

Embracing dimensions of *eco-translatology* in translation classroom

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the implementation of eco-translatology by 50 English literature students at Universitas Negeri Jakarta, employing a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze how they apply this approach in translating general texts. Eco-translatology is a reasonably new translation approach proposed by Hu in 2020. Not only implemented in translation analysis, but some studies have also suggested the optimistic claims of using eco-translatology as an approach for classroom teaching. Eco-translatology is known for its three dimensions: linguistics, cultural and communicative. Newmark (1988) mentioned that the more specific a language becomes for natural phenomena, the more embedded in cultural features it becomes. These cultural words are easy to detect since they are primarily associated with a particular language that cannot be translated. The writer conducted a field study that inspects the linguistic, cultural, and communicative aspects of the three dimensions of eco-translatology by Hu (2020). The writer found that among the three dimensions of eco-translatology, the linguistic dimension received the highest number, while communicative dimension the lowest. Cultural dimension may be well perceived by the students, yet they found difficulty when finding equivalence of those cultural terms. This calls for a more thorough explanation by translation teachers to guide their students in understanding this new concept of eco-translatology.

Keywords: *Eco-Translatology, translation competence, translation analysis, general text*

INTRODUCTION

Eco-translatology is a new approach in translation studies. It was first proposed by Professor Gengshen Hu in 2004, although it only developed into a systematic translation theory a decade later, in 2014 (Guo, 2021). This theory introduces a new perspective in translation analysis that studies translation behavior from the authored-centered perspective. As stated in its name, eco-translatology metaphorically borrows the term ecology with translation. The common grounds between ecology and

translation lie within merging the idea of 'selection' and 'adaptation' within the 'translation biosphere'. For instance, translators adapt to the environment of the source text and source language and will proceed to choose the better one. Also, the translated text that will be selected is the one that has the most suitable translation, and the inferior one will be excluded (Guo, 2021). In other words, both translators and the translation activity will adapt to the translational eco-environment and will only let themselves be accepted by its natural selection.

Although Bo (2014) stated that eco-translatology is often used as guidance for analysing translation activities, several researchers such as Xiaowei (2014), Halili (2020) and Zhai (2019) have studied the possibility of applying eco-translatology to pedagogical approaches. Their claim shows a positive response that applying eco-translatology in a classroom can effectively promote translation teaching and help improve the translation ability of the student. This research aims to identify fourth semester students of the English Literature study program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta in their application of eco-translatology when translating general text after being taught about the eco-translatology approach in classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The basic principle of eco-translatology is the translator's adaptive transformation from the linguistic, culture, and communicative dimension. The main reason would be that language, culture and communication are the three most essential perspectives to consider in translation. A common notion between translators is that the process carries out adaptive transformations according to different phrases and orders of a particular language, culture, and communication. In contrast, language is the carrier of culture and culture is the accumulation of communication.

Adaptive selection on the linguistic dimension refers to the translator's ability to adapt and select the language form in different aspects and levels. Shuyue & Feng (2019) believes that a translator needs to grasp not only the original text but also understand the target languages' features, styles, and rhetorical devices of the original text before translating it. Hu mentioned several elements in the linguistic dimension: rhetorical devices, punctuation, language styles, genre, and sentence pattern.

The cultural dimension pays attention to the cultural connotation differences between original and target cultures to avoid misinterpretation (Dong & Qiu, 2018). Guo (2021) claims that in translation, there are bound to be differences between cultural words within the original language and in the target language. Therefore, translators should adapt to the target language's culture to allow readers understand the

text without any cultural barriers while also appreciating the culture of foreign countries.

Newmark (1998) believes that cultural words are easy to detect since they are primarily associated with a particular language that cannot be translated. The more specific a language becomes for natural phenomena, the more it becomes embedded in cultural features. Nida (in Newmark, 1998) categorized some examples of translating foreign cultural words in a narrow sense: ecology, material culture or artifacts, social culture, customs and gestures. Ecology concerns cultural words involving natural phenomena such as flora, fauna, plains, or hills; for example, most Europeans might not be familiar with a paddy field as Southeast Asian and not familiar with the tundra. Material culture is categorized into food, clothes, houses, and transport. For example, people in India would call a piece of fabric fastened between the legs a dhoti rather than a sarong. Social culture involves human activities such as work and leisure within any culture; for example, the word *charcuterie* will not exist in anglophone countries. Customs are made of three categories: politics, religion, and artistic cultures. Lastly, different gestures occur in different cultures, for example, in one culture people may spit as a blessing, kiss someone's fingertips when greeting someone, or handclap slowly to show appreciation.

