



Investigating Translation Techniques through Theme-Rheme Analysis

Meneliti Teknik-teknik Penerjemahan melalui Analisa *Theme* dan *Rheme*

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Abstract

This study will identify the translation techniques through the information structure theories that are available in BabyShark Story Book series. To do that, in this study, Theme-Rheme analysis which proposed by Halliday will be applied. The qualitative research method is used in observing the equivalence of the translated text. The Theme-Rheme of every clause in Source Text and its translation version are being compared to identify the translation technique. Thus, the study reveals 17 data belong to four (4) different translation techniques. They are Modulation, Transposition, Reduction and Amplification. It shows that the translator applied simplification and explicitation. The implementation of those two styles gave the impact for the easy level of Readability.

Keywords: *translation, translation technique, theme-rheme, readability*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini akan mengidentifikasi teknik-teknik penerjemahan melalui teori 'information structure' yang ada pada buku cerita seri BabyShark. Dalam menganalisa, peneliti menggunakan teori analisis *theme* dan *rheme* milik Halliday. Metode penelitian kualitatif digunakan untuk meneliti kesepadanan makna dalam hasil terjemahan. *Theme* dan *rheme* dari setiap klausa dalam BSu dan BSA akan dibandingkan. Setelah itu, teknik terjemahan akan teridentifikasi. Terdapat 17 data yang dikategorikan dalam 4 teknik penerjemahan yang berbeda yaitu Modulasi, Transposisi, *Reduction* dan Amplifikasi. Dari teknik penerjemahan yang digunakan dapat disimpulkan bahwa penerjemah menerapkan penyederhanaan dan penjelasan tambahan ketika menerjemahkan. Implementasi tersebut memberikan kontribusi terhadap tingkat keterbacaan yang tinggi.

Kata kunci: *theme-rheme, teknik penerjemahan, keterbacaan*

INTRODUCTION

Translation is a process of transforming a text in one language into an equivalent text in another language. Different theories exist in the literature regarding translation as follows. Catford argued that translation as the replacement of textual material in

one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL) (1965:20). Another definition is proposed by Nida and Taber. They assumed that translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (1982:12). Together these theories provide important insights into the translation as a way of transferring meaning from source language to target language with consideration to the equivalence.

In order to keep the meaning constant, it is true that in the practice of translation, forms may change. However, at the same time, meaning in one language can also often be translated into more than one linguistic form in another language. Therefore, it is important to select the appropriate words (and texts) as linguistic units or forms to express the meaning of the target language in the same way as the meaning of the source language. In this sense, translation is basically a process of how to recreate meaning, not that of how create meaning (Huang & Machali in Wiratno, 2009:17).

The practice of translation should be done on the basis of linguistic theories as tools. Newmark in Herawati (2007:39) stated that without guidance of the linguistic theory it would be hard for the translation theory to be systematized and theorized, even though the process of translation is influenced by non-verbal aspects, such as, esthetics and culture loaded by different languages. In the same vein, Catford (1965) notes that the translator should fully consider the theories (particularly linguistic shifts) in order not to be misleading in finding the translation equivalence. Moreover, Halliday's systemic grammar has been applied to the translation theory by some linguists. It can be used as serviceable tools in analyzing and categorizing translation shifts between levels, structures, word classes, unit and system. In other words, it can be said, the study of translation theory would be benefited from theory of SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistic).

SFL, as part of an array of systemic linguistics, views language as a semiotic resource system. It can be defined as a network of system or interrelated sets of options for making meaning (Halliday 1985, 1994, 2004 with Matthiessen in Dwi Nugroho). The term "functional" emphasizes that it is concerned with meaning or functions of language as it is used by speakers. These functional bases are divided into three metafunctions of ideational, interpersonal and textual, which work simultaneously in every written or spoken statement. They are respectively related to the registers of field, tenor and mode and realized through the grammars of transitivity, mood and theme.

Since the translator is concerned exclusively and continuously with meaning, it is not surprising that Hallidayan linguistics which see language primarily as a meaning potential should offer itself as a serviceable tool in determining the constituent part of a source language text network of relations with its translation (Newmark in Wang, 2014:59). Therefore, this research will investigate the translation techniques that are available in *BabyShark StoryBook Series*. It will be observed through the information structure theories (Theme-Rheme) and also the impact to the readability of the translated text.

The notion of 'Theme' and 'Rheme' has been extensively dealt with in linguistics during these last decades. Dejica (2012:891) proposed that Theme and Rheme refer to Theme as starting point which is more important or central to the discourse. In addition, Halliday (2014:89) stated that the speaker chooses the theme as his or her point of departure to guide the addressee in developing the interpretation of the message. The remainder of the message, the part in which the theme is develop, is called 'Rheme'. As a message structure, therefore, a clause consists of a Theme

accompanied by a Rheme and the structure is expressed by the order-whatever is chosen as the Theme is put first.

