THE TRANSLATION OF INDONESIAN CULTURAL LEXICONS IN THE NOVEL SAMAN

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ABSTRACT

Article was aimed to explore and identity the manners used by the translator in translating the Indonesian cultural lexicon in the novel Saman into English, and to find out which manners that contained the least semantic shifts concerning the problems of meaning related to cultural differences. Method applied was descriptive qualitative research by collecting and analyzing both the Indonesian and English versions of the novel. The samples were classified by Newmark four categories: loan words, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, and addition. It can be concluded that there are only seven manners found from the collected data but only four manners used in the analysis, they are loan word, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, and addition.

Keywords: Indonesian cultural lexicons, translation, cultural words

ABSTRAK

Artikel bertujuan mengamati dan mengidentifikasi cara yang digunakan penerjemah untuk menerjemahkan leksikon budaya Indonesia yang terdapat dalam novel Saman ke dalam bahasa Inggris dan untuk mengetahui pergeseran semantik yang terjadi karena cara yang digunakan oleh penerjemah dalam menerjemahkan kata-kata budaya itu. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan mengumpulkan dan menganalisis novel yang berbahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia. Analisis dilakukan berdasarkan empat kategori Newmark. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa hanya ada tujuh cara yang ditemukan dari data yang terkumpul namun hanya empat yang dipakai di dalam analisis, yaitu kata serapan, padanan budaya, padanan fungsional, dan tambahan.

Kata kunci: leksikon budaya Indonesia, penerjemahan, kata-kata budaya

INTRODUCTION

Language does contain all kinds of cultural deposits, in the grammar (genders of inanimate nouns), forms of address as well as the lexis ("The sun sets") which are not taken into account of in universal either in consciousness or translation. Further, the more specific a language becomes for natural phenomena (flora and fauna) the more it becomes embedded in cultural features, therefore it creates translation problems. Language is an aspect that it cannot be separated from the culture. Language reflects the culture in a place and form a pattern of thought and the way of life. (Newmark, 1988)

Culture is a challenge for a translator in translating a text. A translator should have profound knowledge of cultures in both languages in order to convey the message from the source language (SL) and translate it to the target language (TL). Moreover, a translator must also be able to find an appropriate equivalent to the message or information contained in the source language.

In the translation process, translation fails or untranslatability may still occur. Concerning untranslatability, Catford in Bassnett (2002) distinguishes two types of untranslatability, which he terms as linguistic and cultural. On the linguistic level, untranslatability occurs where there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in the TL for an SL item, whereas cultural untranslatability occurs due to the absence in the TL culture of a relevant situational feature for the SL text.

The translation of words is frequently closely related to cultural language context which is sometimes not easily transfered into a different language. Most cultural words, however, are easy to detect since they are associated with a particular language and cannot be literally translated. However, many cultural customs are described in ordinary language where literal translation would distort the meaning and a translation may include an appropriate descriptive-functional equivalent (Newmark, 1988).

Nida in Newmark (1988) categorised foreign cultural words in the narrow sense with the following typical examples: (1) Ecology, such as: flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills: honeysuckle, downs, sirocco, rundra, pampas, tabuleiros (low plateau), plateau, selva (tropical rain forest), savanna, paddy field. (2) Material culture (artefacts), such as: food: zabaglione, sake, kaiserschmarre; clothes: anorak, kanga (Africa), sarong (South Seas), dhoti (India); houses and towns: kampong, bourg, bourgade, chalet, low-rise, tower; transport: bike, rickshaw, moulton, cabriolett, tilbury, caliche. (3) Social culture - work and leisure, such as Ajaki amah, condotttere, biwa, sithar, raga, reggae, rock. (4) Organisations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts, such as: political and administrative; religious: dharma, karma, temple and artistic. (5) Gestures and habits such as: cock a snook and spitting.

Even-Zohar's (1978) proposition that "Cultures translate according to need seems self-evident today, but in its time it was an extremely important statement, for the implications of his theory of cultural change were enormous". He suggested:

"The historical situation would determine the quantity and type of translations that might be undertaken and the status of those translations would be greater or lesser according to the position of the receiving culture. So, a work could be fundamentally important in the source culture and it could be then translated and have no impact at all in the receiving culture or, vice versa, a translation could alter the shape of the receiving literary system."

