THE TRANSLATION OF CULTURAL TERMS IN A BILINGUAL ANTHOLOGY OF INDONESIAN WRITING - *KARMA*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify and analyse the categories, translation procedures, and translation orientation of cultural terms found in the Indonesian short stories from a bilingual anthology entitled *Karma*. The method of collecting data in this study was descriptive qualitative. The theory of cultural categories, translation procedures and translation orientation were used to identify, analyse and describe the data. This study found that five cultural categories were found within the short stories. Whereas, the translation procedures used were borrowing, calque, literal translation, modulation, and equivalence. The majority of the translation procedures were oriented toward domestication.

Keywords: *Cultural terms, Translation procedures, Domestication ~~and~~ ,Foreignization*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis kategori, prosedur penerjemahan, dan orientasi terjemahan istilah budaya yang ditemukan dalam cerita pendek Indonesia dari antologi bilingual yang berjudul Karma. Metode pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Teori kategori budaya, prosedur penerjemahan dan orientasi terjemahan digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi, menganalisis, dan mendeskripsikan data. Studi ini menemukan bahwa lima kategori budaya ditemukan dalam cerita pendek. Sedangkan prosedur penerjemahan yang digunakan adalah peminjaman, kalke, terjemahan literal, modulasi, dan kesetaraan. Mayoritas prosedur penerjemahan berorientasi pada domestikasi.

Kata Kunci: Istilah-istilah budaya, Prosedur penerjemahan, Domestikasi ~~dan~~ ,Foreignisasi

1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalisation, the world has become a global village, the interactions between cultures are very intensive and within this interaction, translators are often seen as the mediators between the cultures. It is also known, however, that translating cultural terms is one of the greatest challenges for translators. ~~Challenges encountered in translating cultural terms can be caused by unfamiliarity with the cultural expressions and ambiguity of some cultural expressions.~~ Incomprehension of the cultural expressions and ambiguity can be cause of the challenges encounter of translating cultural terms.

Lack of knowledge of translation techniques and translation procedures can also lead to failure to achieve the appropriate equivalence in the target language.

To face these challenges, experts have proposed many theories of translation and translation procedures to assist translators. ~~itself~~ According to Nida and Taber (1982) The translation is an effort to reproduce a message from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) by finding the closest natural equivalent, first in meaning, then in grammatical units. This definition is in line with Newmark (1988) who defined translation as a craft to use in an attempt to replace a written message and/or a statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language.

The translation theories clearly indicated ~~that~~ in the process of translating, a translator should have a good knowledge

and competent of words (morphology), words formation (syntax) and word orders related to meanings (semantics) in both SL and TL to be able to reproduce or replace a message in SL to the TL. However, in the case of translation of cultural terms, translation is not only ~~merely~~ a matter of transfer language or meaning but also transfering ~~between~~ two different cultures.It is because every language as a system has words that are integral only to the specific language, thus, raise the problem of comprehension when translator attempts to transfer the words into another language that does not have the same understanding or knowledge. As stated by Newmark (1988), the more specific a language becomes for natural phenomena, such as flora and fauna, the more the language becomes embedded in cultural features and therefore creates translation problems. He classified cultural terms into five categories, which are ecology, material culture or artefacts, social culture, organizational customs, and gestures and habits.

Many translation procedures have been proposed to translate cultural terms and different translation procedures may result in different translation products. Moreover, another problem of translating is in the decision of the translator of whether to translate literally by adjusting the form or translate freely by adapting the message. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) proposed seven translation procedures which are divided into two, direct or literal translation, consisting of borrowing, calque and literal translation, and oblique translation which consist of transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation. This division, according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) is because it may be possible to transpose SL message element by element into the TL due to the existence of parallel structure or concept in TL. The translator may, however, also notice gaps in TL, which must be filled by corresponding elements. In this case, a translator can

employ a parallel category of parallel concepts to convey the meaning in SL.