Newmark (1998) suggested that to solve these translation problems, the most appropriate solution would be for the translator to not depend much on the linguistic or collocation context but focus on the readership and the setting. Ivir (2002) also suggested the use of cultural translation strategies: definition, borrowing, substitution, omission, addition, lexical creation, and literal translation.

The communicative dimension refers to the translator's adaptation and selection in pragmatic bilingual communication (Shuyue & Feng, 2019). Hu (2011, in Dong & Qiu, 2018) explain that the adaptive transformation of the communicative dimension is the translator's selection and adaptation of communicative intentions during the translation process. It requires the translator to pay attention to the communicative intention in both the source and target language during translation. In the communicative dimension, the translator should focus on whether the communicative intention in the original text could be reflected in the translated text (Novosad, 2018). According to Tarone (1981), communication strategies are separated into nine elements: approximation, word coinage, circumlocution, literal translation, language switch, appeal for assistance, mime, topic avoidance and message abandonment.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the writer conducted a field study that inspects the linguistic, culture, and communicative aspects of the three dimensions of eco-translatology by Hu (2020). This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explore how students apply the dimension of eco-translatology in translating general text. The data source in this research is taken from the translation result of the general text. The general text is taken from an online newspaper article “Celebrate Diversity, Foster Harmony” from kompas.id. The translation result of general text is collected from 50 students in the fourth semester of the English Literature study program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. 50 students were selected base on their approval which encompasses more than half of the population of students at fourth semester. The reason lies that these students have finished the Theory of Translation course and were currently taking the General and Literary Translation course. The classes were being taught on the topic only one time.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings on the translation analysis performed by the writer suggested that the students have understood and implemented the elements in the dimensions of eco-translatology, even though there could be found some errors. This may have happened unconsciously or indicated a lack of thoroughness when analyzing the elements in the eco-translatology dimension. The results of students' translation vary in a broad range, but most already show the ability to produce a translation that is accurate, acceptable, and readable.

In the linguistic competence, it is necessary to recognize and implement some, if not all, strategies, or elements whenever it is deemed appropriate towards the translation. Based on the text, elements in the linguistic dimension that the students acknowledged are rhetorical devices, punctuations, language style, genre, and sentence patterns. However, there are still students who makes errors in this dimension, such as making mistakes in punctuations or making rigid translation. An example of this is stated below.

ST	TT
The Sundanese arts being performed included reak, badawang, sisingaan, renggong, angklung buncis and benjang helaran rajawali. The Chinese traditional	Dari adat sunda menampilkan seperti reak, badawang, sisingaan, renggong, angklung buncis dan benjang helaran rajawali. Dan untuk adat china nya seperti penampilan tari singa dan liong.

arts were represented by lion dances and liong.	Pada festival tersebut, berbagai jenis seni tradisional Sunda ditampilkan seperti reak, badawang, sisingaan, renggong, angklung buncis, dan benjang helaran rajawali. Sementara itu, seni tradisional Tionghoa dihadirkan melalui pertunjukan tarian singa dan liong.
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The table presented above is an example of heavily altered translation. On the first translation, the student has changed how they describe the source text's information, from a formal narrative into a casual description. Not only this changed the intended language style, but the genre of students' translated text is also changed. Several mistakes can also be found: for example the use of conjunction 'dan' at the beginning of the sentence in target text, literal translation from 'Chinese' into 'China', and the phrase 'lion dances' into 'tarian singa'. Compared to the second translation, the writer could quickly notice the massive difference between poor and acceptable translations. Translation from the second text is better since it stays faithful with the context of the source text without altering its intended language style, genre and could modify the sentence in the target language well.

Another example of slight error in the linguistic dimension occurred within the punctuation elements. Punctuation marks should not be taken lightly in translation since they could affect the result (Mogahed & Poe 2012). Based on the translation analysis result, the most violated roles of punctuation marks are the syntactic punctuation marks, which function is to organize information and hierarchize information in sentences. The example is being presented below.

ST	TT
The Sundanese arts being performed included reak, badawang, sisingaan, renggong, angklung buncis and benjang helaran rajawali	Kesenian sunda yang ditampilkan berupa reak, badawang, sisingaan, renggong, angklung buncis, dan benjang helaran rajawali.
	Seni kebudayaan Sunda yang ditampilkan diantaranya ; Reak Badawang, Sisingaan, Renggong, Angklung buncis dan Benjang Helaran rajawali.
	Kesenian Sunda yang ditampilkan antara lain reak, badawang, sisingaan, renggong, angklung buncis dan benjang helaran rajawali.

