon as the high or H variety) was inappropriate for use in informal contexts where it was increasingly called for, as Benedict Anderson has remarked: “Contemporary [standard] Indonesian has something curiously impersonal and neuter about it, which sets up psychological distances between its speakers” (1990, p.140).

Such an “austere and forbidding language” (Sneddon, 2003, p.525) is obviously unsuited to informal discourse and particularly for use within the home while the informal variety was eminently appropriate.

This evolutionary process towards diglossia (rather than an informal variety that was not diglossic) may have been influenced by speakers of diglossic languages like Javanese and Sundanese feeling a need to interact in a diglossic fashion with other Indonesians.³ It has undoubtedly been accelerated by the electronic mass media, much of which is headquartered in the ethnic ‘melting pot’ capital, Jakarta. It was in this city that the colloquial variety of Indonesian originated from a potent mixture of a rapidly evolving lower or L variety of Indonesian in the national teen magazines that have their head offices in the capital and certain characteristics of the racy and vivid local geographical dialect of Indonesian (*bahasa Betawi*).

That this process of evolution is a recent one is reflected in the fact that Indonesian films of the 1950s and 1960s and television programs of the 1960s did not display characteristics of diglossia. It has only been since the 1980s that popular television entertainment and comedy programs, ‘soap operas’ and film have (increasingly) featured diglossic Indonesian that reflects this new social and linguistic reality.

As Sneddon has shown, the L variety is widely spoken by people of all social classes (2003, p.536)⁴ and is emerging as the model for the informal

³ For example, Anderson (1990) suggests that “varieties of Indonesian used in Jakarta have come to resemble styles of Javanese linguistic etiquette that serve to mark deference, respect, and social inequality, and are closely associated with the traditional, highly stratified patrimonial Javanese noble and official elite” (cited in Errington, 1986, p.331). However, Errington refutes this suggestion, suggesting that the speech levels in the Indonesian language “are better described with the well known sociolinguistic concept of diglossia.” (Errington, 1986)

⁴ Sneddon conducted research in Jakarta that demonstrated that the L variety is not the province of lower socio-economic groups. His subjects were educated residents of Jakarta from a range of age groups who were highly proficient in the H variety of Indonesian and whose L variety (drawing upon Indonesian spoken in the capital city and disseminated by the mass media and other influences throughout the country) “is becoming the model for informal usage throughout Indonesia.” (2003, p.535)

In Turner (1996) there is an excerpt from a conversation between the late President Suharto’s wife, Ibu Tien, and the former Minister for Research and Technology (later President) B.J. Habibie that shows that social class is no barrier to the use of L variety Indonesian:

‘Habibie ini tak benar, masak kamarnya kayak gudang. Mbok diatur dengan baik’

variety nationwide (2003, p.535). In relation to this latter point, Yohanni Johns writes that although this informal variety of Indonesian originated in Jakarta, “it is also increasingly used in major provincial cities, especially those with ethnically mixed populations such as Bandung, Yogyakarta and Surabaya, Palembang and Medan”. (Johns, 1996, p.xviii).

The L variety has come into its own with the advent of communication via emails and text messaging. In these media, it is used very generally between friends, and emails and text messages represent a rich source of written versions of L Indonesian as it is currently spoken.⁵ It is the Jakarta L variety of Indonesian that has featured in films and television ‘soap opera’ productions in recent decades from media outlets located in the capital city⁶ that will be analysed in this paper.

3. Challenges Associated with Subtitling

The Chief Subtitler at Australia’s multicultural broadcaster, SBS Television, has described successful subtitling in the following terms:

Ultimately, the aim is to fashion subtitles which are attuned so thoroughly to their audiovisual environment that they appear to “melt” into the total fabric of the programme. By making the linguistic sign as unobtrusive as possible, the very best subtitling seeks to foster the illusion of unmediated comprehension on the part of the viewer. When an audience stops being aware of reading the subtitles, the subtitler has achieved a major goal. In effect, the material substance of the subtitles shrinks and vanishes before our very eyes, leaving only the message (McCormick, 1997, p.5. Cited in Mueller, 2001, p.147).

However, there are considerable constraints associated with subtitling that can make it difficult to produce translations of film discourse that encourage viewers to react in the ways aspired to by McCormick.

