

LEXICAL EQUIVALENCE OF CULTURAL TERMS WHEN CONCEPTS ARE SHARED OR UNKNOWN IN TRANSLATION

By

Luciana Edita Karlina Parasati Kanyahayu Andelo

English Department, Faculty of Letters and Cultures

Udayana University

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Abstrak

Istilah-istilah budaya yang ditemukan di dalam novel Mirah dari Banda diambil dari kebudayaan Maluku dan Jawa. Dua kebudayaan itu banyak diceritakan di dalam novel tersebut. Dua permasalahan mengenai penerjemahan bahasa budaya yang diangkat di dalam studi ini, yaitu: (1) Kategori istilah budaya, dan (2) teknik yang dipakai untuk menemukan kesetaraan leksikal pada istilah-istilah budaya tersebut. Tujuan studi ini adalah untuk menemukan kategori istilah budaya serta untuk menganalisa dan mendeskripsikan teknik yang digunakan untuk mendapatkan kesetaraan leksikal dari istilah-istilah budaya.

Metode analisis yang digunakan dalam studi ini adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif, yang dilakukan dengan cara mencari tahu tentang kategori istilah budaya serta dengan menganalisa dan mendeskripsikan teknik yang dipakai untuk mendapatkan kesetaraan leksikal. Metode ini disertai juga dengan metode kepustakaan yang melingkupi teknik membaca dan mencatat.

Terdapat 179 istilah budaya di dalam novel yang dibagi ke dalam lima kategori, yaitu: 34 istilah budaya yang berhubungan dengan alam (19%), 71 istilah budaya yang berhubungan dengan benda-benda hasil kebudayaan (39,7%), 38 istilah budaya yang berhubungan dengan kehidupan sosial (21,2%), 16 istilah budaya yang berhubungan dengan organisasi sosial-politik dan administrasi (9%), dan 20 istilah budaya yang berhubungan dengan kebiasaan manusia (11,1%). Kemudian terdapat 148 istilah budaya yang diterjemahkan ke dalam novel berbahasa Inggris yang berjudul Mirah of Banda. Dua macam teknik dipakai untuk menemukan kesetaraan leksikal istilah budaya, yaitu: (1) 114 istilah budaya menggunakan teknik kemiripan konsep dalam kesetaraan leksikal (77,1%), dan (2) 34 istilah budaya menggunakan teknik perbedaan konsep dalam kesetaraan leksikal (22,9%)

Kata kunci: istilah budaya, kategori istilah budaya, kesetaraan leksikal.

1. Background of the Study

There are many problems among people living in culturally diverse communities. These problems mostly raise from cultural behaviour differences. Each country, nation and community has its own culture and manner, which

influence the behaviour of people inside them. Two ways in which these differences emerge are through people's actions and languages. Surely, we are currently experiencing cultural differences in our Indonesian diverse and multicultural societies.

Cultural knowledge and cultural differences have been a major focus of translator training and translation theory for as long as either has been in existence. The development of a culture can be seen as the result of emerging changes within social and individual lifestyle choices. The generally accepted view is that such lifestyle choices somehow emerge and develop through the anonymous contributions of untold masses.

The two theories proposed by Ghadi(2009) and James (2002) concerning the matter of cultural terms translation. However, they have proposed two different points about the usage of cultural terms translation. James stated that cultural translation is used to gain more background information on the source text, while Gadhi stated that cultural translation is very important for someone to adapt in a new situation or new social life. Certainly, both theorists have proposed strong arguments about the usage of cultural translation because they have important roles in social life. One is to avoid misunderstanding between cultures and second is to adjust easily in the society. That is why problems that relate with cultural translation are very interesting to bring up, especially about the categories of cultural terms and also the techniques to find their lexical equivalence in the target text.

2. Problem of the Study

When two cultures become objects in translation, it is easy to see how things that exist in one culture may have not existed in another culture or have a known equivalence in the target language. Based on that understanding, two problems will be listed as follows: (1) What categories of cultural terms are found in Hanna Rambe's *Mirahdari Banda* and in *Mirah of Banda*? (2) What techniques are used in finding the lexical equivalence of cultural terms in Hanna Rambe's *Mirahdari Banda* and in *Mirah of Banda*?

3. Aims of the Study

In regard to the two problems mentioned above, this study has two aims to be achieved. These aims will be listed as follows: (1) To find out the categories of cultural terms in Hanna Rambe's *Mirahdari Banda* and in *Mirah of Banda*. (2) To analyse and describe the techniques used in finding the lexical equivalence of cultural terms in Hanna Rambe's *Mirahdari Banda* and in *Mirah of Banda*.

4. Research Method

Research method is used to collect and analyze the data. It consists of three aspects, i.e. data source, method and technique of collecting data, and method of analyzing data. These three aspects could be explained as follows:

4.1 Data Source

A novel titled *Mirah dari Banda* by Hanna Rambe that has 388 pages and was published by Universitas Indonesia Press, Jakarta in 1983, and its English translation entitled *Mirah of Banda* by Toni Pollard that has 201 pages and was published by Lontar, Jakarta in 2010, are used as the data sources in this study.

