

TEACHING TRANSLATION USING POETRY AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL IN UNIVERSITAS GRESIK

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ABSTRACT

This research describes how to teach translation using English poetry and applying on the translation process by ESL college level students. It analyzes and codes the characteristics of their writing as well as the experiences and information reported in their reflective essays about the translation process. Poetry translation is discussed to honor the origin language and corresponding culture and as a way to facilitate writing skill development for college students. The final project makes recommendations for future poetry translation assignments for college level with different topic and sources.

Keywords: translation, poetry, ESL

Introduction

This research combines two areas in which the researcher has experience and interest. The process in this research, however, have helped to expand the researcher understanding of the power of poetry. Understanding of poetry not only as an entertainment, but also as a tool by which to strengthen communities. The college students in this research majority spoke English as a second language. This research discusses the general theories about making meaning through poetry and how this may relate to English Language Learners (ELLs).

The main problem in this research is How do poets make meaning in one language when they are raised in another language, means that English is not the first language for the learners. That was the problem that ESL researchers must solve. But, it is not as simple as finding words with corresponding definitions, or even as simple as finding corresponding idioms. Frequently the words really are not enough. Tradition control language and cultural perspective, but not all cultures are the same, and it means that not two languages operate

in the same way. There is non concurrence of traditions. This non concurrence is often referred to as contrastive rhetoric when the subject is academic prose or various forms of informative writing. In English at least, poets have creative authorization to compose with disregard to rhetorical conventions and even the rules of syntax and grammar. So, the challenges in this research of translating poetry across cultures have less to do with linguistic structures and modes of communication, and more to do with personal, cultural experience, linguistic and otherwise. Such as an idiom cannot accurately be transferred to another language because, the contents, a poetic idiom is essentially dependent on the whole of the language.

The process of selecting L1 poems in this research for the students to translate is challenging. This study took into consideration the length and the general theme of the poems that were selected; the poems were all between ten and twenty five lines, and the themes were simple and relevant to ESL studying in a foreign country. However, the ability was focus to

account for style, cultural origin, and historical age was restricted.

Process in Translation

The translation using poetry and essay was a timed assignment and there was no chance for revision. The lack of opportunity for revision prevented the writers from displaying their full level of ability in English translation. It is quite possible that the writers were certain of mistakes they made during the process but that they ignored them because of time constraints.

Research Method

The method in this research is action research. The data was collected in a classroom setting in order to inform and improve curriculum or instructional techniques in future courses. Different to what is common in action research, the researcher did not act as a participant observer. All the process done by a researcher who is also a participant in the class and its activities. The coding in this research is both inductive and deductive. The data will be organized by language group and analyzed for patterns that reveal students' ability and authenticity as writers, as well as their cultural perspectives.

Data Collection

The sample data of this research was getting from the 20 college students randomly from Universitas Gresik. The poetry translation was something that had not been done previously in the translation course. For this particular project, the college students were allowed to continue doing their translation beyond the end of the class period if they wished, and they were not allowed to finish their job outside of class but continue for the next meeting.

It should be noted that translation in this course is not strictly defined in this research. The rules asked them to avoid a word-for-word or letter lag translation, but they were allowed to interpret the assignment to translate the meaning as they do best. The process of creating an English translation of their L1 poem and the subsequent reflection about their process allowed the writers, in a way, to self translation.

Findings and Discussion

In this part, the results of the study are presented in some assumptions to answer the problems.

First, some students would feel comfortable with the meaning of the poem in their L1 and would have a feeling for the tone and understanding of the imagery.

Second, some students would produce fairly literal translations regardless of their level of understanding of the original poem.

Third, students would be able to complete the translations, but their work would show usage errors.

Forth, the translations among individual language groups would show variety in interpretation of meaning.

Fifth, students would find translation to be a difficult task and express a level of dissatisfaction with their translations.

Sixth, poetry translation with reflection and analysis of process would enhance students' understanding of the relationship between their L1 and TL.

From the assumptions above, the researcher compared them with the result from data analysis as follows:

First, this assumption was not affirmed. The students' work shows a variety of levels of understanding, but particularly those that translated the Indonesian poem, indicated that they

were not comfortable with their understanding of the L1 meaning.

The second assumption appears to be fairly accurate. Most of the translation decisions the writers make appear to be on the word level, and the basic imagery and structure of their translations is simple and uniform in the language. However, several students express their desire to accurately represent the artistic characteristics of the original and purposely forsaking a level of exactness and perhaps clarity for artistic integrity.

The third assumption is tied to the first, and it also seems to be partially incorrect. Usage errors were common among all the writers; however, because many of the students did not fully understand their poem, and they were unable to produce complete translations.

The fourth assumption was correct. Among the students, their opinion was divided over whether the poem was intended to highlight environmental concerns or whether it was a commentary on the desire for one's hometown and familiarity. Similarly, the other students showed variety in their interpretations of meaning. Their poem was often understood as a lesson in romance, but others focused on the struggles of language, culture, and separation from both.

The next assumption was affirmed to be mostly correct. A few students expressed dissatisfaction with their work, nearly all of them did indicate difficulty either in understanding or in translating the L1 poem. It should be noted that students were not asked to evaluate the difficulty of the assignment, but the majority of them were nonetheless compelled to explain that they found it hard.

The last assumption remains unconfirmed, but the students' analyses of their translation process

show concern for bicultural integrity and awareness of their readership.

Conclusion

The researcher convinced that translation using poetry is valuable in ESL course. The elevation of the L1 and corresponding culture through L1 poetry provides opportunity for the students' transformation into cultural ambassadors. It also provides opportunities for self-representation and credible writing. Furthermore, the communicative and metacognitive possibilities of the translation process and subsequent reflective writing develop skilled cross-cultural writers. In light of this, the ESL composition instructor in this study, who is also the responsible investigator, has decided to incorporate poetry translation in future ESL classes. The researcher looks forward to further study and implementation of translation using poetry in future work in the ESL field.

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