

## INTRODUCTION

African American English is an ethnolect developed primarily within the African American communities in the United States and is most commonly used in informal situations; it is mostly associated with the African American populations of the Southern states of America and large cities of the Northern states. This dialect developed from Southern American English that was spoken by the Africans during the slavery period and was influenced by other West African languages and other American dialects (Rickford, 1999; Green, 2002; and Wolfram & Thomas, 2008). In terms of its linguistic features, African American Vernacular English (AAVE) can be described as being associated with certain lexical, phonological, morphological, syntactic and discursive patterns that set it apart from Standard American English (SAE).

These features have crucial social importance and function as signals within the African American (AA) communities and culture (Labov, 1972; Smitherman, 1986; Rickford & Rickford, 2007). Thus, AAVE can be described as Nonstandard English with specific linguistic features that distinguish it from other forms of the language. These patterns include pronunciation, phonetic, lexical, morphological, syntactical and other patterns of the foreign language being learned. In pronunciation, AAVE speakers consistently use consonant cluster reduction like in the latter part of the word 'test', where can only be pronounced as 'tes', they also use their own distinctive rhythm and tone, intonation patterns. In the use of lexicon and structures, AAVE

features specific terms like ‘Imma’ meaning ‘I am going to,’ use of the word ‘reel’ instead of ‘real,’ and use of ‘withcu’ meaning ‘with you’. From the syntactical point of view, the invariant ‘be’ is employed in AAVE to point out habitual activities (e. g. , ‘He be working’) and negative marker dynamically, AAVE uses particular sentence construction and order of the words. These linguistic features have several roles in the African American context, such as indexing identity and affiliation, labeling AAVE’S, and expressing cultural and social norms. (Baugh, 2010; Alim, 2016; and Smitherman, 2018) have given much focus to these characteristics in relating AAVE as a special and worthy branch of English.

Lanehart (2022) examines African American Vernacular English (AAVE) as a language, including but not limited to its historical socio-political and educational perspectives. Based on this historical analysis, a clearer picture can be seen of how the structures and essential features associated with African American Vernacular English (AAVE) are important aspects of understanding for its speakers in terms of literacy development that enables interaction using texts across multiple domains (Smitherman 2000; Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 2008; Charity Hudley & Mallinson, 2011). The goal of Lanehart's work is to strengthen the legitimacy or recognition and authority of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) as a dialect, which promotes an inclusive community that values different linguistic backgrounds. In this way, African American Vernacular English (AAVE) speakers can participate in cultural and academic creation without neglecting their own background (Rickford and Rickford, 2007; Alim & Smitherman 2012; Lanehart, 2015)

The importance of translating AAVE correctly for subtitles in a film like *Night School* cannot be ignored. In assessing the quality of subtitles, there is a functional model recommended by COSTA MT Evaluation Tool which includes Fluency, Adequacy, and Translation Error Classification as three measures or indicators (Chatzitheodorou & Chatzistamatis, 2013).

In the case of African American Vernacular English (AAVE), this theory can allow whether the subtitles capture pronunciation to highlights the grammar, vocabulary, and other cultural implications (Green, 2002). However, there is the issue of how faithful it is to make it easier for viewers who are not familiar with this form of English but at the same time maintain its essence. However, a literal interpretation may not make sense when it comes to comprehension by the target audience as some translations are very difficult to understand for those with limited English skills (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014). Subtitled texts must retain the meaning of African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) and the understanding of the reader, although they must also be understandable to those who do not know their dialect.

Machine Translation (Google Translate) has shown clear development in recent years, but it is still a problem to exactly translate especially like capture the original meaning of AAVE subtitles and subtitle African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in movies like '*Night School*'. MT systems that focus mainly on standard English corpora also find it difficult to handle the specific linguistic aspects of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) such as its unique vocabulary, patterns of grammar and cultural subtleties. According to Saldanha and O'Brien

(2014), dialects and non-standard language forms often require human intervention so that communication can be understood. For instance, when it comes to translating AAVE in Night School subtitles, it is possible for MT system to fail to understand the meaning of a specific pronunciation or its cultural context might not be appreciated, thereby leading to a failure to capture the original intonation or even humor in the shot. As Green (2010) notes, this further supports his arguments that continued language and cultural features of AAVE need to be preserved during the translation as what will ensure that contextual meaning and intention from the source text original will also be retained. It remains the issue to consider how to correctly translate AAVE regarding the subtitles of the Night School kind of movie.

To provide understanding of the conduction of the study, it will be useful to break down the identification of the Subtitling Accuracy of African American Vernacular English in the Night School Movie Using the COSTA MT Evaluation Tool. The COSTA MT Evaluation Tool by Chatzitheodorou & Chatzistamatis (2013) is a complete model for the assessment and improvement of machine translation output. It posits that successful evaluation of machine translation relies on two main criteria: Fluency and Adequacy, Translation error classification. Fluency (grammatical and linguistic accuracy of the translated texts), Adequacy (extent to which all of the content of a text is conveyed), and then Translation error classification (categorization of errors in linguistic, words, and style aspects). This tool also stresses that translations should not only provide correct information, but should also provide the information appropriately for the target audience and in a style that is easy for the reader to comprehend.

With the aid of these three factors, evaluators are able to assess translations that serve their purpose optimally, satisfying the user's expectation and enhancing comprehensibility of the content to improve the overall quality and efficiency of machine translation. In order to assess subtitling accuracy, the COSTA MT Evaluation Tool is going to be employed. The following are used in the tool to analyze subtitles:

Fluency: Whether or not the subtitles appear to be in fluent language, without taking into account the correctness of the information.

Adequacy: Determining the extent to which all of the content of a text is conveyed, regardless of the quality of the language in the candidate translation.

