THE TRANSLATION'S TECHNIQUES TO AVOID
THE ERROR TRANSLATION
OF INDONESIAN TOURIST RESORTS SIGNS INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract

This study dealt with the common phenomena error translations in public signs of tourist resorts in Parapat and Bukit Lawang. The objective of this study is to find out the translation's techniques to avoid error translation of public signs at the two tourist resorts (Parapat and Bukit Lawang). Qualitative research was applied in this study. In process of collecting data, the researcher took supporting instrument, such as camera to catch the photo of public signs in the tourism places in Bukit Lawang-Kabupaten Langkat, and Parapat, Kabupaten Simalungun. The researcher also used English Tourism dictionary as the supporting tools to help the researcher find the natural translation in English translation of public signs in tourism places. The findings of this study showed that there are several techniques can be applied to avoid error translations such as transposition, addition, functional equivalent, cultural equivalent, and naturalization.

Keywords: *Translation's techniques, tourist resorts, public signs, qualitative research*

INTRODUCTION

Public signs are the important part consisting of language and human environment in the International city and tourist destination. The beautiful places like Parapat and Bukit Lawang as neighboring place of Medan plays an important role in the world of tourism, and more and more people want to know and come to Medan. So, the image of the tourist resorts is very important. Public signs are the indispensible part of the tourist resorts. Translation of public signs, to a large extent, reflects an International level of environment establishment in a tourist resorts whether the proper use of public signs will have a direct impact on the International image of the tourist resorts. Meanwhile, it relates to the understanding of Indonesian culture, status of society and economic situation, so that Indonesia can get better developments from each aspect. Therefore,

the English translation of pubic signs has a growing importance. But now, there are uneven unnatural translation in Parapat and Bukit Lawang as the tourism places.

Public signs' translation is a special domain of translation studies, as it deals with the linguistic, cultural, and social features in both languages. In this era of modernity and globalization, the language of public signs is important as well as challenging, so it is not difficult to justify why we should study this discourse. We can see many English texts in public signs in Parapat and Bukit Lawang as in accommodations, restaurants, and souvenir places. Parapat and Bukit Lawang as one of the tourist resorts places in North Sumatera, bilingual Indonesian-English public signs are used extensively at public places such as hotels, restaurants, shopping centers, parks, public amenities and places of tourist interest to convey information to the people both Indonesian and foreigners. Public signs have a number of distinctive features. For instance, they are mostly in the form of a single sheet of board, paper or metal, with clearly written words or drawings in large print for people to read or view from a distance. Due to the constraint of physical space, the expressions used on public signs are usually succinct, conveying essential information in just a few words, such as "Wet paint" and "No entry." The translation of public signs can therefore be considered a special domain that requires appropriate strategies to convey the information from the source language to the target language effectively. Tourism is a typical field in which public signs need to be translated. Due to some special features of the Indonesian language used in tourism, the translation of such public signs presents unique challenges and creates a number of problems for the translators. Unnatural translation of public signs in English means a lot to alien tourists. The translator faces the formidable task of conveying to another culture the intricacies of the original, but to do that accurately would require innumerable footnotes and make the translation unreadable fore the average person. So, the translator must try to transpose the meaning and underlying thought of the original into another language and cultural nackground, which ideally cannot be done. However, by its very definition, an ideal cannot be reached. The achievement is in the striving, not in the perfect result. Standard English version of public signs that may perform intended functions should at least meet the following basic specifications: correct spelling, brief and concise language style, choice of appropriate words, use of frequent words and the consideration of cultural differences (Guo:2012). Yet, if we look carefully when walking along the streets in the city we live, when

we are in stores, parks, hotels, etc. it is not difficult to find many problematic translations of public signs in many public places. These mistranslated public signs are just extremely embarrassing when a foreigner encounters them.

Lan (2006:13) highlights that errors in translation can be observed from the linguistic angle, analyzing the clumsy use of words, expressions, grammatical structures. In translating the public signs, the use of words and grammatical structures are important rules.

