

CHARACTER BUILDING THROUGH TRANSLATION: MISSION IMPOSSIBLE?

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Abstract

This paper aims at discussing, values and characters in translation process that must be taught to the students in order to produce good translation. In the translation process, translators face various problems whether untranslatability issues, culture, and ideology. To resolve these problems translators are required to have the competence and intelligence of selecting the best strategy. To that end, in teaching translation skill, the students are trained to not easily give up, choosing a good diction, and the best way to convey the message contained in the target language. Translators are required to be honest but should not be too honest/plain. Translators must not add or subtract in the target language, but the translator may add and reduce information. This principles seem ambiguous, could it be done is teaching process?

Keywords: translation, characters building, translation competencies.

A. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, Indonesian's curriculum puts more attention on characters building for all levels of education. The teachers should focus on character education since in the elementary school to senior high school. The content of character education gradually reduced to the higher education unit. Meanwhile at the university level, the education purposes of the university mostly to produce professional. Therefore, most of the subjects focus on preparing the students to be professional by giving theories and practices to train them to be skillful and professional scholar. Does it mean university ignores character education?

No, college and university also have responsibility in character building related to the vision and mission of higher education. English Department of FBS UNP, for instance, offers Translation and Interpretation subject to prepare students to be professional translators and interpreters as one of learning outcomes in this department. Translation subject provides theories and practices to be a good translator. However, translation is not an easy task as predicted and assumed by many bilinguals or foreign language teachers. In fact, many bilinguals cannot directly translate text from a language to another. Therefore, it is not uncommon that some translation texts cannot be understood by the readers. Even, 70% translation texts are not acceptable (see Surtiati, 2000).

Moreover, various problems and options are faced and should be solved by the translator in the translation process, such as, untranslatability, culture differences, gender, political views, and ideology. To solve the translation problems, translators are required to have the translation competence and good intelligence in selecting the best strategy in translation process. Then, is it enough to provide all the information related to translation theories and translation strategies to produce a good translator? Then, how could characters education be taught to produce a good translator? Is it possible to build students' character while develop their skill and knowledge at the university level? In this paper I will discuss values and characters in translation process that might be taught to the students in order to produce good translation.

B. REVIEW OF RELATED THEORIES

There are various definitions given related to the concept of translation (see Savory, 1969:13; Pinchuck, 1977:38; Catford, 1980:20; Bassnett-McGuire, 1991:2; Bell, 1991:12-13). In general, it can be concluded that translation is the activity of transferring or reproducing messages from a source language to the closest equivalent message in the target language (Nida, 1975: 33; Nida & Taber, 1982: 12; Newmark, 1988; Kridalaksana, 2008; Ardi, 2010b: 392). The equivalence is measured through the equivalence of message or meaning, content, effect to the reader, and also language style (Nida, 1964; Nida & Taber, 1982; Newmark, 1988). Based on this definition, in conducting translation requires some criteria to produce a good translation.

Then, according Savory (1968:50) there are some principles of translation, they are: 1) a translation must give the words of the original, 2) a translation must give the ideas of the original, 3) a translation should read like an original work, 4) a translation should read like a translation, 5) a translation should reflect the style of the original, 6) a translation should possess the style of the translation, 7) a translation should read as a contemporary of the original, 8) a translation should read as a contemporary of the translator, 9) a translation may add to or omit from the original, 10) a translation may never add to or omit from the original, 11) a translation of verse should be in prose, 12) a translation of verse should be verse. These principles seem

confusing; however, they are pair of tendency between producing faithful translation or communicative translation.

Moreover, in order to produce a good translation, translators need some competencies to deliver the message from the source language. Based a research conducted by PACTE (2005: 610), there are some sub-competences and psycho-psychological components that must be owned by the translator, they are: (1) The bilingual sub-competence consists of pragmatic, socio-linguistic, textual and lexical-grammatical knowledge of both languages; (2) The extra-linguistic sub-competence consists of encyclopaedic, thematic and bicultural knowledge. (3) The translation knowledge sub-competence is related to knowledge that guide translation (processes, methods and procedures, etc.) and the profession (types of translation briefs, users, etc.). (4) The instrumental sub-competence consists of knowledge related to the use of documentation sources and information technologies applied to translation. (5) The strategic sub-competence is related to the competence to solve problems and choose the efficient process. It intervenes by planning the process in relation to the translation project, evaluating the process and partial results obtained, activating the different sub-competencies and compensating for deficiencies, identifying translation problems and applying procedures to solve them. →

