

Translation Strategies of Idioms: With Special Reference to “Anak Semua Bangsa” and “Child of All Nations”

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Abstract

This research entitled “Translation Strategies of Idioms: With Special Reference to “Anak Semua Bangsa” and “Child of All Nations”. The aims of this research are to find out the translation strategies applied by the translator in translating the idioms of ST to the TT and to identify the types of equivalence of the translated idioms. The data were in form of idioms collected from an Indonesian novel “Anak Semua Bangsa” and its English translation “Child of All Nations”. Observation method and note-taking technique was used in collecting the data. The data were analyzed using descriptive-qualitative method. In order to answer the formulated questions, the theory of translation strategies of translating idiom proposed by Mona Baker in “In Other Words” (1992) was applied in analyzing the translation strategies used by the translator in translating the idioms in the novels and the theory of equivalence proposed by Eugene Nida in Toward a Science of Translating (1964) to identify the types of equivalence of the translated idioms. The results indicate that there are only three translation strategies found in the translation of 20 idioms used as the data in this study. Moreover, both Nida’s theory of Formal and Dynamic Equivalence were found in the translation of the idioms.

Keywords: Equivalence, Idioms, Translation Strategies

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berjudul “Translation Strategies of Idioms: With Special Reference to “Anak Semua Bangsa” and “Child of All Nations”. Tujuan dari penelitian adalah untuk mengetahui strategi terjemahan yang diaplikasikan oleh penerjemah dalam menerjemahkan idiom-idiom dari bahasa sumber ke bahasa target dan untuk mengidentifikasi tipe-tipe kesepadanan dari terjemahan idiom-idiom. Data dalam penelitian ini berbentuk idiom yang diperoleh dari novel bahasa Indonesia berjudul “Anak Semua Bangsa” dan versi bahasa Inggrisnya yang berjudul “Child of All Nations”. Data diperoleh dengan menerapkan metode observasi dan tehnik pencatatan. Metode kualitatif-deskriptif digunakan dalam proses analisa data. Teori strategi terjemahan untuk menerjemahkan idiom milik Mona Baker (1992) dan teori kesepadanan dalam terjemahan milik Eugene Nida (1964) diaplikasikan untuk menjawab dua permasalahan yang telah diformulasikan dalam penelitian ini. Hasil dari analisa data mengindikasikan hanya ditemukan tiga strategi penerjemahaan idiom dari 20 idiom-idiom yang digunakan sebagai data pada penelitian ini. Selanjutnya, kedua tipe kesepadanan dari teori milik Nida yaitu Kesepadanan Formal dan Kesepadanan Dinamis ditemukan dalam terjemahan idiom-idiom.

Kata kunci: Kesepadanan, Idiom, Strategi Penerjemahan.

1. Background of the Study

Language and culture are closely related. They are affecting each other along with their development process by mankind. Language acts as the medium to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. Thousands of languages exist all around the world and they have various unique cultural elements and different grammatical systems. Hence, to make people with different language and culture possible to interact with each other, a 'bridge' needs to be established.

Geng (2009:141) states that "translation is a media by which people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds are able to intercourse or interchange their ideas. It acts as a 'bridge' to connect two different cultures by the conversion of linguistic systems." However, the SL is not identical in terms of system with TL. Therefore, a reconstruction process needs to be done by translators to transfer the meaning of a text from SL into TL by following the TL grammatical system.

The development of translation study over the past few decades has brought a huge impact for nowadays society. Translation is also involved in the development of various sectors such as economic, education, medical, engineering, tourism, politics and others. In the context of communication, translation has helped the process of cultural exchange through various mediums such as literary works.

Among many types of literary works, novel has the highest rank as the most translated literary works. Translating novel is often considered to be a hard task by the translators as they had to produce a translation result which can give the readers similar ambience like when they read the original novel. In addition to that, they also have a chance

to encounter numbers of words, phrases or expressions which neither have the exact equivalent in the TL nor make sense if translated literary. Those kinds of words, phrases or expressions typically belong to idioms.

Idioms as a part of figurative language share common similarities with other figurative language elements where they characteristically convey different meaning from their constituent lexical meaning and difficult to be translated. According to Baker (1992:73), "Idioms are frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components."

There are numbers of idioms translation strategies that have been developed by translation experts in order to tackle the issues of translating idioms which are generally difficult to be translated. Translators may choose specific strategies, depending on what goal they want to achieve. However, as idioms are hard to be understood based on their constituent words, even a native speaker of the SL sometimes is confused in understanding what the idioms mean. Thus, translators should emphasize the communicative function rather than the aesthetic function the idioms have.

2. Problems of the Study

Based on the phenomenon of translating idioms discussed above, there are two points that can be formulated. Those points are briefly formulated as follows:

- a. What types of translation strategies applied in the translation of idioms in the ST to the TT?
- b. How are the translation of the idioms classified in terms of formal and dynamic equivalence?

3. Aims of the Study

This study aims to answer the following questions that have been formulated. Those aims are:

- a. To identify the types of translation strategies applied in the translation of idioms in the ST to the TT.
- b. To find out how the translation of the idioms classified in terms of formal and dynamic equivalence.

