

# TECHNIQUE USED IN TRANSLATING BALINESE TRADITION TERMS INTO FRENCH

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## Abstract

This paper aims to analyse the technique used in translating Balinese Tradition terms into French found in the Tourism Promotion Book of Bali Government Tourism Department. This book was published every year as one of the important device to promote Bali abroad especially to the French tourist. This paper is also to figure out whether there is loss and gain of information or skewing in conveying the meaning of the terms. The technique of translating from Harvey (2003) was applied to analyze the Cultural-bounded Terms and also the Theory from Nida (1974) was used as supporting theory.

The findings showed that all translation technique are used in translating Balinese tradition and society terms, those are functional equivalence, formal equivalence, transcription or borrowing, and descriptive translation. Borrowing was mostly used by the translator in order to avoid skewing and to retain the SL meaning in the TL. The analysis also found that in the process of translating cultural terms, loss and gain, and skewing of information occurred often and need more some revision to gain a better understanding about the terms.

**Keywords:** *Translation, equivalence, Balinese terms, French*

## I INTRODUCTION

Bali has a very unique culture. Its uniqueness attracts tourist around the world to come and to see directly the way of life of Balinese people. Culture also becomes one of the strength in Bali tourism because without its culture, Bali will not as famous as now. For that reason, the uniqueness of Balinese culture must be continually maintained and promoted as the most attractive thing can be found in Bali beside its beautifulness of nature.

Balinese culture covers almost all part of life of Balinese people. It can be found in the religious life, arts including painting, dance, cloth, architecture, etc, and also the way of life of Balinese people in society. Balinese people have a lot of tradition in society as part of their life and become their identity in the middle of modernization. Balinese tradition and their society life are formed with layers and layers of ritual, tradition, and ceremonies. This is the major aspect that makes Bali a special and captivating place to be visited by tourists from around the world. As mentioned before, to let people know about Bali, it can be ensured that the information about Balinese culture is included in tourism promotion materials, such as in the form of brochures, magazines, or specific book about Bali. These materials must be made in many languages in order to get wider target of country, and also to gain a better understanding about Bali to other communities around the world. English, French, Germany, Russian, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, etc are the most language used in tourism promotion book/materials.

In translating cultural terms like tradition or arts, the translator need cultural knowledge in Source language (here Bahasa Indonesia) so the meaning can be transferred well to the reader of target language. It is not easy to do because cultural terms are often not found in the target language (TL). For example, lots of tradition terms in SL, as part of culture, like *masegeh*, *macaru*, *awig-awig*, etc, do not exist in TL and the translator has to find the closest equivalence to transfer the meaning. French is one of the foreign languages whose culture and tradition are different with those of Balinese people. This condition creates many problems to the translator in transferring the original text into French, especially in translating cultural terms like tradition in society. This research deals with translation of Balinese tradition terms into French found in Tourism Promotion Book published by Tourism Department of Bali Government. The analyses focused on the technique used in translating the terms and also to find out whether the meaning was transferred naturally or not.

## II MATERIALS AND METHOD

Translation is an activity of transferring the meaning in one language into another language. This activity is inevitably involved at least two languages and two cultures (Toury, 1978). In translating a Cultural-Based-Text, the problem of a translator is how to transfer the meaning of cultural aspects in the source text to the closest equivalent and successfully conveying the meaning in the TL. The problems

found in translating cultural terms is depending on how far the gap of culture or tradition between source language and target language. A pluricultural or has a well-understanding about the culture becomes a valuable skill that should be developed by a translator. Cultural knowledge has been a major focus in translation activity of a translator.

Defining culture-bound terms (CBTs) as the terms which refer to concepts, institutions and personnel which are specific to the SL culture (p.2), Harvey (2003:2-6) puts forward the following four major techniques for translating CBTs:

*Functional Equivalence*: It means using a referent in the TL culture whose function is similar to that of the source language (SL) referent. As Harvey (2000:2) writes, authors are divided over the merits of this technique: Weston (1991:23) describes it as the ideal method of translation, while Sarcevic (1985:131) asserts that it is misleading and should be avoided.

*Formal Equivalence or linguistic equivalence*: It means a word-for-word translation.

*Transcription or borrowing* (i.e. reproducing or, where necessary, transliterating the original term): It stands at the far end of SL-oriented strategies. If the term is formally transparent or is explained in the context, it may be used alone. In other cases, particularly where no knowledge of the SL by the reader is presumed, transcription is accompanied by an explanation or a translator's note.