In making the decision of which translation procedures to use, the translator will be faced with two poles of orientations; the SL orientation or TL orientation. Hatim and Munday (2004) stated that the way translators operate within social and cultural contexts is called translation orientations, which are domestication and foreignization. Besides, Venuti (1995) stated that foreignization is a source-culture-oriented translation where the translator strives to translate the SL and culture into the TL in order to give it a kind of exotic flavour. It involves retaining the foreignness of the SL text. In Venuti's perspective, the foreign elements of the SL text should be highlighted to register the differences in linguistic and culture of the TL text. As the representative advocate of foreignization, Venuti openly pronounced that the aim of foreignization is to develop a kind of translation theory and practice to resist the trend of the dominance of the target language, ~~so as~~ to give prominence to the difference between the original and the version in terms of language and culture. In this orientation, there is a deliberation to keep something foreign in the target text.

Domestication, on the other extreme, strives to render foreign elements of the cultural specific source text into parallel target texts. Nida is considered as the representative advocate of domestication and seats the target reader into the first place by putting forward the ideas of the most natural equivalent. Nida and Taber (1982) consider that when encountering cultural specific items, the translation into the target text should be completely natural and that the behavioural model in the SL should be assimilated into the target's reader's cultural sphere. In addition, such, translation does not emphasize that the target language readers should accept the concept of the source language behavioural mode in order to understand the source message. Drawing upon the above problems in translations of

cultural terms, this study seeks to identify Indonesian cultural terms in a bilingual anthology of Indonesian writing entitled *Karma* and analyse their translation procedures and orientation into the English language.

The ways of cultural terms are translated have been discussed by many researchers of translation studies. Herianto (2017) discussed translations of cultural terms based on cultural categories proposed by Newmark's (1988) theory on culturally bound words/phrases in diorama text.It is that there were a high number of non-equivalence translations found due to missing translation, generalisation, and lack of information.The thesis of Al Salmi (2018) stated on cultural translation of an Arabic novel also used Newmark's (1988) cultural categories and Venuti's (1995) translation orientations of domestication and foreignization. The result of this study reveals foreignization was applied more than domestication. However, the translator sometimes departs from foreignization to domestication to give the familiar notion and a similar impression to the target readers. On the contrary, a foreignization strategy was applied when the translator tries to keep the readers aware that they are looking at a different culture. Putrawan (2011) in his thesis on the translation of a novel by Pramoedya Ananta Toer found that the strength of ideology of domestication proven that unknown lexical concepts in culture can be expressed in another language of a different culture.

The result of this study expect to enrich the knowledge of the cultural terms categories in the Indonesian language and their translations into the English language, as well as to provide better understanding and references in relation to the applications of Newmark's (1998) theories of cultural words categories, Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) of translation procedure and Venuti's (1995) of translation orientations theory of domestication and foreignization.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The data were taken from short stories included in an anthology of Indonesian writing entitled *Karma*. The data from these short stories were in the form of the Indonesian cultural terms in the level of words and phrases in the original Indonesian language and their English language translation.

The data were collected using the method of document observation by skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation.

The techniques used were note-taking where the cultural terms found through the thorough observation of the source document were noted down then compared, categorized, analysed and classified based on cultural terms categories, their translation procedures, and translation's orientation.

A descriptive qualitative method was used to analyse the data, first cultural terms identified in the Indonesian source text were categorized based on Newmark's (1988) cultural categories, which are ecological culture, material culture, social culture, organization, and gesture and habits. Then the translations of the cultural words or terms in the target language text were analysed to determine the translation procedures used. This was done based on Vinay & Darbelnet (1995) theory of translation procedures, which are borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation. Last, based on the data findings on the second step, the orientation of the translation was then analysed using Venuti's (1995) theory of domestication and foreignization.

3. DISCUSSIONS

The Indonesian cultural terms identified in the texts of *Karma* were categorised and divided into sections based on Newmark's (1988) cultural word categories. The translator adopts the procedure in rendering the cultural word or

phrase from Indonesian into English were analysed using Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) theory and reference was made to the translation orientation of domestication and foreignization as proposed by Venuti (1995).

3.1. Ecology

Newmark (1988) distinguished geographical features or ecology from other cultural terms because they are usually value-free, politically, and commercially. He adds that the importance of the country of origin and the degree of specificity are nevertheless, influenced by the diffusion of the ecology-related cultural terms in which flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills are included in this category.

