

The Use of Modulation in Translating Metaphors from English to Indonesian in L.M. Montgomery's *The Golden Road*

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ABSTRACT

*This study aims to identify and analyze the modulation used in translating metaphors in L.M. Montgomery's *The Golden Road* using the modulation classification theory proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet. While previous studies on modulation mainly focus on equivalence and meaning shift, there is limited research exploring the specific role of modulation method in translating metaphors, especially in literary works. To address this gap, this study utilizes a descriptive-comparative qualitative method, the data for this study are metaphorical expressions translated with modulation from the English novel *The Golden Road* and its translation into Indonesian titled *Hari-Hari Bahagia* by L.M. Montgomery. The result of this study reveals that out of 181 data, 6 out of 10 types of modulation applied by the translator in this novel are explicative modulation (51%), abstract for concrete (23%), change of symbols (20%), negation of the opposite (3%), active to passive (vice versa) (2%), and one part for another (1%). This study shows that metaphor translation not only focuses on word equivalence but also requires creativity and a deep understanding of both languages to maintain the essence and uniqueness of the source text.*

Keywords: Translation; Modulation; Metaphor; Novel; *The Golden Road*

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INTRODUCTION

The use of modulation in metaphor translation often presents a unique challenge for translators, especially in terms of the cultural aspects embedded within metaphors. The metaphor is a fundamental language element and frequently used in literary works to convey deeper and more complex meanings. In literary translation, metaphors pose challenges due to cultural and structural differences between the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL). As mentioned by Zhang and Liang (2023), translation is not merely about transferring messages from one language to another but also involves cultural exchange that needs to be considered in the context of history and the background of the speakers' and translators' cultures. Literary translation can be successful if the translator effectively conveys the same emotions from the SL text into the TL text (Karomah, 2019). Umam (2017) also argues that metaphor translation becomes particularly difficult when the reader feels unsatisfied due to translation errors or the translator's lack of accuracy in interpreting the source text. Thus, it will create a problem when a translator unfamiliar with the cultural context of the SL speakers and must translate the text while still preserving its equivalent meaning. This makes metaphor translation challenging because metaphors often have broader and deeper meanings in the original text.

Research on metaphor has become a significant and widely discussed topic of interest in linguistics. Metaphors not only add aesthetic elements to language but also provide vivid imagery by using expressions that are not directly related to the subject yet effectively provide a clear analogy (Lakoff & Johnson, 2011). On the other hand, according to Moon and Knowles

in Harahap et al., (2020), metaphors are a form of figurative expression that conveys an implicit comparison between two different elements. Therefore, translators are required to have deep understanding of the intrinsic meaning of metaphors in the source language before translating them into the target language. In literary works such as novels, metaphorical expressions cannot always be translated directly, especially if the underlying concept does not have an exact equivalent in the text. As Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) stated, some metaphors usually rely on highly distinctive imagery that makes it difficult to translate literally. In this case, the translator needs to consider several factors, such as the balance between the meaning and stylistic elements and the target audience's expectations. There are various approaches to translating metaphors, ranging from word-for-word approaches to more contextual and interpretive approaches. One commonly employed technique in translating metaphors in literary works is modulation, which involves adjusting a perspective or manner of expression without altering its fundamental meaning in the SL. Modulation makes it possible for metaphors that may be difficult to comprehend in the SL to be conveyed more naturally in the TL without losing their expressive value.

Modulation was first introduced by Vinay and Darbelnet, (1995) in their classification theory of translation methods, where modulation defined as a method that occurs by changing a point of view or perspective without altering the fundamental meaning of an expression. Molina and Hurtado also discussed the concept of modulation, as cited in Qureisin (2024), who explain that modulation occurs due to cultural differences that affect the way societies perceive a certain concept. Vinay and