Based on the table presented above, two students misplaced the use of punctuation marks, and only one of them did it correctly. Text translation on the top shows a slight mistake of comma placement. When listing nouns in a sentence, commas are used after each noun except the last one (Britannica Dictionary, n.d.). This mistake is quite curious since the punctuation marks in source text (ST) is already placed correctly. Meanwhile, the text in the middle shows an incorrect use of semicolon. Semicolon should be used to link two independent clauses with no connecting words or with

conjunctive adverbs (Purdue OWL, n.d.). However, in the students' translation, semicolon is used before listing nouns, which is incorrect. Again, this mistake could have been avoided easily had the student who translated these stays true to the placement of punctuation marks from the source text. This is shown in translated text in the bottom, which does not change the punctuation marks at all, and as a result, held the same meaning and structure from its source text.

Translation strategies in the cultural dimension ultimately depends on whether the source text (ST) contain any cultural words. If they do, it is the job for the translator to recognize and implement the most proper cultural strategy and use it accordingly. Some elements in the cultural dimension that students acknowledged in the text are definition, borrowing, substitutions (combined with omission and addition), addition and literal translation. An example of students' application of the definition strategy is presented below.

ST	TT
<p>The Chinese traditional arts were represented by lion dances and liong.</p>	<p>Sedangkan kesenian tradisional Tionghoa yang ditampilkan adalah barongsai dan tari naga (liong).</p>
	<p>Seni kebudayaan China direpresentasikan dengan tarian singa (Barongsai) dan liong (Barongsai stik).</p>

Based on table presented above, it can be inferred that the students who did both translations acknowledged the cultural term of 'liong' and decided to explain it in more detail. The first translation explains it as 'tarian naga', while the second explains it as 'barongsai stik'.

Another example from the cultural dimension occurred in the use of literal translation strategy. To use the literal translation element in the cultural dimension, the translator should ensure that the translation result does not ruin the grammatical structure or clash with an existing cultural expression in the target language. Below are some fewer clear examples of using literal translation in the text.

ST: A number of street vendors also took advantage of the crowd.

TT: *Banyak pedagang jalanan yang mengambil keuntungan dari keramaian ini.*

In the translation above, the student translates the phrase 'street vendors' quite literally into 'pedagang jalanan'. However, this is not quite true, since a more suitable existing phrase in the target language is 'pedagang kaki lima'. Another example is presented below.

ST: The Chinese traditional arts were represented by lion dances and liong.

TT: *Dan untuk adat china nya seperti penampilan tari singa dan liong.*

In translation above, a student made the same mistake by literally translating the phrase 'lion dances' word-by-word into 'tari singa'. This is a unique example, as most students do not translate the phrase 'lion dance' literally and have understood to substitute the word 'barongsai' instead.

Lastly, the communicative strategy by Tarone (1981) is understood as the strategies that translators should avoid when translating. In other words, unlike the linguistic competence strategies which requires translators to implement all the elements whenever appropriate, to acquire a good translation competence it is necessary to avoid doing Tarone's (1981) communicative strategies instead. Although not mentioned in Tarone's (1981) communicative strategy, the writer would like to add a sub-chapter relating to communicative dimension. After analyzing students' translation, the writer noticed a variety of vocabularies that students use in translating the word 'beats'. The assortment of said vocabularies are presented in the table below.

ST	TT
The beats of the percussion instruments	<u>Alunan</u> alat musik perkusi
	<u>Ritme</u> alat musik perkusi
	<u>Irama</u> alat musik perkusi
	<u>Tabuhan</u> alat musik perkusi
	<u>Ketukan</u> instrumen perkusi
	<u>Dentuman</u> alat musik perkusi

Since the 'beats' sounds were coming from a traditional percussion, students who translated it into 'alunan', 'tabuhan', 'ketukan' and 'dentuman' are translating it more correctly.

Another example from the communicative dimension is the element of approximation. Using approximation means using a vocabulary that shares a close enough meaning. An example is being presented below.

ST: Celebrate diversity, foster harmony

TT: *Rayakan Keberagaman, Menanamkan Perdamaian*

In the translation above, the student translates the word 'harmony' into 'perdamaian', which is not the equivalent word in the source language but somewhat still carries the same message. Ultimately, this decision would have been made after the student had read all of the passages in the text and decides to use the word 'perdamaian' since it

holds similarity to the intended message. However, to translate 'harmony' into 'perdamaian' outside of this context would result in an incorrect translation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the observation and analysis results on students' translation above, the writer concluded that most students in the fourth semester of the English literature study program have understood and implemented the elements in the three dimensions of eco-translatology, even though some still lacks comprehension in acknowledging it. This might be due to the limited time the translation teacher had in teaching the new approach to students, hence their insufficiency when implementing the elements. Further extensive research regarding eco-translatology in classroom teaching is also greatly needed due to its relatively recent nature.

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