

Manuscript

by Pak Kas

Submission date: 15-Apr-2019 04:53PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1112757424

File name: in_Teaching_Translation_of_Indonesian_Aphorisms_into_English.doc (294.5K)

Word count: 5387

Character count: 32513

Integrating Humanitarian Values in Teaching Translation of Indonesian Aphorisms into English

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Abstract

Indonesia is a country of high diversity culture. One of the manifestations of Indonesian's virtuous culture is the development of aphorisms in the social's life. Indonesian traditional aphorisms are the idioms which contain lots of humanitarian values for the daily life's guidance. Therefore, the virtuous values within those aphorisms, which can be followed by the youth, are worth transmitted. One of the ways applicable to transfer those values is through the teaching of Indonesian traditional aphorisms translation into English. This research is aimed at exploring the students' translation quality on Indonesian traditional aphorisms into English. This research employed descriptive ¹⁶ qualitative case study as the design. The data were gathered from the fourteen translated texts containing ten Indonesian traditional (Javanese) aphorisms. The participants involved in this study were fourteen sixth semester Indonesian EFL students who previously got "A" in translation course. To analyze the data, Newmark's taxonomy on investigating translation quality was employed, focusing on four aspects; they were loan word, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, and addition. To meet validity, the researchers interviewed five selected participants regarding to their understanding on humanitarian values inserted in the translation processes. The findings suggested that the students' translated texts were containing a number of inappropriateness on three categories (loan word, cultural equivalent, and functional equivalent). The cultural equivalent became the most category ignored by the students. Another finding also suggested that cultural values (especially humanitarian values) ³ were taken into account by the participants, even though the lacks of understanding on cultural value are found.

Keywords: Humanitarian values; Aphorisms; Teaching translation

Introduction

One of the compulsory subjects for undergraduate Indonesian EFL learners is translation. Basically, this subject deals with how translating source of language into the target language in appropriate manners. Translation does not merely mean as textually ⁵ translate the language source into the target language, such as Indonesian language into English, but ¹⁸ beyond that, more importantly, they translate value, meaning, and message. Referring to Newmark (1988), translation is defined as “a craft consisting an attempt to replace a written message and or statement in one language by the same message or statement in another language.” Similarly, Haroon and Daud (2017) stated that “translation is the transfer of messages in one language to another language.” For Indonesian EFL learners, translation process happens any time they learn English, even in simple process, for instance: the students cognitively translate the teacher’s question, so that they give appropriate answer for the teacher in English. Translation subject is also expected to equip the learners with adequate knowledge and experience of doing translation. Therefore, the learners will have sufficient capability to translate any kind of language sources, as required by most universities in Indonesian context.

In operationalizing translation process, the students as translators have to realize the equivalent form and meaning ² of the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). Therefore, there should be exactly linearity both in the words form (sentence structure) and their meanings. Nida and Taber (1974), in slightly contrast, point out ⁴ “translation process as a dynamic process in which the three steps of translation involved; they are analysis, transfer, and restructuring. Nida and Taber (1974) further explain that analysis happens when the translator firstly analyze both the meaning ¹⁵ and the structure of the source language texts in a whole. After comprehending the meaning and identifying the structure, the translator needs to transfer his/her comprehension ⁹ into the target language. As the final step, the translator needs to reconstruct the ¹ source language meanings into the target language meanings in accordance to accepted target language rules.

Little bit different with Nida and Taber, Larson (1984) provides similar model for doing translation process. Larson model is basically proposed as the development of the prior model, as proposed by former experts. In his model of translation process, Larson (1984) expounds the following steps, firstly, study and analyze words (including

grammatical structure, context of ⁴ situation, and cultural context) in source language text. After having ⁴ understanding the source language text, the translator has to restructure, reconstruct, and represent the form and meaning into the target language, by strictly obeying the target language rules. Referring to ¹ above theories, one thing which is fundamental in doing translation is the conveyed ¹ meaning and message ² from the source language into the target language should be equally translated. Thus, translation is not only process of translating words, phrases, sentences, and texts from the ² source language into the target language, but also transferring ² meaning, moral message, and culture value, and even “incarnating the culture in the same time” (Gao, 2009). As argued by Hilman (2015), “culture is a challenge for a translator in translating a text.” With this in mind, the translator then needs to master internal and external elements of both source and target language, such as grammatical rules, dictions, and context of culture.

