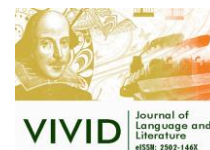




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Linguistics

Untranslatability Found in J.K. Rowling's English Novel *Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone* and Its Indonesian Version

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A B S T R A C T

This research is about the problem of untranslatability in the translation of novel *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling. The intention is what are the types of untranslatability, the causes and how the translator solves the problem of untranslatability that happen in this novel. From 27 data, the researcher finds two types of untranslatability in the novel *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling: linguistic untranslatability and cultural untranslatability. Then there are nine causes of untranslatability found in the novel. The cause is dominated by the culture-specific words or phrases which are semantically complex. From the analysis, it is found that the translator tend to use the loan word or loan word plus explanation strategy to solve the problem of untranslatability in this novel.

INTRODUCTION

Translations nowadays commonly used in daily life to accommodate many aspects, whether in jurnalistic, advertisement, entertainment, and literatures. As explained by Munday [1], "translation is the process of interpreting signs, verbal or non-verbal, from one language to another", the process itself called translating. The equivalence between source language and target language is the aim of translation.

The translator should be aware of the condition of the target language, the culture and grammatical differentiations that will affect the process of translating a text. Since translation is to define the equivalence meaning in the process, the translator always meets one of the major problems in translating, which is the untranslatability.

I choose untranslatability terms as the object of the study Indonesian and English have many differences; in word order, grammar, expression, and culture. Occasionally, there are no

equivalence terms between the languages that can represent the term into the other which make the untranslatability happen.

There are three primary purposes in this research:

1. To find the types of untranslatability which was found in the novel
2. To find the causes of the untranslatability terms
3. To find the strategies which are applied in translating the untranslatability terms

Untranslatability

Catford [2] state that untranslatability or translation fails occurs when it is impossible to build functionally relevant features of the situation into the contextual meaning of the target language text. While Baker [3] named this phenomenon as non-equivalence terms, she said “ non-equivalence at word level means that the target language has no direct equivalent for a word which occur in the source text”. She explains that non-equivalence arises from many semantic complications.

In her journal, Cui [4] defines untranslatability as a property of a text or of any utterance, in one language, for which no equivalent text or utterance found in another language. Contrary to popular belief, the words are not either translatable or untranslatable. They are only words, and these words less more or hard translate depends on their nature and the translator’s skills. Quite often, a text or utterance that is considered to be “untranslatable” is actually a lacuna, or lexical gap, that is to say that there is no one-to-one equivalence between the word, expression or turn of phrase in the source language and another word, expression or turn of phrase in the target language. A translator, however, can resort to a number of translation procedures to compensate.

Catford distinguishes two types of untranslatability, which he called as linguistic and cultural untranslatability [2].

1. Linguistic Untranslatability

It occurs when there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in the target text for a source text item. Linguistic untranslatability happened because the failure to find a target text equivalent is due entirely to differences between the source text and the TT. In Indonesian, the linguistic untranslatability is due to grammatical matter. I applies theory of Grammatical Categories by Palmer [5] to make boundaries with cultural untranslatability. It deals with gender, number, person, tense, mood, voice and case. For example, the particle “*the*” in Indonesia mostly omitted since it was not recognized in Indonesian and it didn’t affect the translation.

2. Cultural Untranslatability

It occurs due to the absence in the target text culture of a relevant situational feature for the source text. This type of untranslatability deals with culture differences between English and Indonesian. As the indicator, I applies translation and culture theory by Newmark [6]. The differences including ecology, material culture, social culture,

customs and habits. For example the term of '*phoenix*' or often called as the *firebird*. In Indonesia, there is no creature which has similar ability and similar appearance with *phoenix*, even though some literature commonly translate it into 'burung api' considering to its ability.

According to Baker [3], the untranslatability are caused by eleven reasons: *culture-specific concept, the source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target language, the source-language word semantically complex, the source and target languages make different distinctions in meaning, target language lack of superordinate, target language lacks a specific term, differences in physical or interpersonal perspective, differences in expressive meaning, differences in form, differences in frequency and purpose of using specific forms, and the use of loan words in the source text.*

She also give eight strategies in solving the problem of untranslatability: *translation by a more general word (superordinate), translation by a more neutral or less expressive word, translation by cultural substitution, translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation, translation by paraphrase using a related word, translation by paraphrase using unrelated words, translation by omission and translation by illustration.*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, *whisperers* was classified as linguistically untranslatable due to the case matter. Suffix *-ers* in *whisperers* consist of two suffixes, *-er* and *-s*. Suffix *-er* in English have several functions. When it associated with an adjective or adverb, it used to form the comparative degree of adjectives and adverbs of one or more syllables such in *hotter* and *beautifuller*. And when it was associated with a noun, it refers to the person or thing belonging to or associated with something such in *traveller*, *New Yorker*.

