

Translation and Ideology: How Translators Shape Narratives

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Abstract: *Language serves as a tool for national unity and is essential for communication and interaction among people. Without it, understanding others' ideas, emotions, and intentions would be difficult. Language functions as a system or method that allows mutual understanding between a speaker and a listener, assigning meaning to symbols and structures used in communication. While every country has its own unique language, English acts as a global bridge, connecting people around the world as an international language.*

Keywords: *Translation, Ideology, Narrative shaping, Domestication, Foreignization, Translator's agency, Cultural adaptation, Linguistic transformation, Target language, Source language, Power dynamics, Cultural transfer, Translation strategies, Discourse, Interpretation, Representation, Social context, Meaning negotiation, Textual transformation, Ethical responsibility.*

Introduction

Translation is not merely the act of converting words from one language into another. Rather, it involves accurately conveying the original meaning and intent of the source material. In contexts such as Indonesian writing, unfamiliar or poorly understood texts can significantly affect the quality of translation, as the logical connection between ideas is essential. The role of translation is to transfer meaning from one language to another while preserving the integrity of the original message. Translation has been described as an art that involves reproducing written expressions from one language into equivalent expressions in another. The core purpose of translation is to replicate, as faithfully as possible, all linguistic elements – both lexical and grammatical – from the original language into the target language. At the same time, every detail and piece of information in the original text must be retained in the translation. The ultimate goal is to mirror the source language's structure and vocabulary by identifying appropriate equivalents in the target language.

Literature Review

Translation goes beyond a simple linguistic exchange – it is also a socio-historical process where various ideologies and potential conflicts intersect, and the final translation often reflects a compromise between these forces. Ideology plays a significant role in shaping the translator's choices and in how the translated text is received by its audience. Because of this, incorporating ideological theory into the field of Translation Studies is both logical and necessary. Cultural differences frequently emerge in translation due to the varying traditions and contexts of the source and target languages. A translator's ideological stance can heavily influence the methods they choose to handle these cultural challenges. This ideological influence is often directly reflected in the translation approach. Translators typically face two main choices: to adapt the text to fit the expectations of the target audience or to retain the original message along with its unique cultural and ideological aspects. These choices align with two contrasting strategies known as domestication and foreignization. The connection between translation and ideology has gained increased scholarly interest, particularly since the "cultural turn" in translation

studies, which highlighted the importance of examining translation through its historical and cultural contexts. Domestication and foreignization are two key translation strategies that offer both linguistic and cultural direction. Domestication involves adapting a translated text to reduce foreign elements, aligning it more closely with the cultural norms of the target audience. Since culture plays a vital role in translation, understanding the cultural backgrounds of both the source and target languages is crucial. Before beginning the translation, the translator should analyze the cultural context within the original text and determine how deeply language is embedded in that culture.

A skilled translator must adapt the content to reflect the cultural expectations, traditions, and social norms of the audience they are translating for. In addition, they should have a solid grasp of the communication styles and conventions of both languages. This cultural sensitivity can greatly enhance the quality and effectiveness of a translation.

In many cases, the cultural content of a text may have a greater impact on translation than the text's genre. Translation operates within a socio-cultural framework, meaning it must be understood and evaluated within the context of the cultures involved. Since different cultures often hold distinct worldviews, these differences naturally influence the language used. Therefore, translation is not only a linguistic task but also an exchange between two cultural systems. Some argue that foreignization is a better strategy than domestication because it retains more of the source culture's authenticity and may be more suitable in certain contexts.

Methodology

Translation is fundamentally the process of converting written content from one language to another while preserving the original ideas and meanings. It is described as the act of conveying a book's intended meaning into another language in a way that aligns with the author's purpose. Translation plays a crucial role in supporting the advancement of science and technology by enabling the global exchange of knowledge. However, due to cultural variations between languages, translators must possess strong skills to navigate the complexities of meaning across different linguistic contexts. The interpretation of language units often differs by country, making cultural awareness essential in the translation process. Translation involves more than just changing words from one language to another—it is about accurately conveying the message in a way that makes sense to readers of the target language. The goal is to ensure that the translated text reflects the author's original intention and resonates with the audience at the same level as the original.

Analysis and Results

Domestication is a translation strategy that focuses on aligning the translated text with the culture and language norms of the target audience. A translation is often considered "correct," "acceptable," or "high quality" when it matches the expectations and cultural preferences of its readers. The goal is to make the translation feel natural, as though it were originally written in the target language, rather than a foreign text that has been adapted. This approach aims to make the text easy and comfortable for the target language (TL) readers to understand by minimizing any sense of foreignness. Domestication involves adapting the source language's (SL) cultural elements to fit those of the TL, allowing for smoother communication and cultural familiarity. According to this view, domestication can be seen as an ethnocentric process that reshapes the foreign content to reflect the values and norms of the target culture, essentially "bringing the author home." This requires not only choosing which foreign texts to translate but also deciding how to adapt them in a way that fits seamlessly within the target culture. Translator and theorist Lawrence Venuti used the terms "domesticating" and "foreignizing" to describe these contrasting translation approaches. In the case of domestication, the aim is to create the illusion that the text was originally written in the target language, producing a final result that reads fluently and naturally to its new audience.

Conclusion

As we reach translation is not a neutral or purely linguistic act – it is inherently shaped by the translator's ideological stance, cultural background, and contextual awareness. Translators play a pivotal role in shaping narratives, not only by transferring meaning from one language to another but by influencing how texts are interpreted and understood across cultural boundaries. Through strategic choices such as domestication or foreignization – translators may align with or resist dominant ideologies, subtly framing how stories are told and received. As such, translation becomes a powerful cultural and political tool, capable of reinforcing or challenging existing worldviews. Recognizing the interplay between translation and ideology allows us to better understand the impact of translated texts on society, culture, and global discourse.

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