Darbelnet (1995) classify modulation into 10 types. The first modulation is abstract for concrete which transforms the abstract concept in the SL into a more concrete concept in the TL. The second is explicative modulation, which is used to explain the meaning more explicitly. The third modulation is part to whole, which shifts a concept that was originally a partial into a whole representation. Next modulation is one part for another, which substitutes one part of an object with another part. The fifth type is reversal of terms, which is a modulation that changes the order of words or sentence structure from SL into TL. The sixth modulation is negation of the opposite, which used to convey meaning by using the opposite concept from SL. The seventh modulation is active to passive, that changes the active sentence into the passive one or vice versa. The eighth type of modulation is space for time which changes the spacial concept in SL into the time concept in TL. The ninth modulation is intervals for limits, which modifies a limit in SL into a time span in TL. Finally, the last modulation is change of symbols which is usually used to replace existing symbols in SL into different symbols in TL. Therefore, the translator needs to consider the cultural appropriateness of the original text when choosing the type of modulation to be used to ensure that the intended meaning is accurately conveyed and effectively understood in the TL.

Several studies have been conducted previously and are related to this research. The first category includes studies that are relevant to the analysis of metaphor translation in novels that has often been done, such as by Andarini et al. (2016), Umam (2017), Karomah (2019), Harahap et al. (2020), Buditama and Sajarwa (2021), and Soelistyowati et al. (2023). The next category comprises

studies related to modulation in translation and has been previously conducted by Sofyansyah et al. (2017), Sujana et al. (2019), Ningrum et al. (2019), Yahya et al. (2021), Siregar et al. (2023), and Qureisin (2024). Third, studies relevant to the analysis of the translation of literary works other than novels include Pardede (2013), who used poetry anthologies as his research data. Rijal et al. (2022) discussed the translation strategy in Surah Ali-Imran. Hasanah et al. (2020) conducted a semantic study of translation in demonstration posters. Next is a study by Alanisa and Munandar (2020), which discussed metaphor strategies in the movies *Mulan* and *Moana*. The last research was conducted by Hidayah and Oktavia (2019) using Kirdjomulyo's drama script as their data.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, various scholars have widely conducted research on modulation in literary translation. However, there is still limited research that specifically examines modulation in the translation of metaphors within *The Golden Road*. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the types of modulation applied in the translation of metaphorical expressions in both the English and Indonesian versions of L.M. Montgomery's *The Golden Road*.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method that is descriptive-comparative. As Sugiyono (2013) said, qualitative research is a type of research that uses a natural setting to interpret phenomena that occur and uses various existing approaches. In addition, the descriptive method in this study is used to explain the results of data analysis in the form of descriptions. Meanwhile, the comparative method is used to compare data from two different objects

(Buditama & Sajarwa, 2021). Therefore, the use of descriptive-comparative methods in this study aims to compare data from two different objects.

The data source for this research is a classic English novel entitled *The Golden Road* (L.M. Montgomery, 1913) and its translation into Indonesian entitled *Hari-Hari Bahagia* (L.M. Montgomery, 2023) translated by Tanti Lesmana. This novel was chosen because the researcher found that half of all metaphors in this novel were translated using the modulation method. This research was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher carefully collected data by carefully reading both the Source Language (SL) and Target Language (TL) novels. Then, the researcher collected the metaphorical expressions

found in the novels and analyzed the use of modulation by the translator on the metaphorical expressions of the SL into the TL using the modulation theory proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). Finally, the researcher concludes the results of the data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, 6 out of 10 modulation methods of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) were found to be used by translators in translating metaphors in *The Golden Road*. The modulation methods include abstract for concrete, explicative modulation, one part for another, negation of the opposite, active to passive, and change of symbols. The following is a description of the number of types of modulation used in this study:

Table 1. Types of Modulation

Modulation Types	Frequency	Percent
Abstract for concrete	41	23%
Explicative modulation	93	51%
One part for another	2	1%
Negation of the opposite	5	3%
Active to passive	4	2%
Change of symbols	36	20%
Total	181	100%

In the table above, it can be seen from the six types of modulation identified, explicative modulation is the most frequently applied modulation by translator in *The Golden Road* with a percentage of 51%, followed by abstract for concrete modulation at 23%, and change of symbols at 20%. Meanwhile, the other three modulations are not used very often by the translator, such as the modulation of negation of the opposite (3%), active to passive (2%), and one part for another (1%).

Abstract for concrete

Abstract for concrete modulation refers to changing the abstract concept in SL to concrete concept so it can easily understood in the TL (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). The following is an example of data that uses abstract for concrete modulation.

