BORROWING IN THE TRANSLATION OF CULTURALLY BOUND EXPRESSION

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Abstract

Translation is not only a linguistic transfer and transfer of meaning but also a cultural transfer. Although theoretically equivalence can be attained due to the universal nature of language and cultural convergence but the facts show that a language is used by speakers who often have very different culture from other speakers of language so that in the translation process it is difficult to find a synonymous equivalent especially culturally bound expression. This study tries to identify and describe the phenomena of translating culturally bound expression from Indonesian into English as a result of the translation ideology and strategy exercised by the translator. This is a descriptive translation study focusing on objective aspect of the product using unidirectional parallel bilingual corpora based on text-based theory and translator-based theory. The findings show that based on the study of Indonesian fiction with Balinese culture setting translated into English there is an effort to translate the cultural meaning with the strategy of borrowing.

Keywords: borrowing, culturally bound expression, translation

Introduction

From a communication perspective translation provides access to resources (science and technology) and to understand and communicate socio-cultural values. From a political and cultural perspective, translation serves as a language development strategy and as a means of enhancing the nation's cultural image. Thus translation can be a catalyst for the progress of a nation. Translation of various works of art such as music, film and literature of a region is necessary for the interest of global understanding of the area and its cultural social life.

Translation is not only a linguistic transfer and transfer of meaning but also a cultural transfer. In the process of translation a shift always occurs simultaneously from a linguistic system to another linguistic system and from one socio-cultural system to another. Although theoretically equivalence can be attained due to the universal nature of language and cultural convergence but the facts show that a language is used by speakers who often have very different culture from other speakers of language so that in the translation process it is difficult to find a synonymous equivalent especially culturally bound expression.

Literary works are imitation, representation and reflection of sociocultural reality. Thus the translation of literary works or texts that have cultural meaning will face language and non-linguistic (including cultural) issues. To address linguistic and cultural inequalities in translation requires an appropriate method or strategy to achieve the closest equivalence level. Adjustment requires a strategy that is largely determined by the translator's ideology, competence, method of translation and translation objectives.

The notion of strategy in this paper is identical with the understanding of the methods used by Vinay and Darbelnet (in Venuti (ed.), 2000, pp. 84-93), procedures by Newmark (1988, pp. 68-93), and adjustments by Nida (1964) and Larson (1998), ie a way of achieving correspondence between the source text and the target text. Although Vinay and Darbelnet (in Venuti (ed.), 2000, pp. 84-93), and Baker (1991) do not differentiate methods with procedure but Newmark (1988) and Machali (2000) assess the

difference between methods and procedures lies in their unit of application. The method of translation concerns the whole text whereas the procedure applies to sentences and smaller language units (such as clauses, phrases, words). Therefore Baker (1991, p. 17) considers that equivalent choice always depends not only on the language system or the system being handled by translator but also on how both the author of the source text and the translator manipulate the language system. In this case translation cannot be separated from the intervention of the translator.

There are many alternative strategies for dealing with non-equivalence issues in the translation process. Vinay and Darbelnet (in Venuti, 2000, pp. 84-93) for example see many alternative strategies and extract them in two broad categories namely (1) direct translation and (2) oblique translation; Larson (1998, pp. 169-193) grouped translation strategies based on whether a concept in source a language is owned/ known. In the case of translating the cultural meaning of the source language (Indonesian) into English, Putra Yadnya (2004) indicated that the most prevalent tendency is that the ideal equivalent or possibly the absolute equivalent is likely to occur at a smaller grammatical level especially the word (and a number of phrases) as well as the borrowing case which permeates the boundaries of kinship and language typology

This study generally tries to identify and describe the phenomena of translating culturally bound expression from Indonesian into English as a result of the translation ideology and strategy exercised by the translator. Specifically, the study is aimed at describing the phenomena of borrowing as the strategy of transferring cultural bound expression in Indonesian into English as the target language.