As a message structure, therefore, a clause consists of a Theme accompanied by a Rheme; and the structure is expressed by the order-whatever is chosen as the Theme is put first. The message thus unfolds from thematic prominence-the part that speaker has chosen to highlight as the starting point for the addressee-to thematic non-prominence (Halliday, 2014:89).

In line with previous description, the focus is only on one aspect, i.e. the thematic analysis. It will be used to help analyzing the changes of theme and rheme in the translated text. The identification of theme and rheme will lead to the categorization of translation technique. From the translation technique itself, the level of readability is also measured.

RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative research method is used in this research in assessing the translation. The Theme-Rheme analysis were applied in observing the equivalence of the translated text. It accords with the earlier observations (Gerzymisch-Arbogast 2005, Cozma 2006, in Dejica-Cartis & Cozma 2013:890), which showed that the relevance of information theories may prove extremely helpful for translators in that, by applying them, they can identify the information structure of the source text and decide whether to preserve it or change it in the target text according to requirements of the client, of the target language preferences for particular structures, etc. Based on their research desiderata the ‘Theme’ and ‘Rheme’ refer to Theme as starting point and Theme as aboutness. Each sentence contains one element which is more important or central to the discourse and which is called Theme, and another element which develops the Theme, and which is called Rheme.

The sources of data are *Baby Shark Storybook Series*. The books were chosen because they have proper segmented readers that are children. By comparing the translation of Theme and Rheme in both texts, it is hoped that this research provides information about equivalence through its analysis. It means that Theme-Rheme analysis as domain are analyzed in a componential analysis to identify their relationship with translation techniques and its equivalence as a taxonomy comprehensively (Spradley 1980 and Santosa 2017 in Ardi 2018).

The data were clauses that taken from the storybooks. The Theme-Rheme of every clause in the source text (ST) and its translation versions are being compared to identify translation techniques. Then, through its analysis some translation techniques were identified. The equivalence of the translation will be observed through its readability that involving children as respondents.

FINDINGS

Translation is the process of transferring a message from one language to another with consideration to the equivalence. In the practice of translation, forms may change. This meaning of translation goes in line with the Halliday’s assumption that in almost all languages the clause has the character of a message. In English, as in many other languages, the clause is organized as a message by having a distinct status assigned to one part of it. One part of the clause is enunciated as the theme, this then combines with the remainder so that the two parts together constitute a message.

Following the terminology of the Prague school of linguists (e.g. Garvin, 1964: Fibras, 1992 in Halliday 2004), the Theme is the element that serves as the point

departure of the message. The speaker chooses the Theme as his or her point of departure to guide the addressee in developing an interpretation of the message; by making part of the message prominent as Theme, the speaker enables the addressee to process the message. The remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed, is called in Prague school terminology the Rheme.

This research identified 35 data based on the Theme-Rheme analysis of two storybooks : *Grandma’s Shark Magic wand (Tongkat Sihir Grandma) and Baby Shark and The Tooth Fairy (Baby Shark dan Peri Gigi)* . The data were obtained from separation of a clause into two parts. The first is Theme and the second is Rheme. Then the Theme and rheme are classified into proper translation technique. They can be seen as follow:

Source Text (ST)		Target Text (TT)	
I	had a blast	Aku	merasa sangat senang
Theme	Rheme	Theme	Rheme

The Rheme ‘had a blast’ translated into target text with any change. From the structure of the rheme, it can be seen that the information structure is in the form of metaphor. In the translated text, contrarily, it translated in different manner as that of the original.

Source Text (ST)		Target Text (TT)	
What	a wonderful tooth!	Itu	gigi yang luar biasa!
Theme		Theme	

The initial exclamative ‘what’ translated into determiner in the target text. It means that the form changes in the target text.

Source Text (ST)		Target Text (TT)	
Baby Shark	is a real Boy	Baby Shark	adalah bayi hiu jantan
Theme	rheme	Theme	Rheme

The rheme ‘real boy’ translated with any change. It shows that the translator referred to a certain object.

Source Text (ST)		Target Text (TT)	
Is Baby Shark	missing a tooth?	Apakah Baby Shark	kehilangan satu giginya?
Theme	Rheme	Theme	Rheme

Every language has its own structure. To be ‘is’ in English translated into question word in the target text. This is done by considering the principle of equivalence in translation.

