

## THE TRANSLATION OF CHAIRIL ANWAR'S POEM "AKU" INTO ENGLISH "I"

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### Abstrak

*Artikel ini berjudul "The Translation of Chairil Anwar's Poem "Aku" Into English. Puisi ini menarik untuk dikaji karena sudah berulang kali diterjemahkan ke bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa apakah terjemahannya sepadan di bahasa sasaran.*

*Penelitian ini menggunakan teori terjemahan dari Eugene Nida, Mildred Larsson, J.P. Vinay dan Jean Darbelnet, serta teori struktur dan elemen puisi dari I.A. Richards. Berdasarkan analisis yang dilakukan, terjemahan puisi ini dapat dikategorikan sepadan dengan bahasa sumbernya. Namun ada penyempitan makna dibanding puisi aslinya yang berbicara tentang kekuatan manusia dalam menghadapi tantangan hidup baik berupa perpisahan, pengalaman hidup baru bahkan kematian.*

*Kata Kunci: Terjemahan, Puisi, Kesepadanan*

#### 1. Introduction

Poem is one of the interesting objects to be translated. Many argue that it is very difficult to translate poem for many different reasons. But until now we still see many poems translated into another language. The high degree of difficulty from this process, at the same time may also be the most interesting challenge to the translators.

All types of literature have two significant characteristics, namely beauty and expression. However, the situation is more complicated because the beauty of poem is not only shown through the choice of words, but sometimes the poet creates rhythm, cadence, and the other typical emotions in various typical expressions too, which is sometimes written without following the formal rules.

The object of this article is a poem "Aku" written by Chairil Anwar and its translation "I" by Burton Raffel. This poem is one of the most well-known and interesting from Chairil. Although the poet himself has now gone and the poem was written in 1953, its echoes are still heard until now. One line of the poem

which is the most popular, **aku ingin hidup seribu tahun lagi (I want to live a thousand years)** has been cited for many times and always burns the spirit of the people who read it.

## 2. Problem of The Study

The problem that the writer tries to answered is: what is the translation of the poem "Aku" in English as the target language (TL)?

## 3. Aim of The Study

This research is intended to know the translation of the poem "Aku" into English as target language (TL).

## 4. Research Method

This research adopted some data collecting techniques related to the library research through close reading and taking notes over some sources (books). The analysis of the data of this research commenced by comparing the SL poem and the TL poem. Reading the poem thoroughly, line by line and stanza per stanza, while watching carefully the surface structure of each sentence along the poem, the writer tries hard to find the initial comprehension of the whole and the parts of the poem.

## 5. Translation Analysis

**Table 1. Comparison of "Aku" and "I"**

Line	Chairil Anwar (Aku)	Burton Raffel (I)
1	Kalau sampai waktuku	When my time comes
2	Ku mau tak seorang kan merayu	I want to hear no one's cries
3	Tidak juga kau	Nor yours either
4	Tak perlu sedu sedan itu	Away with all who cry
5	Aku ini binatang jalang	Here I am, a wild beast
6	Dari kumpulannya terbang	Driven out of the herd
7	Biar peluru menembus kulitku	Bullets may pearce my skin
8	Aku tetap meradang menerjang	But I'll keep on
9	Luka dan bisa kubawa berlari	Carrying forward my wounds and my

		pain
10	Berlari	Attacking Attacking
11	Hingga hilang pedih peri	Until suffering disappears
12	Dan aku lebih tidak peduli	And I won't care anymore
13	Aku ingin hidup seribu tahun lagi	I want to live another thousand years

Raffel translated the word **comes** into **sampai** in the first line, which has meaning about something which is coming, reaches something, or something that comes after to the persona of "I", but it has less significant meaning when it is compared to the word **sampai**. In Indonesian, **sampai** does not only mean to achieve something, get somewhere, but it is also *stop*, *over*, *finish*. That impression is not obtained in **comes** though it is still show shades of ambiguity as the original version. In English, it is often found the statement about death that comes after to someone, but it is only limited to come after. There is no element of the end.

For the second line, Raffel uses addition strategy by adding a clause **to hear** after **want**. The effect is that the pattern becomes very similar to the original. **To hear** is also associated with **cries** because when someone is crying he or she must be heard by the other. Apart from addition, there is also deletion of word **kan** which in Indonesian version gives the impression of candor and free from the confine of grammar.