4. Research Method

This study is an objective-descriptive translation study and applies qualitative approach in which the data were analyzed descriptively. In order to achieve the aims of this study, there are also several methods which were applied in collecting, analyzing, and presenting the data. Observation method and note taking technique were applied in collecting the data.

The data which had been collected were listed in parallel between the source language and the target language. Further, the idioms found in the ST were compared with their English translation in the TT and the meaning of both Indonesian and English idioms were identified by using *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* and Oxford Dictionary of English. Further, the data were analyzed by using Baker's translation strategies of translating idioms (1992:73) to identify the translation strategies applied by translator in translating idioms of the ST to TT and Nida's theory of equivalence (1964:159) to identify the types of equivalence of the translated idioms.

4.1 Data Source

The data in this study were taken from an Indonesian novel entitled *Anak Semua Bangsa* and its English translation *Child of All Nations*. The novel is about the journey of life of an Indonesian journalist called *Minke* and his relatives.

The novel was published first in 1980 and originally written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer or known as Pram, an Indonesian author who had made more than fifty great literary works. Its English was published in 1991. It was translated by Max Lane, a translator who also translated the other 3 novels of the Pram's Buru Quartet series including many other Pram's literary works into English.

4.2. Method and Technique of Collecting the Data

This study applied documentation method to collect the data. The data were collected through several techniques, namely by reading both SL text and TL text intensively and meticulously in order to find a sentence that contains idioms in it. Following the step above, marking phrases which imply idiomatic meaning in the SL text and their translation in the TL text was done to get the desired data. The next step was comparing the idioms found in the SL text with their translation in the TL text. The last step were listing and categorizing the identified idioms and their translation based on Baker's theory of translation strategies of translating idioms (1992:73)

4.3. Method and Technique of Analyzing the Data

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive-qualitative method. Baker's theory of translation strategies of translating idioms (1992:73) was applied in order to answer the first formulated question which is "What types of translation strategies applied in the translation of idioms in the ST to the TT?" In order to answer the second formulated question, that is "How are the translation of the idioms classified in terms of formal and dynamic equivalence?" the theory of Formal and

Dynamic Equivalence by Nida (1964:159) was applied in this research.

4.4 Method and Technique of Presenting the Result of Data Analysis

The results of the analysis are presented using formal and informal method proposed by Sudaryanto (1993:145). The sentences of SL and TL which contain idioms are displayed in parallel in form of table. The idioms in SL were marked with bold style. For the TL, the whole sentence was written in italic and the translation results of the SL idioms were marked with bold and italic style. Meanwhile, the results of the data analysis were presented in form of description.

5. Result and Discussion

The results of the analysis consist of two points. The first point is the analysis of the translation strategies applied by the translator in translating the idioms of the ST and TT based on Baker's theory of translation strategies of idiom translation (1992:73). The second point is how the translation of the ST idioms are classified in terms of equivalence based on Nida's theory of Formal and Dynamic Equivalence (1964:159).

5.1. Using Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form

Data 1

Source Text	Target Text
Dengan mata-batinku aku tebarkan pandang ke kelilingku sendiri.	<i>With my inner eye I scattered my vision over my own surroundings.</i>
(Anak Semua Bangsa, 1980, p. 96)	(Child of All Nations, 1992, p. 93)

Analysis:

The Indonesian idiom 'mata-batin' (literally: 'mata' = eyes, batin = inner) in the ST was translated into inner-eye in the TT by using Baker's using idiom of similar meaning and form (1992:72). According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, the idiom 'mata batin' means 'bagian batin yang paling dalam; perasaan dalam hati; (the deepest part of human feeling; feeling from the deepest of the heart). Moreover, the word 'batin' in Indonesia also commonly used to refer to something related to human's spiritual and mental condition which are things that are invisible to our eyes.

Meanwhile, the phrase inner-eye in the TT is also made of lexical items which are equivalent with the constituents of the idiom in the ST and refer to similar thing. In the Oxford Dictionary of English, the word inner defined as mental or spiritual of thoughts or feelings. Therefore, the meaning of the idiom inner-eye in the sentence of the TT above can be perceived as the illustration of how the character there looking at his surrounding by not only relying on his vision, but also using his feeling. Moreover, based on the meaning and the equivalence of the lexical items of the idioms above, Baker's translation strategy of using idiom with similar meaning and form was applied by the translator in translating the idiom of the ST.

In term of equivalence, the result of the translation can be classified into formal equivalence. It is because the translator preserved the form and meaning of the idiom in the ST by translating the lexical items of the Indonesian idiom 'mata batin' in the ST into their matching word in the TT resulting in the idiom 'inner eye' which also refer to similar thing.