Fitting subtitles into ever changing filmic scenes is a challenge that is peculiar to this sort of translation task. As Diaz Cintas puts it:

The golden rule is that subtitles should keep temporal synchrony with the utterances. That is, the subtitle has to appear at the same time as the person starts speaking and disappear when the person stops talking (2008, p.95).

The underlined words are examples of L variety Indonesian. In speaking in this way Ibu Tien was showing that she was very close to Habibie (there were even rumours Habibie was Suharto’s illegitimate son) and the journalist appears to have quoted Ibu Tien’s use of informal Indonesian to illustrate this relationship.

⁵ One of the authors of this paper (Turner) has in the past been involved in the translation of sms messages for a law enforcement agency in Australia. All of the messages were in L variety Indonesian and could only have been translated by a practitioner with proficiency in this variety of the language. It was at times necessary to resort to footnotes to convey the diglossic intent of the messages.

⁶ Currently there are eleven national television stations broadcasting from Jakarta: TVRI (state owned), ANTV, Global TV, Indosiar, RCTI, SCTV, Trans TV, Trans 7, TPI, and TVOne. To name a few of popular soap operas using the Jakarta L variety, such as: *Si Doel Anak Sekolahan* (Doel, the schoolboy), *tersanjung*, *Liontin* (A Pendant), etc. Furthermore, there are also Indonesian magazines that extensively use this variety, i.e. *Hai* (Hi), *Gadis* (Girl), *Kosmopolitan*, *Femina*, and so on.

Reduction is a strategy often employed to accord with the particular constraints associated with subtitling to produce “subtitles that can be easily read and understood” and “semantically and syntactically self-contained” (Dias Cintas, 2008, p.100).

Another problem associated with subtitling is the portrayal of social and geographic dialects and thereby the social class and regional affiliations of film characters. Hatim and Mason show how translators working from other languages into English sometimes adopt a strategy of choosing a particular social dialect from the target language/culture, citing the use of “Scottish accents in representing the speech of Russian peasants in TV dramatisation of a foreign play” (Hatim and Mason, 1990, p.40). They go on to point out: “The inference was allowed that a Scottish accent might somehow be associated with low status, something which, no doubt, was not intended” (1990, p.40).

Another interesting example of an attempt to signal the use of a rural accent can be found in the subtitling of the German television series *Heimat II*. The main protagonist, Hermann, who hails from a small rural town in the Hunsrueck region of the Rhineland, attempts to sound more sophisticated in Munich and attends German elocution classes to lose his accent. The English subtitlers of *Heimat II* have tried to signal the use of this dialect by using a rural dialect of English (possibly West Country) in utterances such as, “Ere, wot's thot ye say?”⁷

However, because the L variety of Indonesian is the product of diglossia, rather than regional or social class variation, we shall argue in this paper that such a strategy is not appropriate to the translation of diglossic L variety Indonesian dialogue segments into a social or geographic dialect of English.

Another challenge subtitlers often experience involves conveying shifts in tenor of discourse signalled in the spoken source texts by such devices as the use of formal and informal pronouns. Tenor of discourse has to do with “who is taking part ... the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles: what kinds of role relationships obtain among the participants” (Halliday and Hasan, 1989, p.27). Mona Baker notes that “getting the tenor of discourse right [in a translation] can be quite difficult”, pointing out that it depends on “whether one sees a certain level of formality as ‘right’ from the perspective of the source culture or the target culture” (1992, p.16)

Pronouns are an important tool in expressing the degree of intimacy between participants in all languages. For example, Baker shows how the level of formality expressed by formal and informal pronouns in French is difficult to preserve in translation from French into English as English lacks a formal and informal second person pronoun ‘you’ (1992, pp.96- 97). A strategy that is sometimes employed involves explicating subtleties emanating from use of formal and informal pronouns, as Hatim and Mason describe in relation to the English subtitles for the French film *Le Salaire de la peur* (*The Wages of Fear*) (1990, pp.28-29). While such a strategy has been adopted in Dialogue Segment Two from *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta* (discussed later in this paper), the space and time constraints described earlier obviously mitigate against overuse of this strategy.