The analysis of this public signs was written below:

SL　　: *Ada Kamar*

TL　　*: Have Room*

From the data above, the owner of the accommodation translated *ada kamar* into have room. By looking at the international advertisement, and asking at Word Reference Language Forums, to mention *ada kamar* in the accommodation such as hotel it should be *rooms for rent, a room available,* and *rooms available for rent*. Then, transposition technique can be used to change this error translation.The phenomenon of many mistakes found in the English translation of public signs for tourism in Parapat and Bukit Lawang has been choosen on this subject matter. It is necessary to identify and solve the problems translating public signs for tourism that spread all over the city since tourism plays an important role in boosting the economic development in Indonesia.

The phenomenon of many mistakes found in the English translation of public signs for tourism in Parapat and Bukit Lawang has been chosen on this subject matter. It is necessary to identify and solve the problems translating public signs for tourism that spread all over the city since tourism plays an important role in boosting the economic development in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several theories about types of translation techniques. Each theory has some different types of translation techniques. Actually, there is a difference between translation methods and translation techniques. According to Newmark (1988:81) translation procedures or translation techniques are used for sentences and the smaller units of language, while the translation method is related to the whole texts. In its correlation with the translation strategy is

that the strategies open the way to find a suitable solution for a translation unit. The solution will be materialized by using a particular technique. Therefore, strategies and techniques occupy different places in problem solving: strategies are part of the process, and techniques affect the result. For example, paraphrasing can be used as the strategy of translation, and it can be an amplification as the technique used in the translated text.

Here is the example of the transposition category:

SL : *Wayang Kulit*

TL : *Leather Puppet*

In Indonesian, the word *wayang* must precade its modifier *kulit*. Meanwhile, in English, the word *leather* that functions as modifier precedes the word *puppet* having functions as the head in the noun phrase.

Naturalisation

This is a kind of translation technique that succeeds the borrowing technique. According to Newmark (1988:82), this technique succeeds transference and adapts the source language word first to the normal pronunciation. Then to the normal morphology word for word of the target language, for example:

SL : *Computer*

TL : Komputer

Transference / Loan Word (Borrowing)

This translation technique is commonly called borrowing. Newmark calls this technique as transference. This technique is usually applied when there is not yet an equivalent of the certain word or it is applied to appreciate the source language and putting it into the target language. Generally, only cultural object or concept that should be transferred (Newmark, 1988: 81).

Here is the example of transference:

SL : *Pura Mangkunegaraan menyimpan koleksi yang tak ternilai harganya.* (Astuti:2010)

TL : *Pura Mangkunegaraan has invaluable collections (*Astuti:2010).

Cultural equivalent

This is translation technique applied to find the equivalence of the cultural terms. Newmark states that this technique is applied when the source language cultural word is translated by a target language cultural word (Newmark, 1988:83). As we know, the term that is related to cultural matters are the serious problem to find the equivalence. It is also depends on translator's competence to produce the good result of translation. Here is the example of the cultural equivalent.

The example of cultural equivalent can be seen below:

SL   : *keduanya mulai dengan menggali jugangan untuk* **kakus** *kira-kira sedalam satu setengah meter….*

TL   : they began by digging a meter and a half deep trench for 1 **the toilet……**

The TL word "toilet" is not a good translation of the SL word *kakus* because it is different although they retain the same function. *Kakus* is usually made of bamboo like a jamban in Indonesia. However, this is acceptable to translate *kakus* into "toilet" because they have the same function, and the reader can imagine and understand what it is for. Newmark (1988) categorized the translation where a SL cultural word is translated by a TL cultural word. The translator tried to find the equivalence of the cultural terms.