While for suffix *-s*, as it already explained in previous datum, it also has several functions, to express the plural forms of nouns, to form adverbs denoting usual or repeated action or state, and to form the third person singular present.

This untranslatable happen because it was differences in form. Term *whisperers* in this datum is translated into *mereka yang berbisik-bisik*. In Indonesian, *mereka* is a pronoun refers to the third person plural. While *berbisik-bisik* means a repeated and continual action.

To solve it, the translator use translation by paraphrase using a related word strategy. Suffix *-er* in *whisperers* is a noun suffix which refers to people who do whispering. And for suffix *-s*, it shows more than one person who whispers and was a continual action. The term *whisperers* also can translate into *para pembisik* in Indonesian, where *para* is pointed to suffix *-s* as plural marker and *pembisik* is pointed to whisperer. This way was more simple than *mereka yang berbisik-bisik*.

And *bezoar* is considered as culturally untranslatable because the ecology differences. As explained in the novel, a bezoar is a stone-like mass taken from the stomach of animal that acts as an antidote to most poisons. Beside stomach, it also can be found in esophagus, large intestine, and trachea. But, only bezoar taken from goat and cow are used for medical reasons.

The Chinese herbologist is commonly used bezoar taken from cows for healing and as an antidote. While in the novel, Rowling use goat bezoar as the antidote.

This untranslatability happens because the use of loan words in the source text since it derived from Persian *pād-zahr* (پادزهر), which literally means "antidote". In Indonesia, there are two terms to call bezoar. For doctor, pharmacist, tabib and those who dealt in the medical environment, it used to called as *bezoar*. While for common people in some areas in Sumatra, they used to call it *batu kambing* because it was taken from goat's stomach. But medically it only known as *bezoar*.

Although it has a general term used by common people, but the translator still used translation using a loan word plus explanation strategy to handle this problem. The translator should be more aware about the target reader which are children and teenagers whose does not have much knowledge about medical and botanical term. It will be more easy for the target reader to understand *bezoar* as *batu kambing*, unless there is no equivalent terms that can express its term.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis of untranslatability presented in the previously, I concludes that there are two types of untranslatability as proposed by Catford in the novel *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling. The two types are linguistic untranslatability and cultural untranslatability. From eleven causes of untranslatability propose by Baker, there are nine causes found in the novel, such as : *the culture-specific concept, the source-language word semantically complex, target language lack of superordinate, target language lack a specific term, differences in physical or interpersonal perspective, differences in expressive meaning, differences in form, differences in frequency and purpose of using specific forms* and *the use of loan words in the source text*.

The cause of untranslatability in this novel is dominated by the culture-specific words or phrases which are semantically complex which are found in five data and the case of target language lacks a specific term and differences in form are found in four data. Then, the target language lacks superordinate as found in three data. While the case of differences in expressive meaning, differences in physical or interpersonal perspective and the use of loan words in the source text are found in two data. Only one data found which used differences in frequency and purpose of using specific forms strategy.

To solve the problem of untranslatabilty, the translator uses some strategies as proposed by Baker (1992). In this novel, it is found that there are five strategies used by the translator to handle the untranslatability. First, translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation strategy found in seventeen data (in datum 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 25, 26, and 27). Unfortunately, although there are equivalent terms that can used to translate it, the translator choose to use a loan word strategy to solve it. This strategy might used in order to keep the real meaning of the terms, but since the target reader is children and teenagers the translator also should consider their ability in interpreting the meaning.

Second, translation by paraphrase using a related word strategy found in five data (in datum 2, 3, 5, 7, and 22). This strategy used due to lack of an exact match to the target language vocabulary. Third, translation by a more general word strategy found in two data (in datum 1 and 6). This strategy is used because the target language lack of a specific term, so the use of a more general word will help reader to follow the novel plot. Fourth, translation by omission strategy found in two data (in datum 4 and 14). This strategy used by translator since the term in the source language is not recognized in Indonesian. And last, there is only one data using translation by a more neutral or less expressive word strategy (in datum 8). This strategy used by the translator because differences in expressive meaning between source language and target language.

The untranslatability in this novel happen because the grammatical matters and cultural differences. Linguistic untranslatability occurs when a term in English text lost one or some sense-component when it translated into Indonesian text. And when a term in the English text has differences in word order and articles with the Indonesian text. As for the cultural untranslatability, it happen because cultural differences between Indonesian and English culture, which including the differences of ecology, material culture, social culture, customs and habits.

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