

Navigating Pirate Speech: *Peter Pan* in Malay Translation (Menelusuri Pertuturan Lanun: *Peter Pan* dalam Terjemahan Bahasa Melayu)

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Received: 9 January 2026 / Accepted: 20 May 2026

ABSTRACT

As vital markers of social identity, sociolects – language varieties associated with specific social groups – often resist straightforward equivalence, requiring careful negotiation by the translator to preserve their functional and stylistic impact. This study examines J.M. Barrie’s Peter Pan, where a distinct pirate sociolect serves as a primary constitutive element of identity for the antagonists. This research aims to identify the linguistic markers forming this pirate sociolect, examine the strategies employed in rendering these features from English into Malay, and evaluate how these translation strategies affect the sociolectal representation of pirate identity in the Malay translation. To achieve these objectives, a comparative analysis was conducted between the 1911 source text and the 2025 Malay translation. Adopting an inductive, text-driven approach, the study first categorises pirate-specific markers through systematic close reading and cross-referencing with maritime lexicons. These markers are mapped to their Malay equivalents and analysed against Epstein’s (2012) framework of translatorial strategies for expressive language. Finally, Newmark’s (1981) concepts of overtranslation and undertranslation are employed to evaluate the impact on character representation. Analysis of 31 identified instances, spanning nautical commands, interjections, terms of address, and expletives, reveals a predominant reliance on retention, standardisation, deletion, and literal translation. The analysis also reveals the use of an additional strategy, approximation, which extends beyond Epstein’s (2012) framework. While these strategies maintain semantic clarity, they generally lead to a flattened representation of pirate identity, as the idiosyncratic markers of the source text are neutralised in the Malay version. Consequently, this study argues that current translation frameworks should be expanded to prioritise character voice as a core theoretical requirement for maintaining narrative and cultural integrity.

Keywords: Peter Pan; language variety; sociolect; literary translation; characterisation

ABSTRAK

Sebagai penanda penting identiti sosial, sosiolek – iaitu variasi bahasa yang dikaitkan dengan kumpulan sosial tertentu – sering kali tidak mempunyai padanan yang setara, sekali gus memerlukan penelitian yang rapi oleh penterjemah untuk mengekalkan impak fungsian dan stilistiknya. Kajian ini meneliti karya J.M. Barrie, Peter Pan, yang memperlihatkan sosiolek lanun yang tersendiri yang berfungsi sebagai elemen utama dalam pembentukan identiti watak antagonis dalam novel ini. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti penanda linguistik yang membentuk sosiolek lanun tersebut, meneliti strategi yang digunakan untuk menterjemah ciri-ciri ini daripada bahasa Inggeris kepada bahasa Melayu, serta menilai kesan strategi terjemahan tersebut terhadap representasi sosiolek identiti lanun dalam terjemahan bahasa Melayu. Untuk mencapai objektif tersebut, satu analisis perbandingan dilaksanakan antara teks sumber terbitan tahun 1911 dengan teks terjemahan bahasa Melayu tahun 2025. Melalui penerapan pendekatan induktif berpandukan teks, kajian ini terlebih dahulu mengkategorikan penanda linguistik khusus yang berkaitan dengan lanun melalui pembacaan rapi secara sistematik dan rujukan silang dengan leksikon maritim. Penanda-penanda ini kemudiannya dipetakan kepada padanannya dalam bahasa Melayu dan dianalisis berpandukan kerangka strategi penterjemahan bahasa ekspresif oleh Epstein (2012). Akhir sekali, konsep terjemahan berlebihan dan terjemahan berkurangan oleh Newmark (1981) diaplikasikan untuk menilai impak terhadap

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representasi watak. Analisis terhadap 31 data yang dikenal pasti, merangkumi arahan nautika, kata seru, kata sapaan, dan kata makian, mendedahkan kecenderungan yang dominan terhadap strategi pengekalan, penstandardan, pengguguran, dan terjemahan literal. Analisis ini juga menemukan penggunaan strategi tambahan, iaitu penghampiran, yang tidak terangkum di bawah kerangka Epstein (2012). Walaupun strategi-strategi ini berjaya mengekalkan kejelasan semantik, penggunaannya secara umum menyebabkan terhasilnya representasi identiti lanun yang mendatar, memandangkan penanda idiosinkratik dalam teks sumber telah dineutralkan dalam versi bahasa Melayu. Oleh yang demikian, kajian ini mengusulkan agar kerangka terjemahan sedia ada diperluas untuk mengutamakan suara watak sebagai prasyarat teoretikal teras demi memelihara keutuhan naratif dan budaya.

Kata kunci: *Peter Pan*; variasi bahasa; sosiolek; terjemahan sastera; perwatakan

INTRODUCTION

The translation of literary texts often presents challenges that extend beyond the simple transference of meaning and involves negotiating elements that are not immediately transferable between languages. This complexity is particularly evident in the translation of sociolects, a language variety associated with a particular social group and which is characterised by distinctive patterns of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that reflect social identity and cultural background. Thus, sociolects are not merely language varieties but function as carriers of social meaning, closely tied to specific social groups and identities (Wardhaugh, 2010).

Translating language varieties such as sociolects is “a perennial problem for translators” (Hadley, 2011, p. 10), as it requires careful consideration of linguistic features, cultural context, and literary style. Linguistically, sociolects are marked by distinctive vocabulary and expressions that signal affiliation with a particular social group. Translators must therefore determine how to render these features in the target language without losing the social identity encoded in the source text. Culturally, sociolects are often embedded in certain cultural contexts. Translating sociolects therefore may require creative adaptation to make the translation meaningful to readers from a different cultural background. Stylistically, sociolects contribute to the literary qualities of a text, often playing a key role in characterisation. This raises the question of whether translators can successfully recreate the stylistic effects in the target language while ensuring that the resulting translation maintains its overall literary impact. Sociolects, therefore, resist straightforward equivalence and demand careful negotiation on the part of the translator to preserve their function and stylistic impact in the target text.

J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan* provides a compelling site for examining the translation of sociolect, as the “pirate speak” of Captain Hook and his crew serves as a primary constitutive element of their identity. This distinctive language functions as a crucial literary device, distinguishing the antagonists from the other inhabitants of Neverland. Consequently, the way a translator handles these markers directly dictates the survival of the character’s voice in the target culture.