Moreover, PACTE (ibid) states that in translation process, translators also should also have the psycho-physiological components. These related to cognitive and behavioral (memory, attention span, perseverance, critical mind, etc.) and psychomotor mechanisms. The relation of these sub-competences and components can be modeled as follows:

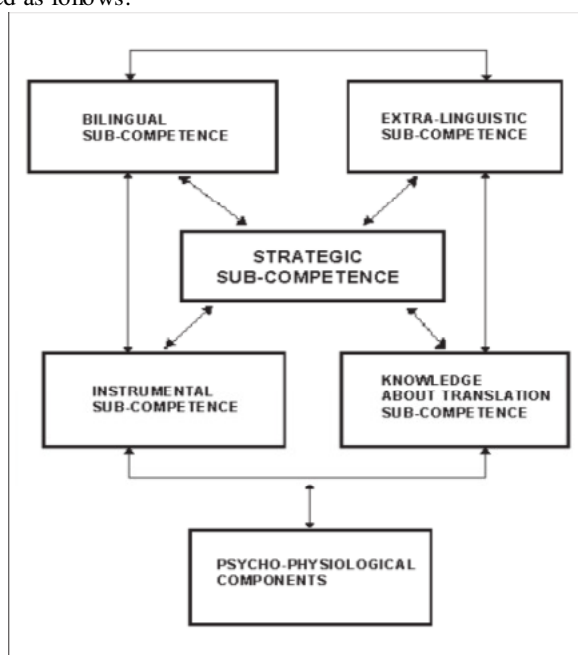


Figure 1: Relation of Sub-competences and psycho-psychological components

Besides, the discussion on how to teach Translation and Interpretation has also been discussed by some researchers (see Li & Zhang, 2011, Nababan, 2003). However, mostly the research focuses on knowledge and practice in translation. Then, whether character building or character education should be included in teaching translation and how to do it are not done yet.

It is also important to note that we need to let the students know that translation is an act of communication which attempt to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication (which may have been intended for different purpose and different readers/hearers) (Hatim & Mason, 1997:1). It means translators play their role to bridge communication from different cultural background and language which will have many problems in it. As a good translator, he should keep the communication effective and efficient.

Moreover, in the translation process, ideology also plays an important role. In this case, ideology is defined as the principle or belief on “right-wrong” or “good-bad” in the translation (Hoed, 2004:1, 2006: 83). The opinion on how the translation should be is also influenced by the society; however, translators themselves also have their own ideology. As stated by Hamerlain (2005: 55) that translator also has such *beliefs & values that would be shared* to others. Therefore, translation is not a white paper, (ibid), as language is always used in a context that also has ideology. As stated by Nida that Language is not used in a context less vacuum, rather, it is used in a host of discourse contexts; contexts which are impregnated with the ideology of social systems and

institutions. It is because language operates within this social dimension it must, of necessity reflect, and some would argue, construct ideology (Nida in Hamerlain, 2005:55).

Related to ideology in the translation, rule of Vermeer Skopos says that, “translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function” (Nord in Yan, 2005: 64). Based on this rule, it indicates that in order to produce an acceptable translation product we need to refer to what the people and ideology in the society. Therefore, ideology does not only influence the strategy used by the translators but it also determines how the translation is distributed (Yan, 2005:64).

C. DISCUSSION

Character education, actually, plays very important role in producing any professional. Providing a plentiful of knowledge of theories and skill practices will not produce a good human being without ethic, moral, or character education. However, in the university level, it is not an easy job to build these characters. We cannot do the same strategies as what we do at elementary or senior high school to university students.

In teaching Translation, for instance, we could make it as part of professional translator’s job that must be done or considered by the translator. In fact, in translation process, translators face various problems and choices. The problems might come from cultural differences which cause untranslatability, ideology differences, sexism, taboo, and other problems. Those problems are the things that build students’ character to be professional translators.

