



Untranslatability and Equivalence in Song's Translation

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Abstract

Adaptation is essential in translating song's lyrics. Creating new lyrics without clear connection to original lyrics also consider as song's translation. Untranslatability of the song caused by many aspects such as phonological aspect, rhyme, rhythm, figurative language and sentence order or syntax. In this study, equivalence understood through Franzon and Low's theory which is provides a lot of choices to translate the song and mantain singability. This study aims to describe the way of translator in translating lyrics. Besides, researcher describes factors that influence the translation. This qualitative study used content analysis method. The data taken from 3 songs by titles "I no can do, I will stand by you & My heart is asking you" of Fabrizio Faniello. The results show that there are untranslatability aspects in the lyrics of this song caused by linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Those 3 songs built by new lyrics. Creating new lyrics with respecting original music is also include into various choices of translating song. Skopos theory by Vermeer also make the study in debates. It is said that the aims of translation become the main focus which is mean the translation result have to adapt to its purpose.

Keywords: *Linguistic Factor; Non-linguistic; Skopos*

Introduction

Along with globalization and cultural exchange, music has become a global medium of cultural communication. In cultural transfer, the first communication received in life is through music (Ford, 2020). Thus, throughout history, translation has played a very important role in conveying thoughts and knowledge from one nation to another. Apart from that, the act of translation does not just change the message from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) but translation is also an act of solving problems. Sometimes it is difficult to solve problems in translation, so the idea of untranslation arises. Translation is a bridge to cultural transfer. Therefore, the translation must meet the needs of all types of translation including song translation.

Translating a song is a complicated mission for translators. In addition to the usual translation problems, translators need to remember that the purpose of translating songs is to be sung again in TL. To achieve a singable translation of the song, the translator is committed to balancing the five principles of Pentathlon, namely singability, sense, naturalness, rhyme, and rhythm. To achieve a balance of these five

aspects, Low (2010) encourages translators to reflect on the characteristics and background of the song's lyric writing. The more information you get, the better the translation will be.

Song translation not only requires optimally conveying ideas and messages from the SL to the target audience, but also must be in accordance with the poetic and musical aspects of the target language. Thus, the main problem in translation is finding an equivalent translation because of the differences in grammar and culture between SL and TL. In this regard, Catford (1978) also stated that the main problem of translation practice is finding the translation equivalent of the target language which is difficult to achieve. It is considered as untranslatability.

Untranslatability of the song caused by many aspects such as phonological aspect, rhyme, rhythm, figurative language and sentence order or syntax. Phonological change is a language phenomenon that occurs because language users change the distribution of phonemes in a language. The aims of this study are to explain the phonological processes that occur in English and Indonesian language and to explain the differences in phonological forms between English and Indonesian. For example the word through, thought, caught and many other words have different pronunciation in its language itself. Compare to pronunciation in Indonesian language, those examples prove that there is a big difference in phonological aspect between English and Indonesian (Diani, 2021). Besides, Use of rhymes strategy is known as a strategy that presents a repetition of similar sound ending between a line with another line of a verse. The application of rhymes strategy is discussed briefly in Leni (2019). Rhymes application in the song make the melody more interesting. Another issue is rhythm. Some translators, for example, tries to make the song singability. So, word count will be their focus in translating lyrics. Word count is a strategy that refers to a comparison of the number of words in the source line and the target line of song lyrics (Leni, 2019).

Furthermore, translating figurative sentences is difficult to overcome. Translating figurative language especially in a song lyric is not easy, therefore, it uses translation strategies to translate song lyrics it becomes an important part of the song lyric to strengthen the message and creativity of the lyric itself (Jayanti, 2022). Various vocabularies and appropriate figurative language procedures are required to transfer the figurative language from a source language to the target language. A translator must have the greatest strategy in order to complete a figurative language translation process. The accuracy with which the translator selects the translation method determines whether a text is correctly translated or not. The application of adequate translation strategies may effectively and accurately protect messages and ideas from the source language into the target language.