Methodology

This is a descriptive translation study focusing on objective aspect of the product. The corpus of data in this translation study was a unidirectional parallel bilingual corpora consisting of the original (Bahasa Indonesia) and its translation (English). The object of this research is the translation of Indonesian fiction literary texts (with a background and theme of Balinese culture) as a source text entitled *Mandi Api* written by Gde Aryantha Soethama (2006) and its English translation entitled *Ordeal by Fire* by Vern Cork (2008) as the target text.

The primary data collected were in the form of meaning representations of Balinese culture or translation units in various lingual forms (words or phrases in sentences or discourses) contained in the source text and its translations in target texts which are then tabulated and classified on the basis of form and contextual meaning of culture referred to get corpus of data. The classification of the corpus is based on criteria of cultural aspects (cultural objects, cultural behavior, and cultural knowledge) and the culturally bound meaning referred to (whether known / shared).

In this study the grouping of culturally bound expression is based on Newmark categorization (1988, 95), namely (1) ecology including flora, fauna, wind, valley, mountain, (2) material culture or artifacts such as food, clothing, housing and city, transportation, (3) social culture including work and leisure, (4) organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts that are political and administrative, religious, and artistic and (5) gesture and habits. Nevertheless, the description of the data findings on the results of this study is theoretically not strict but more adapted to the data collected.

This research uses descriptive qualitative method based on eclectic theoretical framework (text-based theory and translator-based theory on the one hand and hand form-based translation and meaning-based translation on the other) applied partially or simultaneously. The focus of analysis was on identifying the profile of cultural contextual significance reflected in the source text and its equivalent in the

target text and then on determining its level of correspondence.

The study sees (1) the meaning as reference, which holds that there is a direct and constant relationship between signs and references in each context, (2) meaning as context and usage which assumes the meaning of an expression is its function in the use of, or in other words, is determined by the context as linguists hold in the study of discourse and pragmatics, and (3) the meaning as culture assuming that because culture and language differ from one another, linguistic meaning is determined by the cultural context in which the event of speaking happens (See Frawley, 1992, pp. 17-54). Since the analysis was conducted qualitatively then the results of the analysis are presented in descriptive narratives supported by inductive and deductive techniques.

Findings and Discussion

The findings show that based on the study of Indonesian fiction with Balinese culture setting translated into English there is an effort to translate the cultural meaning with the strategy of borrowing. As far as the data can be collected from the text, the culturally bound expressions vary in various fields or registers such as arts and religious rituals, ecology, and address terms, naming or calling.

As previously mentioned, the source texts are short stories that have a Balinese cultural background based on Hinduism. The identity is supported by three basic elements namely Balinese language, traditional arts and institutions based on the configuration of the main values including religious values, solidarity and aesthetics. In the field of art (especially performing arts) there are culturally bound expressions (typically Balinese) in Source Text (ST) and its translation in English as the Target Text (TT) such as the following:

1. ST : Ia menyumbang seperangkat *gamelan*, dan menghidupkan kembali *sekaa legong* di desa kami. Berkat bantuannya *sekaa legong* kami bisa pentas setiap malam di hotel-hotel Nusa Dua. Kemudian is meminta agar kami mengaktifkan *sekaa joged bumbung* (p. 143).

   TT : He contributed a *gamelan* orchestra to our village and revived the *sekaa legong* dance group. Thanks to his help our *sekaa legong* could perform every night in well-known tourist hotels in Nusa Dua. Then he asked us to revive the *sekaa jogged bumbu*ng. (p. 11)

2. ST : Begitu "*Gelagah Puwun*", gending terakhir, dikumandangkan, Mangku Rajeg meninggalkan tempat pertunjukkan. (p33).

   TT : As the *Gelagah Puwun*, the final tune, was played, Mangku Rajeg left the hall. (p. 17)

In the field of religious rituals there are expressions specifically Balinese in the ST and its translation in English as the TT) such as the following:

3. ST : Syarat kedua dalam upacara pernikahan harus ada sesaji *pati wangi*. Sesaji *pati wangi* itu pertanda dan permakluman merosotnya derajat seorang warga puri (p.87).

