

THE IDEOLOGY REVEALED IN THE TRANSLATION OF A POEM “AKU MERASA ASING DI SINI, DI KALA SALJU MENYELIMUTI KOTA” INTO “I FEEL LIKE AN ALIEN HERE IN A SNOWY TOWN”

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ABSTRACT

Translating literary text has always aroused questions on how accurate the target text language might be. Since translating is not restricted on the alteration from source text to the target text, translation itself possibly has been a great matter for the translator. The intact meaning is demanded to be wrapped up in both languages without imposing on one language only. Thus, translating literary text is more challenging. Not only merely changing the meaning and lexical elements from the source text author, formation and ideology should be brought as well to the literary text as a totality.

Ideology as a combination of ideas underlying literary text cannot be overlooked as an inconsequential element. The existence of ideology holds an important role in determining the value of literature. Different values seen by both the author and the translator could lead to different point of views in literature. The ideology of a work that follows then will differ from the translated text as well. The problem is, will literary texts written and translated by one person deliver the same ideologies? Or does ideology simply shift along with the shift of language?

This study aims to observe the shift on cultural expression and the portrayal of ideologies from a poem written by Elisabeth Arti Wulandari which in Bahasa Indonesia titled “Aku Merasa Asing di Sini, di Kala Salju Menyelimuti Kota” and translated to English entitled “I Feel Like an Alien Here in Snowy Town”. The question on whether the same person both writing and translating the poem will result to the exact ideology will also be answered in this paper.

Keywords: literary text translation, ideology, translation shift, expression shift

INTRODUCTION

Translation, according to Munday (2008:5) can refer to the general subject field, the product (the text that has been translated) or the process (the act of producing the translation, otherwise known as translating). Despite only transferring words to another words, phrases to another phrases, and sentences into another sentences in another languages, the process of translation requires a thorough understanding of both the Source Language (SL) and Target Language (TL). A translator is being responsible to bring a comprehensive product of translation to the target readers. In order to produce a ‘good’ translation, not only transferring the linguistic elements from the SL, the translator is obliged to consider the surrounding backgrounds of SL.

One background that should be brought to attention is cultural background. In the process of translating a Source Text (ST) into a Target Text (TT), Hatim and Munday define a cultural turn as a metaphor that has been adopted by Cultural-Studies oriented translation theorists to refer to the analysis of translation in its cultural, political, and ideological context. (2004:102) Culture is distinctive; means that there is no single culture which is similar to one another at all. Due to that reason, it is impossible to have an original text and its translated text which have precisely the same content. Having a comprehensive product of translation does not mean to exactly shifting from one language into another language without considering the cultural background of the TT.

The existence of ideology as a body of ideas that license, enable, and direct social action (Ryan, 2010:40) seems to be firmly connected only with political matter. In fact, it is not always about politic. Ideology is deeply rooted in our everyday life: in education, economy, religion, even literature. A text without the ideology of the author is nearly impossible. Mediation, the extent to which translation intervene in the transfer process, feeding their own knowledge and beliefs into processing the text (Hatim and Mason, 1997:122) seems to appeal to this fact. An author will definitely put their own ideology into their literary works.

When translating the literary text, the task for a translator then becomes more challenging. Without imposing on only the TT ideology, the translator has to adjust linguistic elements of both languages, the ST and TT cultural backgrounds, and also the ideology of the author. All of them should be combined and arranged accurately to the translated text.

This study is aimed at analyzing Elisabeth Arti Wulandari’s poem entitled “Aku Merasa Asing di Sini, di Kala Salju Menyelimuti Kota” which is translated by the author herself into “I Feel Like an Alien

Here in Snowy Town". The poem was a keynote presentation for the 5th Literary Studies Conference themed "Textual Mobilities: Diaspora, Migration, Transnationalism and Multiculturalism" which was held in Universitas Sanata Dharma. Emphasizing on the author's own feeling of being alienated in other country, the poem consists of many strong Indonesian cultural expressions.

The paper focuses on the shifts of the expressions from Indonesian into English, the ideology concealed between two poems observed from the shifts and the research whether the ideology of a literary text simply shifts along with the shift of language.

METHODOLOGY

According to Merriam Webster's Dictionary, ideology is defined as 'a systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture' and 'a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group, or culture'. Both definitions appeal to this study since the existence of ideology is exceedingly tangible in the poems; both in the original and the translated version. As can be seen in the analysis of the expression shift mentioned, both poems deliver different atmospheres to each reader. Even though the the feeling of being alienated is being portrayed approximately the same, the perception of both readers are different. This fact shows the author's own concept and thinking characteristic of human life and culture.

Munday states, "For Lefevere, the most important consideration is the ideological one, which in this case refers to the translator's ideology, or the ideology imposed upon the translator by patronage." (2008:127) Since the author and the translator are the same person, the readers might perceive that the ideology of both poems will be the same. All the author needs to do is to shift from Indonesian to English and to convey the content of the poem to the TL thoroughly. Interestingly, the author does not simply execute that.