(Data 1)

SL: “If she meant to **make the flesh creep on our bones** she succeeded.” (TGR, p. 101)

TL: “Dia berhasil **membuat kami merinding ngeri.**” (HHB, p. 107)

In the data presented above, a change in perspective occurs when conveying the meaning of the SL metaphor to the TL. In the SL, the phrase “make the flesh creep on our bones” is a metaphor or figure of speech that is usually used to describe feelings or fear in an abstract way because it gives the image of “*daging yang sedang merayap di tulang*” in Indonesian. Then, in the TL, the metaphorical expression is translated into “*membuat kami merinding ngeri,*” which still maintains the concept of the feeling of fear but in a more concrete way.

Explicative modulation

Explicative modulation, also known as explanatory modulation, is a method introduced by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) that involves explaining the more explicit meaning of a previously implicit text. The following data is an example of the use of explicative modulation.

(Data 2)

SL: “We worked with **heavy hearts** that day.” (TGR, p. 310)

TL: “Kami bekerja dengan **hati berat oleh kesedihan.**” (HHB, p. 322)

From the example shown above, it can be seen that the metaphorical phrase in the SL is translated by giving a more explicit explanation so that a change in the point of view occurs in the TL. The metaphorical phrase “heavy hearts” in the SL only describes a heavy and burdened feeling or heart. Hence, the translator uses explicative modulation in the TL by adding the phrase “*oleh kesedihan,*” which explicitly explains that the cause of the heavy heart is sadness.

One part for another

According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), one part for another modulation is a method that involves changing part of an expression or object in the SL into another part of the same concept or object in the TL. The data below is an example of the use of one part for another modulation.

(Data 3)

SL: “Poor Cecily **paid dearly enough for her vanity.**” (TGR, p. 196)

TL: “Cecily yang malang **harus membayar cukup mahal atas kekeraskepalaannya.**” (HHB, p. 204)

In the data example above, a change in point of view requires replacing one concept with a different one but remains related to the meaning and main message of the SL. In the source language, “vanity” is a metaphorical expression that means “pride” or in Indonesian is called “*kesombongan.*” However, when translated into the TL, the translator changes the concept of vanity to stubbornness or “*kekeraskepalaannya*” in the TL, which has a different meaning but is still relevant to the message delivered by the SL.

Negation of the opposite

Negation of the opposite is a modulation used to translate expressions from the SL into the opposite meaning in the TL (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). The following is an example of data that applies the negation of the opposite modulation.

(Data 4)

SL: “I don’t see how you ever **had the face.**” (TGR, p. 12)

TL: “Aku heran kau **tidak malu** berbuat begitu.” (HHB, P. 20)

The data above shows a change in point of view by using the negative form of the SL metaphor. In the SL, it can be seen that the phrase “had the face” is a metaphor to express “courage” or “no shame.” Then, the translator makes a change by expressing the opposite of the SL metaphor into a negative form in the TL, which is “*tidak malu*” that means “no shame” in English. The “no shame” phrase is a form of negation used to make the TL more natural and understandable to the reader of TL.

Active to passive (vice versa)

According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), active to passive modulation is a method in which the translator alters the sentence structure by converting an active sentence in the SL into a passive sentence in the TL and vice versa. The following data illustrate the application of active to passive modulation.

(Data 5)

SL: “We all stopped and huddled together in a miserable group. **Fear filled our hearts.**” (TGR, p. 94)

TL: “Kami berhenti dan meringkuk bersama, sama-sama menderita. **Hati kami diliputi ketakutan.**” (HHB, p. 100)

The data above shows that the translator altered the sentence structure from an active form in the SL to a passive form in the TL. In the metaphorical sentence from the SL, the noun “fear” functions as the subject performing the action “filled” on “our hearts.” However, the translator transformed this structure into a passive form in the TL, where the phrase “*hati kami*” (our hearts) becomes the focus of the sentence and receives the action “*menyelimuti*” (enveloped) by “*ketakutan*” (fear).

Change of symbols

The change of symbol modulation type refers to a method in which a specific symbol or emblem in the source text is replaced with a different symbol in the target text (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). The following data illustrates an example of the application of change of symbol modulation.