Source Text (ST)		Target Text (TT)	
It	is a good thing	Syukurlah	
Theme	Rheme	Theme	

A translator is a decision maker. By having a look at the above clause, we can see that a clause consists of theme and rheme can be changed into a theme in target text.

Source Text (ST)			Target Text (TT)		
Indeed, Shark	Baby you are		Benar, Shark	Baby	Kamu kehilangan satu gigimu
Theme	Rheme		Theme		Rheme

From the rheme of two versions above, we can see a glaring differences how translator conveys his message. The translator wants to introduce details that are not formulated in the source text or in this discussion is in rheme.

The Translation Techniques Used in Translating the Theme and Rheme

This study identified 4 different techniques used by translators in *Baby Shark Storybook Series*. The techniques were modulation, transposition, reduction and amplification. The most significant changes can be seen through the reduction technique. By using this technique, the clause that consists of theme and rheme is simplified into theme only.

Another technique that gave obvious description to target text is amplification. This technique used to introduce details that are not formulated in the source text. While modulation and transposition were the dominant techniques together with reduction and amplification gave contribution for easy level of readability.

The assessment of readability adopted instrument developed by Nababan (2012). The rating ranges from 1 to 3, with 3 being the best score and 1 for the worst score. The readability of the Target Text was measured to knowing that the *BabyShark StoryBooks* can be read and understood easily. It has already proven through the involvement of ten young children. They asked to be Target Readers. Surprisingly, they read with good understanding of the story. All of the analysis can be shown through the following table:

Translation Technique	Theme	Rheme	Theme & Rheme	Readability
Modulation	4	3	1	3
Transposition	4			3
Reduction	1		3	3
Amplification		1		3
Total	9	4	4	

From the table above, it can be seen that the easy level of readability were obtained through the modulation, transposition, reduction and amplification techniques. Vinay and Darbelnet in Putranti (2018:99) stated that modulation is defined as a variation through a change the point of view, of perspective, and very often of category of thought. By this definition they want to convey that, in many cases, TL readers’ different perspectives, viewpoint, and mindset are the causes of the failure of the translated text to deliver the SL message. Here are the themes and rhemes that belonged to modulation technique.

Source Text		Target text
<i>My dear baby (theme)</i> <i>Just then (theme)</i> <i>Not a plush toy (rheme)</i> <i>A real boy (rheme)</i> <i>I had a blast (theme and rheme)</i>	Modulated into	<i>Anakku sayang (theme)</i> <i>Pada saat itu (theme)</i> <i>Bukan boneka (rheme)</i> <i>Bayi hiu jantan (rheme)</i> <i>Aku merasa senang (theme and rheme)</i> <i>Sayangku (theme)</i> <i>Oh (not identified)</i> <i>Tersenyum lebar (rheme)</i>
<i>Little one (theme)</i> <i>Dear me (theme)</i> <i>All smiles (rheme)</i>		

The next technique that contributes the easy level of readability is transposition technique. By using this technique, the translator wanted to change a grammatical category. The changes are ‘to be’ in ST becomes a question word in TT, the auxiliary verb ‘can’ and ‘did’ in ST becomes a question word in TT, and the exclamative word ‘what’ becomes determiner in ST. The examples are presented below :

Source Text		Target text
<i>Is</i> Baby Shark missing a tooth? (theme)	Shifted into	<i>Apakah</i> (theme) Baby Shark kehilangan satu giginya?
<i>Did</i> Baby Shark hide it from the tooth thieves? (theme)		<i>Apakah</i> (theme) Baby Shark menyembunyikannya dari pencuri gigi?
<i>What</i> a wonderful tooth! (theme)		<i>Itu</i> (theme) gigi yang luar biasa!
<i>Can</i> I still cast a magic spell? (theme)		<i>Apakah</i> (theme) aku masih dapat merapal mantra sihir?

Reduction is another technique that found in this study. It also affected the easy level of readability. According to Molina and Albir (2002), the translator applied this technique to suppress a ST information item in the TT. Moreover, this technique gave significant impact to the changes of theme and rheme in the ST. The following examples clarified that analysis :

Source Text		Target text
<i>Phew, it worked!</i> (theme and rheme)	Reduced into	<i>Fiuh, berhasil!</i> (theme)
<i>It's a good thing</i> (theme and rheme)		<i>Syukurlah</i> (theme)
<i>Wait a minute!</i> (theme)		<i>Tunggu!</i> (theme)
<i>Where could it be?</i> (theme and rheme)		<i>Dimana, ya?</i> (theme)

