

ANALYSING NOVEL TRANSLATION: The Equivalence of Meaning and Style

Masduki

masdukiunijoyo@yahoo.com

English Department, Trunojoyo University, Madura

ABSTRACT

The analysis of the process of translating a novel needs to be holistically approached which refers to the examination of translation in the viewpoints of genetic factor, objective factor, and affective factor. This analysis is conducted based on the consideration that there is an interplay between translators as the mediating agents, processes of translation, products of translation, and the opinion of the readers about the products of translation. This article highlights the current result of the research conducted by the writer focusing on the analysis on the equivalence of meaning and style found in an Indonesian translation of an English novel using the holistic criticism approach.

Key words: *Equivalence, Meaning, Style, Holistic Approach*

ABSTRAK

Analisis pproses penerjemahan sebuah novel memerlukan pendekatan yang holistik yang merujuk pada evaluasi penerjemahan secara menyeluruh dengan menggunakan tiga sudut pandang. Ketiga sudut pandang tersebut adalah sudut pandang dari faktor genetik, sudut pandang dari faktor objektif dan sudut pandang dari faktor afektif. Artikel ini menganalisis dari ketiga faktor tersebut dengan berdasarkan pertimbangan bahwa terdapat hubungan antara penerjemah sebagai pelaku, proses penerjemahan itu sendiri, produk hasil terjemahan dan tanggapan dari pembaca terhadap hasil terjemahan tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perlunya kajian terjemahan novel dengan fokus padanan makna dan gaya bahasa dari bahasa Indonesia ke dalam bahasa Inggris dengan menggunakan pendekatan kritik holistik.

Kata Kunci: *Equivalence, Meaning, Style, Holistic Approach*

1. Introduction

Process of translating novel needs knowledge of literature and language esthetics and artistic. Translator has to be able to identify the literary elements (theme, character, plot, point of view, setting) and has an understand-

ing of culture and purpose of value of novel being translated, emotion, feeling, and mental set of the author. Translator should not translate a novel word by word or sentence per sentence, but he must consider the overall work of the novel because novel is an integral part

of its elements. Translator should translate idiom into idiom, intention (emotion and feeling) or purpose into intention or purpose, and translator should be careful to the words or structure that seem similar both in source and target language but actually they are different.

Literary translation as a process of transferring messages involves not only two different codes of languages, source language and target language, but also socio-culture condition since texts in translation are in context of socio-culture related to source and target languages. That is why, the translation of literature can not be seen merely as an effort to replace texts from one language to another, but it needs competence of discourse to produce translation syntactically correct, accurate in meaning and style, and socially accepted in cultural based context. If what the translator does is to re-express messages of source language to target language, then the target texts should be equivalent and adequate with the source texts, in which meaning and style of those source and target texts can be understood equally by the readers of source language and target language.

An accurate literary translation can not fulfill its practical purposes as a means of communication between the author of the source texts and the readers of the target texts if the translated texts are difficult to understand by the readers, likewise the translated texts which are considered easy to understand are not good translation if their messages are deviated from the source texts. For that purpose, the translator of literary works needs to master knowledge of socio-cultural background of the source texts, has certain quality of literature, and language esthetics and artistic, and understands the literary works holistically.

Further, in translating literary works, translator needs to understand basic concept and analysis of literary works. Understanding basic concept of literary works means that the literary works should be viewed from their

function to communicate. As such, the literary works are seen as a discourse, that is as a unity containing information, message, expression of the author, and fiction elements. All of those elements are reserved and comprehended fully in life and experienced by the author and then ordered and composed with his imagination and further expressed into story, drama, or novel using simple, fresh, accurate, and live, so that the translated works are not boring, can clearly reveal the purpose of the author, and create desired situation by applying suitable idiom, register, and choices of words. All of those elements are interrelated in texts holistically. Besides, in practice, what is needed by the translator of literary works is not to comprehend literary criticism as a discipline to further become a literary critic, but to interpret literary works better and holistically. So, what is needed by the translator of literary works is more practical analysis approach to understand comprehensively and adequately of the literary works.

Translating literary works, i.e. a novel, is not conducted word by word, in which at glance is well to read, but in fact holistically do not convey messages as it is commissioned by its source texts. Sentences in a novel are not simply utterances of their own, but function as a guide for further ideas. If the translator only translates the words and based on meaning in each sentence, then the result of his translation will be superficial and loss the overall meaning conveyed by the author to his readers.

In translating novel, it is possible that the translator find out some difficulties, such as in aspects of culture, i.e. difficulty in finding terms equivalence related to materials and events of culture, in aspects of literature, i.e. difficulty in translating main characters equivalent to the condition of the readers of novel translation, and also in aspects of linguistics, i.e. difficulty in translating complex sentence and complicated structure.