(Data 6)

SL: “... **the whole great, green, diamond-dripping world**, promising a fair morrow.” (TGR, p. 186)

TL: “... **dunia yang hijau bak bertabur permata**, menjanjikan hari esok yang indah.” (HHB, p. 194)

The data above demonstrates a symbolic shift from the SL to the TL. In the metaphorical expression from the SL, the phrase “diamond-dripping” would be literally translated as “*tetesan berlian.*” However, the translator replaced the original symbol with another that conveys an equivalent meaning in the TL, resulting in “*bertabur permata*” which means “studded with gems” in English. In this case, the translator opted for the word “*permata*” instead of “*berlian,*” as found in the SL. Such changes in symbols or emblems are typically made to align with the cultural context of the TL reader, ensuring that the metaphor remains natural and comprehensible.

Discussion

The translation of a novel must effectively communicate the fundamental narrative elements that structure the source text (Venuti, 2013). In this study, these fundamental narrative elements refer to the metaphorical expressions found in *The Golden Road*. Based on the findings, this study demonstrates that the translation of

metaphors in literary works, such as novels, involves various forms of modulation to adjust meaning according to the linguistic and cultural systems of the TL audience. Among the different types of modulation, explicative modulation is the most frequently applied by the translator in rendering metaphors in *The Golden Road*. This indicates that the translator prioritizes making the meaning of metaphors more explicit in the TL to avoid ambiguity while ensuring that the intended message remains clear to readers. For instance, in data (2), the metaphorical phrase “heavy hearts” would be literally translated as “*hati yang berat.*” However, the translator chose to add “*oleh kesedihan*” (by sorrow) to clarify further the emotional nuance implied in the SL, allowing the TL audience to grasp the metaphor’s meaning more easily.

After explicative modulation, the second most frequently used modulation by the translator is abstract for concrete. This modulation type is often employed when the translator cannot find a direct equivalent in the TL. As a result, the translator replaces an abstract concept from the SL with a more concrete one in the TL while maintaining the artistic nuance of the original metaphor. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) state that certain English words tend to express highly general and abstract concepts, which can pose challenges in translation. For example, in data (1), the translator adapts the metaphorical expressions “make the flesh creep on our bones,” which conveys fear through an abstract concept, into “*membuat kami merinding ngeri,*” a more commonly used and concrete expression in the TL. This transformation ensures the TL audience can comprehend the intended meaning more easily. The application of this modulation also helps maintain the cohesion and clarity of the text without

compromising the metaphorical essence conveyed in the TL.

On the other hand, the translator also frequently uses change of symbols modulation. In the case of metaphor translation, this modulation is necessary to adjust symbols in a way that avoids excessive or unnatural translations (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). For instance, in data (6), there is a symbolic shift in the translation of the SL metaphor “diamond-dripping world” into “*dunia yang hijau bak bertabur permata.*” In this case, the translator replaces “diamond” with “*permata*” to create a more natural-sounding expression in the TL while still preserving the original metaphor’s sense of beauty and luxury. Meanwhile, three other modulation types are one part for another, negation of the opposite, and active to passive are used only sparingly. The translator’s limited application of these three modulations suggests that they were employed only in specific contexts, prioritizing other modulation types that more directly preserve the original metaphorical meaning.

CONCLUSION

Translating metaphors in novels is quite a complex process and requires specific methods to convey the meaning well in the text. One of the methods often used by translators is modulation. In this study, the translation of metaphors in novels involves various forms of modulation to adjust the point of view, structure, and even elements in the metaphors so that the main meaning of the metaphors in the original text is still conveyed in the translation text. Some metaphors may have implicit meanings in the English text, so the translator needs to clarify the meaning of the metaphor to fit the reader’s way of thinking. In addition to explaining more explicitly, the change of abstract

metaphor concepts to be more concrete, as well as the change of certain symbol or expression, are also applied by the translator to be able to express the prevailing cultural values in the TL. However, in novels, the use of modulation often causes changes or even the removal of the metaphorical meaning contained in the text so that the translator can only maintain the message that the text wants to convey. Hence, this study concludes that the application of modulation in metaphor translation shows that the translation process not only focuses on word equivalence but also requires creativity and a deep understanding of both languages to maintain the essence and message of the source language text.

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