4.2 Method and Techniques of Collecting Data

To collect the data, the library method was used, which included reading and note taking techniques. The reading technique included reading any written materials that supported this study about cultural terms translation. Note taking technique included writing down any important data that had been found from the reading technique that supported the study on cultural terms translation.

4.3 Method of Analysing Data

First, to answer problem one, the categories of cultural terms in *Mirahdari Banda* were classified using Newmark's theory (1988: 94-99). Next, to answer problem two, cultural terms were categorized into two ways in finding their lexical equivalence according to Larson (1998: 169-179), which were *shared* or *unknown*. After categorizing the cultural terms into *shared* or *unshared*, the percentage of cultural terms from each way was counted. Therefore, ways that were mostly used by the translator in translating the source language (SL) into target language (TL) were found.

5. LEXICAL EQUIVALENCE OF CULTURAL TERMS WHEN CONCEPTS ARE SHARED OR UNKNOWN IN TRANSLATION

This analysis discussed the categorization of cultural terms found in the novel *Mirahdari Banda*, and also discussed the lexical equivalence of cultural terms when concepts were shared or unknown in translation. A theory by Newmark (1988: 94-99) regarding the cultural categories, namely ecology, material culture, social culture, and social-organization political and administrative, and gesture and habits was used to classify each cultural term found from the novel, and two theories by Larson (1998: 169-179) regarding shared or unknown concepts of cultural terms lexical equivalence were used to identify the translation techniques used by the translator in the English version of the novel, *Mirah of Banda*.

5.1 Cultural Terms Categories

According to Newmark (1988: 94-99), cultural terms can be divided into five categories, namely: (1) Ecological cultural terms, which include the names of flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills, and so on, (2) Material cultural terms, which include names of food, clothes, buildings or traditional houses, and transportation, (3) Social cultural terms, which include names of work, art performances, and games, (4) Social-organization political and administrative terms, which include terms in local political affairs and administrative, and (5) Gesture and habits cultural terms, which include the actions that people do to express their cultural background.

5.2 Lexical Equivalence When Concepts Are Shared

Shared concepts of lexical equivalence between source language cultural terms and the target language ones were found in the two novels. They were divided into four ways: (1) Descriptive phrases, which means that the source cultural term is translated using a sentence to describe it, (2) Related terms, which means that the source cultural terms are translated using another term that has the same meaning and is suitable to replace it without changing its message, (3) Generic-specific terms, which means that the source cultural terms are translated using a more general term in the target text, or vice versa, and (4) Secondary and figurative senses, which means that the source cultural terms are translated using other terms or phrases in the target text that have similar secondary meaning to the source cultural terms one.

5.3 Lexical Equivalence When Concepts Are Unknown

Unknown concepts of lexical equivalence between source language cultural terms and the target language ones were also found in both novels. They were divided into three techniques: (1) Form and function, which means that the translator will explain the form or the function, or both to translate the meaning of the source cultural term that is unknown to the target text, (2) Equivalence by modifying a loanword, which means that the translator loans the cultural term from the source text and transfers it to the target text by modifying it with a classifier or a description of form, function, or both, and (3) Equivalence by cultural substitute, which means that the translator will replace the cultural term from the source text with the cultural term from the target language that share the same concepts with the source text one.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis in the previous chapters, the conclusion are drawn out from cultural categories and the techniques in finding the lexical equivalence of cultural terms found in Hanna Rambe's novel called *Mirahdari Banda* (1983) and in *Mirah of Banda* as the English translation translated by Toni Pollard (2010).

There are 179 cultural terms found in the novel *Mirahdari Banda* and those terms can be classified into five categories according to Newmark (1988: 96-102). There were 34 cultural terms related to the nature (19%), 71 cultural terms related to cultural materials (39,7%), 38 cultural terms related to social life (21,2%), 16 cultural terms related to social-politic and administration (9%), and 20 cultural terms related to human behaviour (11,1%). The percentages indicate that the author of the novel, Hanna Rambe, intend to share the knowledge about Indonesian culture especially Javanese and Moluccas cultures mostly through their material and social cultures. It is because material and social cultures are likely to be noticed easily rather than the other categories when visitors or foreigners learn to understand the culture itself by reading her novel.

The techniques used by the translator to translate the novel *Mirah of Banda* into its English version was the techniques of share and unknown concepts by Larson (1998: 169-193). From the study, there were 114 terms found using the

techniques of shared concept (77,1%), and 34 terms found using the techniques of unknown concept (22,9%). The percentages indicate that there are cultures in Indonesia that have a lot in common with the concept of western culture, although the terms and form are quite different. The percentages also show that the English version novel titled *Mirah of Banda*, which was translated by Toni Pollard, has managed to convey the story of the people of Moluccas and Java that wanted to be shared by Hanna Rambe as the original author of *Mirahdari Banda* to the readers throughout the world.

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