Based on that complicated requirements

in translating novel, the analysis of the process of translating novel needs to be holistically approached. One concept that has been used in translation studies is the approach of holistic criticism, which is used to refer to the examination of translation in viewpoints of genetic factor (translator of the novel), objective factor (novel and its translation), and affective factor (opinion from the readers). The focus of the holistic criticism approach is the idea that there is an interplay between translators as the mediating agents, processes of translation, products of translation, and the opinion of the readers about the products of translation. They are closely related in the sense that when translators are engaged in translation processes, they are obviously producing products. Their competence in the translation process is determined, to a certain degree, by their backgrounds and knowledge about translation. Similarly, the quality of the products, to a large extent, is dependent on how well they can apply their knowledge of translation processes in translation practices. Their linguistic competence in the source language and the target language, and their understandings of the subject matter, target readers and quality of a translation also play a significant role in the performance of translation tasks. In this research, the holistic criticism approach was applied to examine more closely on the translation of English novel 'The Highest Tide' into Indonesian novel 'Pasang Laut'.

The term equivalence related to the habit and socio-cultural understanding existed in the story, the specific words of the source texts, and style in the overall texts of the novel *The Highest Tide* needs to analyze holistically. This is meant to find out relationship of meaning and style equivalence between the source texts and the target texts, whether the meaning and style equivalence is conducted to fulfill the demand of naturalness or it is intentionally forced by the translator due to his lack of understanding of both source and target languages.

This is very interesting to analyze, because the analysis of the translation which is merely based on the works of translation, it can be predicted that the quality of the translation will not give deep and holistic understanding, the works of the translation is produced through the process of translation and the accuracy and acceptance of the translation works rely on the way the translator conducts the process of the translation, and the translator is the main agent of the translation process, and that is why the decision making of the translator is influenced by the background and competence of the translator. In other words, the analysis of the translation should be viewed holistically involving the background and competence of the translator, product of translation, and opinion of the readers toward the product of the translation.

The objectives of this research are: to know background and competence of the translator, to examine in what extent the background and competence of the translator influence process of transferring messages and quality of translation, to look at ways how equivalence of meaning and style between the source texts and target texts and to measure quality of translation, and to identify opinion of readers toward the product of the translation.

This research is contributed to theoretically review the theory of translation of novel and to show comprehensively relation between background and competence of translator, process of translation, and quality of translation. Further, this research is to give feedback to the translators on how to transfer messages from source texts to target texts of a novel holistically.

2. Research Method

Based on the research problems and objectives focusing on analyzing novel 'The Highest Tide' and its translation using the holistic criticism approach and to get meaningful and comprehensive answers on the research

questions above, qualitative approach was applied in this research. The researcher tried to reveal messages in details and comprehensively about the novel and its translation from the interaction between translator, product of translation, and opinion of the readers. Type of this research was embedded case study research with the analysis of single case study, in which the problems and the focus to review in this research were already determined.

The sources of data were taken based on certain criteria and intention of researcher so that the data represent information needed by the researcher. Sources of data in this research were the translator of the novel *The Highest Tide*, source texts of the novel *The Highest Tide* and its translation *Pasang Laut*, and the readers of the novel translation, and all of them were sampled purposively.

Based on statement of problems, the translator as genetic factor was the translator of the novel *The Highest Tide*. The document as objective factor was sentences of the novel *The Highest Tide* consisting of specific terms of literature. To determine the data, researcher read accurately all sentences in the novel and further identified sentences containing aspects or specific terms in literature. If there were two or more similar words or phrases, only one word or phrase was used as data. In order that the identified data were more accurate, the researcher asked for opinion to an expert of language and literature to make sure that the taken data were valid. The readers as affective factor to be sampled were the expert of translation and the students of university. The expert was the person who has translated many novels, published his works, and mastered the source and target languages. The main purpose of selecting this experienced expert was to get information according to the researched problems.

The techniques used to collect the data were in-depth interview, documentation, and questionnaire. In-depth interview was carried

out to get the data on how the translator translated the novel and on what considerations and decision-making of the translator in translating. Documentation was used to obtain data on transferring messages from the source texts to the target texts of the novel. Questionnaires were employed to measure quality of translation in terms of readability and to identify opinion of readers toward the product of the translation. To increase validity of data, this research employed data triangulation by comparing the results of interview to the content of translation (objective factor), then comparing to the data gathered from the translation experts (affective factor), and finally comparing to the data gathered from the translator (genetic factor). Technique of data analysis used in this research was interactive analysis model. It was started by gathering data in the form of information about the translator, process of translating, and opinion of the readers toward the product of translation. Then the data were selected based on stated problems (data reduction). Further, the data were served in the form of information. Based on this information, the conclusion of this research was formulised, and to get valid conclusion, then the conclusion needs to verify. This process of cycle was conducted simultaneously.