Example [3-1]

SL   Aku menceburkan diri ke **petirtaan** Jalatunda. (Mahapralaya Bubat, *Karma*, 2019: 26)

TL   *I plunged into the **waters** of Jalatunda* (*The Great Tragedy of Bubat, Karma*, 2019: 95)

As illustrated by the Example [3-1], Lanus (2018) explained that in the Hindu Bali religion, sacred traditions require water (*toya*) springs and holy springs to be preserved as a source of life and holy water. Holy water in the Balinese traditions is made from a collection of water from various springs, which is known as *petirtaan* or *patoyan*. This collection of springs water or *petirtaan* was usually contained in a pool, considered as sacred and often used in religious rituals. In the ancient Javanese traditions, bathing in a *petirtaan* is a symbol of cleansing the body and soul.

From the above explanation of the SL cultural term *petirtaan*, it can be said that *petirtaan* is a place where sacred spring water used in religious rituals is contained. However, it was translated into *waters* in the TL. *Waters* is the plural of noun water, used to refer to a particular areas or bodies of water like sea, river or lake, for example in 'the Balinese coastal waters' or in literary contexts, such as 'the burning skies above the clear waters of the Pacific'. The SL cultural word *petirtaan* was **domesticated** into *waters* in the TL, as the cultural concept of the SL ecology *petirtaan* does not exist in the TL. The translation procedure of **adaptation** is used to render the SL ecology with a more familiar ecology in TL, as the type of cultural ecology being referred to by the SL message is unknown in the TL.

Example [3-2]

SL   Duduk di bawah **pohon kalabasa** memandang tepian laut yang kemerahan. (Senja dan Sebuah Cara untuk Bahagia, *Karma*, 2019: 54)

TL   *Sitting beneath the **calabash tree** and looking out onto the reddish sea.* (*Twilight and a Way to Find Happiness*, *Karma*, 2019: 121)

The phrase *pohon kalabasa* in data [3-2] belongs to an ecology category, particularly flora. It is another local name given to *maja* (Latin: *Crescentia cujete*) tree in the SL ecology. *Kalabasa* or *maja* tree in the SL culture is known to symbolize prosperity, wealth, and fortune. The tree and fruits of the *pohon kalabasa* or *pohon maja* are considered as sacred. Patih Gajah Mada was said to give the name '*Majapahit*' so that the *maja* tree would bring prosperity and wealth to the kingdom and the archipelago. While in the legend of the Goddess Laksmi in the Indian Hindu religion, the *kalabasa* or *maja* fruit is believed to represent purity. In the context of the story, the author selection of using the SL ecology *pohon kalabasa* instead of other types of tree may relate to the main character of the story, a poor innocent girl who is trying to keep her hopes of happiness while enduring repeated sexual

harassments from his boss at work. It can be seen that the SL ecology of *pohon kalabasa* symbolized the girl's hopes and dreams.

The SL cultural term *pohon kalabasa* was translated into *a calabash tree*. The translator used the procedure of calque to maintain the TL term in the word *calabash*, mixed with the orientation to the target language in the word *tree*. Thusly, the reader can convey the meaning properly that it is a type of tree in the TL.The *calabash tree* in the TL ecology can be considered a **fixed calque**. A recognised ecology is mentioned and explained in the Encyclopaedia Britannica as an ornamental tree with hard skin fruits that can be made into bowls, spoon, or other utensils. However, it is still an exotic type of tree in the TL culture due to its geographical origin and has no symbolic meanings as in the SL culture. By borrowing the expression of *pohon kalabasa* in the SL into *a calabash tree* in the TL, the translator used the orientation of **foreignization** to introduce the exoticness of the SL ecology in the TL while maintaining familiarity.

3.2.Material Culture

When the ecology of one culture is different from another, different materials or artifacts could be produced by these different cultures to match or adapt to their ecology, therefore become specific or unique to that culture only.

According to Newmark (1988), material culture or artifacts include things such as food, houses and towns, clothes, and transports.

Example [3-3]
SL Ia perlu memiliki **aji kebal** agar tak tertangkap.
(Pada Hari Ketika Malam Lelap di Pangkuannya Sendiri, *Karma*, 2019: 44)

TL *They also had to have a particular type of **magic charm**, which prevented them from getting caught.*

(*The Day the Night Fell Asleep in its Own Lap*, *Karma*, 2019: 111)

The material culture in the SL *aji kebal* was translated into another material in the TL, which is the *magic charm*. It can be said that the SL material is known as colocation. The important things for a translator to have a good knowledge and understanding of the meaning behind the two words simultaneously are how the words go together in certain construction, determined what they mean and in order to translate a form of colocation.