Moreover, as will be shown in the discussion of the two Indonesian films in this paper, diglossic Indonesian has a much more complex system of pronouns than English which adds considerably to the capacity of that language to express tenor of discourse. Indonesian pronouns tend to be used

⁷ To illustrate the problems in choosing such a strategy, one website incorrectly identifies the dialect as Cockney. (<http://wodged.blogspot.com/search?q=cockney> accessed 24 November 2009.)

in a much more flexible and interchangeable way than English pronouns, according to the situation, i.e. formal, semi-formal or informal, intimate or not intimate, senior to junior, junior to senior, etc.

Indeed, *bahasa Indonesia* is relatively rare in having three formal and informal dimensions in its first person pronoun system. For example, a Jakarta school pupil would use the informal 'I' pronoun *saya* in formal contexts such as classroom discussions, the less formal *aku* in informal situations but perhaps not in a formal classroom activity, and the highly informal and intimate *gue/gua* amongst friends.

The complexity of the pronoun system is reinforced by the formal language having inclusive (*kita*) and exclusive (*kami*) pronoun equivalents for 'we', with the inclusive *kita* being used for both purposes in the L variety (Sneddon, 2003, p.528).

The choice of second person pronouns in Indonesian can be a difficult process as interlocutors try to gauge to what extent an exchange of discourse is formal or informal and which one (if any) of the interlocutors is relatively senior and who is relatively junior, whether the interlocutors are friends, etc. Unlike languages such as Chinese, French, German and Russian which have a dual system of informal and formal second person pronouns (e.g. *tu* and *vous* in French, and 你 *nǐ*, and 您 *nín* in Chinese), Indonesian has a large number of second person pronouns and other terms of address such as the familial 'father' (*bapak*), 'mother' (*ibu*), and younger sibling (*dik*) which function as second person pronouns. The very informal *lu* is only used in the L variety, *anda* is a relatively recently coined neutral term that is often used in advertising. Indonesian also has a de facto plural second person pronoun (*kalian*) while some English speakers make do with the ungrammatical 'youse' (very broad / uneducated Australian) or 'Y'all' (southern United States).

Indonesian has formal and informal second person singular pronouns with *beliau* representing the highest level of formality and *ia* for the second level of formality, while *dia* is used to refer to people in a less formal (but still correct) manner.

Modal auxiliaries such as 'can', 'must', 'should', etc. also play an important role in establishing tenor of discourse. (Halliday, 1970, p.335) In diglossic Indonesian the range of H and L modals is extensive with some such as *mau* (to want something) being extensively used in the L variety while its close synonym *ingin* is used mostly in the H variety. Similarly, *bisa* (can/able to) is used in the L variety while *dapat* is its H variety counterpart.

Unlike a non-diglossic language like English, Indonesian has a large number of other lexical items and grammatical means of morphological change that are used extensively by speakers at all socio-economic levels and throughout the country in the L variety of Indonesian but rarely feature in H and vice versa. As Sneddon points out, in common with the diglossic languages identified by Ferguson, the H variety of Indonesian displays a "greater level of semantic differentiation" while the L variety is "far more highly context bound" (2003, p.525).⁸

⁸ For example, transitive verbs in H Indonesian are more morphologically complex with a range of prefixes and suffixes (and even some infixes). On the other hand, the L variety generally makes do with a single suffix 'in', as in *diajarin* (taught), *bohongin* (lie to) and abbreviates the various 'me-' form prefixes (e.g. *meny-*, *meng-*, *men-* *me-*) as in the H variety word *melemparkan* (throw something) becoming *ngelempar* in L Indonesian. H Indonesian uses a wide range of prepositions while L generally makes do with one (*sama*) (2003, p.529). Like other diglossic languages, the lexicon has many paired items such as *tidak* (H) and *nggak* (L) for 'no'/'not'. (2003, pp.531-532).

Finally, the L variety is characterised by the widespread and highly expressive use of emotive particles such as *deh* (urging someone to do something), *dong* (what I am saying is true even though you might try to deny it), *kok* (why? How come?) and *lho* (surprise at learning something – said at the beginning of an utterance) (Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004). Indeed, the L variety is spoken in a much more rhythmic (sometimes almost sing-song) manner than standard Indonesian and these emotive particles have to be spoken with particular tonal emphases and skilfully placed within utterances.