Although previous scholarship has explored the translation of sociolects (e.g., Ali, 2024; Hadley, 2011), research has focused predominantly on real-world social groups, leaving the translation of fictional sociolects under-researched. In *Peter Pan*, the pirate sociolect functions as a vital tool for shaping identity. As such, there is a need to investigate how these identity-carrying features are negotiated across linguistic boundaries. The present study, therefore, aims to examine the translation of pirate sociolect in J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*, specifically focusing on how these markers are rendered to navigate the cultural and functional distance between English and Malay. This investigation is guided by the following questions:

- 1) What specific linguistic markers constitute the pirate sociolect in J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*?
- 2) Which translation strategies are used to render these pirate-specific sociolectal features from English into Malay?
- 3) How do these translation strategies affect the sociolectal representation of pirate identity and characterisation in the Malay translation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

TRANSLATING LANGUAGE VARIETIES

Within the field of Translation Studies, the translation of language varieties has emerged as a focal point of scholarly inquiry. This is evidenced by a growing body of research on the translation of dialects (e.g. Braga Riera, 2018; Epstein, 2011; Garanasvili, 2022; Rodríguez Herrera, 2014; Seménaitė & Maskaliūnienė, 2017), as well as on the translation of slang (e.g. Linder, 2000; Perteghella, 2002; Stambekova & Zhanyzbekova, 2024; Stambekova et al., 2025). Such interest is not surprising, given that language varieties such as dialects and slang are laden with social and cultural meanings that are often difficult to reproduce in another language.

Besides dialects and slang, sociolects – understood as language varieties associated with particular social groups – have also attracted scholarly attention within Translation Studies. While these terms may occasionally be used interchangeably in casual discourse, they have specific meanings in linguistics. A dialect refers to a geographically bound variety of a language (Spolsky, 1998). A sociolect, by contrast, is “a variety associated with a specific social class or group which marks off that class or group from other classes or groups” (Wardhaugh, 2010, p. 138). Slang, meanwhile, constitutes a narrower phenomenon, often referring to “special kinds of ‘intimate’ or in-group speech...a kind of jargon marked by its rejection of formal rules, its comparative freshness and its common ephemerality, and its marked use to claim solidarity” (Spolsky, 1998, p. 35). Crucially, slang may appear as a component feature within a sociolect. While all three varieties share a strong social and cultural embeddedness, sociolects are often more systematically tied to a collective group identity, which can intensify the challenge of translation. As Leppihalme (2000) notes, “non-standard language varieties such as dialects and sociolects pose serious challenges for translators, since the functions they fulfil in the source text may be weakened or lost in translation when no target-language variety exists with sufficiently similar situational characteristics” (p. 247). This often forces translators to strike a balance between maintaining source-text fidelity and ensuring target-culture relevance.

While standardisation and neutralisation are frequently employed as translation strategies, they often result in the loss of a text's sociocultural features. This process leads to what Ali (2024), in his study of Egyptian taxi driver sociolects in Khaled Al Khamissi's *Taxi* (2006), terms as “*appauvrissement stylistique*” or stylistic impoverishment (p. 46), whereby linguistic markedness, such as dialectal proverbs and vernacular expressions, is effectively erased. The resulting loss of character identity is not confined to literary translation. In the realm of audiovisual translation, Hadley (2011) observes a comparable tendency toward standardisation in her analysis of the film *Bon Cop, Bad Cop* (2006). She notes that when the profanity and distinctive syntax of the *Québécois populaire* are removed in the English subtitles, the translated dialogue loses much of the sociolect's expressive force and cultural specificity. Taken together, these studies suggest that semantic accuracy alone is insufficient if a translation fails to preserve the characters' social identities. Consequently, the literature calls for an emphasis on sociolinguistic equivalence (Ali,

2024) and a shift toward strategies of adaptation and compensation (Hadley, 2011), prioritising the reproduction of a sociolect's functional and pragmatic effects over literal, standardised equivalence.

Moving beyond general social groups, Kharitonova (2017) explores sociolects as tools for intra-group identification and focuses on the highly specialised “camp sociolect” (prison language) in Russian literature. Kharitonova (2017) argues that traditional strategies such as domestication or foreignisation are insufficient for such socially marked texts, and instead proposes the strategy of functional substitution. The resulting effect of this approach is the preservation of the text's primary role, allowing the reader to recognise the speaker's membership in a specific community.

The difficulty of finding these functional substitutes is highlighted by Benlakdar (2020), who notes that when source and target languages are culturally distant (such as English and Arabic), standard dictionaries offer little help. Benlakdar (2020) echoes the warnings of Hadley (2017), noting that standardisation causes the loss of identity markers. However, Benlakdar (2020) also identifies the risk in using a target-language sociolect, as it may trigger unwanted associations for the reader.

While research on real-world groups, such as taxi drivers or prisoners, provides a foundation for understanding sociolects, these varieties differ significantly from fictional ones. Real-world sociolects are forms of speech used by actual communities. In contrast, the pirate lingo in *Peter Pan* is a literary construct designed by the author to create a specific character archetype. Therefore, translating fictional speech is not just a linguistic task; it is a task of preserving characterisation. Unlike real-world dialects, a fictional sociolect is what defines the villain's identity. When this speech is standardised in translation, it weakens the character's personality and the overall structure of the story. To explore the specific challenges of translating these sociolectal features into Malay, the following section provides a profile of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* and reviews the relevant translation scholarship concerning the novel.

PETER PAN: SOURCE TEXT PROFILE AND TRANSLATION SCHOLARSHIP

The novel generally known today as *Peter Pan* started out as a stage play in 1904 with the title *Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*. It was produced by the Scottish novelist and playwright, James Matthew Barrie. It was only in 1911 that the play was adapted into a novel, published with the title *Peter and Wendy*. The Malay translation, titled *Peter Pan: Peter dan Wendy*, was published in 2025 by Penerbit USM, and was rendered into Malay by Sue Oshin, the pen-name of Nor Shuhada Meskam. For the purpose of this paper, the novel will be referred to simply as *Peter Pan*.

The novel, comprising 17 chapters, centres on the adventures of Peter Pan, who visits Wendy, John and Michael Darling in London and takes them to Neverland, a magical island inhabited by mermaids, fairies, the Piccaninny tribe, and the Lost Boys. Central to the story is the conflict between Peter Pan and the menacing pirate captain, Captain Hook, who commands the pirate ship known as the *Jolly Roger*. Driven by a desire for vengeance after Peter cut off his right hand, Hook, who now bears a hook in place of his lost hand, eventually captures Wendy and the Lost Boys. Peter later rescues them and ultimately defeats Hook. The story concludes with the return of Wendy and her brothers to London, while Peter Pan remains in Neverland.

One of the principal appeals of *Peter Pan* is Barrie's portrayal of the pirates. They are the main source of conflict in the novel, and their menacing identity is foregrounded in key plot points: the capture of Tiger Lily, daughter of Great Big Little Panther, the chief of the Piccaninny tribe of

Neverland, the kidnapping of Wendy and the Lost Boys, and the confrontation on the *Jolly Roger*, leading to the pirate captain's ultimate defeat.