I will show some translation problems faced by the translator, their solution and implication toward character building. The analysis is done by comparing source text and translation text by considering objective aspects (for further see Nababan, 2007). Based on the comparison of source texts and target texts, we can list some condition how translators solve the problems and the implication to character education:

1. Giving an Amplification of Information

Amplification is the way to clarify the information in the translation by put the implicit information become explicit to avoid misunderstanding or ambiguity (see Molina & Albir, 2002 for further). In the following example, we can see how amplification is implemented in the translation:

- (1) SL: It is never clearly stated whether the person whose occupation is being given is the “father” or the “mamak”, an important distinction in determining the actual position of the child in the society.
 TL: Tidak pernah jelas dinyatakan apakah orang yang dinyatakan sebagai kepala keluarga itu adalah “ayah” atau “mamak”. Perbedaan ini penting dalam menentukan kedudukan aktual seorang anak dalam masyarakat.
- (2) SL: The coffee system, at the least, prevented them from spending time on other more profitable or necessary endeavors,
 TL: Sistem [tanaman] kopi, setidaknya, menghalangi mereka untuk memanfaatkan waktu pada usaha lain yang lebih menguntungkan atau lebih diperlukan,....

In example (1) translators directly put “kepala keluarga” (head of a family) explicitly in the Target Language (TL) in order to make the translation text becomes clear and not ambiguous. Meanwhile, in example (2) translators put the information in square brackets to explicit the word “tanaman” in order to avoid ambiguous information.

The implementation of this technique implies that as communicators, translators must produce the translation as communicative as possible. We should not leave the readers to interpret the text as they may misunderstand the information. It can be done by giving clarification and information clearly in the target language. The explicit information in the target language can be put directly, or in the brackets or other marker as the indicator.

Giving explicit information shows that a translator should be a honest person in telling thing but must be effective communicator. Therefore, we need to let the students know and how to anticipate ambiguous information that might appear in the source text into target language. Of course, the implementation of this technique requires translator’s competence in detecting the ambiguity that possibly appears and strategic sub-competence to choose the best solution. Therefore, we need to ask the students to read and reread the translation to produce the best result.

2. Giving an implicit of Information or reduction

Sometimes, translator also needs to implicit the information in the target language as the information has been delivered in the translation text in another place. Molina & Albir (2002) used the term reduction for this translation technique. For, instance, let us see the following example:

- (3) SL: The Minangkabau term for the office was the penghulu kapala, literally the head of penghulu. In order to avoid possible confusion between this Dutch-created position and the pre-existing adat paramount penghulu, the penghulu pucuk, the Dutch term will be used in the text.

TL: *Istilah Minangkabau untuk kedudukan ini ialah “penghulu kepala”. Untuk menghindari kebingungan antara kedudukan ciptaan Belanda dan penghulu pucuk adat yang muncul sebelumnya, maka di sini digunakan istilah Belandanya.*

In the example (3) translators reduce “literally the head of penghulu”, as this information is understood in the phrase “penghulu kepala” in the translation text. That is why, translator should implicit this to avoid redundancy.

Again, it implies that translator may reduce the translation to avoid redundancy. We need to tell the students that in translation we may not waste or give extravagant information, if it has been delivered in another phrase or word in the TL. Therefore, translation does not mean translate all the words in the SL into TL, but message. As long as the message has been delivered we do not need to repeat the same thing. However, it should be noted that reduction is different from omission. Omission is not allowed in translation; as it can cause the reader miss the information. We can see the following example how omission cause mistranslation to the reader.

- (4) SL: The expansion in the coffee cultivation system directly affected the hill villages more than plains.

TL: *Perluasan dalam sistem penanaman kopi lebih memengaruhi secara langsung nagari-nagari di daerah dataran rendah.*

The omission of “the hill village..” in example (4) gives different information to the reader. Therefore, we need to tell that as a translator we may do reduction but we must not do omission.

3. Giving Correction

Correction is different from amplification. Although, it is rarely done in translation, however, it is not impossible to be done. Correction is done whenever there is wrong information given. It may appear in the scientific or nonfiction works. Let us see the following example:

- (5) SL: The nearby village Koto Tuo, reputedly an historic offshoot of Kota Gedang and hence subordinate to it, became a Paderi center fairly early..

TL: *Nagari tetangga Koto Gadang, yaitu Koto Tuo, dikenal sebagai bagian dari Koto Gadang dan menjadi pusat gerakan kaum Paderi yang mula-mula.^{8*}*

^{8*}) Graves, penulis buku ini, keliru menyebut Nagari Koto Tuo dekat Koto Gadang sebagai pusat gerakan Paderi yang mula-mula. Dalam sejarah Minangkabau, pusat Paderi yang mula-mula sebetulnya berada di Koto Tuo, Ampek Angkek, dekat Candung. Kedua nagari itu memiliki nama yang sama dan sama-sama berada di daerah Agam (catatan penerjemah).

