

THE MAPPING OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS WITH REFERENCE TO *LOOKING FOR ALASKA INTO MENCARI ALASKA: A NATURAL SEMANTIC METALANGUAGE APPROACH*

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan emosi negatif dalam novel *Looking for Alaska* dan terjemahannya *Mencari Alaska* dipetakan. Semantik leksikal emosi negatif dianalisis dengan menerapkan teori Metabahasa Semantik Alami (MSA) yang diusulkan oleh Wierzbicka (1996). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kategori emosi yang ditemukan dalam novel tersebut adalah ‘sesuatu yang buruk bisa terjadi’. Melalui pendekatan eksplikasi, leksikon itu menunjukkan fitur-fitur semantiknya. Leksikon tersebut dapat dianalisis dengan menggunakan pendekatan eksplikasi untuk membuktikan bahwa kedua bahasa sumber dan bahasa sasarannya menunjukkan kesetaraannya. Pendekatan NSM sangat membantu dalam menentukan eksponen makna emosi negatif.

Kata kunci: Emosi Negatif, NSM, Eksplikasi

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to describe the negative emotions in the novel Looking for Alaska and its translation into Mencari Alaska were mapped. Its lexical semantic of negative emotions were analyzed by applying the theory of Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach proposed by Wierzbicka (1996). The results showed that the category of emotion found in the novel was bad things can happen. Through the explication approach, those lexicons showed their semantic features. It can be analyzed using explication approach to prove that both source language and target language lexical items are equivalent. The NSM approach is helpful in determining the exponents of the negative emotion meaning.

Keywords: Negative Emotions, NSM, Explication

1. INTRODUCTION

Semantics is the study of meaning, which stands at the very center of the linguistic quest to understand the nature of language and human language abilities (Goddard, 1997:1). It is believed that the core feature of language is to express meaning. Semantic studies provide theories; approaches or methods in understanding 'meaning' that are very useful in translation. Some problems related to meaning are often faced by translators in translating a text.

According to Wierzbicka (1999: 25), the label in expressing a particular emotion in one language may not be matched in another language as 'emotion lexicons' of different languages which sometimes show similarities as well as differences. In particular, the type of negative emotion seems to be more dominating compared to the positive or neutral one. Negative emotions can be described as any feeling which causes you to be miserable and sad. Therefore, translating emotion is not an easy process. Translating state verbs or entities (adjective, noun, adverb, etc) indicating emotions is a task of a translator to bear and solve. The translators need to determine the closest equivalent between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL).

Realizing the importance of transferring the negative emotions in translation, this article is focused on the mapping of negative emotions in the novel *Looking for Alaska* and its translation into *Mencari Alaska* by applying the natural semantic metalanguage approach (NSM) proposed by Wierzbicka (1996). It was done by classifying the emotion concepts and explicating the semantic features of negative emotions in the source and target language.

Based on the orientation of transferring the negative emotion lexicons when translating a novel from English into Indonesian, the research problem can be formulated as follows:

1. How the negative emotions in the novel *Looking for Alaska* and its translation into *Mencari Alaska* are mapped?

1.1 NATURAL SEMANTIC METALANGUAGE

NSM combines the philosophical and logical tradition in the study of semantics with a typological approach to the study of language which is based on the empirical research of languages (Wierzbicka: 1996). NSM provides terms for describing the concepts in the object language called set of semantic primes, a small core of basic, universal meaning which are believed to be shared by all the languages of the world.

According to Wierzbicka (1996), NSM is an approach to semantic analysis based on reductive paraphrase that is breaking concepts or words using a small collection of semantic primes. She derives a number of natural meanings which consist of several components including conceptual primitives and lexical universal.

In a very strict and literal sense, reductive paraphrase is the basic of NSM. An NSM explication of a sentence or sentence frame is a systematic reductive paraphrase, i.e. an attempt to "say the same thing" in a paraphrase composed of maximally simple, intelligible and translatable words (semantic primes), thereby laying bare the semantic content of the original sentence or sentence frame. NSM researchers do not attempt in the first instance to classify lexical meanings, but rather to paraphrase them without circularity. Classifications may emerge

inductively, the generalizations of other kinds may emerge, but the first process is always paraphrased. NSM claims a successful reductive paraphrase which makes the native speaker intuitions feel satisfied and which predicts and/or explains natural usage (including entailments, implications, and so on) can be viewed as conceptual model.

The most fundamental NSM concept is the concept of semantic primes, i.e. meanings which cannot be paraphrased in simpler terms: the bedrock of linguistic meaning. To the extent that semantic primes can be identified and match up across languages, they provide a stable and language-neutral metalanguage for lexical typology, at least on its semantic side; for mapping out patterns of polysemy, patterns of structuring in the lexicon, the general architecture of semantic domains and fields, for investigating lexicon-grammar interactions, and so on. Framing semantic analyses (explications) in semantic primes ensures that they are clear, translatable, and intuitively accessible, which of course make them more predictive and easier to test.

The selection of this theory was greatly motivated by some reasons; first, the Natural Semantic Metalanguage is designed to explicate all of meanings including lexical, grammatical, and even illocutionary. Second, the users of this theory principally believe that the natural condition of a language is purposed to maintain one form into one meaning and one meaning into form. Third, in NSM, meaning explication is framed on a metalanguage in which is derived from natural languages.