Examples of these L variety characteristics and the translation challenges they present in conveying complex and systematic code switching in response to changes in intimacy – deference relations will be identified and discussed in the dialogue segments that are analysed below.

3.1 Ada Apa Dengan Cinta?

This teenage romance takes place in a high school in Jakarta. Most of the time the characters speak in L variety Indonesian. Standard Indonesian features much less and is mostly spoken by the main male character, Rangga. Cinta is the leading female character. That *Cinta* means “love” in Indonesian, leading to two possible interpretations of the title of the film (“What’s up with Cinta?” or What’s up with Love?). This play on words has not been (and probably could not have been) carried over into the subtitles.

The pronouns in the L variety segments in the table below illustrate some of the problems in conveying the tenor of discourse in translated English subtitles. The L variety dialogue actually used in the film is shown in the first column and the translated subtitles in the second column.

Dialogue Segment One

<p>Cinta: <u>Gue</u> kan belum selesai ngomong.</p> <p>Rangga: Baru saja <u>gue</u> ngelempar polpen ke muka orang <u>gara-gara</u> dia berisik di ruang ini.</p> <p>Saya <u>nggak</u> mau polpen itu <u>balik</u> ke muka saya <u>gara-gara</u> saya berisik sama kamu.</p> <p>Cinta: <u>Gue</u> pingin ngomong sebentar <u>kok</u>.</p>	<p>Cinta: I’m not quite finished.</p> <p>Rangga: Listen, I just threw a pen at someone’s face, because he made such noise.</p> <p>I don’t want that pen thrown back in my face.</p> <p>Cinta: I will make it short.</p>
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The pronouns used by Rangga and Cinta are in **bold** characters and the informal L variety words are underlined, for example: *gara-gara* (H = *oleh karena*, because), *ngomong* (H = *bicara*, to talk), *nggak* (H = *tidak*, no), *ngelempar* (H = *melemparkan*, to throw). While there are informal English words for some of these (e.g. ‘nah’ for ‘no’, ‘chuck’ for ‘throw’, ‘cos’ for ‘because’ and ‘chat’ for ‘talk’), ‘cos’, ‘nah’ and ‘chuck’ are not used by all English-speaking socio-economic groups as these L words are in Indonesian. Words from a geographic dialect of English would not have been suitable because of the national applicability of the Jakarta L variety used in the film. Moreover, English does not have informal equivalents for the informal pronoun *sama* that is widely used in L variety Indonesian to replace a variety of H prepositions. The expressive meaning of the emotive particle *kok* in Cinta’s final statement is also difficult to convey as it is very pithy and expressed tonally in L Indonesian.

The use of H and L pronouns is particularly significant in this segment. Rangga uses the L variety Indonesian pronoun, *saya* (I) because he “sees himself as an outsider and does not want to be a member of a trendy in-group. Rather, he wants to differentiate himself from those who speak the L variety [the ‘in’ language]” (Hasan, 2006, p.9). On the other hand, Cinta is using the very informal, *gue* (I) which is commonly used in casual conversations or informal situations.

It is noteworthy that Rangga uses the L variety *gue* once in the second line of the dialogue segment in response to Cinta’s comment either to show his defiance or express his annoyance by using a non-standard personal pronoun. While Cinta usually uses the word *gue* with everyone (i.e. no partiality) it does not have any negative effect, such as that which Rangga intended by deliberately using the formal *saya*. Unlike diglossic Indonesian, English does not have formal and informal singular first personal pronouns and non-Indonesian speakers who are dependent upon the subtitles will miss the impact of different use of pronouns and L variety words and their significance.

Here the subtitler might have explicated the implications of the pronoun usage but space and time (‘in and out’) requirements might have mitigated against this, particularly as the exercise would have had to be repeated in many other dialect segments, including the following one that provides another example of the use of personal pronouns to express the characters’ attitudes towards each other.

Dialogue Segment Two

Cinta: Kamu itu <u>kalo</u> lagi kebingungan <u>tu</u> lebih <u>nyenengin</u> ya? Kamu bingung <u>aja</u> terus.	Cinta: You’re a nicer person when you’re confused. Just stay confused at all times.
Rangga: Kamu ?	Rangga: “You”?
Cinta: Ha?	Cinta: What?
Rangga: Ya kamu . Biasanya <u>ngomongnya</u> <u>loe-gue</u> ?	Rangga: You said: “You”. Usually you use the colloquial “you”.

