

TRANSLATION VARIATION OF SPEECH LEVEL IN BALINESE INTO INDONESIAN AND ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This article aims at analyzing the process occurred in translating words or phrases that contains speech level in Balinese into Indonesian and English. As we know, Balinese language recognized the use of speech level in communication that represents a respectful and polite attitude to the other person, whereas in Indonesian and English, the use of speech level is not too significant as in Balinese. These differences may cause difficulties in translation process because the translator has to maintain this element in the target language. The source of this study is the conversation in Balinese shadow puppet “Sidapaksa” translated by Natarina (2014) into Indonesian and English. This study used documentation method in collecting the data, while the analysis was presented qualitatively and descriptively. The result showed that mostly there are loss of information in translating words or phrases which contain speech level meaning because Balinese used more variety of words that show the social status of the speakers. But between two target languages, Indonesian can preserved speech level more than its translation in English. It is because Balinese is closely similar with Indonesian (the same language family) than English.

Keywords – Balinese speech level, English, Indonesian, source language, speech level, target language

INTRODUCTION

Translation is a process of transferring meaning from one language into another language. As Foster (1958:1) stated, it is also the act of finding the equivalence of linguistics entities of a text in a source language (SL) into target language (TL). Having a good knowledge of both source and target language is the main requirement of becoming a good translator. In addition, a translator must have a high linguistic sensitivity as the process of translation is not only transferring the meaning, but also transmit the writer’s thoughts, intentions, opinion as clearly and faithfully as possible. Translating one language into another language is often said to be an art. It makes sense because this activity needs the creativity of the translator so that the result looks beautiful and natural. It is not easy to make a good translation because every language has its own uniqueness. Speech level that exists in some languages is one of the examples. In this case, speech level is a sociolinguistic term which involved not only linguistic factors but also related to the factors beyond the language such as language used by certain speech community (socio-cultural aspect). For instance, socially, the language use involves who speaks, what language, to whom, when and where (Fishman, 1972:244). A society in which some groups of people are living may show what we call social stratification. This term used to refer to any hierarchical ordering of group within a society (Trudgill, 1983) and it’s

often inferred language used in certain language such as Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and some Indonesian local languages like Balinese and Javanese. In Japanese, specific forms of address terms, polite and respectful style are consistently used based on who we are talking to, while in Korean, what is seen is whether the other person within in the same group or outside the group (Martin in Hymes, 1964).

As we know, Balinese as one of local Indonesian language, has the system of speech level used in communication, it is known as *Sor Singgih Basa Bali* (Tinggen, 1986) which has two basic level of speech: *Basa Singgih* (polite style) and *Basa Sor* (rude style). The difference of those two speeches levels can be seen mostly in the choice and use of pronouns, terms of address, and all kind of formal and polite words that can indicate interpersonal relationships within the speaker and the hearer. In term of translation, especially the translation from Balinese as source language into Indonesian and English (TL), the words that carried speech level element needs more attention to be translated in order to preserve the meaning of politeness. It can be difficult for the translator if they do not understand the deep meaning of certain words for example the word *Ida* is an address term for someone from the highest social status, and in the old Balinese, this word often referred to the designation of God or The King. With that condition, the translator must choose an appropriate word; thus, the sense of speech level can be preserved.

Because of those reasons, it is interesting to analyze how the speech level elements in Balinese translated into Indonesian and English, and also to investigate the translation variation like what class of words can be most translated and retain the speech level element as the result.

METHODS

The data from this research were taken from conversations in a Shadow Puppet performance title Sidapaksa¹, which comprises abundant speech level data. Reading and taking note were the method used in collecting the data in data source. Conversations between the characters, where Balinese was used and had been translated into Indonesian and English, were analyzed qualitatively and described descriptively to show the translation process and variation of a word/phrase/sentence that contains the translation of speech level elements into the target language.

Several studies and research regarding speech levels in a language had been carried out by sociolinguists. One example is Soepomo (1979) who stated that Javanese has three speech levels: (1) *krama* speech level, which has the highest level of politeness, (2) *madya* speech level, which has the middle level of politeness, and (3) *ngoko* speech level, which has the lowest level of politeness. In Balinese, many studies related to speech levels or *sor singgih* had been conducted. In his writing about the Balinese *Sor Singgih*, Tinggen (1986) divided the Balinese speech levels into the following:

1. *Singgih* Level, which can be categorized into:

¹ The transcript and translation of the shadow puppet performance Sidapaksa can be downloaded at <https://arinatarina.wordpress.com/2018/10/19/balinese-shadow-puppet-performances-a-language-documentation-project/>

- a. *Basa Alus Singgih* is used when talking to the higher caste or someone who should be respected.
 - b. *Basa Alus Madia* is used by the higher caste or people in the upper-middle class.
 - c. *Basa Alus Mider* is used when talking to someone who we honor and respected either from the higher caste or the lower caste.
 - d. *Basa Alus Sor* is used when we want to be humble when talking to the three high castes or someone who has a higher social status.
2. *Basa Sor* is grouped into:
- a. *Basa Kepara* is the level that can be used by everyone without humiliating the person being talked to. In other words, this level is not considered polite nor impolite.
 - b. *Basa Kasar* is used when talking to someone close or when fighting/arguing with someone.