¹⁷ In ¹⁷ cultural context, Newmark (1988:94) highlights the ¹⁷ culture as “the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression”. Therefore, the cultural context is embedded element of language that cannot be ignored by the translator. Related to cultural translation, Simon (1997) outlines its complexity, as in the following way:

“[Culture] often appears in translation studies as if it had an obvious and unproblematic meaning. Translators are told that in order to do their work correctly they must understand the culture of the original text, that texts are “embedded” in a culture. The difficulty with such statements is that they seem to presume a unified cultural field which the term inhabits; the translator must simply track down the precise location of the term within it and then investigate the corresponding cultural field for corresponding realities (Simon, 1997).”

Newmark and Simon highly suggest that a translator needs to adjust what is beyond in the language source (such as meaning and value) into the target language. Furthermore, the translators should grab deeper to provide equal translation text. So that, there will be no loss and missing “message” in the translated target texts, because in the same time, translator takes ¹ the role as the communicator. A good translator should ideally re-contextualize ¹ source language text into the target language text (House, 2015).

¹ In Indonesian EFL tertiary education context, the translation subject is often given by highlighting numerous concepts but minimum exposures and experiences. The

translation mostly focuses on literal translation, which tends to explore the surface structure more rather than deep structure. Therefore, the common practices in teaching translation for Indonesian EFL learners are translating various English texts into Indonesian, and vice versa, for instance: narrative texts, descriptive texts, academic texts, exposition texts, short story, and other text types (see e.g.: Hartono, 2010; Zulprianto, 2013; Djatmika, *et al.*, 2014; Yuwono, 2015; Al Farisi, 2015; and Sandra, 2018). Thus, most of Indonesian EFL learners are familiar with various types of text. The studies have also confirmed that those aforementioned various texts were easily found and used as the source language (SL). For many Indonesian EFL learners, translation process can be very hard, exhausted, and challenging phase since they have minimum exposure to empirically experience and operationalize translation process. In fact, they get only two credits of translation subject along the pursuing of bachelor degree.

In one hand, the giving of two credits only for translation subject is dilemma. The teacher always requires the students for being the good translators who are able to appropriately translate **the source language into the target language in** various manners. But **in the** other hand, the narrow and limited exposure to teach translation is simultaneously given, due to the limited time allocation. This gap has been appearing since very long time in Indonesian EFL context, without any concrete solution so far, whereas the Indonesian English teachers have claimed that translation is significant subject for any language learner (see e.g.: Nurbayan, 2019; Salam, *et al.*, 2017; Tiwiyanti and Retnowati, 2017; Napitupulu, 2017; Yolanda and Yuliasri, 2016; and Ninsiana, 2014).

In respond to the significance of translation studies toward English learners, the recognition on the importance of translation study has been significantly increased since the last decade. This recognition is widely acknowledged through a number of journal articles, books, online articles, and conference papers. In Indonesian EFL context, a number of studies dealing with translation have been continuously conducted (see e.g.: Hartono, 2010; Zulprianto, 2013; Djatmika, *et al.*, 2014; Kamil, 2014; Yuwono, 2015; Al Farisi, 2015; and Sandra, 2018). Besides, the importance of the translation has been documented in many referred books (see e.g.: Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1988, 1991; Baker, 1992; Nord, 1997; Nida and Taber, 2003; and House, 2015). The growing body

of research on translation has also been performing through a number of international publications throughout the world (see e.g.: Na, 2005; Chen, 2009; Zhang and Wang, 2010; Extremera, 2015; Jibreel, *et al.*, 2017; and Yuan, 2018). Other recognition on translation studies has also been presenting through a number of online articles, academic forums, translation conferences, and so forth.