In the 1970s, translation was seen as vital to the interaction between cultures. This statement means if translation is vital to the interaction between cultures, why not take the next step and study translation, not just to train translators, but precisely to study cultural interaction. (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998)

The apparent division between cultural and linguistic approaches to translation that characterized much translation research until the 1980s is disappearing. It is partly because of shifts in linguistics that have seen a discipline takes more overtly cultural turn since those who advocated an approach to translation rooted in cultural history have become less defensive about their position. Nevertheless, despite the diversity of methods and approaches, one common feature of much of the research in Translation Studies is an emphasis on cultural aspects of translation, on the contexts within which translation occurs. (Bassnett, 2002)

Every message is wrapped in a complex of implications, dispositions, and predispositions, all required for the sufficiency of the message; even such a simple translation from *il neige* to "it's snowing" demands, minimally, the use of an encyclopedia of culture in lieu of a lexicon. (W. B. Frawley, 1984)

A natural translation involves two principal areas of adaptation, namely, grammar and lexicon. The lexical structure of the source message is less readily adjusted to the semantic requirements of the receptor language. Instead of obvious rules to be followed, there are numerous alternative possibilities. There are in general three lexical levels to be considered: (1) Terms for which there are readily available parallels, e.g. river, tree, stone, knife, etc. (2) Terms which identify culturally different objects but with somewhat similar functions, e.g. book, which in English means an object with pages bound together into a unit, but which, in New Testament times, meant a long parchment or papyrus rolled up in the form of a scroll; and (3) terms which identify cultural specialties, e.g.synagogue, homer, ephah, cherubim, and jubilee, to cite only a few from the Bible. (Nida & Taber, 2003)

Looking into the above statements from different theorists, the study was meant to explore and identify the manners used by the translator in translating the Indonesian cultural lexicons in the novel *Saman* into English and to find out which manners that contain the least semantic shifts concerning the problems of meaning related to cultural differences. The cultural setting in *Saman*, a fictional novel that presents and enlivens Indonesian's literature in the late 90's, tells about the life of a young clergyman named Saman who should disrob his ministry and became a fugitive activist to help the villagers oppressed by the state through its military apparatus. The setting took several places, such as New York where the story began when a girl named Laila planned to meet a

man who had an affair with her. The setting moves to South China Sea, the place where Laila met her boyfriend Sihar for the first time. It then moved to Matak Island, Perabumulih, Palembang, South Sumatra, a moribund rubber plantation where Saman's figure is introduced as a rename from the previous one Wisanggeni. Matak Island becomes a main place in the story and from those settings, a number of cultural lexicons was identified.

It is not easy to translate a cultural term for it is related to an identity or a characteristic of a country. In translating a cultural term, the translator must really understand the cultures of both the SL and the TL. The translator will face some problems in translating cultural terms if he/she is not knowledgeable about the cultures of both languages. The translation of the Indonesian cultural lexicons in the English version of the novel Saman is limited to the following aspects: (1) ecology: flora and fauna, such as cucakrawa (fauna) and daun sirih (Flora); (2) material culture (artefacts): food, houses, clothes, such as cangik (artefact), abon (food), rumah adat Toba (houses), cawat (clothes); (3) organisations: political, religious and artistic, such as Raden Ayu (political), sembahyang (Religious), barong-barong (artistic); (4) social culture: work and leisure, such as dukun (work) and adu biji karet (leisure).

METHODS

Descriptive qualitative method was utilized in the research. According to Sandelowski and Barroso (2007), qualitative descriptive research should be seen as a categorical, as opposed to a non-categorical, alternative for inquiry, it is less interpretive than an interpretive description approach because it does not require the researcher to move as far from or into the data and does not require a conceptual or highly abstract rendering of the data, compared to other qualitative designs. Regarding the use of sampling in a qualitative descriptive design, virtually any purposive sampling technique may be used.

