Technology Aspired through Accurate and Acceptable Literary Translation

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Abstract. This research investigated the strategies used by translators of literary works to find equivalence for information on technology. The accuracy and acceptability of the translation were further studied by collecting data from respondents adapting Nababan’s measurement of translation quality. Perceptions of quality and acceptability were further analyzed using Baker’s notion of translation strategies. Corpus used for this study were Indonesian translations of Victoria Aveyard’s Red Queen and Glass Sword. Results showed 164 occurrences of technology-aspired information from Red Queen and 153 from Glass Sword using different translation strategies. It was found that respondents perceived that both translations were accurate and acceptable. The accuracy rate was 54.8% of the total responses. Meanwhile, acceptability was shown by 50.2% of the total responses. Interestingly, while there was no problem with translation, possible improvements in translations were seen as personal taste, including respondents’ background knowledge of the technology. It could be concluded that translation strategies used were resorted to more general terms and descriptions, which could be rendered by the translators for readers of such different backgrounds of knowledge. Implications for further study and application of translation studies in the classrooms were also provided.

1 Introduction

There are many languages in the world that are different from one to another. Thus, when a literary product needs to be introduced to another language, a translation is required. The process of translating, or generally known as translation is a simple process of changing a source text to the target text [1-4]. Mona Baker stated that, “Translation and interpreting are forms of linguistic mediation that involves rendering written or oral text from one language to another.” [2]. The notion of mediation becomes important as it is understood that words and expressions may be culturally and contextually related. One language may not have the word for snow, for example, as the people of the language do not experience winter or four seasons.

Importance of mediation was resonance by Simpson [4, 5], by saying that both authors and translators were important connectors for languages across the globe. This means, through the activity of translation, languages in the world will be connected. Such connections could further reveal the similarities and potentially also differences between the languages. Such mediation though translation could be seen in various types of texts.

Mediation in the translation of literary texts is at its culmination. This is because not only information is being transferred into another language but also experience being transferred. Larson [6] underlined this by saying, “when translating a text, the translator’s goal is an idiomatic translation which makes every effort to communicate the meaning of the source language text into naturalness forms of the Target Language.” Then it can be said that a good translation is a translation that not only conveys the intended message by the author but also feels natural in the target language.

While translation remains as important as it is, it still has its challenges. Some of the challenges are including the absence of words in the target language. This may be caused by different cultural, geographical, sociological backgrounds between source language and target language. As illustrated before, a language may not have the vocabulary for snow of other related words associated with certain season. This is simply because the experience is not available in the target language.

Similar case would be on the context of technology. An object or a process may not be easily translated because the target language may not have the same object or process. Therefore, translators need to use strategies to transfer the information, finding the closest equivalent and present them to the readers or audience.

Idiomatic translation is the quality of translation aimed by every translator. This means the translation is made in effort to present to the target as closest equivalence as possible from the source language. This idiomatic translation makes a text as if it were written in the target language and not a translation product. Baker [2] identified 11 strategies translators typically resort to in the effort of producing idiomatic translation. Other

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literatures also listed strategies applied by translators to create good and high-quality translation [7-11].

Nababan [12], explains that people believe that a good translation is one that is easy to read, however, an easy-to-read only applies to an easy-to-understand translation, and an easy-to-understand translation does not always mean that it is an accurate translation. This brings up the challenge of finding equivalence between the source text and the target text. When translating, a translator must be aware of the equivalence between the source language and the target language. Another challenge is as mentioned by Culler [11] “Each language articulates or organizes the world differently”. This statement signifies how every language is unique by its own and could be vastly different from one another, hence translating from one language to another is not an easy thing to accomplish.

Accomplishing quality in translation were decided by three aspects, namely accuracy, acceptability, and readability [12]. Accuracy refers to finding exact equivalent for the word being translated. This means that the word has the same meaning and reference in the target language. Acceptability refers to construction of the translation, for example in the way such expressions were being translated, so that it would read and sound as natural as possible in the target language. Readability looks at the use of good grammar and compliance to language rules. Such rules include avoiding typos in the translation, applying good writing standard with coherent and cohesive translation. However, problems may be identified when translator could not find the equivalent for a certain word. This may be caused by the absence of the word in the target language. In technology for example, a source text may mention a certain object. The object being absent in the target language may not have the equivalent. Therefore, a translator would need to find a strategy to transfer the information on the technology which does not have the name yet in the target language.

This paper investigated the strategies used by translators in finding equivalence. Readers would then be consulted to decide whether the translations were acceptable. The aim of such validation would reveal whether there were identified problems in translation process and whether such problems were identified or ignored by readers.

