

TRANSLATING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE USING SONG LYRICS

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Abstract

Nowadays translators are challenged not only to be able conveying the message from source language (SL) to target language (TL) but also they are demanded to bridge cultural differences through language. That is why translator needs to choose the best diction in order to maintain meaning and expression from SL to TL without forgetting the aesthetic. Losing the meaning of word due to the translator's lack ability might give bad impression. In Asian context, English is a foreign language, so translating English to TL is totally difficult. Using song lyrics as one of translating strategy, especially to deal with figurative language could be one of the alternative way in maintaining the meaning and expression in translation. Students face song lyrics in their daily life so they are learning while having fun. This study is about using song lyrics to help students understanding in translating figurative language from SL to TL, and to help them grasp the meaning from figurative language with their own cultural background. Using song lyrics for translating figurative language as the base reference also help them to be more sensitive about the meaning and improve their analysing skill because figurative language consists of many types of word which their meanings are different with the literal interpretation. Moreover, translating in the 21st century needs great innovation to face the challenges in learning English as a foreign language.

Keywords: figurative language, song lyrics, translation

Introduction

Translation plays important role for bridging the different culture which meet people's understanding by interpreting the bilingual or multi-lingual culture. As the people's daily activities are getting complex, such as international trade, globalization, migration, etc. Translation follows the era which is demanded as a problem solver for giving clear message from different culture. However, there are some issues which occur in translation. Before going further, in this section we must identify the major problems which occur among translators especially when they meet the SL from different culture. The problem commonly happens due to lack of cultural knowledge which causes misinterpretation about the content. The translators are demanded not only to master the vocabularies for widening their knowledge but also understand the cross cultural understanding to prevent the common issues happen. Moreover,

they must have the sense of ability to translate into proper way for not decreasing the value of the meaning. Then, some translators still translate the SL from word by word without concerning the whole content that causes misinterpretation or misunderstanding especially for the readers or hearers. Grammar also one of several issues for translator because in particular languages, they have each own grammar structure. Furthermore, each language has each own vocabularies and syntaxes. According to Bendana, Melby (2012, p.13), translation is operation which consist in rendering a written source text to a target written text which consists of elements of information, form, functionally, and tone abiding by agreed-on specifications. Larson (1984, p.3), (cited in Rochmah, 2016) also states that translation is translating the meaning of SL into receptor language. Dallin (1994),(cited in Firdaus, 2013) claims that lyrics are

written as form of interaction between the writer and listeners which contain the message and have purpose to make them motivated or to think about it. Furthermore, every song has each own message, the message depends on the writer how he puts the words to the lyrics to be able delivered to them (Bertoli-Dutra, Bissaco, 2006, p. 1053), (cited in Firdaus, 2013). Moreover, lyrics are considered as written language based on Bertnard's definition (2006, p. 18), he states that written language refers to the process of recording language using symbols as a standard system and being the representation of sounds of its language. According to Spivey, (2011) He explains that figurative language is adding colour and depth to express statements for more interesting way. Furthermore, he adds that there are types of figurative languages such as:

1. Simile, using word "as" or like" which the functions are comparing the two unlike things as being similar. For example, as light as a feather, which means that something is extremely light.
2. Metaphor, an implied comparison of word which generally applies for one thing that is used to another. For example, feeling blue, which means sad.
3. Personification, giving animal or nonhuman thing to act like human being. For example, the bell calls the students as a sign that the study begins.
4. Onomatopoeia, the sound that is named according to certain action. For example, she pointed the glass by gun, and then, "BANG!" the fast bullet pierced it.
5. Hyperbole, exaggerated statement in which it is not to be regarded literally. For example, New Year's Eve is getting closer, however, the price of firework keeps rocketing.
6. Idiom, the expression of meaning which is not predictable from the usual meaning. For example, Jump the gun, which has meaning to do something early.

Cliché, the statements that are overused or often heard, for example, time will tell, which means something will be revealed as the time goes by.

Methodology

This method uses one of the Newmark, (1988, p. 45), (cited in Rochmah, 2016) Idiomatic Translation, which classified in respect of the TL emphasis, he says that Idiomatic Translation reproduces the message of the original, as if it looks naturally and familiar written in original form.