In order to apply the purposive sampling method, the data were collected and analyzed and both the Indonesian and English versions of the novel were read. All cultural lexicons found were highlighted and noted then divided into four different aspects based on Newmark (1988) as stated above before finally the translation of Indonesian cultural lexicons was written. The samples

were classified into four categories based on the manners used in translating them as stated by Newmark: (1) loan word, (2) cultural equivalent, (3) functional equivalent, (4) addition.

The component of meaning analysis technique was utilized to: (1) analyze the meaning of both lexicons – the SL and the TL lexicons; (2) determine and isolate the common component (CC) from the analysis of the SL and the TL lexicons meaning; (3) determine and isolate the diagnostic component (DC) from the analysis of the SL and the TL lexicons meaning; (4) arrange those components in parallel column under each meaning and mark the similiarities (+) and the differences (–); (5) determine the manners in which a translator could find an equivalent expression in the receptor language with the least semantic shift; and note the shifts between the meaning in SL and TL based on their semantic features.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were seven manners used in translating the cultural lexicons in the novel *Saman* and those are loan word, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, addition, synonymy, shift/transposition and modulation. However, among the seven manners, only first four manners were used in the data analysis.

Loan Word

Transference/Loan word is the proses of transferring an SL word to a TL text as a translation procedure. This translation technique is commonly called borrowing. Newmark calls this technique as transference. This technique is usually applied if there is no equivalent of the certain word or it is applied to appreciate the SL word/ term. It is done simply by using a loan word from the SL and putting it into the TL. Generally only cultural object or concept that should be transfered (Newmark, 1988). The following are examples of the data related to this category:

Example 1

SL: "...juga merawat keris dan barang-barang kuno dengan khidmat."

TL: "...also revered **the keris** and other sacred heirlooms."

Table 1 Referential Meaning (RM)—Loan Word 1

Source Language (SL)

Keris: n. senjata tajam bersarung, berujung tajam, dan bermata dua (bilahnya ada yang lurus,ada yang berkeluk-keluk).

Semantic Analysis (SA)

Common Component (CC):

+ a weapon

Diagnostic Component (DC):

SL:

-magic powers

Source Language (SL)

Keris: a wavy-bladed ceremonial

dagger (a weapon and a cult object said to have magic powers).

TL:

+ magic powers

The analysis of the component above, both the SL and the TL lexicons use common and diagnostic components. Nevertheless, the meaning of the SL lexicon is translated correctly into the TL. Based on Newmark (1988), the translation procedure above can be categorized into a transference or a loan word. Translator only borrowed or used the same word in the TL when there is no equivalent of the certain word or it is applied to appreciate the SL word/term.

It is inaccurate translation because it makes the reader confused about the meaning. The translator should add note in the end of page to make the reader understand what it meant. Based on the cultural categories proposed by Newmark (1988), this is part of the material culture:

artefact. The ideology used in this cultural term is a foreignization; it tends to retain the original form with the purpose of giving an extensive knowledge about foreign culture and considering it gives a benefit for the society (Hoed, 2006). As a conclusion, there is no semantic shift in this translation.

Example 2

SL: "Kali ini aku adalah Cangik yang suaranya vang klemak-klemek seperti kulit ketiaknya vang lembek."

TL: "Other times I'm Cangik, whose slow, sluggish voice somehow seems to suit the flabby skin around her armpits."

Table 2 Referential Meaning (RM)—Loan Word 2

Source Language (SL) Target Language (TL) Cangik adalah tokoh dalam dunia perwayangan yang bertugas sebagai Cangik (Jv) the name of a clown, the maidservant to a princess in the pengasuh putri kerajaan. Semantic Analysis (SA) Common Component (CC): + maidservant + figure of wayang Diagnostic Component (DC): TL: SL: -a clown + a clown

From the analysis above the definition about Cangik is listed clearly in the TL from the dictionary. However, it is better to replace the word "Clown" with "Puppet". This statement is strengthened with the meaning of Puppet: kb. 1. Golek, wayang (Shadily & Echols, 2003). Based on Newmark (1988), the translation procedure above can be categorized into a transference or a loan word. Translator only borrowed or used the same word in the TL.