The last technique used in this study is amplification. By doing this, the translator paraphrased the incomplete information in the ST. It helped the target reader got well understanding of a certain information. Some scholars in Purnomo (2020:2) hold the view that amplification is adopted for some reasons. Lopez indicates this adoption of the amplification technique, as she claims, aims as targeting audiences younger than the source readers. A similar claim is also made by Ben-Ari. Amplification tends to be unavoidable in children’s literature translation since the translation has to convey

specific norms for children. O’Sullivan touches this adoption of amplification points out that either the image or the verbal text requires additional elaborative explanations to meet the readers’ reading levels. For further description, it can be seen in the following example :

Source Text		Target text
Indeed, Baby Shark, <i>you are!</i> (rheme)	paraphrased into	Benar, Baby Shark, <i>kamu kehilangan satu gigimu!</i> (rheme)

The rheme ‘are’ in the ST was paraphrased into ‘kehilangan satu gigimu’. Although The information structure in both Source Text and Target Text wasn’t change, this explicative paraphrasing gave clear information about the theme that preceded.

DISCUSSION

This study set out to investigate the usefulness of theme-rheme analysis in determining the technique of translation in *Baby Shark Storybook Series*. As Dejica (2013) stated that information theories, may prove extremely helpful for translator in that, by applying them, they can identify the information structure of the source text and decide whether to preserve it or change it in the target text according to requirements of the client, of the target language preferences for particular structures.

As we know that the client of this storybook is children. These books are in the form of in-text images of translated children’s picture books. For children who have little knowledge about the world, translation is a new thing to understand. As Kaniklidou & House in Abbaspour (2020) highlighted, due to children’s limited knowledge, they often are not able to identify the ideological manipulation of the source text in the translation they are exposed to. Moreover, Oittinen (ibid) stated that translation scholars noticed that in the ideological studies of translation, “everything in a book is of importance, every details carries meaning, all of which are available for translation. Therefore, in translating for children, Shavit in Abbaspour (ibid) gave rules as follow: 1) adapting the text in a frame that in the target society is considered as appropriate for children.; 2) adapting the language, plot, and characters of the text based on children’s level of reading ability and comprehension believed that the noted assumptions together create the image of children’s literature.

The findings of this study showed to us that the translator preserved and changed the theme or rheme with a special orientation to the children as readers. In other words, Machali in Wiratno (2009) stated that it is important to select the appropriate words as linguistic units / forms to express the meaning of the target text in the same way as the meaning of the source text.

The selection of words, especially in this study, realized in the form of information structure or theme-rheme analysis. Based on the analysis, in modulation technique, the theme and rheme didn’t show any change in both text. In transposition technique, the theme and rheme were remain the same both in the ST and TT. The changes can be observed in the reduction technique. In this case, theme and rheme in the ST reduced into theme in TT. The last technique that showed a change is in amplification technique. The missing information was clarified by using this technique.

Modulation, transposition, reduction and amplification became choices for translator to translate the source text using the fourth techniques. All of these techniques indicate that the translator put emphasis to the target language reader. It

can also be referred to Free Translation. In the same way, Newmark in Ulwiyah (2009) holds the view that ‘Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the originally’. It means that the translator has limited freedom to convey the message to the target language. In other words, in order to keep the meaning constant, it is true that in the practice of translation, forms may change.

The target reader becomes an orientation in the practice of translation. This goes in line with the statement of (Nida & Taber:1982) that correctness must be determined by the extent to which the average reader for which a translation is intended will be likely to understand it correctly. In the same way, Nababan in Ulwiyah (2010:66) argued that Target language readers’ responses will be important for deciding whether a certain translation is successful or not. That is to say, by studying the target language recipients’ responses, a given translation can be validated. From the analysis above, we can see that the translator of *Baby Shark Storybook Series* has tendency to the target reader. Therefore, those books have the easy level of readability.

CONCLUSION

From the result of the analysis above, it can be seen there were 17 data. They belong to four (4) different translation techniques. They are Modulation, Transposition, Reduction and Amplification. The data reported here appear to support the assumption that the translator applied simplification and explicitation.

Another important finding was the readability of the translated text. The readability of the Target Text was measured to knowing that the *BabyShark StoryBooks* can be read and understood easily. It has already proven through the involvement of ten young children. They asked to be Target Readers. Surprisingly, they read with good understanding of the story. According to Nababan (2012), the readability can be determined through these rating ranges from 1 to 3, with 3 being the best score and 1 for the worst score.

One possible implication of this is that the success of a translation can be seen through the readability of the translated text. In the same way, Target language readers’ responses will be important for deciding whether a certain translation is successful or not. That is to say, by studying the target language recipients’ responses, a given translation can be validated.

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