

DOES A TRANSLATOR HAVE A FREEDOM?

Rahmat Budiman

A lecturer at English Language and Literature Department

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences

Universitas Terbuka Jakarta

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Abstract

Translation is also seen as an art. Art is commonly associated with freedom. Whether a translator is as free as a painter in expressing her or his idea needs to be considered since a translator does not work for her or himself. She or he works based on the order which may come from her or himself or other people or institution. A translator has to deal with many aspects that sometimes do not conform to her or his ideology. She or he, however, has to do it. Whether a translator has a genuine freedom or just a pseudo-freedom will be described.

Key words: equivalence, freedom, SL, TL, translation, translator, ideology

INTRODUCTION

Translation is defined differently by many linguists. Some are focusing on the form, while others are focusing on the meaning. Although they are different, there is a similar conception connecting them; the transfer of 'message' from a source language (SL) to a target language (TL). The role of a translation is how to formulate or reconstruct the message to be understood by the target readers whose language and culture are different from the SL. It implies that equivalence becomes the core of translation. In addition, a translator has to go beyond the words. A translator does not merely transform language, but he or she has to be able to re-present all aspects of the SL in the TL. A translator is responsible for re-creating a relevant context-situation in TL (Toer, 2006).

Formulating message in TL is not positively easy because it is influenced by many aspects such as TR age, education, social status, experience, culture, and religion/belief. For example, the equivalence of "to marry" in SL may vary in TL which can be "menikah, kawin, naik pelaminan, berumah tangga, or berkeluarga." the word

selection will depend on the aspects mentioned. From those aspects, a question then arises. Does a translator has a freedom? If she or he does, how big is it? If she or he does not have, why it happens? This is the explanation.

Translator's ideology will affect the word selection. Hatim and Munday (2004:342) define ideology as "a body of ideas that reflects the beliefs and interest if an individual, a group of individuals, a societal institution, etc., and that ultimately finds expression in language." Meanwhile, Hoed (2008:27) says that ideology in translation is the principle of good or bad in translation; a good or bad in translation is determined by who the TL reader is and what the translator for is.

TRANSLATION RESTRICTIONS

A Translator is restricted by her/his own ideology

Translator's ideology plays a major role in selecting words or forming target text (TT) which may be different from the source text (ST). The translator her/himself will probably does not realize that her or his ideology works when she or he is translating. Her or his ideology may be seen by other people, especially they who know the theory of translation. On the contrary, the translator does realize the presence of her or his ideology. That is because she or he realizes that what is being translated does not conform to her or his ideology. Look at the following example.

ST: <i>Danny the Champion of the World</i> (Chapter 11 p.112)	TT
Source text reader: children between 9 and 15	Target reader: children between 9 and 15
"Absolutely," he said. "And we shall call this method the Sleeping Beauty Operation. It will be a landmark in the history of <u>poaching</u> ."	"Tentu saja," ujarnya. "Dan kita akan menamakan cara ini Operasi Tidur Nyenyak. Ini akan menjadi peristiwa penting dalam sejarah <u>perburuan</u> burung pegas."

The word *poaching* is not equivalent to *perburuan*. According to *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (1991:1041), *to poach* is: "v.i. 1. To trespass, as on another's game preserve, in order to steal or hunt animals, 2. to take game or fish illegally." In Indonesian, the word *perburuan* which comes from *buru* means "v mengejar atau mencari (binatang di hutan dsb.)" (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Edisi*

Empat, 2008:227). *Berburu* is equivalent to *to hunt, to chase, or rummage*, while *poaching* is equivalent to *mencuri (v)* and *pencurian (n)*.

The translator chooses *perburuan* because he realizes that it is more neutral compare to *perburuan gelap* or *pencurian*. She or he also considers who the target readers are. Since the target readers are children of 9 to 15, the word *perburuan gelap* or *pencurian* will not be appropriate. The translator wants to show her or his moral responsibility. She or he does not want to make the readers think that taking someone's property without her or his permission is permitted.