Cinta employs L Indonesian extensively here, using such L lexical items as *kalo* (‘if’), *nyenengin* (make someone happy), *ngomongnya* (to say something), the flavour of which has not been carried over in the subtitles. However the major challenge to the subtitler takes place when she changes from her regular use of the L variety familiar pronoun, i.e. *loe-gue*, into the standard pronoun *kamu* (you – used when talking ‘down’ to somebody or to close friends/equals) when talking with Rangga. Rangga who is aware of the change of the pronoun asks her why she uses the pronoun, *kamu*. There is a purpose behind the change of personal pronoun; the formal pronoun is generally used as “lover’s language, as Indonesians...prefer to use more formal and elegant language in romantic situations” (Constantine, 1994, p.7). This indicates that Cinta sees Rangga as a love interest, because she finds him attractive.

Although the subtitler has successfully differentiated between the standard and colloquial, by explication (rendering ‘*loe-gue*’ as ‘the colloquial you’) the subtitles do not point out that there is a hidden meaning in the change into formal PP. Indeed, constraints of space and time would have mitigated against such an approach. Again, viewers who do not speak Indonesian will miss the subtle but very important change in the relationship between the characters.

Dialogue Segment Three

<p>Cinta: <u>Ra</u>, Cinta <u>nih</u>, Ra. <u>Kayaknya gue nggak</u> bisa <u>ikutan</u> deh, Ra. <u>Tau nih</u>, <u>abis</u> tiba-tiba kepala jadi pusing <u>banget nih</u>. Ya, <u>kayaknya gue jadi mau</u> ke dokter <u>deh</u>. Ya <u>abis gimana dong?</u> <u>Namanya</u> juga sakit, <u>mau diapain lagi?</u> <u>Nggak pa-pa ya?</u> <u>Bilangin sama</u> anak-anak <u>sori banget</u> <u>ya</u>. Have fun ya.</p>	<p>Cinta: Maura...it's me, Cinta. I think I have to cancel it. I have this terrible headache. I think I'll have to see a doctor. But what else can I do if I'm not feeling well? Please excuse me. And tell the others I'm sorry. Have fun!</p>
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In the above dialogue segment Cinta makes an excuse to cancel her appointment with her friends in order to meet with Rangga instead. In her L variety usage she strikes a very casual yet apologetic tone with her close friend.

L variety words used in this segment are numerous, including the emotive particle *deh*, *nggak* (can't), *ikutan* (come with you) *abis* (it turns out) and *mau diapain lagi* (what else can I do). In particular, the expression *Nggak pa-pa ya?* (2) is very casual and might be translated as "It's ok, yeah?"

Significantly, Cinta addresses her friend, Maura, using the abridged Ra which is a shortened form of Maura. The use of abridged names is commonly done in conjunction with L variety usage, indicating a degree of intimacy, but usually not with standard Indonesian.⁹ That Cinta uses this abridged form indicates that she is close to Maura.

The emotive particle *dong* is used with particularly expressive impact here as Cinta tries to persuade her friend that she is being sincere (whereas in fact she is not).

However the intimate and somewhat tense tenor the dialogue conveys has not been expressed in the subtitles which are relatively formal. This produces a radical change of mood and atmosphere where Cinta speaks in a rather brief and curt manner, giving the impression that she is talking to someone she is not very close to. For example the translated subtitle for *Nggak pa-pa ya* is much more formal, i.e. "Please excuse me."

Here the subtitler might have chosen 'teen' language from a dialect of English. However, as Sneddon has shown, the use of the L variety in diglossic Indonesian is not the province of adolescents and the selection of a geographic dialect of English would not have been in keeping with the Indonesia-wide nature of Indonesian's L variety.