Beyond their narrative function as antagonists, the pirates in *Peter Pan* appear to be distinguished by a highly marked mode of speech that serves as a key device of characterisation. Barrie infuses their dialogue with what appears to be distinctive pirate speech, thereby reinforcing their identities and setting them apart from the other characters in the novel. Preliminary observation suggests that this marked speech is constructed through a variety of linguistic layers, ranging from nautical commands and specialised jargon to archaic expletives and references to maritime lore. However, despite their stylistic prominence, these features have yet to be systematically mapped as a sociolect. Consequently, *Peter Pan* presents a rich, albeit underexplored site for a formal identification of sociolectal markers and a subsequent analysis of their translation into Malay.

Scholars such as Timberlake (2014), however, argue that this iconic form of pirate speech does not correspond to any real-life language variety but is instead a fictional construct. Its origins can be traced to early literary and audiovisual representations of pirates, such as Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883) and its 1950 film adaptation, which Timberlake (2014) identifies as having "birthed the typical pirate" (p. 92). As such, pirate speech in *Peter Pan* is a crucial signifier of "pirateness" in the novel.

The global interest in and fascination with the timeless tale of *Peter Pan* has facilitated the novel's wide circulation across linguistic and cultural boundaries and, in turn, attracted scholarly interest in its translation. This is reflected in studies exploring the translation of *Peter Pan* into Chinese (Yuan, 2016a, 2016b, 2018, 2020a, 2020b, Zhong & Lin, 2023), Thai (Dechanuwat et al., 2023), Arabic (Chelalga, 2016), and Dutch (Keegstra, 2019). Most of these studies, however, have focused on specific aspects of the text rather than on its sociolectal features. For instance, studies on the Chinese translations have addressed the rendering of character names (Yuan, 2016a), gender representation (Yuan, 2016b), culture-bound elements (Yuan, 2020a), and sex-related content (Yuan, 2020b). This focus on challenges in translating *Peter Pan* is also evident in research beyond the Chinese context, where scholars have interrogated the tension between source-text fidelity and target-culture relevance. Whether exploring the challenges of translating cultural references into Arabic (Chelalga, 2016), or comparing the linguistic strategies employed across different Thai versions (Dechanuwat et al., 2023), the literature consistently highlights the difficulty of transposing Barrie's world. Central to this challenge is maintaining its appeal to a dual audience of both children and adults in the Dutch translations (Keegstra, 2019).

Zhong and Lin's (2023) study represents a significant step toward a linguistic analysis focusing on characterisation, as it examines the representation of pirate violence in Chinese translations. By comparing the lexical choices of the translators Shiqiu Liang and Jingyuan Yang, Zhong and Lin (2023) demonstrate how verb choice can influence the portrayal of pirate identity. For example, they note that for Hook's command to "cleave him to the brisket" (which means to strike someone violently across the chest), Liang employs a Chinese equivalent meaning "tear", which conveys the act of violence but does not foreground the distinctive use of Hook's iron hook. By contrast, Yang uses a Chinese equivalent meaning "chop" or "split", a choice that more vividly evokes the image of the iron hook and preserves an important aspect of pirate characterisation.

Although Zhong and Lin's (2023) study highlights the importance of lexical choices in characterisation, a systematic investigation into the translation of the text's sociolectal features is lacking in the current scholarly landscape. This study addresses this gap by focusing on the pirate

speech in *Peter Pan*, a sociolect rich in nautical jargon and distinct linguistic markers that contribute significantly to the novel's characterisation.

METHODOLOGY

In order to examine the pirate sociolect in *Peter Pan* and its translation into Malay, this study adopts a comparative textual analysis approach, by drawing on the source text in English and its translation into Malay. The source text is *Peter and Wendy* (1911) which is available online at Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org), while the Malay translation is *Peter Pan: Peter dan Wendy* (2025).

In line with Timberlake's (2014) assertion that pirate speech is a fictional construct rather than a naturally occurring dialect, this study adopts an inductive, text-driven approach to determine the specific linguistic markers that constitute the pirate sociolect in *Peter Pan*. Given the absence of a pre-existing linguistic framework for this specific sociolect, markers were identified through a systematic close reading of *Peter Pan*. Data collection focused primarily on Captain Hook's dialogues and monologues, as these represent the focal point of sociolectal density within the narrative. The analysis prioritised marked language, i.e. features that convey a distinct maritime flavour. To ensure sociolinguistic authenticity, these identified markers were cross-referenced against specialised maritime and historical lexicons (e.g., SDSU, n.d.; *Pirates of Lewes*, n.d.). This verification process ensured that the selected data functioned specifically as pirate-related sociolectal markers rather than general archaic English. Following verification, categories were derived through an inductive thematic analysis of the dataset. Each marker was coded based on its primary communicative and pragmatic function, with categories established only when multiple instances shared distinct characteristics (e.g., terms of address).

Following the identification of the markers, each instance was mapped to its corresponding rendering in the 2025 Malay translation. To account for potential variations in the translator's approach, recurring terms were documented as individual entries rather than aggregated. This process produced a comprehensive English-Malay dataset (see Appendix A), which serves as the primary material for the comparative analysis.

To identify the specific methods employed by the translator, the dataset was analysed against Epstein's (2012) framework of strategies for translating expressive language. Based on Epstein (2012), categories subsumed under expressive language include neologisms, names, idioms, allusions, wordplay, and dialects. Although sociolect is not specifically stated as a category of expressive language, it constitutes a socially marked language variety that performs strong expressive functions by encoding social identity and group affiliation. For this reason, Epstein's (2012) framework is well-suited to the analysis of sociolect in translation, as it offers a comprehensive set of strategies for capturing the expressive and sociolinguistic effects of non-standard language. For the purpose of this study, Epstein's (2012) twelve strategies are defined and applied as follows:

- Deletion: The complete removal of the sociolectal marker from the target text.
- Standardisation: The replacement of a marked, idiosyncratic term with a neutral or formal target-language term.
- Replacement: The substitution of a source-language sociolectal marker with a different, yet equivalent, target-language marker.

- Addition: The introduction of new expressive or sociolectal elements that were not present in the source text.
- Explanation: The use of a descriptive paraphrase to convey the meaning of a marker, either paratextually or intratextually.
- Compensation: The introduction of a sociolectal marker at a different point in the text to offset a loss occurring elsewhere.
- Grammatical representation: The use of non-standard grammatical structures to signal a particular social identity.
- Orthographic representation: The use of non-standard spelling to mimic the specific pronunciation of the pirate sociolect.
- Vocabulary representation: The use of non-standard lexical items to reflect the pirates' social group.
- Literal translation: A word-for-word translation of the marker that may not preserve its original sociolectal function.
- Adaptation: Modifying the marker to align with the cultural or linguistic conventions of the target audience.
- Retention: The direct transfer of the original source-language term into the target text, often maintaining its foreign flavour.