The increasing body of research in translation as mentioned earlier, in fact, is not in line with the increasing translation studies on aphorisms. So far, the translation studies on aphorisms remain few. Even, none of the previous studies mentioned above dealt with aphorisms, especially Indonesian traditional aphorisms. Aphorisms are cultural-based content that very rare used as source language text, whereas they are easily to find. Most of the aforementioned studies were focusing on translation quality text of selected literary works, by taking the specific objects, for instance: Yolanda and Yuliasri (2017) analyze the translation quality of pun in novel *Tolkien's The Hobbit*. Tiwiyanti and Retnowati (2017) investigate culture-specific items in Indonesian novel (*Lintang Kemukus*). In the area of academic text, Yuwono (2015) and Napitupulu (2017) focus on analyzing translation quality of article abstracts. Other studies, Nurbayan (2019) and Al Farisi (2014) investigates the quality of translation from Arabic into Indonesian by specifying on metaphor and speech act. While Djatmika *et al* (2014) analyzed the translation quality on translated book, English into Indonesian. Other similar studies, conducted by Salam, *et al* (2017) and Kamil (2014) focus on investigating Indonesian-English translation errors in which the data are taken from online application, *Crowdsourcing* Translation Application and Twitter Web pages. While Ninsiana (2014) studies the translation quality of English bidding document, translated from Indonesian into English.

Besides in the national context, the increasing body of investigation on translation studies is also performed internationally. Chen (2009) and Zhang and Wang (2010) utilize Chinese idioms to be translated into English. Chen (2009) investigates on the translation quality of Chinese-English idioms translation, while Zhang and Wang (2010) specify their study on investigating the use of functional equivalence theory Chinese-English idioms translation. More structurally, Na (2005) investigates the translation errors made by the learners in realizing topic-comment structures, from Vietnamese into English texts. Other researchers, such as Jibreel (2017) interested in

exploring the relationship of learners' translation strategies awareness and their translation quality which involved 144 Yamani students taking the translation subject. Similar with many other studies on translation who involved literary works translation, Yuan (2018) conducts a study on exploring the different roles of translated literature played in the Chinese literary system from the 1920s to the present. Another study on translation was also conducted by Ghourchian (2012). He focuses on analyzing speech act translation, taken from Persian drama into English.

Observing the previous studies, as presented earlier, the study on investigating translation texts on Indonesian traditional aphorisms into English remains unexplored. To fill the gap, the study on exploring the translation study of Indonesian traditional aphorisms into English is necessary to conduct. Therefore, this present study is intensively aimed at exploring the learners' translation quality on Indonesian traditional aphorisms into English. Through this study, the students are also expected to internalize such humanitarian values contained in Indonesian traditional aphorisms, such as patience, cooperativeness, hard work, responsibility, and tolerance. These values were officially inserted in the latest document of curriculum for national education in Indonesia. The curriculum requires every teaching and learning activity needs to instill and integrate the national character values, among of them are patience, cooperativeness, hard work, responsibility, and tolerance, as previously mentioned. The big impetus of this present study also comes from the researchers' interest in analyzing Indonesian EFL learners' translation studies, which still remaining various issues to address. Moreover, studies on analyzing Indonesian EFL learners' competence on translating local cultural based-content texts into English are found few.

Methodology

Research Design

The present study employed case study which aimed at investigating Indonesian EFL learners' translation quality on Indonesian traditional aphorisms into English. The type of design is chosen due to its applicability and appropriateness in enabling the researchers to investigate the object (translation quality). Case study belongs to qualitative in nature; therefore, this design is also commonly known as qualitative case study. As descriptive study in nature, this present research neither intervenes the

subjects nor treats them due to its main objective that ² is to explore the quality of the Indonesian - English aphorisms translation, translated by the Indonesian EFL learners in the undergraduate level (tertiary education).

Participants

The study involved fourteen participants of Indonesian EFL learners, consisting of eight females and six males. They were in the sixth semester, majoring English at one of private universities in Indonesia (the name of university was pseudonymized). Previously, they got “A” (excellent) on translation course. This pre-condition is applied in order to get qualified participants under the research. Their ages were varied from 20 to 25 years old. The whole participants were experienced learning English since they were in the primary school. Furthermore, the participants were homogeneous in their mother tongue, Javanese, an Indonesian local language. The fourteen participant’s names were intentionally pseudonymized to ethically avoid any threat appears.