Translation Error Classification: Categorizing errors in linguistic aspects, words usage, and style of the produced texts.

Although there is extensive research on African American Vernacular English (AAVE), there is a gap in the accuracy and effectiveness of machine translation (Google Translate) in translating African American Vernacular English (AAVE), especially movie subtitles. In this study, previous researchers mainly focused on the African American Vernacular English (AAVE), which is particularly culturally distinctive. However, they did not go into detail when they compared human language with machine translation in handling the nuanced African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in the movie. This study is expected to provide a solution by using qualitative research approach to examine the accuracy of Machine Translation (Google Translate) in translating African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in Night School compared to Human Translation (Prime Video Subtitles),

based on the MT Evaluation Tool model. Thus, this study will be a proof that provides the ability of Machine Translation (Google Translate) in preserving African American Vernacular English (AAVE).

American Vernacular English (AAVE) across multiple devices. The film *Night School* is analyzed through the COSTA MT Evaluation Tool model to see how it translates African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Therefore, *Night School* presents both problems and opportunities for translators who wish to maintain linguistic and cultural authenticity. Translating a film into African American Vernacular English (AAVE) requires that one understand its various dialects in order to retain the intended meaning (Diaz-Cintas & Remael, 2014). Fluency, Adequacy, and Translation Error Classification are key concepts of the COSTA MT Evaluation Tool model that can guide translators during this process (Chatzitheodorou & Chatzistamatis, 2013).

In relation to film translation, this model also helps to maintain the linguistic and cultural richness of the original by facilitating not only cross-cultural communication but also audience engagement with the film (Gottlieb, 1992; Diaz-Cintas, 2014). This means that subtitling a film such as ‘*Night School*’ in African American Vernacular English provides an opportunity to enhance the linguistic diversity of the medium while respecting the authenticity of cultural expression.

The research question underlying this study is: In the movie *Night School*, how close is the Machine Translation (Google Translate) to the Human Translation (Prime Videos Subtitles) in translating African American Vernacular English (AAVE) dialogues? This study is trying to solve the problem of standard Machine Translation

(Google Translate) systems with the unique features of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) such as the language and the humor between the lines. By deciding on the COSTA MT Evaluation Tool model to measure the accuracy of subtitles, the thrust is to see if Machine Translation (Google Translate) can successfully convey the authentic communication and original intent of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) dialogue. Consequently, by providing a specific comparison between Human Translation (Prime Video Subtitles) and Machine Translation (Google Translate) using this comparison, the study will offer a way to support the idea or interpret the meaning of the subtitle dialogue.

Several study research works have looked at how such features of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) may be subtitled in spoken situations of use. The first study by Mayastri and Nugroho (2019). Which focuses on the examination of the procedures used for translating AAVE grammatical features and cultural categories into the subtitles of the movie ‘Straight Outta Compton’. They identified AAVE grammatical features in 292 utterances out of 2976 movie subtitles they analyzed. First of all, they noted that deviation from standard English in AAVE implicates the translation of grammatical features and dialectical features of cultural components. The study underscores that there are many challenges when translating AAVE and culturally relevant content and should encourage language and culture sensitive translation when translating the content to other audiences.

The second by Santoso (2019) who conducted a study that tested the simple sentences as well as evaluated the quality of the Indonesian translation of the book ‘The Help’ by Kathryn Stockett, which uses African American Vernacular English

(AAVE). They realized that AAVE being a non-standard language and rarely in novels, the English-Indonesian translation was legal, valid and appropriate; therefore, it was a good translation.

The third study by Dewi, Nababan, Santosa, and Djatmika (2018). That is described in the provided document concerns the analysis of the usage of the African-American English dialects in Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and its translation into Indonesian. Researchers examined all the utterances produced by AAVE characters in the novel and established that 95% of them include phonological processes of AAVE, which draw attention to ethnicity, social status, and geographical origin of the character. Nevertheless, these dialect features are relatively unobservable on the Indonesian translation of the text since translators generally substituted AAVE words with either mainstream or informal Indonesian.

This study has a unique focus compared to the previous three studies. This study compares machine translation (Google Translate) with human translation (Prime Video subtitles) for AAVE dialogue in the movie Night School, using an MT evaluation model to measure accuracy. Meanwhile, Mayastri & Nugroho's (2019) study analyzed the translation procedure of AAVE grammatical and cultural features in the subtitles of the movie Straight 'Outta Compton', Santoso (2019) translated the quality of AAVE translation into Indonesian in the book 'The Help', and Dewi et al. (2018) analyzed the use of African-American dialects in the novel 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn' and its translation. Although all of these studies focus on AAVE and its translators, this research approach directly compares machine and human translation, as well as the use of MT evaluation tools, providing a new



perspective in the study of AAVE translation. This research study aims to assess the ability of machine translation to convey authentic communication and the original intent of AAVE dialogue, while previous studies have focused more on the procedures, quality, and challenges in translating AAVE into a specific target language.

## **METHOD**

This study is that of descriptive qualitative research. According to Nassaji (2015), descriptive qualitative research methods suggest that when investigating a phenomenon, it is viewed whole and in its entirety and, phenomenon is understood when data is collected, analyzed and interpreted. This type of research approach aims at understanding a certain phenomenon in depth, by collecting and analyzing information about a phenomenon of interest as opposed to collecting data to support or oppose a hypothesis or theory. This flexibility helps the researcher to gain a deeper insight into the subject under study because this approach means that the researcher looks at it as a whole and comes to conclusions depending on the information discovered.

A total of 12 African American Vernacular English (AAVE) were collected from the Night School Movie 2018, then the data were selected to be identified and discussed because they had similarities. Thus, from the 12 selected data, the researcher divided each into the grouping of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) translations that were matched by Chatzitheodorou & Chatzistamatis's