Finally, to evaluate how these translations affect the sociolectal representation of pirate identity, the study employs Newmark's (1981) concepts of undertranslation and overtranslation, while identifying stylistic and functional equivalence as the optimal target. Undertranslation is defined as the loss of sociolectal richness through standardisation, resulting in a flattened characterisation where the character's social markedness is diminished. Conversely, overtranslation refers to the introduction of excessive detail or an exaggerated tone that distorts the source intent. Between these two poles lies stylistic and functional equivalence, where the translator successfully recreates the marked nature of the pirate sociolect. In this state, the translation maintains the balance of the original identity, ensuring that the characters retain their idiosyncratic voice and narrative impact within the Malay linguistic framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

THE PIRATE SOCIOLECT IN *PETER PAN*

Based on the analysis, 31 distinct markers were identified and classified into eight functional categories. As shown in Table 1, these categories range from basic linguistic fillers to complex cultural allusions, representing the foundational components used to develop the sociolectal density of the source text.

TABLE 1. Functional categories of pirate sociolectal markers

Category	Definition	Example from <i>Peter Pan</i>
interjections	Formulaic linguistic fillers and attention-seeking particles that serve as immediate acoustic signals of a maritime identity.	“ahoy”, “ay”/“ay, ay”, “yo ho”
commands	Imperative structures and nautical directives that reflect the hierarchical, disciplined, and often violent nature of shipboard life.	“avast”, “belay”, “heave to” “cleave him to the brisket” “luff”, “stow this gab”
terms of address	Vocatives and group-identifiers are used to establish interpersonal dynamics, signaling either camaraderie or hostility within the social group.	“bully/bullies”, “dog/dogs” “hearty/hearties”, “lads” “lubber/lubbers”
expletives and oaths	Stylised profanities and exclamations that reinforce the lawless temperament of the pirate archetype.	“brimstone and gall” “by thunder”, “sdeath and oddsfish”, “odds bobs, hammer and tongs”
allusions to pirate figure	Proper nouns referring to historical or legendary pirates that anchor the fictional narrative within a broader intertextual tradition of piracy.	“Barbecue”, “Blackbeard Joe” “Flint”, “Sea-Cook”
nautical artifacts and concepts	Lexical items representing material culture and maritime symbols that provide the physical reality of the pirate world.	“cat”, “Davy Jones”, “Jolly Roger” “flag o’ skull and bones” “hempen rope”, “Johnny Plank”
nautical lore	References to maritime myths, superstitions, and biblical archetypes that are used to reflect the specific belief systems of seafaring communities.	“Jonah”
social practices	Verbs and phrases describing specific behaviors and rituals associated with piracy that function as markers of the group’s unique moral and legal code.	“cozening”, “walk the plank”

Rather than being a simple list of maritime words, this classification demonstrates that the pirate sociolect is a complex, integrated system. In *Peter Pan*, these eight categories function as the primary building blocks of identity, ensuring that the pirate persona is established not just through action, but through a consistent and highly specialised linguistic presence.

TRANSLATION STRATEGIES AND IMPACT ON SOCIOLECTAL REPRESENTATION OF PIRATE IDENTITY

In this section, the analysis of translation strategies and their impact on the pirate sociolect are discussed concurrently. This integrated approach allows for a closer examination of how translational choices directly reshape the sociolectal representation of the pirates. To provide a clear analytical context, each excerpt from the English source text (ST) is presented alongside its Malay target text (TT) rendering, supported by the relevant narrative background necessary to clarify the sociolectal meanings being conveyed.

The analysis revealed that pirate speech in the English source text is translated into Malay using several strategies, namely retention, standardisation, deletion, and literal translation. The analysis also identified an additional strategy – approximation – which is not accounted for in Epstein’s (2012) framework.

RETENTION

One instance of pirate sociolect retained in the Malay translation is the interjection “yo ho”. This expression appears for the first time in *Peter Pan* in Chapter 5, in the ditty sung by Captain Hook and his pirate friends as they pursue the Lost Boys in Neverland. This is illustrated in the following excerpt.

Example 1

- | | |
|----|---|
| ST | : ‘Avast belay, <u>yo ho</u> , heave to,
A-pirating we go,
And if we’re parted by a shot
We’re sure to meet below!’ (p. 78) |
| TT | : “Awas lanun laut, <u>yo ho</u> , berhentilah,
Kami akan jadi lanun laut,
Dan jika kerana tembakan kami kalah,
Kami bersedia menjemput maut!” (p. 84) |

“Yo ho” functions as “a call or shout to attract attention” (Collins, n.d.). It occurs seven times in *Peter Pan*, all within ditties sung by the pirates, highlighting its role in the pirates’ collective vocal expression. In this instance, the pirates’ use of the cry “yo ho” functions as an audible signal of their presence as they go about trying to capture the Lost Boys.

In the Malay translation, the expression “yo ho” is retained. It is in fact also preserved in all seven instances throughout the Malay translation. Considering its repeated presence in the ditties in the Malay translation, it is possible that the reader may interpret “yo ho” as a characteristic feature of the pirates’ verbal repertoire. As such, this choice achieves stylistic equivalence. However, achieving functional equivalence remains less certain. In the English source text, “yo ho” is a maritime interjection that instantly signals the pirate archetype to an Anglophone audience. It is unclear whether the reader in the Malay context will perceive “yo ho” as a meaningful pirate marker or merely as a nonsensical, foreign phonetic sound.

Another instance of pirate speech, which is also retained in the Malay translation is “ahoy”. In Chapter 8, Smee and Starkey, two of Captain Hook’s pirate crew, kidnap Tiger Lily. Acting on Hook’s command, they tie her to Marooners’ Rock and leave her there to drown. In an attempt to rescue Tiger Lily, Peter Pan imitates Hook’s voice and demands that the pirates release her, as seen in the following.

Example 2

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : ‘ <u>Ahoy</u> there, you lubbers,’ he called. It was a marvellous imitation. (p. 129) |
| TT | : “ <u>Ahoy</u> , kalian lanun yang lamban!” Teriaknya. Suara yang dibuat itu mirip sekali dengan Hook. (p. 141) |

Similar to the word “yo ho” in Example 1, the word “ahoy” is also a word that is used to attract attention (Collins, n.d.). The interjection is used in three instances in *Peter Pan*. In this particular example, Peter uses “ahoy there” to attract the attention of Smee and Starkey, before making his demands known.

The word “ahoy” is also preserved here, and in the two other instances in the Malay translation. Unlike the expression “yo ho”, whose meaning and function may not be clear to the target reader, “ahoy” may be less ambiguous, as its initial position in the sentence signals its use as an interjection to call for attention. Because “ahoy” is repeated throughout the text, the reader may still perceive it as a distinctive feature of the pirates’ speech. In this case, stylistic equivalence is achieved because the specific “pirate sound” of the source text is maintained. Furthermore, functional equivalence is more likely to be achieved here than with “yo ho”. Because the word’s placement makes its purpose (calling for attention) easy to understand, the communicative intent remains clear to the Malay reader.