*Descriptive or self-explanatory translation*: It uses generic terms (not CBTs) to convey the meaning. It is appropriate in a wide variety of contexts where formal equivalence is considered insufficiently clear. In a text aimed at a specialized reader, it can be helpful to add the original SL term to avoid ambiguity.

As the translation theory proposed by Harvey does not cover the overall analysis regarding the translation techniques applied in transferring the SL meanings into both the target languages, it is supported by the translation procedures proposed by Newmark (1988b) in Ordudari (2007). The translation procedures are as follows:

*Transference*: it is the process of transferring an SL word to a TL text. It includes transliteration and is the same as what Harvey (2000:5) named transcription.

*Naturalization*: it adapts the SL word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology of the TL. (Newmark, 1988b:82)

*Cultural equivalent*: it means replacing a cultural word in the SL with a TL one. However, they are not accurate (Newmark, 1988b:83)

*Functional equivalent*: it requires the use of a culture-neutral word. (Newmark, 1988b:83)

*Descriptive equivalent*: in this procedure the meaning of the CBT is explained in several words. (Newmark, 1988b:83)

*Componential analysis*: it means comparing an SL word with a TL word which has a similar meaning but is not an obvious one-to-one equivalent, by demonstrating first their common and then their differing sense components. (Newmark, 1988b:114)

*Synonymy*: it is a near TL equivalent. Here economy trumps accuracy. (Newmark, 1988b:84)

*Through-translation*: it is the literal translation of common collocations, names of organizations and components of compounds. It can also be called: calque or loan translation. (Newmark, 1988b:84)

*Shifts or transpositions*: it involves a change in the grammar from SL to TL, for instance, (i) change from singular to plural, (ii) the change required when a specific SL structure does not exist in the TL, (iii) change of an SL verb to a TL word, change of an SL noun group to a TL noun and so forth. (Newmark, 1988b:86)

*Modulation*: it occurs when the translator reproduces the message of the original text in the TL text in conformity with the current norms of the TL, since the SL and the TL may appear dissimilar in terms of perspective. (Newmark, 1988b:88)

*Recognized translation*: it occurs when the translator normally uses the official or the generally accepted translation of any institutional term. (Newmark, 1988b:89)

*Compensation*: it occurs when loss of meaning in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part. (Newmark, 1988b:90)

*Paraphrase*: in this procedure the meaning of the CBT is explained. Here the explanation is much more detailed than that of descriptive equivalent. (Newmark, 1988b:91)

*Couplets*: it occurs when the translator combines two different procedures. (Newmark, 1988b:91)

*Notes*: notes are additional information in a translation. (Newmark, 1988b:91)

Translating cultural or art terms could be difficult to be conducted when they do not have the equivalence in the target languages. Nida (1974) stated that loss, gain and skewing of information may occur in the target language. Loss of information occurs if the translation of items in the SL does not explain the whole information in the TL or is not translated or transferred into the TL, addition of information may occur if the translation of items in the source language into target language is with addition of extra information, and skewing of information may occur if the translation of items from the source language is not the exact equivalence in the target language.

The data of this paper was found in the Tourism Promotion Book by Bali Topurism Departement, 13th edition, which entitled *Bali Sekilas* in Bahasa Indonesia and *Bali Un Coup d'Oeil* in French.

### III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are many Balinese cultural terms was found in the data source but only five data will be presented that can showed various technique used by the translator. Not all cultural terms will be discussed in this paper, but only the terms about traditions of Balinese people in society as their way of life. The translation of those terms was analyzed using the theory from Harvey (2000) and Newmark (1988) as supported theory.

Data (1)

SL : ... filosofi *Tri Hita Karana*, sebagai tiga jalan menuju kesempurnaan hidup, yaitu hubungan manusia dengan Tuhan, hubungan manusia dengan manusia dan hubungan manusia dengan alam lingkungan.

TL : ... la philosophie du *Tri Hita Karana*, les trois voies qui mènent à la perfection: la relation entre l'homme et la Divinité, entre l'homme et ses prochains et entre l'homme et la nature qui l'entoure.