A Translator is restricted by the TL's ideology

A translator has to know the target reader well. By knowing the target readers, a translator will know the most appropriate procedure to be used. Two important steps before translating ST are audience design and need analysis. Those two steps will determine translation procedures or methods to be used by the translator. Audience design is a step to determine the target reader in order to determine the most suitable strategy (Hatim, 2001:74). All aspects connecting with the target reader will be analysis including culture, custom, convention, and concepts. Need analysis is an attempt to find out the intention of translation (Hoed, 2001:66). Those two steps lead the translator to put aside her or his own ideology. A thing that she or he believes as good, proper, or even unpleasant might be the complete opposite of what the target readers believe. Please look at the example below and the explanation.

ST: Conversation between a receptionist and a guest.	TT
Source text reader: students of tourism institute	Target reader: mahasiswa sekolah pariwisata
Receptionist: "Excuse me, can you spell your name again Mr. Heimbrecht?"	Resepsionis: "Mohon maaf Pak Heimbrecht, bisa eja kembali nama Bapak? "

Pronouns in TL is unique since it offers various choices. The choices relate to power and solidarity between the speakers (Hoed, 2006:102). A translator has to see the context of ST and TT and the relation between the speaker and the person who is talking to. Baker (1992:96) mentions that in some languages including Indonesian,

gender, level of solidarity, as well as whether the speaker involves the person who is talking to or not is very important.

Pronoun *you* is equivalent to *kamu, Anda, or engkau (kau)*. In this case, *you* is not equivalent to *kamu, Anda, or engkau (kau)* because of different power and level of solidarity between the speakers. *Kamu, Anda, or engkau (kau)* is not common to be used as a pronoun for someone who is respected or older than the speaker. *Bapak* is used to substitute *kamu, Anda, or engkau (kau)* in order to respect the person since the conversation is between a receptionist and a guest. Goffman in Renkema (2003:25) says that everyone who involves in a social interaction has a need to be respected by others. Therefore, everyone must respect others' honorary. A translator has to be aware of such condition. She or he has to know the common parlance in the TL to create a natural translation.

A Translator is restricted by her/his customer's (individual or institution) ideology

A translator ordinarily works based on an order which may come from an individual or institution. A proverb says "the customer is king". In translation, the customer sometimes asks the translator to make some alteration or emphasize some subjects and understate others. It happens usually due to the customer's interest or ideology which sometimes disagree with the translator's interest and ideology. A translator has to go along with what the customer wants or reject it. She or he can not put in her or his own interest or ideology. Here is an example.

ST: Wikipedia	TT
Source text reader: adult	Target reader: adult
On 7 December 1975, Indonesian forces invaded East Timor. <i>Operasi Seroja</i> (Operation Lotus) was the largest military operation ever carried out by that nation.	Pada tanggal 7 Desember 1975, tentara Indonesia mendarat di Timor Timur. Operasi Seroja adalah operasi militer terbesar yang pernah dilakukan Indonesia.

The word *invaded* is not equivalent to *mendarat*. According to *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (1991:709), "to invade: -v.t. 1. to enter forcefully as an enemy; go into the hostile intent. 2. to enter as if to take possession." According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Edisi Empat* (2008:237), "mendarat: v 1 turun dari

kapal (perahu) dan naik ke darat. 2 turun ke tanah (tt pesawat terbang)." The word *mendarat* is equivalent to *to land* or *to go in land*. The word *invaded* is equivalent to *menginvasi* or *menyerbu*. In other words, *invaded* is not equivalent to *mendarat*. The translator uses *mendarat* rather than *menginvasi* or *menyerbu* because it is ordered by the customer of the translation. The translator may disagree with the word she or he chooses.

CONCLUSION

Translator is always under the shadow of ideology. It may be her or his ideology, the target reader's ideology or the customer's ideology. It means that the translator has a pseudo-freedom, a freedom which is not actually real. She or he has to deal with many aspects, interest, and ideology that sometimes she or does not agree with. The most important task of a translator is conveying the message in the most appropriate and natural target language by mentioning or remarking the target readers' age, culture, social status, education, and religion/belief.

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