When looking for equivalence, translators are faced with the concepts of translatable and untranslatable items. In the problem of untranslation, the translator is dealing with elements that have no equivalent in the target language. This is supported by Catford (1978) who argues that failure in translating untranslated words occurs when the same functional features of the SL situation into contextual meaning in TL are impossible to establish. This study discusses the untranslation of the lyrics of the song *I no can do, I will stand by you & My heart is asking you*". The discussion in this study focuses on two things, untranslation of words and sentences and equivalence of meaning from the results of the translation. Franzon (2014) says that song translation will work well if the prosodic, poetic and reflexive semantic functions are well combined by the translator. Franzon proposes five options for translators to translate songs according to the desired focus: which are Leaving the song untranslated, Translating the lyrics but not considering the music, writing new lyrics for the original music without a clear connection to the original lyrics, Translate the lyrics and adapt the music as far as needed and adapt the translation to the original music.

Translators have their own reasons for translating songs. Irawan (2022) which examines the procedures of translating song lyrics into Indonesian of "Things will get better" by Agnes Monica from Indonesia. The purpose of this study is to determine the translation strategy used in translating the song

and to find out the moral values contained in the song. This is very different from Gita (2016) who researched Translation strategies in the rendition of the “*Amazing grace*” song into Indonesian. This study emphasizes the suitability of the number of syllables in translating songs into the target language. The SL “*Amazing grace*” has the same meter and rhymes as the TL. At first if we talking about a meter that contains the number of syllables and beats. Every stanza in this the song is divided into 4 lines, and if we look at the number of syllables in each stanza pattern number of syllables will be 8 and 6 syllables. Original version of this song and the Indonesian translation has the same number of syllables for all stanzas because this is a translation of the song lyrics so we have to make the same number of syllables so we can sing this song properly like the original version. For this purpose, in Indonesian version of the song has some words that have been shortened.

Another research from Zakiyah (2020) examines about strategies and techniques of translation in translating songs as 21st century curriculum. In the result, researchers provide 5 detail ways to deal with song translation which are: First, shape shift. Shifting caused by the system and language rules. In this case the translator has no option to do so. The shift is made if grammatical structure in SL. Shifts made for the reasonable expression. It is possible to have a literal translation according to for grammatical structures although the equivalent is unnatural or rigid in TL. Shifts made to fill a collection of vocabulary including textual devices such as word “*pun*” in Indonesian. Second, meaning shift or modulation. There are times the structure changes as it happens in the procedure. It is also involves a change including a shift in meaning because there has also been a change perspective, point of view or other meaningful aspect. This shift in meaning is called modulation. Third, adaptation. Adaptation is the pursuit of a cultural equivalent between two specific situations. Some cultural expressions whose concepts are not the same between SL and TL requires adaptation. Fourth, contextual matching. Giving context or contextual conditioning is the placement of information in context. In translation, it is important to consider the communication principle that expressed in sentences to avoid misinformed. The last, matching recordings. If all translation procedures or strategies cannot produce the expected equivalent, a step that can be taken is to match the records. For example, in translating words or expressions that have no lexical equivalent in TL.

This study describes the choices in translating song which said that creating new lyrics without clear connection to original lyrics also consider as song’s translation. Translating song is a specific purposes. An established theory for this case is discussed enough in Skopos theory. Common meaning of Skopos are: translator need to know why a Source text is to be translated and what the function of the Targett text will be is crucial for the translator. According to Vermeer (Metin, 2017) the methods and strategies used to produce a translation are determined by the intended purpose of the target text. It is different from equivalence based theories where the source text and its effect on the source language audience or even the function attributed to it by the author determine the translation result. Skopos theory holds that the prospective function or aim of the target text is determined by translators. Skopos theory states that text have to convey consciously and consistently based on principle respecting the target text. The theory does not state what the principle is. The aims of translation activity must be decided separately in each specific case (Metin, 2017).

In this case, the author choose to translate the song using an adaptation strategy to mantain the rhythm of the song. There are some additions or omissions or modifications to important details of the source text. Therefore, it can be said that the target text is important and exists out of the source text in terms of fidelity and similarity. Low (2010) defines adaptation as an adaptation is a derivative text in which significant details of meaning have not been transferred which can easily happen. For Skopos, the translator can modify the translation based on purposes. However, it is partially reaching for the perfect translation. This study aim to describe the way of translator in translating lyrics. Besides, researcher also describes factors that influence the translation.

Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative through content analysis method. The purpose of qualitative research is to conduct a systematic study of a case or cases and to give a description of the research object. This research describes the phenomenon related to the linguistic and non-linguistic problems which may occur in the translation of the Fabrizio's songs. The data of this study were the lyrics of Fabrizio Faniello's song by titles "*I no can do, I will stand by you & My heart is asking you*" by Fabrizio Faniello. The researcher used a new creation of song's lyrics as main data. The research started from analyzing the translation choices proposed by Franzon (2014) & Low (2005). Next, the researcher analyzed the factors caused the untranslatability aspects contained in the lyrics which included linguistics and non-linguistic factors. The data analyzed by reading and note-taking. Furthermore, the study described the translation result into 2 items. Meanwhile, the reliability test was carried out by experts in the field of translation to audit the research process. In this case, the researcher checked it through expert judgment.

Findings and Discussion

This study aims to describe how the singer created new lyrics of the songs. The singer choose to adapt the rhythm to the original music. Fabrizio re-create lyrics to maintain singability. Besides, the researcher finds some factors influence the translation process which are linguistic and non-linguistics aspects.

A. Linguistic Factor

Linguistic untranslatability is defined as the failure to find an equivalent in the target language because there is a complete difference between the source language and the target language. More precisely, linguistic untranslatability is a situation when the linguistic elements of the source language cannot be replaced adequately in terms of structural, linear, functional or semantic as a result of the lack of denotation or common connotations in the SL. Linguistic problem indicated in most of translated song. It is influenced by Skopos (Vermeer, 2000) and choices in translating lyrics (Franzon, 2014).

1. Phonological Aspect

The big difference between English and Indonesian is because each language has its own phoneme system and cannot be supported by each language. The pronunciation has no equivalent in both languages. As a result, it is difficult to translate the lyrics into the target language. The song "*I no can do, I will stand by you & My heart is asking you*", the writer found that the entire song could not be translated into the target language because of the different phoneme systems of the both languages. Indonesian phonology can be said as consistent language because it has the same sound between letters and their sounds. In contrast to English, where pronunciation and writing do not follow the same form. The pronunciation is not consistent with the written form. Some example in the song are: "*break, doubt, heart, tears, keep, deep, should, guide, soul, would, weep*". In the phonology field, there is a process of phonological change. This phonological change occurs when a speaker pronounces a word in a certain language by changing, adding, inserting, and a sound at the beginning, middle, and end of a word. When two sounds that are close together resemble adjacent sounds in several words, it is called a phonetic process (Diani, 2021).

Phonological changes in pronouncing a word can occur in the form of phonetic changes sounds. Josef (2013) stated that phonetic change is a phonetic implementation of shifting from surface phonological representations. This change will produce a new sound in words. The findings in line with the previous study conducted by Diani (2021). The author said that the cases of the phonological change have been a language phenomenon and are often experienced by language learners who study a second

language in Indonesia including Indonesian language and English. For example, the word “*break & heart*” is a type of phonological changes called assimilation. It occurs when two vowel phonemes meet, so the sound of the pronunciation changes into one vowel sound, such as - /ea/ - shift to - /e / - (heart → hert), - /ea/ - shift to - /i/. The word “*deep, keep & weep*” also meet two vowel phonemes and the sound of the pronunciation changes into one vowel sound. Such as -/ee/- shift to - /i:/.

2. Assonance Aspect

Verse 1	Verse 2
I walked on the street When of all the friends I meet	When I said it face to face And I want to live this place

Assonance refers to the effect created when two words have the same vowel sound, but different consonants, or the same consonant but different vowels. Assonance in the song above are: Verse 1: **street/meet** and Verse 2: **face/place**.

3. Rhyme

A rhyme is a short poem which the last word in a line has the same sound as the last word in another line, especially the next one. The rhyme pairs found in the song “I No Can Do” are: *say-okay, be found- be found, real-seal, can do- can do*.