*Tri Hita Karana* is a concept in Hindu which is often used in describing the life of Balinese people in relation with another element to create a peaceful life. It can be included in the terms of Balinese tradition (the way of life) which is always held and run in the community. From the data above, the technique used was *borrowing*, it means that the term in SL was not translated in TL, or the term in SL was the same used in TL. This can be happen when there are no equivalence of the term in TL. Afterwards, the meaning of the terms itself, was explained in the following phrase both in SL and TL. By this technique, the meaning of the terms *Tri Hita Karana* was transferred very clear and sound natural to the target reader.

Data (2)

SL : Upacara *Magedong-gedongan*, *otonan*, *menek kelih*, *pawiwahan*, *hingga ngaben* adalah wujud upacara Hindu di Bali yang termasuk dalam tingkatan *Manusa Yadnya*.

TL : *Magedong-gedongan*, *otonan*, *menek kelih*, *pawiwahan*, *et ngaben* sont des forms de ceremonies hindouistes balinaises comprises dans les ceremonies *Manusa Yadnya*.

*Magedong-gedongan*, *otonan*, *menek kelih*, *pawiwahan* and *ngaben* are terms in Balinese tradition which is related to Balinese Hinduism. These terms are ceremonies held to human being as their steps of life, started from they were born until they passed from the world. This kind of ceremonies called *Manusa Yadnya* which they have to do throughout their lives. The data above showed that *Transcription* or *borrowing* technique was used in translating the terms. It means the terms in SL were used completely in TL because those terms are formally transparent or explained in the context. In the context, there is an explanation about what kind of ceremonies referred by the terms *Magedong-gedongan*, *otonan*, *menek kelih*, *pawiwahan* and *ngaben*. It was explained generally that the terms are included as *Manusa Yadnya* ceremonies, but the meaning of each terms were not described in detail. There are loss of information occurred in translating those terms because at the end, the term *Manusa Yadnya* was not explained. The reader in TL will not understand what is meant by *Manusa Yadnya* because they are not Hindus and they are not familiar with this term, so that the important meaning about *Manusa Yadnya* should be mentioned as ceremonies for human being itself which is done according to life stage. While the meaning of *Manusa Yadnya* was not clear, the other terms were also

cannot be understood. For example, *magedong-gedongan* is a ceremony to purify the baby in the womb, *otonan* is ceremony for the baby of seven month, *pawiwahan* is a ceremony of marriage, etc.

Data (3)

SL : Pada pelaksanaan suatu upacara di Pura dikenal tahap upacara *Masang Busana atau Masang Pengangge* yaitu memasang busana, hiasan dan dekorasi pada bangunan pura.

TL : Une ceremonie dans un temple en particulier appelée *Masang Busana ou Masang Pengangge* signifie l'habillage, la decoration et l'ornement d'un temple

In data (3), the meaning of tradition terms *Masang Busana or Masang Pengangge* are transferred by using *borrowing technique* into TL, it is because the following text in SL is the explanation about the terms itself. The meaning of the terms was described into *l'habillage, la decoration et l'ornement d'un temple* 'dress up, decorated and ornamented the temple.' The meaning after the text was very clear so the translator borrow completely the term *Masang Busana or Masang Pengangge*.

Data (4)

SL : Seorang *undagi* pada dasarnya adalah manusia utama yang mesti mampu memahami seni, komposisi, proporsi, teknik, rasa ruang, filosofi agama, *aturan adat (awig-awig)*...

TL : Un *undagi* est hautement respecté car il doit comprendre l'art, la composition, les proportions, la technique, le sens de l'espace, la philosophie religieuse, les *savoirs ancestraux (awig-awig)* .....

There are 2 tradition terms in data (4), *undagi* and *aturan adat (awig-awig)*. The term *undagi* is translated by using borrowing technique because the context has explained about the meaning. The title of the context where this term occurred was talked about Balinese architecture, and based on the context, the meaning of *undagi* (an architect) can be easily understood with the addition of some qualifications from an architect in the following text. This qualification of *Undagi* was explained into *hautement respecté car il doit comprendre l'art, la composition, les proportions, la technique, le sens de l'espace, la philosophie religieuse, les savoirs ancestraux (awig-awig)* highly respected person because he has to understand about art, composition, proportion, technique, the sense of space, religious philosophy, ancestral knowledge,... The second term *aturan adat (awig-awig)* in SL was translated into TL as *les savoirs ancestraux (awig-awig)*. In this case, the translator combined two technique, *Functional equivalence* and *borrowing technique*. Functional equivalence was used in translating the term *aturan adat* into *les savoirs ancestraux* (ancestral knowledge), while borrowing used in translating term *awig-awig* in SL into *awig-awig* in TL. The first term, the translator considered that *les saviors ancestraux* is a referent in the TL culture whose function is similar to that of the source language (SL) referent. But the result was not accurate because the meaning of *aturan adat* could be translated by its words to become custom rules/society rules (formal equivalence technique). It will be more natural because *aturan adat* was not an ancestral knowledge, but a custom rules which was made by the community in one village which contains some rules that must be obeyed by the society in that village. Besides the rules on how to live a good and peacefull society, *awig-awig* also contains sanctions, fines, punishment physically or spiritually, and also this *awig-awig* can be changed anytime if it is required. There is a loss of meaning here because the sense or the meaning of *aturan adat (awig-awig)* is wider than just an ancestral knowledge.