Data

The data in this study were mainly gained from the fourteen students’ translated texts which contained ten Indonesian traditional aphorisms. In this case, the ten Indonesian traditional aphorisms took the role as the source language (SL), while ten relevant English aphorisms functioned ¹³ as the target language (TL). The researchers intentionally chose ¹² the ten Indonesian traditional aphorisms which considered containing the humanitarian values. The data were primarily in the form of descriptive (qualitative). Another data were taken from the students’ interview, regarding to their understanding on cultural equivalent (humanitarian values) inserted in the translation processes, including: patience, cooperativeness, hard work, responsibility, and tolerance.

Data Analysis

Data analysis technique employed in this study was content analysis. Technically, Newmark’s taxonomy (1988) on investigating translation quality was employed, focusing on four aspects; they were loan word, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, and addition. Loan word refers to common technique of translation that is applicable when equivalent word of the target language from source language is unavailable, for example: Javanese language *batik*, translated in English into exactly the same *batik*. Cultural equivalent refers to certain translation technique that enables the

translator to match the source language and target language equivalence of words related to culture, for example: Indonesian language *kakus*, translated into English word *toilet*. Even though they have difference in physical form (building), but *kakus* and *toilet* are equal in their function as the place for urinating or defecating. Functional equivalent refers to the translation technique in which the translator comprehends the idea of the terms in source language and finds the words that express the same idea in the target language. Moreover, functional equivalent conveys the same idea, meaning, concept, and intent as conveyed by the original word, such as Indonesian word *sholat*, possibly translated into *Islamic prayer*. Lastly, addition refers to technique of translation that adds more specific information towards the words in target language.

3 Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings and subsequently followed by the discussion on each displayed finding. Before presenting the result of analysis on students' translated text, the ten Indonesian traditional aphorisms and their suggested English translation is firstly displayed to give better understanding on the topic discussed, as shown in the following table:

Table 1: Recommended English translation for Indonesian traditional aphorisms

Indonesian traditional aphorisms	Suggested English aphorisms
<i>Sehat iku larang regane</i>	Health is better than wealth
<i>Desa mawa cara negara mawa tata</i>	When you in Rome, do as romans
<i>Alon-alon waton kelakon</i>	Slow but sure
<i>Cakra manggilingan</i>	Life is like a wheel
<i>Dhuwur wekasane, endhek wiwitane</i>	Big things have small beginnings
<i>Kakehan gludhug, kurang udan</i>	A barking dog never bites
<i>Gusti ora sare</i>	God never sleeps
<i>Iro yudho wicaksono</i>	With our courage, wisdom bears no fruit
<i>Nglurug tanpo bala, menang tanpo ngasorake</i>	A brave man acknowledges the strength of others.
<i>Rukun agawe santoso, crah agawe bubrah</i>	We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided

In table 1, the researchers proposed the possible translation of ten Indonesian traditional aphorisms into English. The translation made by prioritizing the cultural equivalence, rather than other aspect of translation. This is made in order to meet the linearity (equivalence) in case of meaning, message, and cultural value in the targeted text. As Newmark (1988) highlighted, cultural and meaning equivalence is more important item to translate, compared to words structure and lexical items. To have concrete view on students' translated texts of Indonesian aphorisms into English in a whole, see the following table:

Table 2: Analysis on students' translated text

Student	Loan word	Cultural equivalence	Functional equivalence	Addition
A	-	6	3	-
B	-	5	3	-
C	-	5	2	-
D	-	7	4	-
E	-	3	2	-
F	1	3	2	-
G	-	5	4	-
H	-	6	5	-
I	-	4	2	-
J	-	6	3	-
K	-	5	3	-
L	1	2	2	-
M	-	8	5	-
N	-	4	3	-

Table 2 shows that from the ten aphorisms they have to translate; only some of the texts fulfill the cultural equivalence. For instance, student A was able to translate six out of ten Indonesian aphorisms into English, which fulfilled the cultural equivalence. Furthermore, student A was able also to translate three Indonesian aphorisms that meet the functional equivalence criteria. In a whole, none of student who is able to translate all Indonesian aphorisms into English by emphasizing the cultural equivalence, while the best achiever (Student F) was able to complete only eight translations of the source text, ten Indonesian traditional aphorisms.