The SL material, *aji kebal* is a colocation that combined the word *aji* and *kebal*. According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), *aji* means a sacred object that is very valuable and considered to be lucky. While the word *kebal* means immune or cannot be hurt by weapons. Based on the above, it can be said that the colocation term *aji kebal* indicated a sacred and valuable object that could bring luck by providing immunity against weapons for its owner or bearer.

The translator translated *aji kebal* into the term magic charm in the Oxford Dictionary of English (ODE), the word charm explain as an object, an act, or saying believed to have magic power. The word magic indicated the charm as having supernatural power. However, dissimilar with SL material *aji kebal*, the term magic charm is a general term that does not explain specifically what the charm provides or possessed for kind of supernatural or magical power. Such a specific nature of the SL material *aji kebal* is unknown in the TL.

Due to the foreignness of the SL in the TL, the term *aji kebal* was **domesticated** into the *magic charm*, which is a familiar and natural term for the TL readers to describe something with magical power. It can be said that the translator used the **modulation** procedure by providing a variation in the form of the message. *Magic charm* is mostly synonymous with magic formula, chant, or

spell. Despite the difference between the forms, the idea of an object with supernatural or magical power was conveyed to the TL readers.

3.1 Social Culture

Work and leisure are included as part of social culture in Newmark's (1988) cultural categories. The usage of fictive kinship address term and title are also included in this category. Some examples of words and phrases included as a social culture that was found within *Karma* are given in [3-4].

Example [3-4]

SL Yang jelas, **Bung** harus tahu, saya tidak akan salah kali ini.
(Sebelum dan Setelah Perang, *Karma*, 2019: 15)

TL *What is clear – and **Bung** you must know this – I will not be wrong this time.*
(*Before and After the War, Karma*, 2019: 84)

The SL social culture *bung* is a familiar or fictive kinship address term used to call a male person, usually older. It is used to show respect and a close relationship. In the TL, the concept behind *bung* is unfamiliar and was translated into exactly the same form in the TL using the **borrowing** procedure. As stated by Vinay & Dalbernet (1995), borrowing procedure is occasionally used to introduce or maintain the flavour of the SL culture, as well as to create a stylistic effect. Instead of finding close equivalence or a more familiar term in the TL, the translator retained the **foreignness** of the term and remains within the SL culture by borrowing the SL word purely.

Example [3-5]

SL "**Lonte**," rutuknya. "Jadi kalian mengkhianatiku selama ini?"

(Sebelum dan Setelah Perang, *Karma*, 2019: 19)

TL *"**Bitch**," he grunted. "So you both were betraying me all this time?"*
(*Before and After the War, Karma*, 2019: 88)

Social culture the word *lonte on the SL* according to KBBI is an address term for wild woman, a woman with no morals, or prostitute. The address term *lonte* is specific for females and in Indonesian culture; *lonte* is categorized as a very rude or impolite address word or even a taboo word to describe a woman prostitute. While, the word *lonte* translated into TL could be *bitch.* The word *bitch* in the TL means a female dog and is not considered as a taboo word, though it has developed into a word with a negative connotation and categorised as a swear word. The word *bitch* also generally used as a term to describe someone who is malicious, selfish, offensive, unpleasant, or lewd. The word *lonte* not only commonly used for females but also it used for males.

When the word *lonte* in SL was translated into TL would be a different form that is less specific than in the SL culture. However, the idea to address someone derogatorily was transferred from the SL to the TL. It can be said that the translation of the SL social culture word *lonte* into the TL word *bitch* applied the **modulation** procedure with consideration to the situational equivalence of the two words while the **domestication** orientation was applied to the translation.

3.2. Organisation, Customs, and Ideas

Newmark (1988) divided organisation, customs, and ideas into three major topics which are political and administrative, religious, and artistic. Some examples of this category, translation procedures, and orientation in *Karma* will be discussed below.

Example [3-6]

SL Atau kamu lebih suka tujuh puluh dua **bidadari** daripada **malaikat**?
(Kucing Leti, *Karma*, 2019: 13)

TL *Or would you prefer seventy-two* **virgins** *to* **angels**?
(*Leti's Kitten*, *Karma*, 2019: 82)

In the SL, the word *bidadari* is a concept believed within Islam and Hindu religions and Indonesian folklores. Particularly in Islam, *bidadari* is believed to be of beautiful and pure female human-like beings, who live in heaven and whose duties are to accompany and entertain departed souls to happiness in heaven. In the Hindu religion and Indonesian folklores, the term *bidadari* is often referred to as female deities or goddesses who are messengers or wives of gods. Wiyatmi, et.al. (2019).