The ready intelligibility of NSM explications to native speakers and the close relationship between the metalanguage and the language being described makes it easy to generate and test hypotheses: by direct or indirect

substitution into natural contexts of use, and by direct accessibility to native speaker intuition.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Mapping of Negative Emotions in *Looking for Alaska* and Its Translation into *Mencari Alaska*

The data found in a bilingual novel entitled *Looking for Alaska* and its Indonesian translation *Mencari Alaska*. The data were explicated based on the conceptual primitives and lexical universal using the theory proposed by Wierzbicka (1996). The data analysis can be seen below.

1. **SL** : I wasn't sure whether I liked her, and I was **doubtful** whether I could trust her, but I cared at least enough to try to find out. (p.93)

TL : Aku tidak tahu apakah aku menyukai Alaska, dan aku **ragu** apakah bisa memercayainya, tapi setidaknya aku cukup peduli untuk mencari tahu. (p.99)

The character Pudge was thinking whether he was in love to Alaska or not. He was *doubtful* to his feeling because he was unsure to Alaska. The lexicon used in the SL to express an uncertain feeling was *doubtful*. *Doubtful* is a feeling of being uncertain about something or not believing something (Hornby, 2010: 438). This emotion is often used to express situation whereby people have certain expectation upon something to happen. It covers the probability that something expected may not happen in the future.

Doubtful (X felt doubtful)

X felt something because X thought something

Sometimes a person thinks for some time:

“I want something

I think this may not happen

I want to do something because of this if I can

I can't do anything now”

when this person thinks this, this person feels something bad

X felt something like this

Because X thought something like this

In *Looking for Alaska*, the word *doubtful* is translated into *ragu* (Echols & Hassan, 2002: 195). In Indonesian, *ragu* means *dalam keadaan tidak tetap hati, adanya rasa tidak percaya akan suatu hal*, and so on. Similarly, in *doubtful* the experiencer does not believe about his feeling to the other person. It makes him slightly confused to face the situation. The explication of *ragu* can be seen below.

Ragu (X felt ragu)

X felt something because X thought something

Sometimes a person thinks:

“I want something

I don't think this will happen

if I can, I want to do something because of this

I can't do anything now”

when this person thinks this this person feels something bad

X felt something like this

Because X thought something like this

In the data above, the word *doubtful* and *ragu* show desire of something (“I want something”) but the experiencer knows that it will not and cannot happen. In the willingness of doing something, *doubtful* and *ragu* are similar, as can be seen from “I want to do something because of this if I can”.

From this short explanation, it can be concluded that the translation of *doubtful* into *ragu* are closely equivalent.

2. **SL** : Sinking. Sinking, but instead of feeling **panic** or anything else, it occurred to me that “Please, guys don't” were terrible last words. (p.35)

TL : Tenggelam. Aku tenggelam, tapi bukannya **panik** atau semacamnya, aku malah berpikir bahwa “Kumohon, teman-teman, jangan,” (p.36)

In the data above, *panic* was translated into *panik*. *Panic* means a sudden feeling of great fear that cannot be controlled and prevents one from thinking clearly (Hornby, 2010: 1061). The data above described about Pudge who was a new junior in the school. His senior gave him persecution at his first day of school. They brought him to a beach and hurled him into the water. In his thought, he thought that he was sinking and *panic*, but instead of feeling *panic* he wanted to say “please, guys don't.”

The semantic features of this lexicon can be drawn comprehensively in the following paraphrase.

Panic (X felt panic)

X felt something because X thought something

Sometimes a person thinks:

“something is happening now

if I don't do something now something very bad will happen

to me because of this

I don't want this to happen

because of this I have to do something now

I don't know what I can do

I can't think now”

when this person thinks this this person
feels something

bad

X felt something like this

As in the explication above, *panic* is related in various ways to alarm. Wierzbicka (1999: 82) stated that, in particular, the sudden realization of something is wrong and that something has to be done immediately and the intensity of the impending danger (“something very bad can happen to me now”). The situation of *panic* is assessed as a “bad” condition (“something bad is happening”), the experiencer has to mobilize themselves to action otherwise the situation will be a disaster (“if I don’t do something, something very bad will happen to me”). Of course, the experiencer does not want that disaster (“I don’t want this to happen”).

In Indonesian, the lexicon *panic* is translated into *panik*. The lexicon *panik* is defined as a sudden feeling of a great fear that can cover a person when they are faced a dangerous or threatening situation. *Panik* indicates confusion, nervousness, and fear that can cause a chaotic thought. A person can be *panik* when something very bad is happening to them. In order to show the characteristic of *panik*, below is the explication of *panik*.

Panik (X felt panik)

X felt something because X thought something

Sometimes a person thinks:

“something is happening now

I want to do now something if I can
something very bad will happen

after this

I have to do something now because
of this

I don’t know what I can do

I can’t think now”

when this person thinks this this
person feels something very bad

X felt something like this

Because X thought something like this

The translation of the lexicon *panic* into *panik* was appropriate because they share a similar category of emotion concept and match to each other. However, the lexicon *panik* showed the element of “something very bad will happen after this”, it seems that the experiencer knows about the next situation and it is exactly about something very bad.

3. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the word *emotion* found in the novel *Looking for Alaska* and its translation shows that something bad can happen. By NSM analysis the scenario of negative emotion cognition can be revealed. It is an alternative of breaking the wall of transferring barrier in translating negative emotions.