3.2 Naga Bonar Jadi 2

This second film emphasises the generation gap between father and son. The father, Naga Bonar, is very nationalistic, comes from the countryside, is not very well educated and has a rather rough and terse speaking manner. On the other hand, his son, Bonaga, is a modern city man who is highly educated

⁹"Indonesians are in my mind the world champions of abbreviating, relegating the previous world champions, Australians, to the silver medal. By the end of 1997, people were already talking about *krismon* (*Krisis Moneter*) [*Monetary Crisis*]. You will notice that the closer friends are, the shorter their names become (particularly among girls). Ultimately, you may hear people addressing each other by the first letter of their first name." (Richardson: <http://www.tim-richardson.net/Jakarta/>)

(studied abroad) and a successful businessman. Perhaps because of his overseas studies, he regularly uses English loan words in his L variety usage. However, he speaks in a semi-formal way (gradation between the L variety and standard Indonesian) with his father.

In this film there are many different segments of dialogue that interpersonal relationships and contexts are reflected in code-switching in diglossic Indonesian. For example, exchanges between father and son, friends, and strangers have distinct language styles, i.e. formal-informal-casual-intimate styles. Rendering these nuances between speakers in English subtitles presents major challenges.

3.3 Gradations of L Variety Use

In accordance with Sneddon's observation that "there is a continuum" between L and H Indonesian (2003, p.520), various gradations of L variety use can be found in the film and the use of code-switching and choice of pronouns reveal the interpersonal relationships between the interlocutors. An interesting feature is the distinctive use of personal pronouns by the son, Bonaga, when he is talking to his father (dialogue segment one), and then when he is talking to his co-worker/love-interest (dialogue segment two).

Dialogue Segment One

<p>Bonaga: Oke, <u>aku tau</u> bapak marah <u>sama aku</u>, tapi jangan diam seperti itu, bicaralah! <u>Aku</u> ini anak Bapak. Kalo Bapak mau marah sama <u>aku</u> yah <u>aku</u> terima. Seorang Bapak marah <u>sama</u> anaknya wajarlah itu. Sebagai anak <u>aku</u> terima, Pak.</p>	<p>Bonaga: Fine, I know you're upset with me, but do not keep in silence. I'm your son. If you get mad at me, fine. It's natural for a father to get mad at his son. I take it as your son, Dad.</p>
<p>Naga Bonar: Kau bukan anakku, Bonaga.</p>	<p>Naga Bonar: You're not my son, Bonaga.</p>

Bonagar always uses the (underlined) pronoun 'aku' ('I' or 'me' in English) whenever he talks with his father. The semi informal first person pronoun *aku* is often used with family, friends, and between lovers. However, in other scenes in the film (not discussed here) Bonaga switches to the more informal pronoun *gue* when he talks to his co-workers. This may be because Bonaga is talking to outsiders (non-family members) and as a result the conversation becomes less respectful and more casual. It could also indicate that Bonaga has sought to align his social level to that of his subordinate because Bonaga perceives him as his friend. Again, explication might have been used here but extensive use of this strategy would have seriously mitigated against engendering a situation where "the material substance of the subtitles shrinks and vanishes before our very eyes, leaving only the message" (McCormick, 1997, p.5. Cited in Mueller, 2001, p.147)

Dialogue Segment Two

<p>Monita: Kenapa?</p>	<p>Monita: What is it?</p>
<p>Bonaga: Maksud <u>gue</u> ini <u>mau, mau</u>..</p>	<p>Bonaga: I mean that I want...</p>
<p>Monita: <u>Udah</u> jam sebelas.</p>	<p>Monita: It's already eleven o'clock.</p>
<p>Bonaga: Itu dia, Mon. <u>Gua</u> mau <u>kasih tau</u> <u>aja</u> sekarang <u>udah</u> jam</p>	<p>Bonaga: That's it. I want to tell you that's already eleven o'clock. See</p>

sebelas. Aku mau pamit pulang dulu yah. Permisi.	you. Bye.
Monita: Stupid.	Monita: Stupid.

While Bonaga usually chooses the highly informal first person pronoun *Gue* or *Gua* meaning ‘I’ or ‘me’ with his friends or co-workers, he switches back to the semi-formal *aku* at the end of his two lines when speaking with Monita.