To increase validity of data, the triangulation of data was employed. The researcher made use of other sources of data to get the similar data. In this triangulation of data, the focus was on the sources of data, not on techniques of collecting the data or others. The sources of the data were the translator of the novel *The Highest Tide* dan its translation *Pasang Laut*, expert of translation, and the readers of the novel translation. The triangulation of the data conducted by the ways of: comparing the data from translator of the novel *The Highest Tide* to the content of the translated novel. The comparison was conducted to search or find out the faithfulness of meaning. The data then triangulated to the data from

the expert of translation to further find out the equivalence of meaning and style, untranslatability, gain and loss of meaning from source language to target language. The data then triangulated to the data from the readers and finally triangulated back to the data from the translator to get more valid data.

3. Findings and Discussion

The findings of this research were categorized based on three factors: genetic factor, objective factor, and affective factor, as follows:

3.1 Genetic Factor,

3.1.1 Academic background, professional experiences, and works of translation influenced the translation of novel *The Highest Tide*.

3.1.2 In general, process of translation conducted by the translator in translating novel *The Highest Tide* involved three main steps: preparation, translating, and editing, with the special characteristics; namely, professional, technique, and instrumental skills were applied in process of translating the novel *The Highest Tide*; style of translation was deeply taken into consideration from the beginning until the last step of translating; and process of translating novel *The Highest Tide* considered not only linguistics aspects but also communication act between the sender and the receiver.

It was stated that the academic background, professional experiences, and works of translation influenced the translation of novel *The Highest Tide*. The translator of the novel *The Highest Tide* was graduated from department of translation in Indonesia and postgraduate program of applied linguistics in Australia. The translator has taught some courses in linguistics, literature, and translation, and has experienced in translating for fifteen years since the 1994/1995. Further, the translator has also

published many of his works of translation in the forms of books, novels, and articles.

By seeing the academic background, it can be said that the translator is an expert in translation, meaning that he has special skills in applying elements of linguistics in translating, is able to manage interference in time he comprehends and creates information, and has tendency to consider the translation on texts level. Meanwhile, by seeing the experiences in translating for a long time, it can be said that the translator is considered to be the professional translator, and a proven qualified translator becomes parameter to measure the quality of translation. According to Nababan (2004:31), professional translator is the translator who can produce translation professionally and consider the activity of translating as a profession. The proven professionalism of the translator can be seen from the works of translation he produced. During his profession as translator, the translator has translated many works both in the forms of books and articles, and both in the forms of literary works and non-literary works translation.

Process of translation conducted by the translator in translating novel *The Highest Tide* as stated above involved three main steps: preparation, translating, and editing, with the special characteristics; namely, professional, technique, and instrumental skills were applied in process of translating the novel *The Highest Tide*; style of translation was deeply taken into consideration from the beginning until the last step of translating; and process of translating novel *The Highest Tide* considered not only linguistics aspects but also communication act between the sender and the receiver.

The preparation step conducted by the translator could be divided into two steps, general and specific step. The general steps conducted by the translator in translating novel *The Highest Tide* were: (1) reading the overall texts of novel *The Highest Tide* before translated. The translator studied the overall source texts

to get the holistic description and ideas about the content and style of the novel to further equited to the characteristics of the target texts. To do this, the professional skill was needed. In this step, not only the linguistics characteristics of source texts and the target texts were studied, but also some other factors should be considered, including the time of completion, plotting, and way of expression; (2) searching or browsing internet before translating; and (3) preparing compatible dictionaries. The specific steps conducted by the translator were comprehending terms in indexes, reading past and recent novels related to specific terms of the novel *The Highest Tide*, and considering style. What the translator meant by the style was how to consider the length of sentences or paragraphs, width or size of pages, font types and lines distance, size of paper, type of column, and contexts relation of novel and readers. This step is in accordance with the step as it is stated by Sumarno (1997:13; 2003:16) and Nababan (2003:24-25) that in general, before a translator analyses texts, the translator is always faced with the source texts first. In this step what the translator does is to read and understand the content of source texts. In understanding the content of the texts, it is required the understanding of linguistics and extralinguistics aspects of the source texts. The linguistics elements refer to the features of language while extralinguistics elements refer to the elements outside the language. The extralinguistics aspects are related to the socio-cultural texts of source texts as interrelated parts of that language.