The translator has translated the word *bidadari* in TL into a *virgin*. It was based on a well-known debatable interpretation of Islamic belief about 72 *virgins* as a reward for the souls of Muslim martyrs in heaven. In this case, even though the TL readers may be familiar or have heard about the 72 virgins for martyrs, the fully conceptual of *bidadari* is unknown in the TL culture. Therefore, the translation of the SL *bidadari* into the TL *virgin* applied **adaptation** procedure to the SL word. It is a narrow translation of the word *bidadari* and some culturals nuance may be lost in the TL translation.

Differently with the word *malaikat*, is another religious concept of the heavenly beings that are emotionless, obedient only to god, and performed special duties for god. *Malaikat* dissimilar with *bidadari* that take the form of a woman, *malaikat* can be of any form or genderless. In the TL, *malaikat* has translated into *an angel,* a comparable concept that is also known in the TL religious culture.

Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) explanation of parallel in translation that can exist when corresponding to a parallel thought process could justify the comparable concept of the SL *malaikat* with the TL *angel*. It can be affirmed that the translator applied **the equivalence** procedure for the SL *malaikat* into the TL *an angel*.

The translator uses translations procedures for the SL words *bidadari* and *malaikat* into the TL *virgin* and *an angel* were both oriented toward **domestication**. The translator made the translation more reader-friendly for the TL readers when the translator rendering the foreignness of the SL words into familiar or parallel terms in the TL.

3.3. Gestures and Habits

Newmark (1988) relates a cultural category to actions and traditions that may exist in one culture. Every culture may have a different way of body movements and gestures to express meanings and once a particular gesture is used often enough, it often becomes a habit within that culture.

Example [3-7]

SL Saat embu' mengelus wajahku pelan-pelan lalu **meniup ubun-ubun** sebentar
(Pada Hari Ketika Malam Lelap di Pangkuannya Sendiri, *Karma*, 2019: 43)

TL *As my mother slowly caressed my face, then gently* **blew onto the top of my head**.
(*The Day the Night Fell Asleep in its Own Lap*, *Karma*, 2019: 110)

In the SL , phrase *meniup ubun-ubun* in Example [3-7] is a cultural gesture commonly done by parents or elders to their children or younger person. The gesture was done by blowing air from the parents or the elder's mouth into the crown of the children or the younger person. Prayers always accompanied the gesture for their

health and welfare. An example of this gesture ~~could be seen~~ in the *Aqiqah* ceremony for the blessing of a newly born baby. In this ceremony, special Islamic prayers recites on top of the baby's head, followed by blowing air three times toward the top of the baby's head or the crown. This gesture is symbolically believed to bring the prayers into the most important organ that controls behaviour and personality, the lobus frontal part of the brain, which is located behind the crown.

This cultural gesture is not known in the TL culture. The translation of the SL *meniup ubun-ubun* was done literally in the TL with blew on to the top of my head since the SL gesture is not familiar in the TL. However, the **literal translation** provided the TL readers with some idea of how the gesture was conducted. The translation was oriented toward **foreignization** with the gesture translated from the SL into the TL, without any context of what the gesture culturally means.

4. CONCLUSION

The analysis in this study was found that all categories of cultural words proposed by Newmark's (1988). It was found within the selected short story of *Karma*, which are ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts, and gestures. The cultural categories most frequently found in *Karma* were material culture, followed by social culture. This may relate to the combination of the short stories that represented many aspects of people's daily life activities, ~~from~~ different regions, ethnic groups, and background in Indonesia.

Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) proposed main part of the translation procedures ,which are borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation which used to except for transposition procedure that was not found within the anthology *Karma*. Therefore, the translators were most of the time able to capture the intended meaning meant by the SL writers. However, the findings also showed that in some cases, the translators failed or seem to be not trying hard enough to capture the cultural focus or the level of the cultural meaning intended by the writers.

Translation orientations of domestication and foreignization as proposed by Venuti (1995) indicated both throughout this study. However, the translators through the procedures of adaptation and equivalence most frequently used the orientations toward domestication.

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