Data (5)

SL : *Krama adat, warna, wangsa, soroh, sekeha* atau kelompok tradisi lain di Bali.....

TL : *Les manières d'être, les couleurs, les dynasties, soroh, sekeha* ou les groups traditionels à Bali .....

In data (5), the translator uses some technique for five terms in the sentence, which are:

- |       |            |                     |                                      |
|-------|------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (i)   | Krama adat | les manieres d'être | descriptive translation              |
| (ii)  | Warna      | les couleurs        | formal equivalence                   |
| (iii) | Wangsa     | les dynasties       | formal equivalence                   |
| (iv)  | Soroh      | soroh               | transcription or borrowing technique |
| (v)   | Sekeha     | sekeha              | transcription or borrowing technique |

The term (i) *krama adat* was translated into *les manières d'être* (the ways of being, how to behave or act) by using descriptive or self-explanatory technique because it uses generic terms (not CBTs) to convey the meaning. But in this case, there is skewing of information because the meaning of *krama adat* is not about manners, but *krama adat* is a term for community members who must follow custom/society rules applicable in the village where they live. In a text aimed at a specialized reader, it can be helpful to add the original SL term to avoid ambiguity.

For the term (ii) *warna*, translator used formal equivalence or word-to-word translation; it was translated into *les couleurs* (the colors). It was totally skewing of information, because the meaning *warna* here have no relation with red, yellow, blue etc, but it is generally referred to the division of society based on its work, and nowadays its develop became a caste class in Bali (*brahmana*, *weisya*, *ksatria*, and *sudra*).

The term (iii) *wangsa* was translated into *les dynasties* (dynasty) in TL by using formal equivalence or word-to word translation. This technique was appropriately used because the meaning of *wangsa* itself refers to dynasty (family lineage). But it will be helpful and more appropriate if the translator adds the original SL term to avoid ambiguity.

For terms (iv) *soroh* and (v) *sekeha*, were translated into the same word in TL. It is called transcription or borrowing and it happen when there is no equivalence in the TL culture. *Soroh* in Balinese is a class of community, smaller than *wangsa* or dynasty, or it can be equivalence with clan. In Bali, there are some *soroh* known such as *soroh pasek*, *soroh pande*, *soroh dukuh*, *soroh penyarikan*, etc. The use of borrowing technique can be acceptable, but it will be clearer if the translator add some information about this cultural term. For the last term (v) *sekeha*, borrowing the word in SL to be used in TL was right because lack of equivalence word in TL culture. *Sekeha* is known to refer a performance arts group in society, like *sekeha gong kebyar* (gong kebyar group), *sekeha angklung* (angklung group), *sekeha tabuh* (gamelan group), etc. But it will be more natural if there are additional information to the term *sekeha* to make the reader know the meaning clearly and the differences between the other group of society.

#### IV CONCLUSION

Based the analysis above, it can be concluded that all technique from Harvey (2003) was used in translating cultural term especially the term in Balinese tradition and society. Those four techniques are Functional equivalence, Formal equivalence, Transcription or borrowing, and Descriptive or self-explanatory translation. The technique that mostly used in translating Balinese tradition and society terms are transcription or borrowing because cultural terms are difficult to be translated when the culture in SL and TL were very different. It will be the simplest and safety way in translating cultural bounding terms if the culture terms words are not exist in other language. In the process of transferring the meaning, loss and gain, and skewing of information occurred, because there are no two or more cultures are perfectly similar, and that is why the translator must be very careful in translating cultural terms to avoid a wrong perception on the meaning of the terms.

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