This study requires the students as the subjects of the research then they must provide the song lyrics to be identified. Moreover, those song lyrics contain figurative languages and they classified them to where they belong. Next, they translate them to TL. The lyrics are taken per sentence so they can solve them easily. Furthermore, the lyrics below are taken from the various songs which contain figurative languages which the SL is from English and the TL is Bahasa Indonesia.

1. I'd catch a grenade for ya, throw my hand on a grenade for ya (Bruno Mars – Grenade)
2. You would not believe your eyes If ten million fireflies Lit up the world as I fell asleep (Owl City – Fireflies)
3. Cause you know I'd walk A thousand miles If I could just see you Tonight (Vanessa Carlton – A Thousand Miles)
4. That you were Romeo You were throwing pebbles And my dad said Stay away from Juliet (Taylor Swift – Love Story)
5. I have died every day waiting for you Darling, don't be afraid. I have

loved you for a thousand years.
 I'll love you for a thousand more.
 (Christina Perry - A Thousand
 Years)

6. Somewhere else I'll see you
 Our days be like a blossom
 Blooming all around you
 So bright
 By and by, I'll miss you
 And your laugh like a sunshine
 Fading into shadow of tears
 (Lasse Lindh - Hush) (Goblin
 OST Part 3)

7. Skies are crying, I am watching
 (Demi Lovato – Skyscraper)

The students present their own works in front of class and have discussion. They give feedback to each other in order to revise or meet the best result of their translating works.

Findings and Discussion

One of several methods of understanding the culture where the SL belongs for translating to TL is by knowing where the region is, for example, the figurative sentence of 'as white as snow' has the function of comparing to the other thing which has similarity. However, for the target language which the country does not have four seasons, especially in Winter, people who live there do not experience the Winter season in their country like Indonesia. Moreover, we cannot translate it to be 'seputih salju' because they will not be familiar with snow. Furthermore, the solution is by replacing the word *snow* with the white thing that they are familiar with, such as cotton. Besides, the TL will be like 'seputih kapas'. So, the reader from Indonesia will be much easier to understand the message. These data below are taken from students of English Department who do the tasks about translating figurative languages by using song lyrics which the SL is English and the TL is Bahasa Indonesia. The writer uses abbreviation of lyrics into "L".

Source Language	Target Language
(L1) I'd catch a grenade for ya, throw my hand on a grenade for ya (Bruno Mars – Grenade)	Ku kan <i>melakukan segalanya</i> demi kamu (Student 1)
(L2) You would not believe your eyes If ten million fireflies lit up the world as I fell asleep (Owl City – Fireflies)	Dirimu takkan percaya dengan mata kepalamu sendiri jika <i>sepuluh juta kunang-kunang menyinari dunia</i> ketika diriku tertidur (Student 2)
(L3) Cause you know I'd walk A thousand miles If I could just see you Tonight (Vanessa Carlton – A Thousand Miles)	Karena kau tahu <i>ku kan berjalan ribuan mil</i> jika diriku bisa menemuimu malam ini (Student 1)
(L4) That you were Romeo You were throwing pebbles And my dad said Stay away from Juliet (Taylor Swift – Love Story)	<i>Engkaulah Romeo</i> Engkaulah yang melempar batu kerikil Dan ayahku bilang <i>Menjauhlah dari Juliet</i> (Student 2)
(L5) I have died every day waiting for you Darling, don't be afraid. I have loved you for a thousand years I'll love you for a thousand more (Christina Perry - A Thousand Years)	Aku telah <i>lama menunggu</i> kehadiranmu Sayang, janganlah takut Karna aku telah <i>mencintaimu sejak lama</i> Dan <i>aku akan terus mencintaimu selamanya</i> (Student 1)
(L6) Somewhere else I'll see you Our days be like a blossom Blooming all around you So bright By and by, I'll miss you And your laugh like a sunshine Fading into shadow of tears (Lasse Lindh - Hush) (Goblin OST Part 3)	Di suatu tempat, aku akan bertemu denganmu Hari – hari kita akan <i>bahagia seperti bunga</i> Yang bermekaran disekitarmu dengan menyilaukan Waktu demi waktuaku akan merindukanmu Dan tawamu yang <i>secerah matahari</i> Lenyap dalam bayangan air mata (Student 2)
(L7) Like marbles it keeps circling on my ears The sweet word that rolls Putting it in my mouth, the sweet smell blows in,	<i>Seperti kumpulan kelereng yang terus terngiang</i> ditingaluku, Kata kata manis yang kau ucapkan