The apparent proof can be seen in the observation of stanza two and three. There are total eight untranslated words in the TT. Lefevere mentions, "Once translator has decided either to leave the original untranslated for ideological reasons or to use a specific strategy to translate it after all, they face problems concerning poetics and universe of discourse." (1992:88) What might be poetic in the ST might not be poetic in the TT since the same words used in both poem are not totally understood by the TT readers. Due to the confusion, the poetic cultural expression in Indonesia does not seem poetic anymore for English native speakers or English readers.

Lefevere adds further that, "On the universe-of-discourse level, translators may be faced with things, customs, and concepts that were immediately intelligible to the readers of the original but are no longer intelligible to prospective readers of translation." (1992:88) Above all, the author who at the same time is the translator does not give any glossary to explain what the words mean. It might be assumed that the author intentionally does not want to translate the words and let the words to be the poetic way they are no matter whether the TT readers understand that or not. Even this decision is very ideological and appeals to the theory of Lefevere, "In other words, the decisions the translator made in the level of language were based on criteria found not on that level but on the hierarchically higher level of ideology." (1992:91)

The untranslatable words are not the only proof of the author's ideology. The change of expression, word addition, and word omission are taking part as well. Hewson and Martin added, "Whatever his motivation in fact may be, it is important to see that the translation is carried out within the framework set by the translator himself, rather than within a predefined set of conditions. This can have an important effect not just on the way a translator works, but also on the choices he will make in his translation." (1991:113) Ideology, even though sometimes marginalized, obviously takes control over literary text and its translation. It indicates the very crucial concept and thinking characteristic concealed from the author in a text.

ANALYSIS

The following data discuss the expression shifts found in the translated text. The analysis will be presented stanza per stanza.

Stanza	Source Text	Target Text
Stanza 1	Kuingat dulu waktu aku sekolah di desa Setiap Senin tegak siap upacara naik bendera Lantang anak nyanyikan Indonesia Raya Pancasila hapal luar kepala.	I remember when I was a school kid in my village Every Monday I stood at attention during the flag raising ceremony Loudly the children sang the national anthem “Indonesia Raya” And recited Pancasila.

In the first stanza, the expression shift can be seen in “Pancasila hapal luar kepala” into “And recited Pancasila”. Instead of equalizing *hapal luar kepala* and translating it into ‘recited by heart’, which according to *Cambridge Dictionary* is “to learn something in such a way that you can say it from memory”, the author translates it into ‘recited’ only. The source text (ST) indicates that the speaker of the poem memorizes *Pancasila* by heart that she can say it from her memory, while the target text (TT) indicates that the speaker only recites *Pancasila* without us knowing whether she really says it from her memory or not.

Stanza	Source Text	Target Text
Stanza 2	Ku tumbuh dalam gempita musik dangdut, keroncong, gamelan dan MTV Gebyar layar wayang kulit, Srimulat, ketoprak Dongeng tentang hantu di pohon kemiri ujung gang Rambo and Superman berteman dengan Gatotkaca dan Srikandi dari Mahabarata, Salah Asuhan, Winetou, Donald Bebek, Putri Salju dan Cinderella	I grew up amidst vibrant music: dangdut, keroncong, gamelan, and MTV Shadow puppet screen, Srimulat comedy, ketoprak performance Stories of ghosts living on a big candle-nut tree at the end of the alley And Rambo and Superman befriended Gatotkaca and Srikandi from the Mahabarata, Salah Asuhan, Winetou, Donald Duck, Snow White and Cinderella

The second stanza indicates that there are eleven expression shifts as seen in the word omission of *gebyar*, the word addition of ‘comedy’ into ‘*Srimulat* comedy’ and ‘performance’ into ‘*ketoprak* performance’, the untranslated words of *dangdut*, *keroncong*, *gamelan*, *Srimulat*, *ketoprak*, *Gatotkaca*, *Srikandi* and *Salah Asuhan*. The word *gebyar*, which according to KBBI (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*) means *gemerlap*, is omitted in the translated poem. The feeling of great Indonesian performances is omitted in the TT and will not be acquired by the TT readers. The word additions suggest that the translator – the author as well – wants to apprise what *Srimulat* and *ketoprak* are to the TT readers. This fact is contradictive to the eight untranslated words. Since ST and TT differ from one another not only in language but also in culture, the untranslated ST words are confusing for TT readers. The meaning becomes vague especially because the author does not give any glossary at all.

Stanza	Source Text	Target Text
Stanza 5	Di sini aku sepi Di tengah lautan putih dan pohon-pohon yang merana Aku merasa asing Seorang pintar berujar, “bahasa adalah rumah bagi jiwa” Sedang lidahku kelu oleh kata-kata yang bapakku tidak mengerti Bahasa yang bukan rumahku berteduh hanya rumah singgah di mana aku tetap tamu yang asing.	Here I am lonely Amidst white sea and heart-broken trees I am an alien here A sage once said “language is the house of being” But my tongue feels stiff from words my father does not understand The language in which I do not find home only a temporary shelter where I am always a guest, yet an alien.

