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Song Translation: A Strategy to Teach Translation for Young Learners

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Abstract

This research aimed to find out the implementation of song translation for young learners and to find out the difficulties faced by the students in translating song. The researcher used descriptive qualitative research design. The researcher collected the data from students' translation text. The English songs were translated into Indonesian songs and vice versa. The data were collected by (1) deciding the song, (2) observing the process of translating text and the performance, and (3) interviewing the students about the difficulties. After being collected, the data were analyzed by these steps: (1) decribing the implementation of song translation, (2) elaborating the difficulties faced by the students, and (3) drawing the conclusion. The result showed that the implementation of song translation was divided into these following steps: (1) the lecturer managed the class into some groups, (2) the lecturer gave the song lyric in a rolled paper, (3) the students found the core meaning of the song, (4) the students translated the song, (5) the students tried to sing the translated version, (6) the students sang the song, (7) the students created video clip. In addition, the students faced some difficulties: (1) the students got difficulties in finding the synonym of the words that can be sung as in the original song and (2) the students got difficulties in maintaining the words as in the original song rhyme.

Keywords: translation, song translation, young learners

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1. Introduction

English becomes is important languages in this world, since it plays important role in international communication. English is placed in second level of most language users around the world, that Mandarin is the first. English becomes the popular language to be mastered by people, as well as in Indonesia. Therefore, English is included in school subject as the second language or foreign language learning.

However, not all people can master English easily. The different in pronunciation and the complexity of tenses become problems in learning English. The personality factors, like anxiety and motivation also give impact for the success of learning English. English

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becomes the "disaster" for the students, as well as the adult learners. Here, translation exists as "a bridge" to solve this problem.

Translation exists in human daily lives. Through translation, books or articles can be translated into many other languages based on the demand. The film can be spread around the world by using translation product, subtitling and dubbing. Translation also occurs in product brochure that gives advantages in economic value. Multilingual product brochure is intended to widen the scope of target market.

Talking about translation, it has many definitions. Bell (1991: 6) defines it as the replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of an equivalent text in a second language. While Catford (1965: 20) says that translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL). From those definitions, it is implied that translation covers three key terms: replacement, language (SL and TL) and equivalence.

Translation covers two areas, product of translation and process of translation. Those two areas are interconnected each other. Translating is not simply as reading the original text, opening dictionary and rewriting the expression into target text. It is the old assumption in translation. Translation needs some process to gain the accurate translation. According to Larson (1984), the process of translation can be drawn in the following picture:
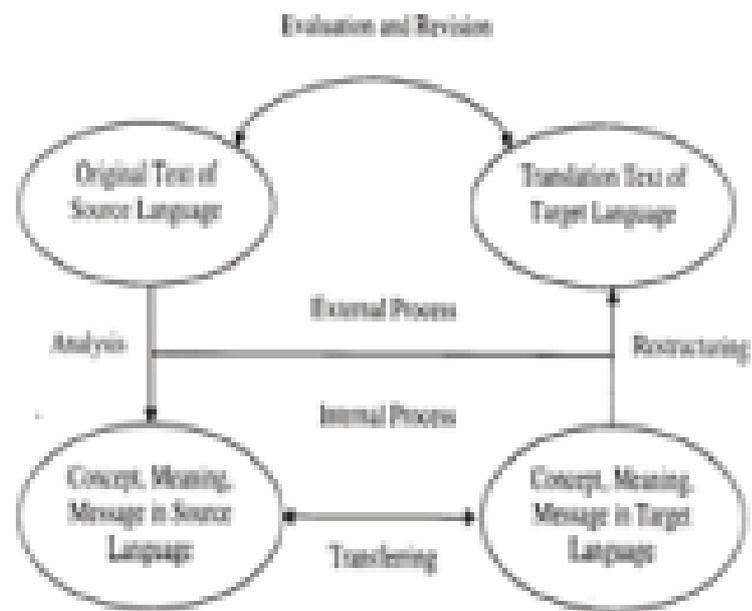

Figure 1: Translation Process.

Talking about the product of translation, equivalence becomes the "core" in translation. As Nida and Taber (1982) said that translating consists in the reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message,

firstly in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. With regard to equivalence, Nida maintains that there are two basic types of equivalence: (1) formal equivalence and (2) dynamic equivalence. In particular, Nida argues that in formal equivalence the TT resembles very much the ST in both form and content whereas in dynamic equivalence an effort is made to convey the ST message in the TT as naturally as possible (Panou, 2013).

Related to the product of translation, the quality of translation must be maintained by the translator. Larson (1998: 485) points out that a good translation has several criteria, such as: accuracy, clarity and naturalness. Accuracy refers to the precise understanding of the source language message and the transfer of message as accurate as possible into the target language. Here, the translators have to bring the expression in ST into TT accurately.

One of strategy to increase the students' translation accuracy is using song. Compared to translation studies of literature, translations of singable songs pose specific demands on the translator (Andersson and Ulvaeus, 2009). For instance, the translator needs to have a good sense of rhythm to make a successful translation, so that s/he does not put a long syllable on a short note, to mention but one example. Rhythms, note-values, harmonies, durations, phrasings and stresses are examples of features within music that simply cannot be ignored when translating lyrics (Low 2005:185). In addition, the translators have to consider some aspects. For instance, the song must be singable, and the text must sound as if it had been made for the music (Low 2005:190). Further, when choosing words, the translator must be semantically flexible and pay great attention to rhythm and rhyme in order to get a natural sound to the song (Low 2005:195).