The findings presented in table 2 also inform that the participants (students) were able to apply functional equivalence. It means that, even though there is no totally similar lexical item ⁵ in the target language representing the source language, but the students were able to choose the functional equivalence as the alternative option in translation. The result of analysis, hence, suggests that identification of the meaning in source language has been successfully carried out by the students. Interestingly, the students used no addition category in their translated texts. This finding shows the good news since the students are able to translate texts in equal structure and probably meaning

Loan word

Loan word or also known as transference, which refers to common technique of translation that is applicable when equivalent word of the target language from source language is unavailable, for example: Javanese language *keris*, is translated in English into exactly the same *keris*, which means the Javanese traditional handmade weapon. Based on the findings, the loan word used by the students found few. There were only two loan word used by student F and L. The loan word they used was *cakra*. The detail translation can be observed in the following sample:

Source text : *Cakra manggilingan*

Target text : *Life is like a chakra.*

The source text *Cakra manggilingan* refers to the situation where any individual is sometimes up, and sometimes down. This aphorism suggests everyone to learn enjoying the life in whatever situations they face. This aphorism also teaches the students for keep hoping and working to do the best in any situation. The use of *cakra* in target text simply represents the borrowing technique in translation, even though the term loan word they used slightly differed in spelling, *cakra* into *chakra*. Even though the term *chakra* in English does not refer to *wheel*, but it refers to one of the seven centers of energy within the human body (Cambridge Online Dictionary). This term is usually used linked to yoga and traditional South Asian medicine activities. So the source text *cakra* basically has nothing to do with *chakra* in target language, because they are totally different in meaning. Overall, the findings suggested that the students were able to insert cultural equivalence in translating the term *cakra*, becomes *wheel*, as in the suggested translation in the table 1.

Based on the interview, conducted to know the use of loan word, both participants (student F and L) acknowledged that the term *chakra* was assumed having the totally same meaning, as *cakra* in source language. They thought there was no meaning difference between *cakra* and *chakra*. They also acknowledged that the term *chakra* in their target texts was borrowed from the source language. Therefore, it could be clearly argued that student F and L had lack of meaning comprehension.

Cultural equivalence

Cultural equivalence refers to certain translation technique that enables the translator to match the source language and target language equivalence of words related to culture, for example: Indonesian language *dukun*, translated into English word *medicine man*. The Indonesian term *dukun* refers to the traditional healer who is capable in curing someone's disease, while *medicine man* in English refers to person who is able to do healing by empowering the special magic power. What has been done by the translator as the example, translating *dukun* into *medicine man*, is categorized as the cultural equivalence.

Based on the analysis, the findings which containing the cultural equivalence can be observed in various translated text, for instance:

Source text : *Sehat iku larang regane.*

Target text : *Wealth is better than wealth.*

The source text of aphorism if literally translates will possibly be like this: *Health is priceless*, or might be *health has very expensive price*. If it is translated so, the meaning will not be equal. Moreover, the literal translation will not meet the cultural equivalence. This aphorism teaches Indonesians for being responsible for their own health. In other words, keeping healthy is everyone's responsibility. Another corpus of cultural equivalence can be seen in the following sample:

Source text : *Kakehan gludhug, kurang udan.*

Target text : *A barking dog never bites.*

If the source text of aphorism is literally translated will possibly be like this: *More thunder less rain*, or might be *Too many thunder but no rain*. If it is translated so, the meaning will not be naturally equal. In addition, this kind of translation will not fulfill the cultural equivalence. For Indonesians, this aphorism highly suggests for not only talking, but more importantly act or do something. Another possible translation which

culturally equivalent is “*No action talk only.*” Even though the structurally the source and the target language are unequal, but they are equal in cultural context.

Functional equivalence

Functional equivalent simply refers to the equivalence of idea, meaning, concept, and intent as conveyed by the original word, such as Indonesian word *kakus*, possibly translated into *toilet*. Even though they have difference in physical form (building), but *kakus* and *toilet* are equal in their function as the place for urinating or defecating. Functional equivalent refers to the translation technique in which the translator comprehends the idea of the terms in source language and finds the words that express the same idea in the target language which represents the same/equal function.