Literal Translation

Literal translation is a direct transfer of a SL text into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate to TL text. Principally, literal translation is a unique solution in which is reversible and complete in itself. For examples, *black market* in English is translated to be *pasar gelap* in Bahasa Indonesia. *Honey moon* is translated into *Bulan Madu.* This technique is applied by translating word for word translation. Newmark prefers to call it as through translation. Normally, literal translation should be used only when they are already recognized terms (Newmark, 1988:85).

Calque

Calque, refers to the case where the translator imitates in his translation the structure or manner of expression of the SL. Calque may introduce a structure that is stranger from the TL. For instance, *photo studio* in English is still translated as *photo studio* in Bahasa Indonesia,

although there is normally no such Modifier + Head construction in Bahasa Indonesia Noun Phrase.

Functional Equivalent

This technique is used when a source language cultural word has no target language equivalent. This is applied to cultural matters and requires the use of a culture free word (Newmark, 1988:83). This technique is the accurate way of translating a cultural word as what proposed by Newmark. Here is the example of this category:

SL : *Wayang orang Sriwedari telah berjasa besar dalam ikut melestarikan kebudayaan bangsa, yaitu seni wayang orang, seni tari, seni busana, seni suara, serta seni karawitan (*Astuti:2010)

TL : *Human Wayang of Sriwedaru has given a huge contribution for conservating traditional culture, such as human wayang art, dabcing art, fashion art, singing art, and Javanese orchestra art.*

The term is used to refer cases where language describe the same situation by different stylistic or structural means. For example, an interhjection *ouch!* In English can be translated to be *aduh* or *aw* in Bahasa Indonesia. An English *don't cry over spoiled milk* may can be translated as *nasi sudah menjadi bubur* in Bahasa Indonesia.

Reduction

This is a technique in which the information / message is given implicitly in the TL. In contrast, the source language information is explicit one. This technique is in contrast with amplification technique. This is rather imprecise translation techniques practiced intuitively in some cases (Newmark, 1988:90). It is to suppress a source language into item in TL. Here is the example of this category:

SL : *Galdag Langen Bogan sebuah penguat bagi sebutan Solo sebagai kota yang tidak pernah tidur (Astuti:2010)*

TL : *Galabo emphasizes more the so-called as the city that never sleep*

Synonymy

Newmark states that the word synonym is used in the sense of a near target language equivalent to an source language word in a context, where a precise equivalent may or may not exist (1988:84). This technique is used for an source language word where there is no clear one to one equivalent, and the word is not important in the text, in particular for adjectives or adverbs of quality. The translator has to make do with it as a compromise, in order to translate more important segments of the text the meaning more accurately. For example:

SL   : *Dia adalah seorang <u>pria sejati.</u>*

TL   : *He is <u>gentlemen.</u>*

From the example above, the word gentlemen is translated into pria sejati since there is no one to one equivalent in the target language, In here, the translator considers that *pria sejati* in Indonesian has the same meaning as the word *gentlemen* in English.

Modulation

Modulation is a change in point of view that allows us to express the same phenomenon in a different way. Modulation as a procedure of translation occurs when there is a change of perspective accompanied with a lexical change in the TL. There are two types of modulation, i.e. free or optional modulation and fixed or obligatory modulation. For instance, *he was killed in the war* in English is translated as *Dia gugur dalam medan perang* in Bahasa Indonesia.

Addition

This technique is commonly used by using additional information. It is usually applied in cultural-based translation (Newmark:1988:92). Additional information in translation may take various forms:

  For example:

SL   : *Sebuah taman rekreasi di Jl. Ir. Sutami yang terletak di tepi Bengawan Solo* (Astuti:2010)

TL   : *A creation park in Jl. Ir. Sutami which located at the side of <u>Bengawan Solo river</u>.*

In this case, the additional words river in the English translation adds the clearer information about what Bengawan Solo is as the Indonesian term.

Accommodation or Adaptation

Accomodation is considered a synonym of adaptation which means changes are made so the target language produced is in line with the spirit of the original.