2 Previous studies

Several studies have been done in literary translation. One of the research projects is by Eunike Yaakoba Eha entitled An Analysis of Translation Strategies and Quality in Translating Notes in PS, I Love You into Indonesian [13]. This thesis was published back in 2020. The focus of this thesis is the translation strategy and the quality of the translation. In the finding of this study, it is found that there are 12 data using one translation strategy amongst seven strategies, 9 data using two translation strategies combined, and 3 data using three translation strategies at once. Alongside the finding of the strategies, the researcher also uses Nababan’s [12] model to determine the quality of the translation. In the finding, out of 24 cases of translation, it is found that 23 data are identified as accurate, and 1 datum is identified as inaccurate. This research concludes that the translation strategies used within the novel translation are enough to convey the message from the source language to the target language accurately.

The second research is by Gerry Agustino, published in 2011 and titled An Analysis of Translation Techniques and Translation Quality of Flight Attendant Manual [14]. As the case with the previous research, this research identifies both the translation techniques and quality of the result of the translation. The writer proposes a questionnaire to support his research. The findings of this research are that there are 9 different translation technique used by translator in the process of translation of the Flight Attendant Manual. The techniques are addition, deletion, borrowing, amplification, modulation, established equivalence, reduction, transposition, and literal translation. Another finding is that the resulting translation is less accurate, less acceptable, and less readable translation. The writer concludes on the note that in translating specific terms, the usage of appropriate technique with the target readers in mind is highly important.

The last research is conducted by Uswatun Khasanah in 2009, titled A Translation Analysis of Cultural Terms in the Film Ratatouille [15] in which the writer identifies and analyses the translation between the movie and its translation in the subtitling. She uses a descriptive and qualitative method to categorize cultural terms and then proceeds to identify and finds their Indonesian counterparts. In the end, she finds that the translation in the subtitle itself is highly acceptable and could be understood even when there are differences between the Source and Target Language.

3 Methodology

The primary method used in this research is a descriptive-qualitative method. This design uses the numerical result obtained from the questionnaire, which shall be further explained in the instruments of the research. Aside from that, this method functions as the tool to analyse the insights by the respondents, as mentioned by Karjo [16], “the researcher is making interpretations of the meaning of data.” The data provided by the respondents are regarding the accuracy and acceptability of the translation of the novels.

Data source for this present research were novels written by Victoria Aveyard. The first novel entitled Red Queen was published in 2015 and the second novel Glass Sword was published in 2016. There were two corpora for this present research, one English corpus and Indonesian translation corpus. The reason for the selection of both novels is due to the unique cultural setting of the novels. Another reason for the choice of both titles of the novel is because there are not much research that has used these novels as the material of the objects. And the writer believes that these novels still have the potential to be explored more using other research fields and methodologies.
Data for this study was collected from the corpora, the data consisted of words, phrases, and idioms. There were two data sets, one in English and another one was the Indonesian translation dataset. The steps for collecting the data were: First, identified the words, phrases, and idioms in both novels. Second, selected cases of inequivalences. Third, selected the cases of inequivalences to be included in the questionnaire. From both the novel, the writer chooses 30 cases in total to be included within the questionnaire. Each category of the words, phrases, and idioms are chosen randomly to fill the questionnaire, with equal division between the first and the second novel across the 30 cases within the questionnaire, another factor that is considered in the inclusion of the cases is that there is at least one case of words, phrases, and idioms from each novel within the questionnaire. This method of spreading is so that there is less discrepancy between the first and the second novel in the result, which could be caused by the absence of one of the categories mentioned above.

After the questionnaire has been distributed to the respondents, the data then can be drawn. The first data that can be obtained from the questionnaire is the respondents’ assessment towards the cases of English to Indonesian translation of the words, phrases, and idioms. The data that can be obtained is how respondents perceive the accuracy of the translation, whether the cases of the English to Indonesian translation are highly accurate, accurate, inaccurate, or highly inaccurate. Aside from the accuracy, another aspect that can be collected from the questionnaire is how respondents perceive the acceptability of the English to Indonesian translation within the cases in the questionnaire, and like the accuracy of the translation, is also divided into four different categories, highly acceptable, acceptable, unacceptable, and highly unacceptable. The accuracy and acceptability assessment by the respondents are then converted into the form of pie chart for easier viewing and presenting in the analysis part of the research.

Another aspect that is collected from the questionnaire is the contribution by the respondents in the form of suggestion of the Indonesian translation. Each case of English to Indonesian translation yields at least one suggestion by the respondents, these suggestions are then organized to be used in the analysis part of the research.

### 4 Result and discussion

Results of this study showed that there were inequivalences in the translations of two novels. Inequivalences consist of 164 inequivalences identified in *Red Queen* and 153 inequivalences in *Glass Sword*. The data could be seen in Table 1.

The questionnaire convey assessments of the case between two novels are categorized into accuracy and acceptability assessment.