Next step conducted by the translator was writing results of translation in computer and at the same time: checking words or phrases, finding difficult meaning in dictionaries, understanding meaning based on contexts, accessing references in internet, writing in other expressions, deciding whether to use loan words, naturalisation, synonym, footnotes, or to create new words, consulting to other trans-

lators or experts, and writing words in translation drafts. These actions and decisions were conducted repeatedly and differently in needed.

In this step, the translator had to find out equivalence for all words, phrases, clauses, and/or sentences. In finding out equivalence, the translator needed to consider that certain words had also certain characteristics or traits, some words could not be translated literally merely by copying from dictionaries or glossaries of two languages, and that was why it was needed special attention from the translator. Some words having those specific characteristics were very possible to create problems in translation. The problems of translation of the specific terms, as it is stated by Baker (1992) can be in forms of: certain concept of culture, source texts semantically complicated, source texts and target texts having meaning differently, target texts lacking superordinate, target texts lacking specific terms, different concept of source language and target language physically, difference in expressing meaning and style, difference in frequency and purpose of using specific forms, and using loan words in source texts. Meanwhile, according to the translator, problems in translation about the specific terms covering the translation of specific terms in the source texts which are not available or equivalent in the target texts, the cultural terms of source texts, and figure of speech.

Final step was editing translation. The focus of revision was the linguistics quality of translated texts and naturalness of translated texts. After some improvement, final revision was conducted and let the work of translation for few weeks to get the naturalness of the result.

3.2 Objective Factor,

3.2.1 Types of meaning realized in translating novel *The Highest Tide* were lexical, grammatical, situational or contextual,

textual, socio-cultural, and implicit meaning. Types of style realized in translating novel *The Highest Tide* were the usage of choices of words in target texts, the usage of idiomatic expression in target texts relevant to source texts, the usage of the same figure of speech in target texts to replace figure of speech in source texts, the usage of suitable words, structure, and other expressions in target texts relevant to its type of text, and the usage of punctuation mark in target texts which can be modified after compared it with punctuation mark in source texts. One data consisted of not only one meaning or style but also realized in other meanings or styles of translation. Meaning and style frequently existed in the translation of novel *The Highest Tide* were the use of socio-cultural meaning (68.70%) and lexical meaning (14.78%) with the the usage of choices of words in target texts (60,87%).

3.2.2 Quality of translation of the novel *The Highest Tide* into *Pasang Laut* viewed on criteria of translation quality assessment categorized in good translation (*terjemahan baik*) with the score 61-75. Meanwhile, since there was no perfect translation and no scoring toward equivalence of meaning and style objectively, then the scoring was relative and based on criteria more or less.

3.2.3 Aspects in translating specific terms in literature found out in novel *The Highest Tide* covered aspects of: materials of culture, ecological terms, gesture and habit, socio-culture, specific terms of concepts or ideas, organizational terms, religion and artistic, and figure of speech (metaphors, idioms, slogan, and advertisement)

Types of meaning realized in translating novel *The Highest Tide* were lexical, grammatical, situational or contextual, textual, socio-

cultural, and implicit meaning. One data consisted of not only one meaning but also realized in other meanings. After the data were classified, 14.78% constituted as data containing the lexical meaning, 2.61% containing the grammatical meaning, 3.48% having situational or contextual meaning, 2.61% having textual meaning, 68.70% containing socio-cultural meaning, 5.22% having implicit meaning, and 2.61% containing lexical and socio-cultural meaning.

Types of style realized in translating novel *The Highest Tide* were the usage of choices of words in target texts, the usage of idiomatic expression in target texts relevant to source texts, the usage of the same figure of speech in target texts to replace figure of speech in source texts, the usage of suitable words, structure, and other expressions in target texts relevant to its type of text, and the usage of punctuation mark in target texts which can be modified after compared it with punctuation mark in source texts. One data consisted of not only one style but also realized in other styles of translation. After the data were classified, 60.87% were the usage of choices of words in target texts, 17.39% containing the usage of idiomatic expression in target texts relevant to source texts, 4.25% having the usage of the same figure of speech in target texts to replace figure of speech in source texts, 8.70% having the usage of suitable words, structure, and other expressions in target texts relevant to its type of text, 0.87% containing the usage of punctuation mark in target texts which can be modified after compared it with punctuation mark in source texts, 1.74% realizing style in the usage of idiomatic expression in target texts relevant to source texts with the usage of punctuation mark in target texts which can be modified after compared it with punctuation mark in source texts, and 5.22% constituted realizing style with the usage of choices of words in target texts and the usage of punctuation mark in target texts which can be modified after com-

pared it with punctuation mark in source texts . Meaning and style frequently existed in the translation of novel *The Highest Tide* were the use of socio-cultural meaning (68.70%) and lexical meaning (14.78%) with the the usage of choices of words in target texts (60,87%).