The expression “ay, ay” is also similarly retained in the Malay translation. As shown in Example 2, Peter mimicks Hook’s voice and threatens Smee and Starkey to ensure their compliance. Fearing Hook’s wrath, Starkey urges Smee to obey the “captain’s” order to release Tiger Lily, as shown in the following.

Example 3

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : ‘Better do what the captain orders,’ said Starkey nervously.
‘ <i>Ay, ay,</i> ’ Smee said, and he cut Tiger Lily’s cords. (p. 129) |
| TT | : “Lebih baik lakukan apa yang diperintahkan kapten,” kata Starkey dengan gugup.
“ <i>Ay, ay,</i> ” jawab Smee, lantas dia memotong tali yang mengikat tangan dan kaki Tiger Lily. (p. 141) |

Smee responds to Starkey’s suggestion by saying “ay, ay”. The expression, sometimes spelled ‘aye-aye’, is “an expression of compliance, esp. used by seamen” (Collins, n.d.).

“Ay, ay” is not only retained in the Malay translation but also marked in italics, indicating that it is directly borrowed from the English source text. Again, because of its recurrence, its initial position, and its visual presentation, the reader is likely to associate “ay, ay” with pirate speech. As such, where stylistic equivalence is concerned, this choice is successful because it preserves the specific sound of the character’s voice. Furthermore, it can be assumed that functional equivalence is also achieved. Even though the word is not Malay, the surrounding context provides enough clues for the reader to understand it as a term of agreement or a response to a command. Therefore, by using both retention and italics, the translator ensures the pirate’s identity is preserved without confusing the target audience.

The preceding examples all demonstrate the retention strategy, specifically in translating interjections. In the following example, retention is also employed, but in translating a pirate-related concept. The name “Davy Jones” is mentioned twice in *Peter and Wendy*, both in the ditties sung by the pirates, underlining its significance in pirate culture. One example of the reference to “Davy Jones” can be seen in the following excerpt.

Example 4

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : ‘Yo ho, yo ho, the pirate life,
The flag o’ skull and bones,
A merry hour, a hempen rope,
And hey for <u>Davy Jones</u> .’ (p. 85) |
| TT | : “Yo ho, yo ho, hidup lanun laut,
Bendera, tengkorak dan tulang,
Waktu suka ria, tali gantung maut,
Dan hei, <u>Davy Jones</u> , ini kami datang.” (p. 90) |

This excerpt, taken from Chapter 5, shows the song the pirates sing as they pursue the Lost Boys. In their song, the pirates make references to several pirate-related items/concepts, for example, “the flag o’ skull and bones”, a symbol which is commonly associated with pirates and which signifies danger; the “hempen rope”, also known as the “hempen halter” or the hangman’s noose which is used to kill the enemies; and “Davy Jones”, which refers to “the spirit or devil of the sea” (Collins, n.d.) or a “personification of the bottom of the sea” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). In fact, in pirate lingo, “Davy Jones’ locker” is used to refer to “the bottom of the sea; grave of those drowned at sea or buried there” (Collins, n.d.). In short, the pirate ditty here underlines the fact that captives will be hanged, and the bottom of the sea will be their final resting place.

In the Malay translation, the name “Davy Jones” is retained in its original English form. However, unlike “ahoy” and “ay, ay”, which have clear communicative functions, “Davy Jones” serves as a specific cultural metaphor. Crucially, it is not merely a metaphor but one which is closely tied to seafaring traditions. For the Malay reader, the meaning of this metaphor may not be readily apparent. While the retention strategy helps preserve the “pirate atmosphere” of the source text, thereby achieving stylistic equivalence, it fails to achieve functional equivalence. This is because the name remains a mysterious proper noun in Malay. In this instance, retention leads to undertranslation, as the rich symbolic value of the original term is lost in the target text.

The preceding examples all demonstrate the retention strategy, in which the pirate speech is carried over into the Malay translation. In the following, retention is also employed but with a slight difference. We have seen before that Peter Pan impersonates Hook to free Tiger Lily. Subsequently, when the real Captain Hook confronts the pirates and asks about Tiger Lily, they remind him that he was the one who ordered the girl’s release. Hook starts to believe that the order must have come from a “spirit that haunts this dark lagoon to-night” (Barrie, 1911, p. 134). Hook addresses the spirit, to which Peter, once again imitating Hook’s voice, responds by saying that he is indeed James Hook. This exchange between Hook and “the spirit” is shown in the following.

Example 5

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : ‘Who are you, stranger, speak?’ Hook demanded.
‘I am James Hook,’ replied the voice, ‘captain of <u>the Jolly Roger</u> .’ (p. 134) |
| TT | : “Siapa kau, makhluk asing? Katakanlah!” desak Hook.
“Aku James Hook,” jawab suara itu, “kapten <u>kapal Jolly Roger</u> .” (p. 147) |

In this excerpt, Peter responds to Hook’s question by imitating him and saying that he is indeed the captain of the “Jolly Roger”. The “Jolly Roger” is the ship which serves as the base for Captain Hook and his pirate crew. The name is fitting, as “Jolly Roger” also refers to

“the traditional pirate flag, consisting of a white skull and crossbones on a black field” (Collins, n.d.). As the flag is often used by pirates to frighten the crew of other ships into submission, it is not surprising that Captain Hook’s ship is described in Chapter 14 as “the cannibal of the seas, and scarce needed that watchful eye, for she floated immune in the horror of her name” (Barrie, 1911, p. 201).

In the Malay translation, “Jolly Roger” is retained, but the translator inserts a clarifying element, “*kapal*” (lit. ship), to explicitly indicate its referent. By doing so, the translator achieves a high degree of functional equivalence regarding the plot; the Malay reader knows exactly what object is being discussed. However, this clarity comes at the cost of the name’s deeper symbolic resonance. In the source text, “Jolly Roger” also refers to the flag that serves as a universal symbol of piracy. By clarifying that the name refers to a ship, the translator obscures the connection to the flag as the ultimate symbol of maritime terror. In short, while the translator maintains formal stylistic equivalence by retaining the English name and preserving the maritime sociolect, the addition of “*kapal*” shifts the style from allusive to descriptive. This act of overtranslation ensures comprehension but ultimately neutralises the cultural depth of the pirate identity.

STANDARDISATION

The following excerpt illustrates the strategy of standardisation, in which non-standard pirate speech is translated into standard language. In this example, taken from Chapter 15, the reader is told that Captain Hook and his pirate crew have captured Wendy and the Lost Boys, but before Hook punishes them, he decides to terrorise them first.