In order to obtain the variation occurred in translating speech level in Balinese, the translation process was analysed. Generally, translation is the process of delivering meaning or message from the Source Language to the Target Language. Bell (in Wafa, 2013) stated that translation is the transferring of ideas from SL into TL where the semantic meaning and language style should be maintained. In other words, it is not only the same meaning that must be conveyed, but also the writer's language style should be preserved. In the process, there are not translated texts that are exactly the same as the source texts, often due to the addition and/or the deduction of information. This is in accordance with the three principles of translation by Nida (1974), namely loss information, addition of information, and skewing of information.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data compiled, there were many words in the conversation of the characters in the shadow puppet performances that indicate the use of speech levels. The analysis of the translation for these words or phrases containing speech levels meaning shows several variations. The transfer of additional meaning in the form of speech level from the SL to TL1 (i.e. Indonesian) and TL2 (i.e. English) can be easily identified in the translation of pronouns within address terms, due to the fact that in address terms, the social status of the interlocutors are immediately conveyed based on the choice of words used. The followings are some examples of cases where the speech level elements from SL may or may not be transferred into TLs.

1. The speech level meaning of some words could be transferred to both Indonesian (TL1) and English (TL2). These words includes *aratu*, *iratu*, *bapa*, and *cening* as shown in the analysis below:

Data 1

SL: *Aratu*

TL1: Yang Mulia

TL2: Your Highness

Aratu in SL is an address terms in the highest speech level (*Basa Alus Singgih*) for a person who is most respected and honored. The speech level meaning could be illustrated in the Indonesian translation *Yang Mulia* that is normally used to greet a King and their family members, or to a superior who comes from the Brahmana (priests) or Ksatria (knights) family. Similar transfer of

the speech level meaning also occurs in the English translation where the word *Aratu* becomes *Your Highness* which is also used to address a king and the royal family member. Therefore, all of these three words (*Aratu*, *Yang Mulia*, *Your Highness*) were used to greet someone who has the highest social standing in this performance, namely God Indra.

2. The speech level element can only be transferred into one TL. In this case, speech level elements in SL can be transferred well into TL1 but not into TL2. It can be seen in the examples below:

a. Data 2

SL: Jeg ngamuk ngubrak-ngabrik *Ida* Batara Indra²

TL1: *Beliau* mengamuk penuh kemarahan

TL2: *He* was full of rage

The word *Ida* in this utterance is utilized to address God Indra, which belongs to the *Basa Alus Singgih*, the highest level of speech used to glorify the addressee, was translated into *beliau* in TL1 and *he* in TL2. The translation of TL1 contains the meaning of honoring the addressee since the pronoun *beliau* is used to greet a respected person. On the other hand, the translation of TL2 does not contain any speech level meaning because the pronoun *he* is used to refer to a singular third person male from every social standing. However, this translation works because it refers to Dewa Indra – a male figure – and there is no equivalent of the singular third person word in TL2 that can be used to honor someone.

b. Data 3

SL: Saja, adi jeg gedegan *awake* ningalin.³

TL1: Benar, kenapa *aku* yang lebih marah melihatnya.

TL2: Yeah, why am *I* angrier than My Lord.

The pronoun *awake* means “I” belongs to the lowest level of speech (*Basa Kasar*), in which it is used between friends. In TL1, the word *awake* was translated into *aku*, a pronoun for the first person singular, which has the same meaning of *saya*. The word *aku* has a lower speech level interpretation compared to *saya*, since this pronoun is only used when speaking to close friends. In TL2, the word *awake* is translated into *I*, the only pronoun that refers to first person singular in English.

c. Data 4

SL : *cenig*⁴

TL1: *ananda*

TL2: *you*

The word *cenig* is included into *Basa Kepara*, which can be used by anyone without having the feeling of demeaning someone. In other words, it is not polite nor rude. *Basa Kepara* is normally used within conversations between friends, or by an older person when addressing younger generation. In TL1, the word *cenig* is translated into *ananda*, an address terms for kids or youngsters who are usually the children of the speaker. Therefore, the translation to TL1 has a

² Data can be found in Sentence 23

³ Data can be found in Sentence 100

⁴ Data can be found in Sentence 7

more polite meaning and in this case, the translator employed the appropriate word in the translation, which has similar meaning in SL. However, for the translation into TL2, where the word *kening* becomes *you*, there is no additional meaning that expressed the speech level as the words used in SL and TL1.