Quality of translation of the novel *The Highest Tide* into *Pasang Laut* viewed on criteria of translation quality assessment categorized in good translation (*terjemahan baik*) with the score 61-75. Meanwhile, since there was no perfect translation and no scoring toward equivalence of meaning and style objectively, then the scoring was relative and based on criteria more or less because evaluation toward the equivalence of meaning and style objectively was difficult to attain and the score then was not absolute.

Aspects in translating specific terms in literature found out in novel *The Highest Tide* covered aspects of: materials of culture, ecological terms, gesture and habit, socio-culture, specific terms of concepts or ideas, organizational terms, religion and artistics, and figure of speech (metaphors, idioms, slogan, and advertisement). An example of specific terms found out in the novel is as follows (ecological terms):

Source Text:

“You hear that crunching sound?” I asked.
“Yeah.”
“You’re killing **sand dollars**.”
She winced. “Walk over here,” I said.

Target Text:

“Kau dengar suara gemeretak itu?” tanyaku padanya.
“Ya”
“Kau sedang membunuh **dolar pasir**.”
Spontan dia melompat ke samping.
“Lewat sini,” kataku.

3.3 Affective Factor,

3.3.1 According to the translation expert, in general the translation of the novel *The*

Highest Tide was very good, and something made the translation interesting was how the translator reduced and added meaning in target texts to make the texts lively, however, consistency and accuracy in translating the novel should be taken into more consideration,

3.3.2 Result of questionnaire from samples of readers showed that language used in novel translation was good to read, texts was easy to understand, and words selected was relevant to convey information.

According to the translation expert, in general the translation of the novel *The Highest Tide* was very good, and something made it interesting was how the translator reduced and added meaning in target texts to make the texts lively, as the following examples:

Source Text:

We started out studying the little chimney holes in the mud through which clams siphoned and spat seawater, hunting for the telltale signs of the geoduck. Most of those huge clams-**pronounced gooey-duck for some reason**-lived farther out in the bay, but there were still plenty of exposed burrows if the tide fell low enough and you knew where to look.

Target Text:

*Kami mulai dengan mengamati gundukan-gundukan kecil mirip cerobong asap di lumpur, yang digunakan tiram untuk menyedot dan menyemprotkan air laut, sambil mengamati tanda-tanda keberadaan mereka. Sebagian besar tiram raksasa itu suka menggali sarang di bagian teluk yang dalam, namun kalau air pasang tidak terlalu tinggi, dengan mudah kalian dapat melihat pintu masuk liang mereka, sehingga tidak sulit mencarinya (**reduced meaning**).*

Source Text:

Overhead lights had crashed onto dozens of desks, but Mrs. Guthrie’s portable classroom

actually fell off its blocks and split in two, as if struck by a huge axe. **The Ice Queen didn't smile once during the 181 days of my fourth grade.** So why was her classroom singled out? Or what about the stretch of crumbled chimneys the quake left behind on just one side of Jefferson Avenue? And why did the brand-new fake fountain at the entrance to Sunset states crack all the way through?

Target Text:

*Ruangan-ruangan kelas lainnya tak seberapa rusak, kecuali bola-bola lampu yang jatuh menimpa lusinan bangku, tapi ruang kelas Ibu Guthrie jatuh anjlok dari beton penyangganya dan terbelah menjadi dua seperti dihantam kapak raksasa. **Ratu Es yang judes itu belum pernah sekali pun tersenyum selama 181 hari mengajar kami di kelas empat.** Jadi, kenapa hanya ruang kelasnya yang dipilih oleh petaka itu? Atau, mengapa di Jalan Jefferson bangunan-bangunan yang rata dengan tanah hanya di satu sisi saja? Dan mengapa air mancur*

buatan di gerbang kompleks Sunset estates yang baru selesai itu harus hancur berkeping-keping?(added meaning)

4. Conclusion

Based on research findings and discussion, it was concluded that academic background, professional experience, and works of translation, process of translating with professional, technique, and instrumental skills, translation strategies, influenced the quality of translation novel *The Highest Tide* into *Pasang Laut*. This quality of translation was showed with result of evaluation in category of good translation (*terjemahan baik*). This good translation was supported by the statement from the expert of translation that in general the translation of novel *The Highest Tide* was very good and the statement from the readers that language used in novel translation was good to read, texts was very clear and easy to understand, and words choices were relevant to convey information.

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