Example 6

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : ‘Fetch the <u>cat</u> , Jukes,’ said Hook; ‘it’s in the cabin’. (p. 218) |
| TT | : “Ambilkan <u>cemeti</u> , Jukes,” kata Hook, “cemeti itu ada di dalam kabin.” (p. 244) |

In this excerpt, Hook orders one of his pirates, Bill Jukes, to fetch the “cat” in order to torment his prisoners. The word ‘cat’ here is the short-form for ‘cat-o’-nine-tails’, which is “a rope whip consisting of nine knotted thongs, used formerly to flog prisoners” (Collins, n.d.). The fact that the “cat” refers to a whip is also clear when the pirates sing a ditty which mentions “the scratching cat, its tails are nine” (Barrie, 1911, p. 218) to annoy the prisoners, as Jukes enters the cabin to retrieve it.

In the Malay translation, the pirate term “cat” is translated into “*cemeti*” (lit. whip). By replacing the specialised pirate jargon with a standard Malay word, the translator achieves a high degree of functional equivalence. The target reader immediately understands the literal object being discussed and Hook’s violent intent. This clarity, however, is achieved at the expense of stylistic equivalence. In the source text, the term “cat” (short for cat-o’-nine-tails) is a highly marked, sociolect-specific term that firmly establishes the brutal maritime environment of the pirates. By translating it as a generic “*cemeti*”, the translator effectively neutralises the distinctive pirate register. This choice represents an instance of undertranslation in terms of its stylistic impact. While the translator ensures communicative function, the unique voice of the pirate dialogue is flattened into standard language. The loss of the stylistic feature of the source text is notable, but given the lack of a Malay equivalent that can simultaneously express both the meaning and the pirate nuance, the translator’s choice is perhaps thoroughly justified.

A further instance of standardisation occurs during the climax, which involves the rescue of Wendy and the Lost Boys. Unsettling noises emanating from the cabin throw the crew into panic, and in his attempt to rationalise the strange goings-on, a pirate crew by the name of Cookson declares that there is an intruder on board: "...the surest sign a ship's accurst is when there's one on board more than can be accounted for" (Barrie, 1911, p. 221). Hook tries to take control of the situation and orders his crew to prepare for action, as seen in the following excerpt.

Example 7

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : 'Lads,' he said, ready to cajole or strike as need be, but never quailing for an instant, 'I've thought it out. There's a <u>Jonah</u> abroad.' (p. 223) |
| TT | : "Anak-anak buahku," kata Hook yang sudah bersedia untuk memujuk atau menyerang jika keadaan memaksa, tetapi dia tidak pernah gentar, "Aku sudah memikirkan hal ini. Ada <u>seseorang yang membawa malang</u> di dalam kapal ini." (p. 250) |

Hook attributes the mysterious occurrences on the ship to the presence of a "Jonah". The name 'Jonah' refers to "a person believed to bring bad luck to those around him; jinx" (Collins, n.d.). The origin of the name in the context of nautical/pirate tradition is explained in the following: "Certain people weren't even allowed to board a ship because of superstitions. These people were often labelled as 'Jonahs', after the biblical prophet Jonah who defied God's instructions, was thrown overboard by the crew of the ship he was sailing on after trying to run away from his actions, and was swallowed by a whale" (Rowan, 2023, para. 5). Thus, according to Hook, it is this unidentified "Jonah" who is the cause of their misfortune.

In the Malay translation, the proper name "Jonah" is replaced with its descriptive meaning, "*seseorang yang membawa malang*" (lit. one who brings bad luck). By converting this cultural and religious allusion into a straightforward description, the translator achieves a high degree of functional equivalence. The plot remains perfectly accessible, and the target reader immediately comprehends Hook's underlying motive, i.e., that he believes an unidentified jinx is causing their misfortune. Stylistic equivalence, however, is sacrificed. In the source text, "Jonah" is a highly marked linguistic feature deeply embedded in historical maritime and pirate superstitions. The rendering of this concise name into a standard phrase ultimately neutralises the pirate-specific register. Again, this shift represents a clear case of undertranslation regarding the text's literary texture.

DELETION

Deletion is also employed by the translator in dealing with pirate speech in *Peter Pan*. After capturing the Darling children and the Lost Boys, Hook tells them they will be executed, but at the same time adds that he has "room for two cabin boys" (Barrie, 1911, p. 207). In the excerpt shown in the following example, Hook tries to entice John Darling to join his crew.

Example 8

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : 'You, boy,' he said, addressing John, 'you look as if you had a little pluck in you. Didst never want to be a pirate, <u>my hearty?</u> ' (p. 208) |
| TT | : "Kau, budak," tunjuknya kepada John, "kau seperti seorang pemberani. Apa kau mahu menjadi lanun laut?" (p. 233) |

In the English text, Hook addresses John using the term “my hearty”. ‘Hearty’ refers to “a friend; comrade; esp., a fellow sailor, usually preceded by ‘my’” (Collins, n.d.). Even though John Darling is a captive, Hook addresses him using a friendly and affectionate term, as a way of enticing him to become a pirate and of conveying group solidarity. This, to some extent, shows Hook’s manipulative side, using charm to get what he wants.

In the Malay translation, the pirate-related term of endearment which conveys Hook’s exaggerated warmth is omitted. This results in a loss of both character nuance and narrative function. The translation fails to achieve functional equivalence here. In the source text, “my hearty” is not just a greeting; it is a manipulative tool. Hook uses this pirate-to-pirate term to foster a false sense of solidarity and entice John to join his crew. By omitting the term entirely, the Malay translation fails to communicate Hook’s exaggerated warmth and his scheming nature. The reader misses out on a key part of the interaction, i.e., Hook’s attempt to use charm as a weapon. Stylistic equivalence is also compromised. By removing “my hearty”, a hallmark of the pirate sociolect, the pirate flavour is diminished. Without this marker, Hook’s speech becomes plain and direct. As such, this is a classic case of undertranslation through omission.

The following excerpt also illustrates how both the form of the pirate speech and its meaning are removed in the Malay translation. In Example 6, Hook orders Bill Jukes to fetch the “cat” from the cabin to terrorise the captives. However, a “dreadful screech” (Barrie, 1911, p. 218) is heard from within. Jukes’ fellow pirate, Cecco, goes to investigate but returns shaking. A curious Hook then questions Cecco about Bill Jukes, as seen in the following.

Example 9

ST	: ‘What’s the matter with Bill Jukes, you <u>dog</u> ?’ hissed Hook, towering over him. (p. 219)
TT	: “Ada masalah apa dengan Bill Jukes?” desis Hook, bercekak pinggang di hadapannya. (p. 245)

As seen in the excerpt, Hook addresses Cecco as “dog”. In this instance, the word ‘dog’ refers to “a man or boy regarded as unpleasant, contemptible, or wretched (Collins, n.d). It is not surprising that Hook belittles Cecco by using a derogatory term to address him. When the narrator first introduces the crew in Chapter 5, the reader is told that Hook treats his pirate crew in a degrading way: “As dogs this terrible man treated and addressed them, and as dogs they obeyed him” (Barrie, 1911, p. 80).