METHOD

Qualitative research design will be applied to this research. Bogdan & Biklen (1992:58) mentions that the qualitative research is descriptive, where the data is in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. It is about what going on and what the data shown. Then, Bogdan and Biklen stated that research here is descriptive with the natural setting as the direct source of the data and the researcher is the key instruments. So, the data collection is very dependent on the researcher. The data will be collected in the form of the words in order to give more understanding the researcher does not reduce the page upon page of narration. The researcher will analyze the data with all of the richness as closely as possible to the form in which they recorded and transcribe, and the written result of the research contains quotation from the data illustrate and substantiate the presentation.

The reason of why this research uses descriptive qualitative design because the data are in the form of words rather than number. This point discusses the way to collect, analyze, and get the valid data due to the need of completing the research objectives. Therefore, even when certain statistics were calculated, it is used to form a descriptive qualitative conclusion to describe the patterns and in what context the unnatural translation used in Parapat and Bukit Lawang.

In this research, the researcher wil analyze the data by using the Interactive Model Technique of Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014). According to them, the interactive model consists of three concurrent steps, they are:

1. Data collection,
2. Data condensation,
3. Data display, and
4. Conclusion drawing or verification.

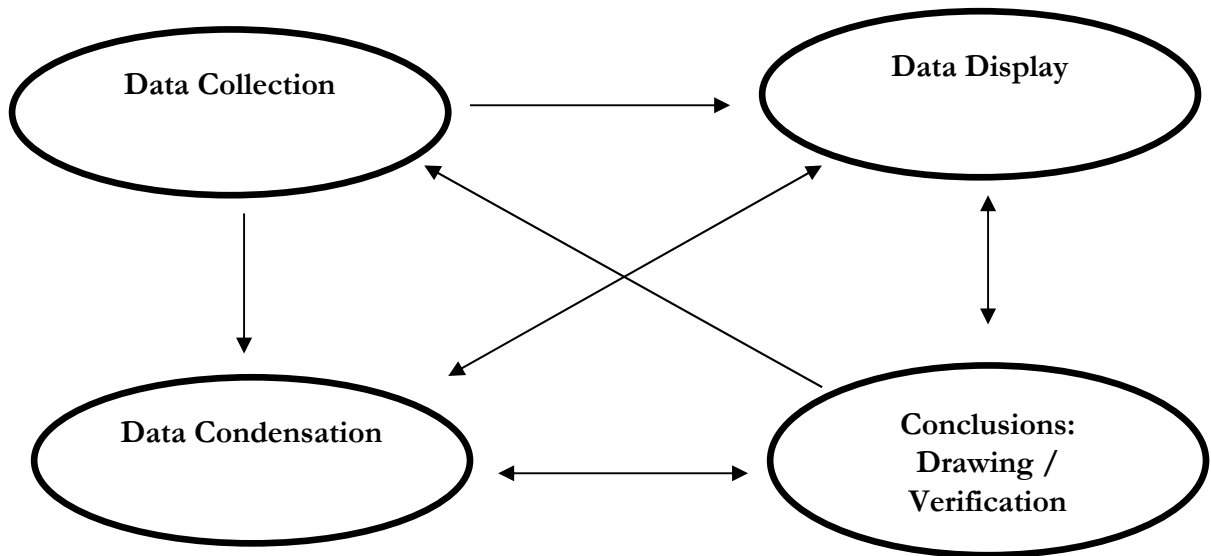The figure below shows the process from the first into the last step.

Figure 1. Miles, Huberman & Saldana Components Data Analysis Interactive Model

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Error in translation can be avoided as long as translators are aware of the potential traps they may get caught in and know the strategies to overcome these pitfalls. There are several theories about types of translation techniques. Meanwhile, Molina and Albir (2002:499) state that translation techniques are used to describe how the result of translation functions related to the corresponding units in the source text. In this case, Molina and Albir use the translation technique as a tool to analyze the result of the translation.

