

## Translations and Rewritings of *Hamlet* in Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

Exploration of local adaptations of Shakespeare's plays around the world has been one of the most prolific disciplines of Shakespeare studies in the last two decades. The local appropriation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* has led to challenging the Indonesian translators to reproduce the masterpiece work of William Shakespeare for the local reader. *Hamlet* has several translated versions in Indonesia, from the early translation by Trisno Sumarjo (1950), Santiko Budi (2009), and then more contemporary translation by Fatimah, Ifa Nabila and Ratna Ofvilia (2018). This article looks at translations and rewriting of *Hamlet* in Indonesia. It explores how the rewriting process happens and the functions that *Hamlet* has served for the Indonesian reader: a rite of passage and an educational tool of literary works for students. It is also elaborate concept of Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere's ideas about translation and rewriting at work. how the translators react to the ideas and references of the source cultures' myths and belief systems and rewrite them to fit the target reader

**Keywords:** *Hamlet*, play, translation, local appropriation.

### INTRODUCTION

Literary translation is part of the broad area of Translation Studies, and it has been a significant concern for many scholars (Simon, 1996)(Moga, 2021) (Toury, 1985) and who have discussed it in terms of accuracy, equivalence, and faithfulness. Literary translation is a challenging and fascinating phenomenon that arises at the intersection of two types of literature and two cultures. It is related to translating literary writings in the source culture or translating in such a way that the final product is

regarded literary in the target culture.

Literary translation is part of the broad area of Translation Studies, and it has been a significant concern for many scholars (Simon, 1996) (Moga, 2021) (Toury, 1985) and who have discussed it in terms of accuracy, equivalence, and faithfulness. The translation of literary works is a dynamic process that involves a creative process so that readers can enjoy the beauty of a literary work through its forms and the author choice of word. Literary translation has altered ancient literary texts, such as poetry, drama, and prose, into a current form in target language.

A translator has to consider interface between languages and cultural gaps. It triggers cultural negotiation as a two-stage process: reception and interpretation of the source text and reproduction of the message into the target text (reinterpretation). This method allows the literary translator to alter the text and so rewrite it according to his or her ideas and expectations, therefore it can be said that a literary translation becomes a form of rewriting. It is undertaken under certain social and cultural limitations and for certain reasons. In other words, rewriting entails translating the meaning of a foreign text into the local customs while adhering to the norms and exploring the resources that comprise that society's system.

*Hamlet* is one of the classical play that are timeless from William Shakespeare, the greatest English writer who lives in the era of Elizabeth (1558-1603 AD). Shakespeare's works and have been translated into many languages, one of which is Indonesian (Tilson, 1985). The translation of *Hamlet* is said to have undergone a rewriting process in Arabic, Chinese and Uzbek (Kuchkarovna, 2020)(Gentzler, 2015)(Al-saidi & Khalaf, 2020). This is related to the translator's choice who must adjust to political conditions, local culture, and also the ideology of the translator. *Hamlet* has several translated versions in Indonesia; the early translation by Trisno Sumarjo (1950), Santiko Budi (2009) and then more contemporary translation by Fatimah, Ifa Nabila and Ratna Ofvilia (2018). This research is focus on the translations and rewriting of *Hamlet* in Indonesia. How the Indonesian version bridge the language and cultural gap between source text and the target text.

## **METHOD**

This is qualitative descriptive research since the research aims to systematically give the factual description and the data found are not

analyzed by using numbers. Qualitative research uses humans as research instruments to collect data. The use of humans as instruments is based on the idea that humans can adapt to the environment and think abstractly to explore a reality that is plural, holistic, and shaped by their environment (Santosa, 2017). The data source for this research is in the form of documents; it is included the original version of *Hamlet* written by Shakespeare as the source language text and its translation in Indonesia is the target language text. The Indonesian version is taken from a translated version by Santiko Budi in 2009 (Shakespeare, 2009). The play text was compared between the original and its translation to see how the translation process of rewriting goes.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

*Hamlet* in Indonesia is translated by retaining its form. It was translated in the form of a play. The translator maintains the plot, the names of the characters, as well as the number of acts and scenes in the target language. The dialogues of the characters are translated literally. The tale remains the same, concerning the tragedy of the Danish prince, named *Hamlet*. At the end, all the characters are died.

In terms of cultural-gap between West and East, the translator is concerned with familiarising the Indonesian reader with the local culture especially Javanese, because the Javanese are the largest tribe in Indonesia. The translator brought the European and American cultures closer to the eastern reader. The translated version uses a great deal of Javanese cultural nuances to describe the condition of the Danish's monarchy. The author tries to bring the reader closer to the target language culture by means of cultural words such as '*gusti*' (in Javanese), instead of '*tuanku*' (in Indonesian) to represent 'my lord' in target language.

ST :

Hamlet : Sir, my good friend. I will change  
that name with you .  
And what make you from  
Wittenberg, Horatio?  
Marcellus.  
Marcellus : My good lord !

TT :

**HAMLET**  
*tuan- sahabat baikku  
ingin rasanya aku bertukar sebutan  
denganmu  
tapi, apa sebab wittenberg kau  
tinggalkan horatio?  
Dan ini Marcellus bukan?*  
**MARCELLUS**  
***hamba gusti***

The translator use the addressee '*gusti*', a Javanese word to address a king or a prince, for the translation of 'my lord' in the dialogue above. The translator tried to make the readers close to their culture so that it is easily for them draw imagination of a royal situation.

ST :

Francisco : I think I hear them. Stand ho !  
Who is there?  
Horatio : Friend to **this ground** !  
Marcellus : And **liegemen to the Dane**

TT :

**Francisco**  
*kurasa kudengar mereka*  
*berhenti ! siapa di situ?*  
**HORATIO :**  
*sahabat **tlatah** ini*  
**MARCELLUS**  
***kawula denmark***

the translated version is rich in Javanese nuances. The translator use the word '*tlatah*', '*kawula*' which is in Javanese, despite the fact that those words have the Indonesian equivalent. The word '*kawula*' is to describe people who have a lower social status compare to his interlocutors. The word is often used in royal conversation.

A literary text, whether verse or prose, has its own what we call special language which is distinct from everyday speech. It has its own vocabulary, using poetic words that can stimulate a sense of beauty. In *Hamlet*, some of the dialogues are written in verse. The translator tried to keep the form of the verse and manage to replace the dialog using aesthetic words. Below is the example of verse translation in *Hamlet*. It is taken from the queen's dialogue.

ST:

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
Do not forever with thy vailèd lids  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.  
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,  
Passing through nature to eternity

TT:

*hamlet sayang*  
*campakkan segala warna kesedihan*  
*buat matamu memancar berseri selayak*  
*sahabat di denmark ini dan jangan mencoba*  
*mencari bapamu di debu dengan mata pilu*  
*sebab kau sepatutnya tahu yang hidup sekali*  
*akan mati*

The translator manages to use the aesthetic words in the translated version. The word choice is different from the everyday language. The reader can perceive the beauty of the language in the source text. It appears that they are reading a literary masterpiece in their own language.

## CONCLUSION

Hamlet's translation in Indonesia is part of the literary translations rewriting. The translator decides to adjust the culture gap by choosing the

Javanese culture which more close to the reader. The translator managed to maintain the use of aesthetic language in his translation, so that the target text reader can sense the beauty of the source text.

Despite the fact that there are several versions of *Hamlet* in Indonesia, none of them have been performed on a significant scale. Hence, the functions that *Hamlet* has served for the Indonesian reader are merely a rite of passage and an educational tool of literary works for students

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