There are two possible reasons for his switch from informal to semi-formal pronouns and modal auxiliaries. The first is that he has feelings of guilt towards his addressee, Monita, for coming and leaving suddenly in the middle of the night. The second is that he might be seeing her as a love interest and is therefore trying to create a romantic situation with her by using the semi-formal pronoun. However, it seems that the first reason is more likely than the second one because he only shifts from informal into formal pronoun at the end when he says goodbye. Unfortunately, the English subtitles convey a different nuance, where he seems to casually say “See you. Bye” instead of “I have to go now. Excuse me”, which is closer to the source text. Yet again, the subtle change or hint of change in the interpersonal relationship between the two characters is ‘lost in translation’ and it is difficult to imagine strategies that might have overcome this challenge within the particular constraints of subtitling.

Dialogue Segment Three

Traffic Officer: <u>Saudara</u> tahu di depan sana adalah daerah bebas bajaj?	Traffic Officer: Do you know that this area should be free from pedicab scooter?
Umar: Sini, <u>Pak</u> . <u>Saya sih</u> tahu, <u>Pak</u> kalo daerah sana itu daerah bebas bajaj, <u>saya</u> ngerti . Cuman masalahnya <u>saya</u> nggak tau lagi caranya yakinin penumpang saya itu, <u>Pak</u> .	Umar: Come here. I’m really aware that this area should be free from the scooter. But I don’t have any other way to explain it to my passenger.
Traffic Officer: Siapa <u>dia</u> ?	Traffic Officer: Who is he?
Umar: Jenderal, <u>Pak</u> .	Umar: General, Sir.

The traffic officer speaks in the H variety using very formal pronouns, such as *saudara* (which is never used in the L variety). However, it is interesting that while Umar, the pedicab scooter driver, is speaking respectfully with the officer by using formal personal pronouns, i.e. *Ba(pak)*, *saya* and *beliau*, the rest of his Indonesian remains in L variety (in bold characters), i.e. the lexical items *ngomong*, *yah*, *ngerti*, etc. This illustrates Sneddon’s point that “rather than two distinct forms of Indonesian with a clear boundary there is a continuum between the two extremes.” (2003, p.520)

However, these elements are not conveyed in the subtitles and again, it is difficult to imagine how they could have been. Although the translator has successfully translated *Ba(pak)* into “Sir” indicating that Umar is being respectful to the officer, he is unable to convey the L variety items in Umar’s dialogue segment. As a result, Umar sounds more serious and respectful in the translated version.

Dialogue Segment Four

<p>Monita: Bonaga cerita kepada saya bahwa ia sudah membuat Bapak kecewa sehingga Bapak mau pulang hari ini. Bonaga tidak ingin Bapak pulang dengan perasaan sedih dan kecewa, Pak. Makanya ia ingin memperbaiki caranya menyampaikan sesuatu.</p>	<p>Monita: Bonaga told me that you've been disappointed in him that you want to go home today. He doesn't want you to go home with sadness and disappointment. That's why he wants to improve how to say something.</p>
<p>Nagabonar: Apa itu?</p>	<p>Nagabonar: What is it?</p>

In the above segment, Monita, who we observed speaking in the L variety in Dialogue Segment Two, is now speaking in the H variety with Bonaga's father, Nagabonar, in the more formal setting of a meeting. This shows that educated Indonesians can easily shift from L variety to H variety when the situation arises, as Sneddon's research shows (2003, p.543). The translator has had no difficulty in translating this segment into English because Monita is using standard Indonesian and what she says can easily be translated into standard English. This indicates that fewer challenges are presented in translating from standard Indonesian into non-diglossic English and serves to highlight the difficulties presented in the earlier diglossic dialogue segments.

4. Conclusions

Indonesian is an unusual language in that it has emerged as a viable national language following decolonisation. However, an even more unusual and unforeseen aspect of this process is that over the six decades since independence was declared, it has developed diglossic characteristics to the point where it can now be categorized as a diglossic language.

This gradual emergence of diglossia in Indonesian has not escaped the attention of mass media and entertainment interests, including the film industry. In the last two decades a number of films have used the diglossic nature of Indonesian to show subtle and sometimes complex shifts in tenor of discourse.

The paper has shown that the translation of film subtitles into English in the films discussed in this paper has failed to reflect changes in tenor of discourse expressed by diglossic means and that it is very difficult, to say the least, to translate diglossic dialogue segments into a non-diglossic language like English.

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