In example (5), the translator/editor gives a footnote to correct the information given in the translation. As the expert in historical studies, he clarifies it by giving the correction to the information given. He still writes the original information; however, he puts the clarification in different position. The mistake in the source text happened as there are similar name of places in the object being discussed by the author (Ardi, 2010b: 405). It is also the implementation of extra linguistic and strategic sub competence.

Furthermore, correction is rarely done by the translator as the translator does not realize there is false information. According to Newmark (1988: 47), correction is one of the characters of communicative translation. Again, it implies that translation does not mean translate everything as what it is, but we may also clarify, correct, revise as long as relevant and do not betray the author. In this example, the translator put the correction explicitly without forgetting that it is a translation. It indicates that translator may not ignore the mistake in the source text, translator should pay attention the information inside the text.

4. Giving an Addition of Information

Molina and Albir (2002) categorize addition as an amplification technique that is done to solve the problem in translation process. However, I think we should differentiate the amplification of implicit information (amplification technique) and addition a new information (addition) in the translation text (see Ardi, 2010a; 2010b for further). Addition is an activity to add information that is not available in source text (both implicit or explicitly). However, it should be noted that “a translation may never add to or omit from the original” (Savory, 1968). Therefore, we should keep in mind that translation is translation. We should tell it that it is an addition, see the following example:

(6) SL: One was the nephew of a penghulu (his son in turn became a trained economist and was governor of West Sumatra between 1966 and 1978).

TL: *Satu orang diantara mereka adalah kemenangan seorang penghulu (anak itu itu kemudian malah menjadi ekonom yang terpelajar dan pernah menjadi Gubernur Sumatera Barat antara tahun 1966-1978).^{39*}*

^{39*)} *Tokoh yang dimaksud ialah Harun Zain, putra St. Mohammad Zain, seorang tokoh Minangkabau ahli bahasa Melayu (Indonesia) terkemuka asal Pariaman, penerjemah).*

In the example (6), translator puts a footnote to give addition or further information about person being informed in the text. Then, the translator is also responsibly noted that the explanation comes from the translator by putting “(..., penerjemah)” or “translator”. This addition is only to enrich the information. This addition information mostly done in several ways, such as, by put in the addition by giving brackets or square brackets to show that the addition is a must.

It implies that a translator may give some information as long as the information is appropriate, relevant, and necessary. However, translator may not betray the author (original writer) by adding the information that is not true. This information will enrich the readers. Moreover, translator may not ignore or leave as what it is whenever the source text become ambiguous or unclear. Translator is a bridge that helps the reader to understand the source text so he/she needs to clarify the information. This technique is included as extralinguistic sub-competence.

6. Other Problems in Translation

Besides the problem above, translator also faces the problem related to the beliefs and values in the society. One of the beliefs and values own by the society related to the sexism. For instance let us check example (7), the data given by Machali (2000: 128-130):

(7) (SL): *Bila seorang gadis berkenan di hati seorang pemuda, maka ia memberi tahu orang-tuanya untuk melamar pujaan hatinya itu. Orang-tua si jejak kemudian mengadakan lamaran kepada orang-tua si gadis. Upacara ini disebut mepadik. ...*

(TL1) When a young girl falls in love with a young man, then **she** informs her parents about the marriage proposal to the idol of her heart. ...

(TL2) If a young girl **agrees in her heart** to marry a young man, **he** informs her parents to offer her his heart. ...

In example (7) source language is in Indonesia. Then, the two TL texts were produced by the Australian students in the Advanced Translation Class of Indonesian-English. In the SL text, there is the word “ia” which refers to ‘pemuda’ that must be translated into ‘he’. However, in the TL1 the translator translates it into ‘she’. It happens as the translator’s ideology influences her in choosing the word. The translator is influenced by western ideology that woman has the same position as man. Therefore, the woman becomes very active. Meanwhile, in TL2, the translator keeps using the word ‘he’ as the meaning of ‘ia’, however the translator also adds ‘agrees in her heart’ to show that woman also has human right that she must be agree although in her heart (Machali, 2000).