It was an inaccurate translation because it made the reader confused about the meaning. The translator should add note in the end of page to make the reader understand what it meant. Based on the cultural categories proposed by Newmark (1988), this is part of the material culture: artefact. The ideology used in this cultural term is a foreignization; it tends to retain the original form with the purpose of giving an extensive knowledge about foreign culture and considering it gives a benefit for the society (Hoed, 2006). As a conclusion, there is no semantic shift in this translation except the difference in it spesification.

Cultural Equivalent

This is a translation technique applied to find the equivalence of the cultural terms. Newmark (1988) states that this is an approximate translation where a SL cultural word is translated by a TL cultural word. The following are examples of the data related to this category:

Example 3

SL: "Ketika bawahannya menawarkan diri mencarikan dukun, ia cuma berucap terima kasih."

TL: "When his employees offered to find a medicine man for him, he just politely declined."

Table 3 Referential Meaning (RM)—Cultural Equivalent 1

Source Language (SL) Target Language (TL) Medicine man: n, a person who is believed to have special magic pow-Dukun, n orang yang pekerjaannya mengobati; memberi jampi-jampi ers of healing, especially among Native American. (mantra, guna-guna, dsb). Dukun (Jv) 1. Traditional healer, Medicine man: dukun. medicine man; 2. Spiritual counselor. Semantic Analysis (SA)

Diagnostic Component (DC): -

Common Component (CC): + a person with magic powers There is no diagnostic component found meaning that the TL lexicon correctly explained the meaning of the SL lexicon. The translation procedure above can be categorized into a cultural equivalent (Newmark, 1988). This is an approximate translation where an SL cultural word is translated into a TL cultural word. The translator tried to find the equivalence of the cultural terms.

Based on the cultural categories proposed, this belongs to the social culture: work (Newmark, 1988). The ideology used in this cultural term is domestication. It focuses on the target language. It occurs if the readers read the translation as their own language or they read the

text as if it is not the translation but the original text. The right, acceptable, and good translation is the translation which is appropriate with the culture of the SL readers (Hoed, 2006). As a conclusion, there is no semantic shift in this translation.

Example 4

SL: "Keduanya mulai dengan menggali jugangan untuk kakus kira-kira sedalam satu setengah meter..."

TL: "They began by digging a meter and a half deep trench for1 **the toilet**..."

Table 4 Referential Meaning (RM)—Cultural Equivalent 2

| Source Language (SL) Kakus, n. Jamban; tempat buang air (besar). | Target Language (TL) Toilet, n. A large bowl attached to a pipe that you sit on or stand over when you get rid of waste matter from your body. | |
|--|---|--|
| Kakus, n. Jamban, kamar kecil, toilet. | Toilet, kb. Kamar kecil, WC, kloset. | |
| Semantic Analysis (SA) | | |
| Common Component (CC): + a place + to urinate + to defecate | | |
| Diagnostic Component (DC): SL: + usually made of bamboo | TL: - usually made of bamboo | |

The TL word "toilet" is not a good translation of the SL word *kakus* because it is different although they retain the same function. *Kakus* is usually made of bamboo like a jamban in Indonesia. However, this is acceptable to translate *kakus* into "toilet" because they have the same function, and the reader can imagine and understand what it is for. Newmark (1988) categorized the translation procedure above into a cultural equivalent. This is an approximate translation where a SL cultural word is translated by a TL cultural word. The translator tried to find the equivalence of the cultural terms.

Based on the cultural categories proposed by Newmark (1988), this is included in the material culture: houses. The ideology used in this cultural term is domestication. It focuses on the target language. It occurs if the readers read the translation as their own language or they read the text as if it is not the translation but the

original text. The right, acceptable, and good translation is the translation which is appropriate with the culture of the SL readers (Hoed, 2006). The conclusion is there is no semantic shift in this translation except the difference in it spesification.

Example 5

SL: "Kami penuh dalam diri masing-masing, tidak mengisi satu sama lain, apalagi melengkapi upacara penyambutan tamu-tamu sultan atau turis keraton."

TL: "We're quite self-sufficient, the music and I, we don't feel the need to complement each other and we definitely don't want to be called upon to perform for the sultan or the tourist visiting the palace."