In the Malay translation, the pirate term of address is not translated, resulting in the loss of pirate speech. Consequently, Hook’s demeaning verbal behavior, which is evident in the source text, is not replicated in the target text. Thus, the translation falls short of achieving functional equivalence. In English, calling Cecco a “dog” establishes Hook’s power and dominance. By removing this word, the Malay text fails to replicate Hook’s demeaning verbal behavior. Stylistic equivalence is also compromised. “Dog” is a sharp, aggressive part of the pirate register. Omitting it cleans up the pirate’s voice. Without the insults, Hook’s speech becomes neutral, resulting in a flattened version of his character.

LITERAL TRANSLATION

As seen in Example 8, Hook attempts to entice John Darling to join his crew. John Darling then admits that he has once entertained the thought of becoming a pirate under the name ‘Red-handed Jack’. This admission prompts his younger brother, Michael, to similarly contemplate adopting a pirate identity, as illustrated in the following exchange aboard the *Jolly Roger*.

Example 10

- | | |
|----|---|
| ST | : ‘What would you call me if I join?’ Michael demanded.
‘ <u>Blackbeard Joe</u> .’ (p. 209) |
| TT | : “Kau akan memanggilkku apa jika aku sertai, John?” tanya Michael.
“ <u>Joe Si Janggut Hitam</u> .”(p. 234) |

Hook suggests the name ‘Blackbeard Joe’ to Michael, as a way of enticing the boy. The name ‘Blackbeard’ (Collins, n.d.), as suggested by Hook is the nickname of Edward Teach (Collins, n.d.), who was a notorious English pirate who was active in the Caribbean and the Atlantic coast of North America and who died in 1718. The novel thus alludes to a real-life infamous pirate.

In the Malay translation, the name “Blackbeard Joe” is translated literally as “*Joe Si Janggut Hitam*” [(‘*si*’ (particle used before a name); ‘*janggut*’ (lit. beard); ‘*hitam*’ (lit. black)]. Here, the translation fails to achieve functional equivalence. In English, the name signals a legendary pirate identity. In Malay, “*Joe Si Janggut Hitam*” sounds like a simple description of a man with a black beard. Consequently, the Malay reader misses the historical connection, as the name no longer carries its intended pirate prestige. Stylistic equivalence is also compromised; by translating the phrase literally, the name becomes generic, erasing its legendary pirate identity despite sounding natural in Malay. Ultimately, this literal approach reduces a legendary figure to an ordinary individual.

Another instance in which the pirate speech is literally translated appears in Example 11. In this excerpt, Hook reveals to Wendy his sordid plan concerning the execution of his captives, specifically the Lost Boys.

Example 11

- | | |
|----|--|
| ST | : ‘So, my beauty,’ said Hook, as if he spoke in syrup, ‘you are to see your children <u>walk the plank</u> .’ (p. 210) |
| TT | : “Jadi, si gadis cantik,” kata Hook berbicara dengan manis, “pastikan kau melihat mereka <u>berjalan di atas papan</u> itu.” (p. 235) |

Hook refers to the Lost Boys as Wendy’s children, acknowledging her maternal role within the group. Hook’s vile and sadistic disposition is manifested in his deliberate torment of Wendy, i.e. forcing her to watch the boys “walk the plank”, a pirate term which means “to be forced by pirates to walk to one’s death off the end of a plank jutting out over the water from the side of a ship” (Collins, n.d.).

In the Malay translation, the expression is translated literally as “*berjalan di atas papan*” [(‘*berjalan*’ (lit. walk); ‘*di atas*’ (lit. on); ‘*papan*’ (lit. plank)]. Here, the translation fails to achieve functional equivalence. In English, “walk the plank” is a specific method of execution. While the source text implies certain death and pirate cruelty, the Malay literal translation, “*berjalan di atas*

papan”, feels mundane and generic. Consequently, a Malay reader might perceive this as a harmless physical action rather than a death sentence; the phrase completely loses its function as a terrifying threat. Furthermore, stylistic equivalence is compromised. By translating the idiom literally, the pirate sociolect is stripped away, replacing Hook’s unique, menacing rhetoric with a plain, everyday sentence.

The discussion that follows focuses on an additional translational strategy, namely approximation. Although this strategy falls outside Epstein’s (2012) proposed framework for translating expressive language, it is nonetheless employed in the Malay translation of *Peter Pan* and thus merits closer examination.

APPROXIMATION

Approximation here can be defined as the use of a target language term which is not an exact equivalent of the source language word but is close in meaning to convey the source text message, albeit partially at times. In Chapter 12, a pirate dinghy arrives at the Mermaids’ Lagoon, carrying Smee and Starkey, two of Captain Hook’s pirate crew, who have kidnapped Tiger Lily. They accidentally crash into Marooner’s Rock, prompting Smee to shout an order to Starkey.

Example 12

ST : ‘Luff, you lubber,’ cried an Irish voice that was Smee’s... (p. 128)

TT : “Ke sana perahunya, dasar lamban!” teriak suara berlongat bahasa Ireland milik Smee...” (p. 140)

In the English text, Smee addresses Starkey as “lubber”. We have also seen from the excerpt in Example 2 that Peter Pan also addresses Smee and Starkey as “lubbers” when he calls out to them in his impersonation of Hook. The word ‘lubber’ (Collins, n.d.), short for ‘landlubber’ (Collins, n.d.), refers to “a person who has had little experience at sea and is therefore awkward aboard a ship”. Smee thus uses a derogatory term to address Starkey, due to his annoyance at Starkey’s incompetence which results in their mishap. ‘Luff’ (Collins, n.d.), meanwhile, is a command “to head (a sailing vessel) into the wind so that its sails flap”. Smee is thus asking the inept Starkey to steer properly.

In the Malay translation, the pirate/nautical term “luff” is replaced with its approximate meaning, i.e. “*ke sana perahunya*” [(‘*ke sana*’ (lit. over there); ‘*perahunya*’ (lit. the boat)], which is a general, non-nautical command. “Lubber”, meanwhile, is replaced with “*lamban*”, which refers to someone who is slow-moving and sluggish (“*tidak cepat (bekerja dll), tidak cergas, kelesa, lambat, lemah*”) (PRPM DBP, n.d.). Here, the translator achieves only partial functional equivalence. For “luff”, the Malay command “*ke sana perahunya*” captures the basic need to move the vessel, but it loses the technical precision of a sailing command. For “lubber”, the word “*lamban*” (sluggish) conveys annoyance, but it misses the specific nautical insult. While the reader may understand that Smee is angry, the specific reason for his anger (Starkey’s lack of seamanship) is weakened. Stylistic equivalence is also lost. “Luff” and “lubber” are highly marked terms that place the characters firmly in a maritime world. By using “*lamban*” and “*ke sana perahunya*”, the translator uses unmarked, standard language. Again, this is a clear case of undertranslation as the translator has simplified technical jargon into everyday language. In the Malay version, the characters lose their identity as specialised sailors and become generic villains.