Verse 3	Verse 5
It's hard for me to say Saying every thing's okay Cause I see, you have someone now And my love, never will be found And my love, it never will be found	The moon, the stars no doubt it's real But never you, because I know that my heart forever seal I no, I no can do I no, I no can do

4. Untranslatable of Words and Sentences

Untranslatability arises because in the translation process no equivalent is found that matches the context, structure and language pattern of the target language. There are snippets of song lyrics such as the following, “*No one knows, in my heart it's you*”. And the second lyric, “*No one knows, my heart belongs to you*”. The suffix “s” in “*knows*”, which is attached to visible verbs and cannot be translated into Indonesian. In English the ending -s in the verb, is a third person marker while in Indonesian it does not add additions to words or for something that the third person does. Furthermore, in the lyrics verse 1 “*I walked on the street*” and verse 3 “*But you knew, knew must spinning round*”. The word “*knew*” and “*walked*” in the past tense indicates the event was completed in the past, or an activity that just finished. However, in Indonesian language need to add the word “*telah*” before the verb to create an equivalence meaning. This happen because the verb in Indonesian language has a separate meaning from the adverb of time. Such compensation is closely related to the difference in narrative tenses in the target language. For recent cases, translator solved it by interpretation. A Translation strategy that creates a new version based on translators’ interpretation. The translators still maintain the content of the source lyric but the structure will be changed (Zakiyah, 2020).

This is also called syntactic different between English and Indonesia. In line with another study conducted by Nur (2022). The study found a significant shift in sentence order. For example in Indonesian lyric, it is written: “*Aku tak punya bunga, aku tak punya harta*”. This sentence is written orderly with subject + predicate + object. But, in its English lyric, it is translated into “*Don't have flowers, don't have gold*”. This sentence is not written orderly with subject + predicate. English

translation is the missing subject of the sentence. Another case is In Indonesian lyric, it is written “*Segala cara telah kucoba*”. This sentence is not written orderly with subject + predicate. But, in its English lyric, it is translated into “*I tried everything*”. This sentence is written orderly with subject + predicate.

B. Non-linguistic Factors

1. Untranslatability in Figurative Language

Some figurative languages are found in the lyrics of the song *I will stand by you & My heart is asking you* such as “*I will break your fall*”, “*Don't keep it bundled up deep inside*”, “*I wrote it in my heart, now my heart is asking you*”, “*Just listen to my heart and you'll hear me say I do*”. Translating figurative language contains specific aims for both translators and readers/listeners. That is why certain translation techniques (Molina & Albir, 2002) is essential to apply such as how to create a good lyric of metonymy such as “*I will break your fall*” and “*Don't keep it bundled up deep inside*”, or personification such the lyrics “*Just listen to my heart and you'll hear me say I do*” and “*My heart is asking you*”. Personification is inanimate thing given the attributes of a human being (Indratno, 2020). In personification, people can see that non-human things seem like doing human's activity. Besides, Metonymy is figure of speech that substitute the detail of an experience for the experience itself (Indratno, (2020). Shortly, metonymy is the use of word that is used to represent another word. Metonymy replaces another name of thing that is closely related with it.

In addition to the linguistic aspect, untranslatability can also occur in non-linguistic aspects, namely the cultural gap that occurs between source language and target language. Language is part of culture. So in this case, translation does not only mean the process of transferring meaning in grammatical terms, but also includes culture. Figurative language is often used in a literary work. This figure of speech is commonly used in literary works, such as novels and poetry. Figurative language can also be found in a song, as a medium to express one's feelings (Ariska, 2021). If a figure of speech in a language cannot be translated correctly or equivalently into the target language, the translator must find the figure of speech in the source text in the target text that contains the same meaning and expresses the same concept. Therefore, the translator can make the target text as aesthetically pleasing as the source text. It is a big challenge for a translator to transfer figurative languages from a language to another language, especially in the song lyrics. Figurative language in songs makes ideas, feelings, and emotions stronger and more touching. It becomes an important part of the song lyric to strengthen the message and creativity of the lyric itself (Jayanti, 2022).

This song lyrics is full of modification. Because the singer choose to maintain the original music to reach singability. “*I no can do*” song contained figurative languages such as written in the *Reff* “*I cannot open up my heart - Along that side to the night and - Send my tears to the stars - I tell the moon how I feel but never knew - I no, I no can do*”. The lyrics contains metaphor meaning which is implied comparison of word which generally applies for one thing that is used to another. Besides, the sentences also contain personification meaning which is giving animal or non-human thing to act like human being. These case are in line with the study conducted by Satriawan (2017). The author said that figurative language make a song more dramatic and full of sense. Furthermore, figurative language add intentions to make a song more enjoyable for listener. Specifically in translating songs, lyricists can have many intentions and aims. The main intention is a self-expression (Metin, 2017). According to Low (2003), instead of concentrating on the source text, translators should focus on the readers of the target text and their needs. Readers of song translations are usually music-lovers, not poetry enthusiasts, and thus would need a more understandable translation than the ones that are usually made of poems.