   TT : And secondly, that during the marriage ceremony they must be sure to make *pati wangi* offerings. *Pati wangi* offerings are a symbol and acknowledgement of the loss of rank of a woman of noble birth (pp. 91-2).

4. ST : Selama duabelas hari setelah seorang meninggal, anggota keluarga dalam keadaan *cuntaka* (p.113).

   TT : The custom is that, for twelve days after somebody dies, the members of the family are to remain in a state of ritual impurity, called *cuntaka* (pp. 65-66).

Borrowing strategy is also found in the translation of expression under category of ecology (flora) as indicated by the following examples:

5. ST : Ayah pengantin wanita mendatangi anaknya yang termenung lesu di

bawah pohon **belimbing**, menggamit tangannya (p. 165).

TT : The father of the bride approached his daughter who was standing listlessly under a **belimbing** tree and took her hand (p. 3).

6. ST : Pohon bunga **sandat** di tepi jalan is rasa menebarkan aroma lebih wangi dari biasanya (p.92).

TT : The scent of the **sandat** tree's flowers smelled sweeter than usual (p. 95).

Borrowing strategy is also found in the translation of expression indicating material culture or artifact related to traditional clothing, community building and religious building as indicated by the following examples:

7. ST : Badan mereka terbaring tengadah di atas balai-balai yang dihias dengan kain **songket**….. (p.7)

TT : They lay with their heads back in the pavilion which had been decorated with **songkets** ….. (p.89)

8. ST : Persis ketika matahari muncul di timur, tiga saudara Kadek bergiliran metatah di **bale dangin** yang terbuka (p. 7)

TT : Exactly as the sun rose in the east, Kadedk's three siblings in turn, had their teeth filed in the **bale dangin** (p. 89).

9. ST : Hanya lima puluh meter dari rumah ini kami membangun **Pura Ulunsuwi**, tempat suci untuk petani yang tergabung dalam Kelompok petani *subak*. (p.142)

TT : Only fifty meters from this house, stood the **Pura Ulunsuwi** temple, a worshipping place for all farmers who were involved in the local irrigation group *subak* (p. 10)

As quoted by Liliweri (2001, p. 83), Murdock in Gundyhunst (1983) sees culture as consisting of customs and tendencies in a certain way and emphasizes that the "way" is the essence of an action and not the action itself. Newmark (1988) incorporates the customs and tendencies of acting in this particular way into cultural categories such as address terms, naming, greeting and calling as part of Balinese culture. Here is the corpus containing the words with various equivalents. This group of words consists of the name of self, the term kinship and the name or calling of fellow human beings and God and its manifestations as the ST and its translation in English as the TT:

10. ST *:* **Ketut Wijil** menunduk (p. 39).

TT *:* **Ketut Wijil** lowered his head (p. 23).

11. ST : Gelegar *gamelan baleganjur* langsung menyergap rombongan **Nyoman Soroh** ketika keluar dari gerbang kedatangan Bandar udara (p. 109).

TT : *baleganjur gamelan* assaulted the ears of **Nyoman Soroh**'s group the moment they came out of the gates of the airport.

12. ST : Betapa pekat rasa kecewa **Mangku Rajeg** ketika ia tahu kursi pengunjung kosong melompong (p. 33).

TT : **Mangku** *Rajeg* was overwhelmed by disappointment when he realized that most of the seats for the audience were completely empty (p.17).

13. ST : Kalau banten sudah dihaturkan kepada **Hyang Widhi**, itu sudah jadi lungsuran. (p.55)

TT : Once the offerings had been dedicated to **Hyang Widhi**, the Almighty, they were regarded as left-overs (p. 129).

14. ST : "Kita harus minta maaf kepada **Sang Hyang Prama Kawi** dan leluhur karena kita ceroboh. …" (p. 57).

TT : "This is derecliction of duty and we must ask forgiveness of **Sang Hyang Prama Kawi** and our ancestor (p. 131).