The use of approximation can also be observed in the following. As shown in Example 7, strange sounds in the form of screeching and crowing are heard coming from the ship's cabin. Unbeknownst to the crew, the sounds are produced by Peter Pan. Hook then instructs one of his pirates, Cecco, to investigate the source of the crowing sound. Almost immediately after Cecco enters the cabin, the crowing sound is heard again, provoking Hook's fury.

Example 13

ST	: Hook rallied his dogs with a gesture. “ <u>Sdeath and odds fish</u> ,” he thundered, ‘who is to bring me that doodle-doo?’ (p. 220)
TT	: Hook mengisyaratkan anak-anak buahnya untuk berkumpul. “ <u>Tak guna!</u> ” herdiknya, “Siapa yang akan membawakan ayam jantan itu kepadaku?” (p. 246)

Hook's anger and agitation are reflected in his swearing. He utters the minced oath “sdeath and odds fish”, and demands to know who will fetch the source of the “doodle-doo”, i.e. the mysterious crowing sound. A minced oath is “a word or phrase that is used instead of saying an offensive word, often humorously” (Cambridge, n.d.). In this instance, Hook's exclamation “sdeath” is a euphemistic form of “God's death” (Collins, n.d.), while “odds fish” likewise functions as a mild oath (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

In the Malay translation, Hook's minced oath “sdeath and odds fish” is rendered as “*tak guna*” (lit. useless or good for nothing), which functions as a mild insult to express frustration. Here, the translator achieves only partial functional equivalence. In the original text, these oaths show that Hook is exploding with rage. While “*tak guna*” expresses frustration, it is far too weak. It functions as a mild, everyday complaint rather than a dramatic outburst. As a result, the intensity of Hook's anger is toned down, making him feel less dangerous. Stylistic equivalence is also lost. Minced oaths like “sdeath” are archaic and eccentric. They define Hook's unique identity as a pirate who uses old-fashioned, dramatic language. By using “*tak guna*”, the translator uses unmarked, standard language. The pirate flavour is removed, and Hook no longer sounds like a villain.

The analysis reveals that the Malay translation of pirate speech in *Peter Pan* utilises retention, standardisation, deletion, literal translation, and approximation. While retention and standardisation preserve basic meaning, they frequently result in undertranslation, where the rich socio-stylistic nuances of the source text are thinned out. Deletion and literal translation further diminish these features, failing to achieve stylistic equivalence even when functional equivalence is maintained.

A key finding of this study is the emergence of approximation as a necessary but limited strategy. In this context, approximation often leads to undertranslation because it conveys meaning only partially, failing to reproduce the culturally marked “flavour” of the source text. This suggests that existing frameworks for children's literature should be expanded to include strategies for stylistic mimicry when exact equivalents are unavailable.

These findings echo concerns raised in the literature, which emphasise that preserving semantic accuracy alone is insufficient; the translation of sociolect must also prioritise functional and stylistic equivalence to maintain the characters' social identity and the expressive impact of their speech (Ali, 2024; Hadley, 2011). Collectively, these strategies result in a flattened representation of pirate identity. By prioritising a functional translation over a marked stylistic

one, the pirates' linguistic distinctiveness is neutralised, making them appear less vividly differentiated than in the original text.

The implications of these findings are twofold: first, translators need to carefully balance meaning and style, recognising that strategies like standardisation or literal translation, although convenient, risk eroding or erasing sociolectal identity through undertranslation. Second, translation frameworks may benefit from incorporating additional strategies such as approximation to address the expressive and culturally marked features of fictional sociolects, ensuring that the target text retains both communicative function and literary characterisation.

CONCLUSION

This study identified 31 linguistic markers forming the pirate sociolect in *Peter Pan* and analysed the strategies used to translate them into Malay. The findings reveal a predominant reliance on retention, standardisation, deletion, and literal translation. The analysis also reveals the use of an additional strategy, approximation, which extends beyond Epstein's (2012) framework. While these strategies maintain semantic clarity, they often result in undertranslation, as the rich, culturally specific nuances of the source text are omitted or simplified. By eroding the linguistic otherness of Captain Hook and his crew, the translation fails to achieve stylistic equivalence, even when functional equivalence is maintained.

This imbalance results in a flattened representation of pirate identity, as the idiosyncratic markers of the source text are neutralised. Because pirate speech is central to the characterisation of the antagonists, these results highlight the translator's dual responsibility: ensuring clarity while avoiding the thinning effect of undertranslation.

Consequently, this study argues that translation frameworks should be expanded to prioritise character voice and stylistic equivalence as core requirements for maintaining narrative integrity. Considering the worldwide popularity of *Peter Pan* and its translation into many languages, it would be valuable to explore how pirate speech is rendered in other linguistic contexts, shedding light on how translators navigate the tension between preserving distinctive pirate lingo and maintaining comprehensibility for target readers. Finally, since the impact on the audience remains a key question, reader reception studies are necessary to understand how target readers actually perceive and respond to these translated identities.

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APPENDIX A

PIRATE SOCIOLECT	PAGE NUMBER	MALAY TRANSLATION	PAGE NUMBER
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	87	<i>ay</i>	92
	88	<i>ay</i>	93
	98	<i>ay</i>	107
	99	<i>ya</i>	108
	99	<i>ya</i>	108
	102	<i>ay</i>	110
	132	<i>ay</i>	144
	169	<i>ay</i>	190
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ay, ay	226	<i>ay</i>	253
	69	<i>ay, ay</i>	73
	69	<i>ay, ay</i>	73
	101	<i>ay, ay</i>	109
	102	<i>ay, ay</i>	110
	129	<i>ay, ay</i>	141
	136	<i>ay, ay</i>	148
	137	<i>ay, ay</i>	150
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	80	anjing	85
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	206	anak-anak buahnya	232
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	220	anak-anak buahnya	246
	222	anak-anak buahnya	249
	223	anjing	250
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	204	Flint	229
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	223	anak-anak buahku	250
	224	anak-anak buahku	250
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'sdeath and oddsfish	220	tak guna	246
stow this gab	208	simpan semua omongan kosong kalian	233
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	202	dihumban ke dalam laut	227
	207	humbankan ke dalam laut	232
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yo ho	78	□ oho	84
	85	yo ho	90
	85	yo ho	90
	217	yo ho	243
	217	yo ho	243
	218	yo ho	244
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