2. Method

The researcher used descriptive qualitative research design. The researcher collected the data from students' translation text. The English songs were translated into Indonesian songs and vice versa. There are five songs as the data source: Nothing's Gonna Change my Love for You by George Benson, Un-Break My Heart by Toni Braxton, Broken Vow by Lara Fabian, A Whole New World by Peabo Bryson, I Wanna Grow Old with You by Westlife. The data were collected by (1) deciding the song, (2) observing the process of translating text and the performance, and (3) interviewing the students about the difficulties. After being collected, the data were analyzed by these steps: (1) decribing the implementation of song translation, (2) elaborating the difficulties faced by the students, and (3) drawing the conclusion.

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3. Findings

3.1. The implementation of song translation

There were some steps in implementing song translation:

1. The lecturer managed the class into some groups.

   In the beginning of the class, the lecturer managed class into five groups. The class consisted of 21 students, with 4-5 students in each group. The lecturer selected the students by the numbers. The lecturer made a piece of paper with number 1-5 as many as 21 students. Then, the students rolled the paper, which the students cannot see, the number written inside. The lecturer called the students based on the students' number to come in front of the class and took the number. The last, they wrote their name on the row based on their number. After completing the students grouping, they moved their chair based on their group.

2. The lecturer gave the song lyric in a rolled paper.

   After grouping the students, the lecturer gave them six rolled paper where the title and song lyric written inside. The lecturer called group leader to take the paper. Then, they back to their group and open the paper. They had a chance to switch the title with the rest of the paper if the song was unfamiliar to them. However, they had to take the last paper decision.

3. The students found the core meaning of the song.

   After reading the song lyric, the students were given time to listen the song. They searched the core meaning of the song. It is important step because translating song is not translating word by word. They had to catch the overall meaning first, and then decided the words choice.

4. The students translated the song.

   After completing rewriting the song lyric into Bahasa Indonesia, they must harmonize the translated lyric with the rhyme. It is the difficult step in translating a song lyric. They must "mix and match" the meaning into a singable translated version of a song lyric.

5. The students tried to sing the translated version.

   After completing translating song lyric, they tried to sing the translated version together. In this step, they can add, omit or change the words due to the reason of singable translated version. However, they still keep the meaning of ST.

6. The students sang the song

After practicing together with their group, the lecturer called them randomly to perform and sing the song. They sang the song in front of the class.

7. The students created video clip.

The final step is creating the video clip. All of the group members had to participate in making video clip. The example of video clip can be watched in this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9J4kwRkQc7w.

3.2. The difficulties faced by the students in translating song

1. The students got difficulties in finding the synonym of the words that can be sung as in the original song

Translating song is not easy. The students have to focus into two areas: bringing the meaning in ST into TT and making the translated version singable. Some students keep the meaning tightly based of what is written in ST but they had difficulties in singing the translated version. The other cases, they got the singable words, but the meaning is omitted in some parts. Here is the example:

Taken from "Unbreak My Heart" by Toni Braxton

ST: Don't leave me in all this pain
Don't leave me out in the rain

TT: *Jangan tinggalkan aku*
Dalam kesedihanku

The example above shows that the translator omits the words in TT in order to sing the expression. The translator cannot translate "Don't leave me in all this pain" into the most accurate word for word translation "*Jangan tinggalkan aku dalam sakit ini*" because the TT expression cannot be sung like the original song. The expression is too long. The second sentence "Don't leave me out in the rain" is translated into "*Dalam kesedihan*" because "the rain" can represents "tears". It implies that the person inside was was sad.

Taken from "A whole New World" by Peabo Bryson

ST: I can show you the world

TT: *Lihatlah dunia*

The example above shows that translators omit the word. It is free translation technique to get the naturalness between ST and TT. The expression "I can show you the

world" was translated into "*Lihatlah dunia*". The expression in ST is a statement and the expression in TT is command sentence. The translator cannot translate the ST into "*Aku bisa menunjukkanmu dunia*" because it is too long to be sung.

(2) The students got difficulties in maintaining the words as in the original song rhyme

Some expression cannot be translated completely because of differences song rhyme. Especially, Indonesian language tends to be longer than English language. However, the solution is implementing omission and addition to keep the song rhyme, as in the example below:

Taken from "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love for You" by George Benson

ST: Nothing's gonna change my love for you
You oughta know by now how much I love you
One thing you can be sure of
I'll never ask for more than your love

TT: *Tiada yang merubah cintaku*
Betapa besar ku mencintaimu
Hal yang kan kau yakini
Ku hanya meminta cintamu

The example above shows that the translator got difficulties in maintaining the ST expression completely. The translator translates the first line "Nothing's gonna change my love for you" into "*Tiada yang merubah cintaku*" and omits "for you" in order to make the expression singable. In the second line, the translator omits the expression "You ought to know by now" and makes it into simple expression "*Betapa besar ku mencintaimu*". In the third line "I'll never ask for more than your love", the translator simplifies the expression into "*Ku hanya meminta cintamu*". It is simpler than ST is but the meaning is still accurate.

4. Conclusion

The researcher can take these conclusions:

1. The result showed that the implementation of song translation was divided into these following steps: (a) the lecturer managed the class into some groups, (b) the lecturer gave the song lyric in a rolled paper, (c) the students found the core meaning of the song, (d) the students translated the song, (e) the students tried to

sing the translated version, (f) the students sang the song, (g) the students created video clip.

2. The students faced some difficulties: (a) the students got difficulties in finding the synonym of the words that can be sung as in the original song and (b) the students got difficulties in maintaining the words as in the original song rhyme.

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