Table 5 Referential Meaning (RM)—Cultural Equivalent 3

Source Language (SL) Keraton n rumah besar dan bagus tempat tinggal raja; istana raja. Keraton (Jv) royal palace; court; the sultan's residence. Semantic Analysis (SA) Common Component (CC): + a royal palace Diagnostic Component (DC):

There is no diagnostic component found meaning that the TL lexicon correctly explains the meaning of the SL lexicon. The translation procedure above can be categorized into a cultural equivalent (Newmark, 1988). This is an approximate translation where an SL cultural word is translated into a TL cultural word. The translator tried to find the equivalence of the cultural terms.

Based on the cultural categories proposed, this is included in the material culture: houses (Newmark, 1988). The ideology used in this cultural term is domestication. It focuses on the target language. It occurs if the readers read the translation as their own language or they read the text as if it is not the translation but the original text. The right, acceptable, and good translation is the translation which is appropriate with the culture of the SL readers (Hoed, 2006). As a conclusion there is no semantic shift in this translation.

Functional Equivalent

This technique is used when the SL cultural word has no TL equivalent. This common procedure that applied to cultural words requires the use of a culture free word, sometimes with a new spesific term. Therefore, it neutralises or generalises the SL word. This technique is the most accurate way of translating a cultural word (Newmark, 1988). The following are examples of the data related to this category:

Example 6

SL: "Ketika kecil sampai remaja ia biasa sembahyang dan pembagian lima waktu menetap dalam kesadarannya seperti jam matahari."

TL: "As a girl she used to perform the five daily prayers, a marking of time by attitude of the

Table 6 Referential Meaning (RM)—Functional Equivalent 1

Source Language (SL)

Sembahyang, n. ibadah, doa, ekaristi, kebaktian, misa, sakramen, salat.

Salat, n. Isl 1. Rukun Islam kedua, berupa ibadah kepada Allah Swt; 2. Doa kepada Allah Swt.

Sembahyang: a cannonical, ritual prayer.

Semantic Analysis (SA)

Common Component (CC):

- + ritual prayer
- + habit of praying

Diagnostic Component (DC):

Target Language (TL)

*mentioned in TL

Prayer, n. 1. Words which you say to God giving thanks or asking for help; 2. A fixed form of words that you can say when you speak to God; 3. The act or habit of praying.

Prayer, kb. doa; sembahyang

Both the SL and the TL lexicon own the same feature, the SL lexicon sembahyang is appropriately translated in the TL by the translator. Based on Newmark (1988), the translation procedure above can be categorized into a functional equivalent. The translator requires the use of a culture free word, sometimes with a new spesific term. Therefore, it neutralises or generalises the SL word. Based on the cultural categories proposed by Newmark (1988),

this belongs to the organisations aspect: religious. The conclusion is there is no semantic shift in this translation.

Example 7

SL: "Mereka membawa seorang dokter muda dari **Puskesmas.**"

TL: "A young doctor from the local clinic accompanied them."

Table 7 Referential Meaning (RM)—Functional Equivalent 2

Source Language (SL)

Puskesmas: akr, pusat kesehatan masyarakat; poliklinik di tingkat kecamatan tempat rakyat menerima pelayanan kesehatan dan penyuluhan mengenai kesehatan.

Puskesmas: (Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat) local government clinic.

Semantic Analysis (SA)

Common Component (CC):

+ a place

+ to give medical treatment and advice

Diagnostic Component (DC):

SL:

+ local government

Target Language (TL)

Clinic: n, a building or part of a hospital where people can go for special medical treatment or advice.

Clinic: kb, balai pengobatan.

TL:

local government

The common components above are not clear enough to explain the meaning of *Puskesmas*. The feature "local government" which is the main feature in the SL word *Puskesmas* is not listed in the TL word. So, the TL word "clinic" cannot convey the meaning of the SL word *Puskesmas*. The translation procedure above can be categorized into a functional equivalent (Newmark, 1988). The translator requires the use of a culture free word, sometimes with a new spesific term. Therefore, it neutralises or generalises the SL word. Based on the cultural categories proposed by Newmark (1988), this belongs to the organisations aspect: political. As a conclusion, there is no semantic shift in this translation except the difference in it spesification.