The omission of *berteduh* and the change of expression from *rumah singgah* into ‘temporary shelter’ mark the expression shifts in this stanza. The word ‘shelter’ which in the ST language is equal to *berteduh* should have been used to describe “The language in which I do not find home to shelter”. Instead, it is deployed as the translation of *rumah singgah*. The expression shift of *rumah singgah* to ‘temporary shelter’ seems crucial since shelter does not equal to home. According to *Merriam Webster’s Dictionary*,

‘home’ is “a familiar or usual setting: congenial environment; also: the focus of one's domestic attention”, while ‘shelter’ only means as “something that covers or affords protection”. Both expressions are totally different that they lead to different concepts as well.

Stanza	Source Text	Target Text
Stanza 6	Toh di setiap bandara aku harus tunjukkan buku kecil Penanda diriku sebagai yang kebetulan terlahir di tanah ibuku Toh ada secarik kertas ajaib tertanda nama yang tidak kukenal dan tidak pernah kutemui Toh tanpanya aku tidak bisa tinggal di negeri asing ini	And still, in every airport I have to show my little book which labels me as one born in my mother's land And still I have to keep this magic paper signed with a name I do not know and will never meet And without it, I cannot stay in this foreign land

The addition of ‘will never meet’ shows the expression shift in TT. The speaker in TT tends to say that even in the future she will never meet with the person. The use of word ‘will’ strengthens the idea that the meeting between them will never happen at all. On the ST, the speaker leaves an impression that she might meet the person since she does not say she will never meet. She only states that she never meets the person. This expression shift that looks inconsequential demonstrates the importance of expression in different language. Another expression shift is found in this stanza, indicated by the deletion of the word *toh*. According to KBBI, *toh* means “an affective word that functions to strengthen meaning”. Since expression *toh* is omitted in the TT, the meaning has no strong effect.

Stanza	Source Text	Target Text
Stanza 9	Laki-laki tua renta yang pernah aku temui 2-3 kali itu Kakekku yang asing dan jauh karena dibawa tuan-tuan negeri matahari terbit Dipekerjakan di negeri asing, sepertiku, tinggalkan desa tempatnya lahir Apakah dia juga kapai-kapai yang mabuk dijerat oleh neon-neon sepanjang jalan-jalan di negeri bikinan Tuan Jenderal Raffles? Gemerlapnya lampu-lampu di sana pasti lebih terang Daripada kunang-kunang di sawah kakek buyutnya dan lampu-lampu minyak di desa Di mana istri dan anaknya menunggu dalam kemiskinan yang menyesak Salahkah jika dia tidak kembali Terus mengejar terang neon-neon Pulau Sentosa?	An old man that I met twice or thrice before, my grandfather, a stranger who lives far, taken by masters from the land of the rising sun to work in a foreign land, left his home too, like me. Is he also an intoxicated moth maddened by neon lights along the roads in General Raffles' land? The neon must be brighter than fireflies in his ancestor's paddy field and oil lamps in his village Where a wife and kids were waiting in suffocating poverty Was he to blame for not returning, or returning And for loving the bright neon lights in Sentosa Island instead?

Three expression shifts are found in this stanza: the expression change from *dijerat* into ‘maddened’, *bikinan* into ‘in’, and the omission of word *Tuan*. *Dijerat*, according to Echols and Shadily (2014:277), means “snared or tangled”. On the other hand, ‘maddened’ according to *Oxford Dictionary* is “to make a person or an animal very angry or crazy”. The use of word ‘maddened’ in the TT makes an indication that the speaker expresses the anger due to the what so called colonization. Contrast to the TT, the word *dijerat* in the ST expresses a feeling of powerlessness. The same concept applies to the expression shift from *bikinan* into ‘in’. The speaker seems to detach from the feeling of being ‘colonized’ by not proudly declaring that the road was made by General Raffles. The omission of *Tuan* also is related to the preceding idea that expression shift might be caused by the shift of ideology as well.

CONCLUSION

By observing the expression shifts in the translated poem, it is clear that the ideology that follows a literary text will shift as the language changed. Even though the message conveyed does not differ between the original and the translated text, the atmosphere resulted is distinctive. The author who is altogether the translator of the text delivers different ideology seen from the change of expression, word

addition, word omission, and untranslated words in the translated poem. In the ST, the author expresses what she feels of being alienated very poetically. Many strong Indonesian cultural terms are used in the ST and are obviously being intelligible for the ST readers. On the other hand, it can be assumed in the TT that the author only retells the story in ST and intentionally does not want the TT readers to fully understand what she feels due to the unexplained terms and the change of way of thinking. The expression shifts in the TT show the TT readers what the author means by being alienated.

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