The case of accuracy involves the Noun Phrase “push cycle”. Table 2 shows the source text, which is the English original version of the novel, and the target text, which is the Indonesian translation. In the survey, respondents are first asked to give a rating (from 1 to 4, 1 being highly inaccurate and 4 being highly accurate) regarding the accuracy of the translation. Afterwards, the respondents are invited to provide their opinion regarding the translated text in comparison to its original English form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Phrases</th>
<th>Idioms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red Queen</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass Sword</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 2, it contains the word “push cycle”, in the story, the expression is used to describe how the protagonist is among the poor ones in the society that she lives in. The term “push cycle” is described as a luxury that only few can afford. Based on the excerpt shown in Table 1, the use of superordinate or hyponym could be applied when equivalence is not readily available [1]. Additionally, Baker [1] explains that when there is a problem of finding equivalence, some strategies could be implemented. However, push cycle and otopet are two different objects using different technologies. A typical otopet could be seen Figure 1 below:

![Razor scooter or typical kick scooter](https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otopet#/media/Berkas:Razor_Scooter.JPG)

As can be seen from Figure 1, an otopet is a kick scooter. A kick scooter is different from a push cycle. A
push-cycle could have a typical construction as shown in the following Figure 2.


It could be argued that both objects were not considered as equivalent. However, results from the survey to respondents showed an interesting outcome. Overall, respondents considered the translation to be accurate and acceptable. The details of the responses could be seen in the Figure 3.

As can be seen from Figure 3, on the accuracy of the translation, 6 respondents gave the score 4 for highly accurate, while 20 respondents chose to give the score 3 for accuracy. On the other hand, 14 respondents gave the score 2 for the translation being inaccurate, and 1 respondent gave the score 1 for the translation being highly inaccurate. In general, 64% of the respondents considered the translation to be accurate and highly accurate, while 36% chose the translation to be inaccurate and highly inaccurate. It can be concluded that, most of the respondents considered the translation to be accurate.

The respondents were asked to provide answer to the question, “Please observe both version of the sentence of the novel below and choose from the scale in terms of the accuracy and acceptability of the translation”.

![](image)

From the Table 2, it can be observed that respondents provide different alternatives to find equivalence for the object “push cycle”. Being a Noun Phrase (NP), respondents are trying to give the best NP in Indonesian. Respondents are trying to identify object in the Indonesian culture, which is similar to the NP “push cycle”. The alternatives are using the superordinate, paraphrasing, and omission. Thirteen respondents suggest the use of superordinate, such as sepeda and sepeda dorong, while two respondents prefer the usage of paraphrasing using related words, which results in the word skuter. One participant suggests the use of omission, and another suggests the use of loan words and italicization. The alternative provided for the translation ranges from using the synonym of the word to omitting the word altogether.

Another case depicted in the translation was the word transport, in which the translator chose the Indonesian equivalence of kendaraan. The responses from the survey showed variations of strategies apart from one used by the translator. The details of these inputs could be seen in the Table 4.

The respondents provide two different methods of translation to the word “transports”. The term is a Noun Phrase (NP). It can be observed that the respondents try to find the closest meaning to the word in the ST. The first method used in the translation by the respondents are the translation by using paraphrase using a related word, this results in the words such as, kendaraan and angkutan. While another method is the translation by a more general word or superordinate, resulting in the word transportasi.

Based on the result above, the most common method of translation is the translation by using paraphrase using a related word. This method, according to Baker...
Therefore, the selected cases of the novel translation are unacceptable, including within are highly unacceptable, occupies 24.3% of the responses. The percentage can be divided into two, the cases are acceptable. On the other hand, the amount of the responses that refer to the cases being unacceptable, 50.2% agree that the selected cases within are highly acceptable, 50.2% give the score 4 for highly acceptable. Lastly, 4.7% of the total give the score 1 for highly inaccurate. It can be concluded, then overall, that the translation of both Red Queen (2015) and Glass Sword (2016) are accurate, with 77% of the side of it being accurate, and 23% of it being inaccurate.

The acceptability also shows similar result. The average of all responses, 75.6% of them give the score 4 for being highly acceptable. While 50.2% give the translation of both novels the score 3 for acceptable. Inversely, 18.3% of the total responses give the score 2 for acceptable. Lastly, 4.7% of the total give the score 1 for highly unacceptable. From these results, it can be concluded that the translation of both the novels, Red Queen and Glass Sword have acceptable level of translation. This is supported by 75.6% of the total responses point to the translation of both novels being acceptable and 24.3% of the total refer to the novel being unacceptable.

5 Conclusion
Translation is something of high importance, remembering there are vast numbers of language in this world. In transferring literary text from one language to another, a good translation is always a demand. To create a good translation, however, there are several things to be considered. This is due to that, a good translation must cover every aspect of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. Even if a translation is easy to read and easy to understand, if it is not accurate, then it cannot be called a good translation. The three aspects must support each other in creating a good translation.

Further implication includes investigating translation of literature as part of readers’ response investigation. This means, translation studies could be conducted to reveal the multi-layer and complex realities as seen from readers of literature. Results of this new avenue of study would be beneficial to introduce nuances in culture through works of literature. In addition, language classrooms could also benefit in offering variations of lexical or vocabulary building, enabling learners to resort to more accustomed, relevant, and natural expressions of the English words learnt.
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