In simple words, translation techniques are the procedures to analyze and classify the way of equivalence happens and it can be applied in whatever lingual terms. However, translation techniques are called as the realization of the decision making process, where the product can be identified on the translation result. Below are the kinds of translation techniques that are proposed by Newmark (1988:81-91) as follows:

Shift / Transposition

Shift or transposition is a translation procedure involving a change in the grammar from source language to target language. One of the type of shift found based on the data is structure shift. This is a shift in grammatical structure including change in word order.

Table 1. The Total Transposition Translation

No	Unnatural English Translation	Natural English Translation
1	Thank's For Coming	Thank's for Coming
2	TRADITIONAL INDONESIAN MASSAGES & TREATMENTS	Indonesian Traditional Massages & Treatments
3	We have juice fresh	We have fresh juice
4	SELAMAT JALAN DAN SAMPAI JUMPA KEMBALI	GOOD BYE AND SEE YOU AGAIN
5	HAVE ROOM	THERE IS AN AVAILABLE ROOM
6	FACILITY (Pl)	FACILITIES (Pl)
To	6	6

Structure shift occurs when a source language grammatical structure does not exist in the target language.

Here is the example of the transposition category:

SL : *ADA KAMAR*

TL : *HAVE ROOM*

From the data above, the owner of the accommodation translate *ADA KAMAR* into have room. By looking at the international advertisement, and asking at Word Reference Language Forums, to mention *ADA KAMAR* in the accommodation such as hotel it should be *rooms for rent, a room available,* and *rooms available for rent*. Signs are common to be written in short

form with be verbs or generally function words dropped e.g. waitress wanted, evenings and weekends which is actually a waitress is wanted here in the evening on the weekend, so room available is short for a room (to rent) is available. Available room is more like labeling a room (this is an available room) than a sign reading room is available to rent.

Naturalisation

This is a kind of translation technique that succeeds the borrowing technique. According to Newmark (1988:82), this technique succeeds transference and adapts the source language word first to the normal pronunciation.

Then to the normal morphology word for word of the target language, for example based on the data

Table 2. The Total Naturalisation Translation

No	Indonesian Translation	Natural English Translation
1	Tradisional	Traditional
2	Restoran	Restaurant
3	Aktivitas	Activities
4	Tiket	Ticket
5	Laundri	Laundry
6	Kualitas	Quality
7	Teh	Tea
8	Kopi	Coffee
9	Sate	Satay
10	Kari	Curry
11	Servis	Service
Total	11	11

These words translated from Indonesian to English translation by looking up the naturalization which is the meaning close each other. Fortunately, the owner of the resort or restaurant did not take another word to translate the Indonesian. If they change another English translation, it will sound so strange.

Cultural equivalent

This is translation technique applied to find the equivalence of the cultural terms. Newmark states that this technique is applied when the source language cultural word is translated by a target language cultural word (Newmark, 1988:83). As we know, the term that is related to cultural matters are the serious problem to find the equivalence. It is also depends on translator's competence to produce the good result of translation.

Here is the example of the cultural equivalent.

Table 3. The Total Cultural Equivalent Translation

No	Indonesian Translation	English Translation	Natural English Translation
1	DINAS KESEHATAN		HEALTH CENTRE
2	TOKO OBAT BERIZIN		Medicine Store
3		Traditional Wooden Batak House	Rumah Bolon
4		BATAK BLANKET OLD & NEW	Ulos Batak
Total	4		4

    SL   : DINAS KESEHATAN
    TL   : HEALTH CENTRE

Based on Cambridge Dictionary health centre as a noun phrase meant by a building where a group of doctors work and treat their patients. *DINAS KESEHATAN* is not a place or a building where a group of doctors work and treat their patients. Based on Cambridge Dictionary, the suitable translation for *DINAS KESEHATAN* is *HEALTH SERVICE* means (the organization which runs) all the medical services of a country which are available to the public. Furthermore, Supono (2008:425) put the abbreviation of NHS by National Health Service (Dinas Kesehatan Nasional di Inggris). So, from the explanation from both sources, it was found that *DINAS KESEHATAN* should be translated by *HEALTH SERVICE*.