The above example 10 and 11 indicate name or address terms are translated

into English through borrowing strategy. The name or address terms in Balinese society is shown by two distinctive features of the components that show the clan (*triwangsa* and non-*triwangsa*) and the components that indicate the birth order. Features referring to clan such as *brahmana, satria, wesia* or *sudra*, are at the forefront of which is then usually followed by the birth order component (*Wayan* for the eldest, *Made* for the second, *Nyoman*, the third, and the fourth *Ketut* or another title according to the country and residence in question). The third component is a personal name each of which is usually different from the surname / parent. Example 12 is the translation of adress terms or calling of fellow human beings (priest), *Mangku* while the rest two (example 13 and 14) are calling of God and its manifestations.

Culture is not only built on extrinsic factors that arise as an explicit culture but also by intrinsic factors such as beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, values and norms that are understood theoretically as implicit cultures (See Liliweri 2001, p. 83). This field appears on the surface as a concept and system of knowledge. The presentation of the following corpus will illustrate the field of implicit cultural field found in the source text and its equivalent in English. The identified lexical items are related to the Balinese concept of life and death.

15. ST : Selama duabelas hari setelah seorang meninggal, anggota keluarga dalam keadaan *cuntaka*. (p.113)

    TT : The custom is that, for twelve days after somebody dies, the members of the family are to remain in a state of ritual impurity, called *cuntaka*. (pp. 65-66).

16. ST : Ia *moksa* di sana, konon, tanpa meninggalkan jazad. (p.168)

    TT : There he had reached *moksa* without leaving his body. (p. 7) uniting soul of dead with God

To clarify meaning and to convince the target audience to capture the message or the meaning of the cultural context, borrowing is often accompanied by modifications such as:

17. ST : Ia sangat girang kalau ada *arisan*, dan selalu membuat kegiatan-kegiatan baru bersama kawan-kawannya sehingga ada alasan untuk ke luar rumah (p. 103-104).

    TT : She loved going to *women's arisans* too, and was forever organising new activities with friends so that she had a reason to get out of the house (p. 38).

The translation of *arisan* into *women's arisans* conducted shows there has been a process of borrowing followed by a modification in which the word *arisan* is retained by adding modifier *woman's* in front of the word *arisan*.

In addition to including modifiers, a number of data also show borrowing followed by descriptions or explanations of culturally bound concepts in the source language as can be seen in the following equivalence:

18. ST : Dulu, mati ditabrak di jalan raya memang aib besar. Peristiwa semacam itu disebut *mati salah pati* (p. 103).

    TT : In earlier times, to be killed on the roads was a terrible misfortune. There was even a special term for it: *Mati Salah Pati Death by Misfortune* (p. 37).

The above example indicates the translator uses a couplet strategy through borrowing accompanied by the explanation of the *Mati Salah Pati-Death by Misfortune*. This indicates that the concept of *mati salah pati* is culturally not shared by the culture of the translator. In Hindu culture (Balinese) this concept is related to *Ngaben* because the status or type of death determines whether the ceremony *Ngaben* can be done directly or not. Hinduism embraced in Bali knows

some kind of death, dead common death (ordinary because of sickness or old age), *mati ulah pati* (suicide), *mati ngulah pati* (planned death for example by crashing into a vehicle that impresses death due to other people), and *mati salah pati* (die not accidental but because of accident like being hit or other misfortune). Actually it is only common death that can be directly cremated while the other three types of death cannot be directly and must be buried first for a certain period.

Conclusion

Borrowing is a strategy of translation by taking and carrying lexical items from the source language into the target language without formal and semantic modification. The rationalization of the implementation of this strategy lies in the goal of maintaining the integrity of the message and introducing the cultural distinctiveness of the source language. Borrowing tends to occur in the process of translating implicit culturally bound meaning or in cases where the concept of culturally bound meaning in the source language is not owned / unknown and the translator exercise foreignization ideology in order to introduce foreign culture to the target readers.

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