<p>oh I like that glass-like transparent heart It's as pure as the first snow Putting it into words, it's just like your love (Lovelyz - Candy Jelly Love)</p>	<p>Kuletakkan dalam mulutku, hembusan aroma manis, oh Aku menyukai <i>hatimu yang sebening kaca</i> Hati yang murni <i>seperti salju yang turun untuk pertama kalinya</i> Kemudian merangkainya menjadi kata - kata yang menggambarkan cintamu (Student 1 and 2)</p>
<p>(L8) Skies are crying, I am watching (Demi Lovato - Skyscraper)</p>	<p><i>Langit pun menangis, diriku menyaksikannya</i> (Student 1 and 2)</p>

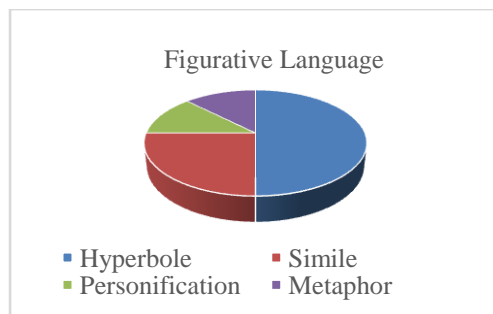
The followings are explanations according to students for each of those lyrics:

- (L1) uses Hyperbole, that sentences states that **I'd catch a grenade for ya** means he would do anything for his love.
- (L2) uses Hyperbole to express the meaning, which **ten million fireflies to lit up the world** is exaggerated statement. Ten million fireflies represent how magical it is to lit up the world.
- (L3) uses Hyperbole, **I'd walk a thousand miles** means how far the distance is between the lovers. However, she would do anything as long as for seeing her lover.
- (L4) uses Metaphor, the sentence states **you were Romeo and stay away from Juliet**, it is the romance story about Romeo and Juliet as an analogy.
- (L5) uses Hyperbole, **I have dead every day waiting for you** means she have been waiting for her love for quite long. While **I have loved you for a thousand years** and **I will love you for a thousand more** mean she loves her lover forever.

- (L6) uses Simile, **your laugh like a sunshine**, which means your laugh is bright like the sunshine which gives lightness to his or her surroundings.
- (L7) uses Simile, **like marbles it keeps circling** on my ears means that the sweet words cling in his or her mind which he or she always think or remember about it. Then, **glass-like transparent heart** is also Simile, it states the similar thing related for two unlike things (between glass and heart). While **as pure as the first snow**, it is Simile too, however, the writer gives correction here because as the previous explanation that snow in Indonesia is not familiar, based on the methodology for using the idiomatic translation, it is all right for translator to reproduce the original meaning as long as the writer's intention has the same purpose to deliver the message. The figurative sentence in TL can be replaced into *seputih kertas yang belum pernah terkena tinta*.
- (L8) uses Personification, **Skies are crying** represents the human action, while sky is nonhuman thing and crying is human's action.
- The TL language uses informal one because most song lyrics do not concern on the structure or grammar of the word.

After translating figurative language in sentences above, students will already have a concept about figurative language and be able to distinguish whether it is figurative language or not.

Therefore, there are four Hyperboles (50%), two Similes (25%), one Personification (12.50%), and one Metaphor (12.50%) found based on those whole lyrics.



Therefore, the level of study increases gradually or goes to the next level step by step which means students must translate and identify which the figurative language is.

Conclusion

Using song lyrics helps the student to study translation easier. At first, students deal translation with many difficulties so using method with song lyrics as the bridge for them to study. Students deal song lyrics in their daily activities. Furthermore, they can learn translation wherever they are. Moreover, using this method can be more fun for students to study. Fun learning is the effective way for them to gain knowledge because they will not feel pressured. Also, they can understand the cultures widely and use appropriate word or language for each of them.

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