Based on the findings, functional equivalence can be observed in the following samples:

Source text : *Dhuwur wekasane, endhek wiwitane.*

Target text : *Big things have small beginnings.*

The above source text of Indonesian traditional aphorism if literally translates will possibly be like this: *High at the end, short at the beginning*, or might be *High position starts with little beginnings*. If it is translated so, the meaning will be obviously unequal. Moreover, the literal translation will not meet the functional equivalence. *Dhuwur wekasane* then translated into *Big things*, which both structurally and culturally are unequal, but functionally equal. In this case, *Dhuwur wekasane* and *Big things* refer to the same meaning as someone’s success, achievement, and possibly high level position.

This aphorism teaches Indonesians for being the courage person to start doing. In other words, working hard is compulsory for everyone. Therefore, this aphorism tells people to immediately take the first step and throw out the doubt. Furthermore, the aphorism reminds us that everything is always began with the first action (step). In English, another possible translation for source text *Dhuwur wekasane, endhek wiwitane* is *A thousand miles begins with a single step*.

Addition

Addition refers to technique of translation that adds more specific information towards the words in target language. When the translated texts add more information, which sometimes unnecessary, to provide more specific of the detail, the addition category is applied by the translator. In fact, additional information is often displayed

through various forms, such as: within the target text, giving the footnotes at the bottom of pages, giving notes at end of section/chapter, and providing the notes or glossary at the end of the book.

Based on the findings, as presented in the table 2, unfortunately, the whole translated texts contained no addition category. This becomes the good news since the students are able to translate texts in equal structure and probably meaning. Addition, as suggested by Hilman (2015) is often found in translating cultural-based content. For instance, source text *budeng* translated into *the budeng, tropical blackish long-tailed monkey*. Looking at to that translation, more information accompanies *the budeng*, is provided. Therefore, the example belongs to addition category.

Pedagogical Implication

Considering the significance of the translation studies for Indonesian EFL learners, and the urgency of equally realizing cultural values into the target language, the pedagogical implication could be formulated in the following ways; firstly, since teaching translation is also understood as translating meaning and culture, both EFL teachers and learners are necessary to cooperatively engage in realizing translation studies by employing various techniques and materials as well. The teaching translation should expose the students' competences, involving their knowledge and cultural understanding in equal portion. Giving more experiences and practices of translation activities can be taken into account by Indonesian EFL teachers. Besides, the teacher should assist students with sufficient understanding on target language culture.

Secondly, materialization of teaching translation needs to adjust both source and target language culture. Therefore, selecting and scrutinizing suitable source language becomes the starting point of teaching translation in Indonesian EFL context. This possibly enables the learners to achieve wider understanding and experiences on the target language culture, although they have never been living in the countries where English becomes the first language or national language. Providing such various activities of translating cultural-based content is also important for them, such as aphorisms, proverbs, idioms, and other local wisdom texts.

Lastly, since the time allotment of the translation studies in Indonesian EFL context is very limited, equal to two credits during the seeking of undergraduate degree,

teachers ideally need to work harder. This has become another problem for teaching translation which is never been solved before. Indonesian EFL institutions, especially for tertiary education, need to evaluate the time allotment given. They are expected to find alternative breakthrough, so that, the problem can be minimized, and even solved. Furthermore, the present study may provide the new insight of translating aphorisms and may be considered as the starting base to further study on “unexplored” area.

Conclusion

Considering the goal of the study, the findings, and the result of analysis, the findings suggested that the students’ translated texts were containing a number of inappropriateness on three categories (loan word, cultural equivalent, and functional equivalent, but not in addition category). The cultural equivalent became the most category ignored by the students. Another finding also suggested that cultural values (especially humanitarian values) were taken into account by the participants, even though the lacks of understanding on cultural value are found.

Acknowledgment

This present study was fully funded by the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education of Republic of Indonesian (*Kementerian Riset, Teknologi, dan Pendidikan Tinggi*) and fully supported by the Program of Overseas Seminar Facility (*Program Bantuan Seminar Luar Negeri*), Director General of Research Enforcement and Development (*Ditjen Penguatan Riset dan Pengembangan, Kemenristekdikti*). Therefore, the researchers would like to express their big thanks to the aforementioned institutions for the support and facilities given.

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