5.2. Using Idiom of Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form

Data 1

Source Text	Target Text
Waktu itu sedang hujan gerimis dan dingin menusuk tulang . (Anak Semua Bangsa page 34)	<i>It was drizzling rain and the cold made its way into my bones.</i> (Child of All Nations page 40)

Analysis:

The phrase 'dingin menusuk tulang' in the ST is considered as an idiom because the combination of the word 'dingin' (literary means cold), 'menusuk' (literary means to stab), and 'tulang' (literary means bones) has resulted in an idiomatic meaning which should not be perceived from those the lexical meaning of those words. The idiom in the ST doesn't literary mean cold that stab the bones. Instead, it actually refers to a temperature which is so low and could make our body shiver. In the sentence of the ST, the idiom 'dingin menusuk tulang' seems to be used to illustrate the ambience of the weather when the rain was going on.

Meanwhile, the translation of the idiom in the ST, the cold made its way into my bones, also implies similar meaning with the idiom 'dingin menusuk tulang' as the phrase 'made its way into my bones' in the TT also refers to the extremely low temperature that is not only felt on the surface of the skin, but also felt up in the bones. Therefore, based on the explanation of the meaning and the meaning of the lexical items of the idiom above, it can be concluded that Baker's translation strategy using idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form

(1992: 74) was applied by the translator in translating the idiom in the ST to the TT.

Moreover, in term of equivalence, the translation result of idiom 'dingin menusuk tulang' in the ST which in the TT was translated into the cold made its way to my bones, can be classified into Nida's dynamic equivalence (1964:159). It is because the translator doesn't preserve the form of the idiom in the ST, as the idiom 'dingin menusuk tulang' was translated into different form into the cold made its way to my bones which actually still implies similarity in term of meaning.

5.3 Translation by Paraphrase

Data 1

Source Text	Target Text
Sungguh memalukan kalau kau menulis tentangnya, hei, kau pengarang kepala besar! (Anak Semua Bangsa, 1980, p. 124)	<i>It would be so embarrassing if you tried to write about him, you arrogant writer!</i> (Child of All Nations, 1992, p. 117)

Analysis:

The Indonesian idiom 'kepala besar' in the ST consists of two lexical items 'kepala' which lexically means head and 'besar' which lexically means 'big'. The translation of the combination of those two lexical items actually doesn't refer to the size of the writer's head. Instead, it actually refers to the personality of the writer. According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, the idiom 'kepala besar' means 'sukar dinasehati'; 'keras kepala'; 'bengal'; 'sombong'; (hard to be advised, stubborn, naughty, or arrogant).

As the idiom 'kepala besar' in the ST was translated into arrogant which is not

an idiom in the TT, it means that Baker's translation by paraphrase translation strategy was applied by the translator. In this case, the translator decided not to use any idiom to convey the intended meaning of idiom 'kepala besar'. Instead, the translator used the word arrogant which is similar with one of the meaning of the idiom 'kepala besar' which is 'sombong' to transfer the message of the ST idiom, although there is idiom big-headed in English that actually implies the same meaning. According to the Oxford Dictionary of English, the English idiom big-headed means conceited or arrogant.

Moreover, based on the translation of idiom 'kepala besar' in the ST, the result of the translation can be classified into Nida's concept of dynamic equivalence (1964:159). It is because the translator emphasizes more the equivalence meaning of the idiom instead of its form, as the Indonesian idiom 'kepala besar' was translated into a non-idiomatic expression arrogant instead of into 'big-headed' which is equivalent in term of form and meaning.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the data which was done in the previous chapter, it was found that the translator emphasized the TL culture in translating the idioms in the SL, as the translator translated 23 out of 38 idioms found in the SL text by adapting the TL cultural reference to convey the intended message of the idioms in the SL text. Each idiom in the data was also properly translated by the translator as none of the intended meaning of the idioms in the ST which was conveyed using a non-equivalent translation.

The first finding which is the answer to the first formulated question is out of 20 idioms which were analyzed using Baker's theory of Translation Strategies of Idiomatic Expressions (1992:72)

which consist of 4 strategies; there are only 3 translation strategies found applied by the translator in translating idioms in Anak Semua Bangsa into its English version Child of All Nations. There are 13 idioms which were translated using Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form, 10 idioms were translated using Idiom of Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form, and 15 idioms were translated using Translation by Paraphrase. Meanwhile, the last translation strategy proposed by Baker (1992:72) which is Translation by Omission was not found as all the idioms in the data were translated by the translator into their equivalence form or meaning in the TL text.

The second finding of the discussion which is the answer to the second formulated question is both of Nida's concept of equivalence (1964:159) which consist of Formal and Dynamic Equivalence was found in the analysis of 20 idioms used as the data. The concept of Formal Equivalence obviously occur in the idioms which were translated using Baker's Using Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form translation strategy, as the lexical items of those idioms were translated into their matching words in the TT which has also resulted in similar idiomatic meaning. Meanwhile, the concept of Dynamic Equivalence occurs in the idioms which were translated by using Baker's Using Idiom of Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form and Translation by Paraphrase translation strategies, as the concept of Dynamic Equivalence aims at producing a natural translation and emphasizing more in the TT form, whether using an idiom which consists of non-equivalent lexical items with the idiom in the ST or using a non-idiomatic expression, as long as the intended meaning which is conveyed properly.

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