But the use of word **cries** by Raffel also raises question. **Merayu** in Indonesian literally means *persuade* until someone wants to do something, while **cries** means *menangis*. In terms of the sounds of cries (-es) with comes (-es) on the first line does indicate similarity, rhythmic, but there is a very noticeable difference when it is compared to the original meaning. Unless Burton really thinks that the meaning of the first line is only about death or separation.

**Tidak juga kau** in the third line comes from formal pattern *kau juga tidak* (*merayu*, if it is connected with the second line). Due to consideration of "taste", style and novelty, Chairil deliberated to writes in that way. This sentence shows a clear rejection message, even to **you** (in this case, the close friend or relative of him).

But in Raffel, the word **tidak** is not translated as *not*, but **nor** and **you** turn into a possessive pronoun, **yours**. This is related to the word **cries** on the second line which if it is combined, the meaning is *tidak juga tangismu (milikmu)*. So Raffel's translation openly refers to the tears belonging to **you**. While the strategy which is used in this line classified as transposition. The word **juga** in Chairil's poem actually shows a higher intensity of rejection, not merely the persona "you" suddenly becomes one from the group that is rejected by the persona "I".

Raffel translates the fourth line with a different pattern from the original. He uses the strategy of addition as well as descriptive equivalent. The phrase **tak perlu** is translated into **away**, **sedu sedan** into **cry** and **itu** into **with all who**. When it is translated literally will be *menjauhlah semua yang menangis*.

And when the fourth line from Raffel is combined with the previous line, there is no problem with the line. Moreover, Raffel consistently uses the word **cry** that shows sadness. However, when referring to the original line, the impression is different. **Away** and **tak perlu** equally show rejection and may be regarded as equivalent translation, but **cry** is not enough to represent **sedu sedan**. *Sedu sedan* is one kind of cry which is not only the tears that come out from the eye, but also the sound of sobbing and gasping from the mouth. *Sedu sedan* is one particular form of the general forms, cry. By replacing it does not indicate deepest meaning.

Raffel's translation for the fifth line uses transposition and additional strategies. He also splits the sentence from the original into two and separates them by comma. Transposition occurs in the place of **here** in front **I am**. **Here** is used to translate **ini**, which literally means *this*. But in the context of the fifth line, *this* is not right because the function of **ini** is to show the existence of a person, to introduce persona of "I". It seems that **here** actually refers to the place (where persona of "I" is used to belong) in the Raffel's translation feels more equivalent. The change in location of **here** to the front and the phrase **I am** which is written in full form, not abbreviated into I'm, gives the same intensity as **aku ini** in Chairil version.

The addition occurs in the translation above with the inclusion of the word **a** in front of **wild beast**. The addition is not an option, but a necessity because the

article *a* and *an* are required in English structure for the objects that can be calculated and referred for the first time or not known from its context.

Raffel uses **wild beast** for **binatang jalang** in the sixth line. The word **jalang** and **wild** if being compared do not show equivalence of meaning. **Jalang** in Indonesian does not only mean *liar, wild* but also means *tidak tahu malu, shameless*, in the phrase of *perempuan jalang* for example. While **wild** only means *liar, buas*. Although the **beast** itself not only means *binatang (buas)* but also *jahanam*, still the full meaning of **jalang** in Indonesia, is not delivered.

The line **dari kumpulannya terbangun** actually has an ambiguous meaning. Persona of "I" is excluded from his group or he comes from a group that consists of excluded person, or unwanted people. Both of these meanings are important and relevant. The translation by Burton demonstrates the first meaning.

Raffel's translation uses addition strategy by the presence of the word **the** in front of **herd** as a definite article according to English structure. The sentence pattern is different from Chairil's version and when we translate it literally, it means *dusir dari kawanannya*. The form is passive.

Raffel uses transposition strategy, as seen in the possessive pronoun **-ku** which shows change in position to the front of noun, **my skin**. The change is also present in the word **may** behind the word **bullets**. This pattern creates repeated sound effects that are similar between **my** and **may**.