Based on the example given above, it implies that translator should choose the best decision in making the translation. Basically, translation focuses on communicate message in the SL text to the reader in the TL. We should remind the students that we may not change the message as it reflects the culture, ways of life, beliefs, and values in the source language text. However, we should also remember that certain beliefs might not be acceptable in the target language. For instance, related to the political issues that happened in the project of Australian-Indonesian Institute., it can be seen in the following example as quoted from Machali (2000: 134) below:

(8) (SL): When Indonesia annexed the former Portuguese colony East Timor in 1975 many Australians understood this as part of the process decolonization. ...

(TL3): *Ketika Indonesia mencaplok Timor Timur, bekas koloni Portugis di tahun 1975 banyak orang Australia yang melihatnya sebagai proses dekolonisasi. ...*

(TL4) *Ketika Timor Timur, sebagai bekas koloni Portugis, berintegrasi dengan Indonesia pada tahun 1975 banyak orang Australia yang menganggapnya sebagai proses dekolonisasi. ...*

In example (8), the source text is in English about Australian political belief related to the integration of East Timor into Indonesia. In SL, it uses the word ‘annexed’ which means ‘mencaplok’ or grab. However, if the translator produces (TL3) in Indonesian context, of course it will not be permitted to be distributed in Indonesia as it is different from the government’s political view (Machali, 2000). Meanwhile, in the (TL4),

annexed was translated into 'berintegrasi' which means East Timor has its own intention to join with Indonesia. This translation is acceptable in the target language related to the government political view. Although, (TL4) is acceptable and has been published in Indonesia, actually, it changes the message in the SL. The TL4 can be published as the author agrees to the changing of the information. However, whatever the reason, actually, the translator may not change the message (Machali, 2000). However, translator live in the society who have their own beliefs, values, and norms that must be obey.

Furthermore, translator should also consider beliefs, values, and norms in the target language. Sometimes, the source text is accepted in the culture of source language, however it is not acceptable in the target language. For instance the use of taboo words should be neutralized or replaced by euphemism. Even, certain text must not be translated. For instance, the following text example (9) might not be permitted to be translated into Indonesia.

- (9) (SL): A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries
"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There."

Although translator provides service as communicator, it does not mean that translator reproduce any message that against his beliefs and religion.

Related to character education, we must not change the message in the source language. Actually, we can learn how other, for example Australian political view in example (8). If it happens, translator needs to confirm it first to the author, whether he/she agrees or disagrees to the changes of information. Then, in example (7 TL3) this changes might not be accepted by the Javanese people, it is because in Eastern culture, woman is the passive position. These two examples imply that translator may not interfere the translation with his/her beliefs.

Then, we need also build students' nationalism, religious awareness, and cultural awareness in translating text into our language. For instance, example (9) must not be translated into Indonesia related to religious belief in Indonesia. It might cause protest by the Muslim society toward the product although it was based on the original message. Then, for certain context translator might also choose a neutral word instead. For instance, in example (10)

- (10) (SL): Shit... what the hell happened here!
(TL5): Bah!... apa yang terjadi di sini?

In example (10), it shows the translator does not translate the message literally although there is the equivalent word in Indonesia. The translation will not be acceptable if it is translated in formal equivalence. It means translator must also have censor to the information into Indonesia. Billiani (2007: 4) defines censorship as "an act, often coercive and forceful, that—in various ways and under different guises—blocks, manipulates and controls the establishment of cross-cultural communication [and] functions as a filter in the complex process of cross-cultural transfer encouraged by translation".

Moreover, the translators who break the rule or norm in the society will get punishment or sanction from the society. As stated by Toury (1995) there will be "a price to pay for opting for any deviant kind of behavior;" for example, when one chooses not to comply with "accepted norms" (*ibid.*, p. 55). It indicates that whenever the translators do not obey the norm in the society there will be punishment as the consequence. For instance, many countries object to publish Salman Rushdie works "Satanic Verse". As a translator in Japan translated into Japanese finally he was killed. We need to build students' ideology that they must not translate anything that are refused or cannot be accepted by society and their own beliefs and values.

D. CONCLUDING REMARK

Based on our discussion, it can be concluded, that in conducting Translation, we can build students' character through the activity or problems faced in translation process. In teaching translation, we do not only provide students with some knowledge, skill, and practice to become professional translators. However, we should also provide responsibility, values, norms, beliefs behind the technique chosen to solve the problem. Even as a professional translator, students need to have nationalism, cultural awareness, religious awareness, and beliefs in the society. Translation is aimed at communicating ideas or message from a language to another language, but translator should have filter & censorship as he/she should responsible for his translation text that might trigger reaction from the society.

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