3. The speech level element cannot be transferred into any of the TLs.

a. Data 5

SL: *titiang* katugasang olih ...⁵

TL1: saya

TL2: I

The subject pronoun *titiang* “me” in SL has the meaning of first person singular with the additional speech level meaning as it is a part of the *Basa Alus Sor*, the level of speech that is used to humble oneself in front of another person who has a high social status. In TL1, the word *titiang* was translated into *saya* which has the same literal meaning. However, it is best if the word *titiang* is translated into the word *hamba* that has the speech level element because the word *hamba* is generally used to refer to oneself in front of a person with a really high social status such as God or a king. In comparison, the use of the pronoun *I* in TL2 does not convey the speech level element.

b. Data 6

SL: *Ia* nagih ngerebut Indraloka,⁶

TL1: *Dia* mau merebut surga

TL2: *He* wanted to take over the Heaven

The word *ia* is included into the *Basa Sor* (Keparu) – the level of speech that can be used by everyone without having glorifying or demeaning sense. In TL1, this word was translated into *dia*, while in TL2 it was translated into *he* which has the same literal meaning as *ia*, i.e. third person singular. These translations are appropriate because they do not have any speech level element since they can be used to address everyone from any social status.

There are some variations found in the way of the translator transferring the meaning of some words that contained speech level element. It means that the translator used more than one word in TL for one word in SL, for example the word *aratu*. The word *aratu* in TL1 was translated into *Yang Mulia* and *tuan*, besides in TL2 it was translated into *Your highness* and *Lord* in different utterance. Word *aratu* translated into *Your Highness* (TL2) and *Yang Mulia* (TL1) can be seen at **data 1**, and the other equivalence that translator uses in replacing the word *aratu* are *tuan* (TL1) and *Lord* (TL2).

Data 7

SL : Inggih durus **aratu** margi aratu Sang Sidaayu.

TL1 : *Silakan, datanglah Tuan Sidaayu.*

TL2 : *Please, here comes Lord Sidaayu.*

⁵ Data can be found in Sentence 15

⁶ Data can be found in Sentence 27

From the data above, it can be seen that in TL1 the word *aratu* was translated into *Tuan* and *Lord* (TL2). This variation can be accepted because the speaker is Delem, an aide of Patih Sidaayu, who talk to his boss, so he uses *tuan/lord*, not *Yang Mulia/Your Highness* because *Yang Mulia/Your Highness* was not appropriate with the social status of Sang Sidaayu (he is not a King or God like Batara Indra).

Another variation can be seen in the translation of the word *bli*. *Bli* is adress term for brother or someone older and considered as your brother/family. This wors is translated into *kakanda* and *kakak* in TL1, while in TL2 it is translated into *me* and *brother*.

Data 8

Jalan jak *bli* nganten jani..! (perck. 373)

Menikahlah dengan *kakanda* sekarang.

Come on , marry *me* now

In data 8, the word *bli* tend to be a pronoun, was translated into *kakanda* (TL1) which has the same meaning, but those two words belongs to two differents speech level. *Bli* as *basa kepara* is used for lower social status while *kakanda* is used to someone from higher social status and usually used in the royal family and rarely used in daily conversation In indonesian. In that conversation, the speaker is the King who talk to Sidaayu wife because the king wants to marry her. It is means that between SL and TL1 are not equal since there a addition of information or meaning in the result. In TL2, the word *bli* was translated into *me*, and it sound natural because it can convey the meaning of *bli* in that utterance.

Based on the analysis above, speech level element in address terms and pronouns can be transferred in translation process, particularly those in the category of *Basa Alus* – the polite style of speech, while address terms or pronouns in the other level of speech lost their speech level elements when translated.

Apart from address terms and subject pronouns, speech levels are also conveyed in the verbal category, although there are only a few. Some of them can be seen from the following examples:

- a. SL: *Mamit lugra titiang aratu Batara Indra*

TL1: *Saya undur diri, Yang Mulia.*

TL2: *I beg your leave, Your Highness*

The phrase *mamit lugra titiang* expresses the high speech level (Basa Alus Sor) by glorifying another through humbling oneself. This can be seen from the polite style and the choice of words. In the example above, the style used for the translation into TL1 and TL2 expresses respect and politeness in the highest level. In the TL1 translation, for example, the words used are *saya* – the polite form of I – and *undur diri* – the expression of asking someone's permission before leaving. In the translation to TL2, the style of the languages is also very polite through the use of the phrase *I beg your leave* which illustrates how one person humbling him/herself by begging the other person to allow him/her to leave indicating her lower social status.

- b. SL: *Minab titiang sampun seda, be mati sang Sidaayu*⁷

⁷ Data can be found in Sentence 326

TL1: Hamba pikir dia telah **tewas**, sudah **meninggal** Sidaayu

TL2: I think he has **passed away**, Sidaayu is **dead**.

In the data above, the SL words *seda* and *mati* has the same meaning, which is being dead. However, the word *seda* is categorized into the high speech level *Basa Alus Singgih* which is used to refer to the death of people in the higher caste and those who are respected, whereas the word *mati* belongs to *Basa Sor (Kepara)* which can be used by anybody (it is not polite nor rude). In the translation, the word *seda* becomes *tewas* (TL1) and *passed away* (TL2). These words choice indicates a higher level of speech when compared to the words *mati* which was translated into *meninggal* (TL1) and *dead* (TL2).

CONCLUSION

From the data analysis above, it can be concluded that the speech level in Balinese, the source language cannot be easily translated into Indonesian and English, the target language. Only a few of the address term can have its speech level elements be transferred into TL. This is generated by the fact that the two TLs does not have speech levels based on caste or social status.

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