SL   : TOKO OBAT BERIZIN

TL   : Medicine Store

Both from Oxford Dictionary and some websites, it is not found to transfer the meaning from *TOKO OBAT BERIZIN* into *Medicine Store.* Based on Oxford Dictionary, to transfer the meaning from *TOKO OBAT BERIZIN* can be as *drug store (AmE)* which has meaning as a shop / store that sells medicines and also other types of goods. *Pharmacist's (AmE)* which has meaning as a shop that sells medicines also can be the equal meaning for *TOKO OBAT BERIZIN.* Besides that, *pharmacy (AmE)* whose meaning is shop / store, or part of one, that sells medicines and drugs also recommended to be the same meaning of *TOKO OBAT BERIZIN. Chemist's (BrE)* has the same meaning of *TOKO OBAT BERIZIN* as shop / store that sells medicines and usually also soap, make-up, etc.

Functional Equivalent

This technique is used when a source language cultural word has no target language equivalent. This is applied to cultural matters and requires the use of a culture free word (Newmark, 1988:83). This technique is the accurate way of translating a cultural word as what proposed by

SL   : SELAMAT DATANG DI KABUPATEN SAMOSIR   PARIWISATA

TL   : WELLCOME TO SAMOSIR TOURISM REGENCY

The analysis first discussed from "*SELAMAT DATANG DI KABUPATEN SAMOSIR PARIWISATA*" The Indonesian sounds unclear. There is no *Kabupaten Samosir Pariwisata*. The data from North Sumatera Government Website , there is just Samosir Regency ,not Samosir Tourism Regency. Discussed about the English translation, the data showed *Selamat datang* was translated into *Wellcome*. The owner of the public sign said that they actually wanted to write *Welcome*. In other words, they got mistyping. Then, the data from Wikipedia informed that *Welcome* itself is a supermarket chain owned by Jardine Matheson Holdings via its Dairy Farm International Holdings subsidiary. The good Indonesian and English translation should be as the following:

SL   : Selamat Datang di Kabupaten Samosir

TL   : Welcome to Samosir Regency

Addition

This technique is commonly used by using additional information. It is usually applied in cultural-based translation (Newmark:1988:92). Additional information in translation may take various forms:

SL   : SELAMAT JALAN DAN SAMPAI JUMPA KEMBALI

TL   : TILL WE MEET AGAIN

The source language consists of two clauses namely *selamat jalan* and *sampai jumpa kembali*. While the target language just consists of one clause; *till we meet again*. *Till we meet again* can be translated as *sampai bertemu kembali, sampai bertemu lagi, sampai jumpa kembali, sampai jumpa lagi, hingga bertemu lagi, hingga jumpa lagi*. But there is one missing meaning of *selamat jalan*. *Selamat jalan* cannot be paraphrased into one meaning just as *till we meet again* because *selamat jalan* and *sampai jumpa kembali* have different meaning.

Then, by looking at the source from Oxford Dictionary, *till* can be classified as conjunction, preposition, noun, and verb. *Till as* the conjunction and preposition has the same meaning as *until*. *Till* is generally felt to be more informal than until and is used much less often is writing. At the beginning of a sentence, until is usually used. Then, *till* as the noun has meaning as cash register; the place where you pay for the goods in a large shop / store. *Till* as the verb has meaning to prepare and use land for growing crops. Based on the explanation above, till is rare used at the beginning of the sentence. So, to transfer meaning from *selamat jalan dan sampai jumpa kembali* it can be as *good bye and see you again*

CONCLUSION

Having all the data been analyzed based on the three research problems, the findings are described as the following: There are some techniques that can be used to avoid and repair the unnatural translation as the following examples of shift/transposition, natural, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, and addition. Those techniques can make the unnatural translation sound natural.

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