Further explanation in Jayanti (2022) found that various techniques of translation is used during her study of figurative language and how to deal with song lyrics. The author added that there are significant structural variations between the source and the target language and the importance of understanding the meaning from source language to target language. At this point, the singer, for

example, wants to maintain the aesthetic value of the song without changing the meaning. It is slightly different with Fabrizio Faniello. Considering to respect the melody of Wali's song. He creates new lyrics, different amounts of syllables and built his own rhymes of the lyrics. The song is still singability without modified its original music.

2. Equivalence of Meanings

Equivalence in translation is not meant to seek similarity in meaning. According to Bassnett (2002) the concept of similarity will not exist in the target language text of the source language text. In contrast to Pym (2014), which states that what can be said to be equivalent is value, not the language used in conveying messages. Equality in translation can be seen as the effectiveness of translation in conveying meaning. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that equivalence in translation is at the level of meaning not at the grammar level between the source language and the target language (Mandal, 2018). In this study equivalence understood through Franzon and Low's theory which is provides a lot of choices to translate the song and mantain singability.

The translation song "*I no can do, I will stand by you & My heart is asking you*" is a translation that pays close attention to the basic criteria so that the translated lyrics can also be sung. Low (2016) explains that in translating a song one must pay attention to singability, sense, naturalness, rhythm and rhyme. The criteria for a song to be called singability can be seen from the suitability of the phonetics in the translation. The reference to the physical organs involved in singing such as mouth, throat, lungs and vocal cords. Sentence length is also important in song translation and is closely related to the level of prosody. In addition, consistency in the number of syllables in the verses of a song lyric is also necessary. It can still be sung according to the original melody. In the song "*I no can do, I will stand by you & My heart is asking you*", the words in SL mostly not translated into the appropriate number of syllables. The singer achieve singability and ignore the difference in the number of syllables. Singer did it for adjusting the rhythm and intonation. However, its totally different from the original one.

The singer, fabrizio choose to respect the rhythm of Wali's band. Many choices offered by Metin (2017) in translating song such as Respect the rhythms, find and respect the meaning, respect the style, respect the rhymes, respect the sound, respect your choice of intended listeners and respect the original. While translating a song, translation can be very close to or different from the source text, or translation can match a bit with the source text. When a song is translated into another language, it will be a translation, an adaptation, or a replacement text. When a song in one language is sung in another, the words we hear may be a translation or adaptation of the original words, or they may be what previous article calls a replacement text, where completely new verbal components are underlaid to an existing melody (Low, 2013). The song in translation doesn't resemble its original lyrics very much, because it is very difficult to focus on only characteristics of the Source Text. Target culture expectations and their needs are more important than the Source Text. Therefore, for the framework for this study, Skopos Theory has been selected as it focuses on the target text and culture. Vermeer (2000) defines the term skopos to designate the goal or purpose, defined by the commission and if necessary adjusted by the translator. The functionalist approach stresses that the methodology and strategies of translation should be determined by their skopos. It is the skopos that helps the translator to determine whether the source text needs to be translated, paraphrased, or completely re-edited (Vermeer, 2000 via Metin, 2017).

Conclusion

The song entitled *I no can do, I will stand by you & My heart is asking you* from Fabrizio Faniello contain several cases that cannot be translated from two aspects, namely linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. The singer choose to create new lyrics by adding its own stylistic and aesthetic aspects of the source lyrics, such as rhythm, rhyme, and figurative languages. Besides, Fabrizio made its own naturalness of meaning by creating a new lyrics to reach singability. The creation of those three song are

in line with the previous theory built by Franzon & Low. They said that creating new lyrics with respecting original music is also include into various choices of translating song. Skopos theory by Vermeer also make the study in debates. It is said that the aims of translation become the main focus which is mean the translation result have to adapt to its purpose (audiences/readers/listeners).

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