Raffel translates eight line using descriptive equivalent strategy. He uses **keep on** to express **meradang menerjang**. When we read the eight line only, without reading the seventh line in Raffel version, we do not get any clue, **but I'll keep on** (what?). Compared to line eight by Chairil which is already full of meaning. **Meradang menerjang** is not only brilliant on the firmness of meaning, a sense of restrained anger and an effort to attack forward, but also has a beautiful sound repetition in prefix **me-** and the suffix **-ang** in both words. This sound is more beautiful when they are combined to the **binatang (-ang) jalang (-ang)**. **But I'll keep on** does really not represent the intensity of the meaning from its original version.

Transposition occurs in the ninth line when the predicate in form of verb, **carrying forward** is placed in the front. **Ku** which in the original version has an

object is turned to **my** as possessive pronoun in **my wound and my pain**. The effect from repetition of **my** creates sound repetition too, slightly similar to the **luka dan bisa**.

Raffel uses **forward** to explain **berlari**. These two words do have meaning to move. Something that is not revealed is in **berlari**, there is an intensity of physical leg movement, while in the **forward** does not exist. This word only describes the direction of movement, to the front. **Berlari** itself means the movement toward a "goal" in front of him, and also means leaving something behind, running from something. The direction is the same, but the purpose is different.

The use of **pain** to translate **bisa** is categorized as descriptive equivalent. This word describes only one of the effects of *bisa*, which in Indonesian is more known as venom of animal, the snake for example. So the **pain** is no longer present in form of metaphor in the English version, but as the literal meaning. That means that this translation results a reduction of language style eventhough this is still equivalent in the target language.

Raffel translates the tenth line which originally only consists of one line into two lines. This also has a correlation with the word **berlari** which he did not translate in the ninth line and is inserted into tenth line.

As we have discussed earlier, **berlari** is very different from **attacking**. This word will be relevant only if it is associated with the previous line, where persona of "I" does challenge death by ignoring a barrage of bullets. The emergence of **attacking** twice can be said as a delayed emotion or slower phase than the original poem or two other translations. In the original poem, the desire to attack has emerged since **menerjang meradang**. At Raffel, the seventh stanza is only translated into **but I'll just keep on**.

The eleventh line from Raffel is classified as transposition and componential analysis. Burton simplifies the phrase **pedih peri** into one word **suffering**. It does not just eliminate the rhythmic sound of **pedih peri**, **suffering**, but also does not show the impression of restrained anger and resentment, either it only shows *penderitaan*. So the message is less complete.

The line **dan aku lebih tidak peduli** from Chairil is actually the same as the sentence *dan aku makin tidak peduli*. The word **lebih** shows the intensity of a

"double" act from something done by persona of "I". Burton uses literal strategy. But the sentence **and I won't care anymore** which literally means *dan aku tidak akan peduli lagi* is not in the same level as **dan aku lebih tidak peduli**. In that sentence there is no sign of high increasing level of "not care" as in the original version.

Raffel uses the strategy of literal translation and transposition for the thirteenth line. He chooses the word **another** to replace *lagi* and put it in front of **thousand years** in accordance with English structure. The word **another** in Indonesian also means *lagi* actually, not only *yang lain*. As the same as in the sentence: *give me another banana, I have eaten this one*, for example.

Based on the analysis of the translation above, the most significant differentiator from the original version appears in the second line **ku mau tak seorang kan merayu**. In the original poem, the word **merayu** makes the poem ambiguous. Many interpretations come, especially when it is associated with the first line, **bila sampai waktuku**. "Aku" by Chairil affirms the spirit to face the challenges and difficulties of life, with all of its risks and suffering, whether it is separation, death or new adventure.

In the translation, this line really affects the change of meaning from original poem. In Raffel's work, the message of the poem is narrowed down to just the extent of suffering of death, especially since he consistently uses the word **cries** to replace **merayu**, and also cry to replace **sedu sedan**.

## 6. Conclusion

Finally, this study comes to some conclusions. The first, the translator use different strategies, namely literal, transposition and componential analysis in translating the poem. The different strategies and the different words used also affect the meaning of each line. Second, Raffel's translation is categorized as equivalent in the target language, but the reduction of meaning can not be avoided, though it is not to the extent that changes the whole theme.

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