Addition

This technique is commonly used by using additional information. It is usually applied in cultural-based translation (Newmark, 1988). Additional information in translation may take various forms: (1) within the text, (2) notes at bottom of pages, (3) notes at end of chapter, (4) notes or glossary at end of book. The following are examples of the data related to this category:

Example 8

- SL: "Hiburan menegangkan lain adalah **lutung** atau siamang yang mendadak turundari pepohonan."
- TL: "The other sources of entertainment were the lutung, the long-tailed monkeys, and the gibbons, that would suddenly leap from the trees."

Table 8 Referential Meaning (RM)—Addition 1

| Source Language (SL) | Target Language (TL) | |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Lutung, n. Kera hitam berekor panjang. | *mentioned in TL | |
| Lutung: a black long-haired and longtailed monkey. | | |
| Semantic Analysis (SA) | | |
| Common Component (CC): + a long-tailed monkey | | |
| Diagnostic Component (DC): | | |
| SL: | TL: | |
| + black long-haired | - black long-haired | |

The common component "a long-tailed monkey" is not clear enough to explain the real meaning of the SL word *lutung*. It is because the TL word missed a feature "black long-haired" which actually appears as a diagnostic component. The lack of that feature can lead to confusion of the reader. The translator should give a complete explanation about lutung to make the reader understand the differences between *lutung* and other types of monkeys so that the reader can imagine what *lutung* looks like.

Newmark (1988) categorized the translation procedure above into an addition. The translator gives an

additional information in several ways; within the text, notes at bottom of page, notes at end of chapter, notes or glossary at end of book. Based on the cultural categories, this belongs to the aspect of ecology: fauna (Newmark, 1988). The conclusion is there is no semantic shift in this translation except the difference in it spesification.

Example 9

- SL: "Tapi Ia pucat bagai cicak, yang tak hidup di kota ini."
- TL: "But, she's also as pale as a cicak lizard. (we don't have them here in NewYork)."

Table 9 Referential Meaning (RM)—Addition 2

Source Language (SL) Cecak/cicak, n. Binatang merayap, biasa hidup di rumah (pada langitlangit dekat lampu), makanannya binatang-binatang kecil (seperti nyamuk, laron). Semantic Analysis (SA) Common Component (CC): + an animal + a reptile Diagnostic Component (DC): SL: + originally from Indonesia Target Language (TL) *mentioned in TL Lizard, n. A small reptile with a rough skin, four short legs and a long tail. *TL: - originally from Indonesia

Though the explanation in the TL is not spesific in describing what *cicak* is, the feature "animal" and "reptile" help to explain that *cicak* is a kind of reptile eventhough it is not clear enough to describe the real meaning of the SL word *cicak* because the TL word missed a feature from the SL word that is originally from Indonesia.

Based on Newmark (1988), the translation procedure above can categorized into an addition. The translator gives an additional information in several ways; within the text, notes at the bottom of page, notes at end of chapter, notes or glossary at end of book. Based on the cultural categories proposed, this belongs to the aspect of ecology: fauna (Newmark, 1988). As a conclusion, there is no semantic shift in this translation.

CONCLUSION

The manners of translating cultural lexicons which included the least semantic shift were in the category of Addition in which there was no semantic shift identified. The additional information that was provided by the translator helped the reader to understand the Indonesian culture contained in the lexicons. It also gave foreign readers knowledge about some Indonesian ethnics. In addition, the manners having the most semantic shift were in the category of Functional Equivalent comprising semantic shifts. These semantic shifts occured when the translator made an effort to give an incomplete definition and generalised the SL lexicons. These manners had the highest possibility to the semantic shift and led to the error translating if the translator were lacking in comprehensive knowledge and high imagination.

Translating cultural terms needs cultural lexicons understanding in order to transfer the meaning and the message from the SL into the TL, so that it would not lead to confusion. The manners above provided a good solution in translating cultural lexicons. Translator, who rendered cultural terms, should carefully consider which manners that must be chosen in order to get the closest translation. Having a good comprehension and broad knowledge in the SL and TL cultures is important before doing the task, besides the use of dictionaries, encyclopedia, and other references.

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