

Category Shift in the Translation of the Novel

the Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates category shifts in the Indonesian translation of Paulo Coelho's novel "The Alchemist." The study addresses translation inadequacies that potentially affect reader comprehension and examines the strategic implementation of category shifts. Research objectives include identifying types of category shifts, determining their distributional frequency, and analyzing the predominance of specific shift types. The study employs descriptive qualitative methodology with document analysis techniques, examining data from the initial and final twenty pages of the novel. The analysis identifies four category shift types with the following distribution: unit shift (40%), structure shift (31%), class shift (19%), and intra-system shift (10%). These findings contradict Catford's (1965) theoretical assertion that structure shifts predominate in translation processes. The prevalence of unit shift reflects fundamental lexical disparities between English and Indonesian linguistic systems, where semantic equivalence frequently necessitates morphological expansion or reduction. Translators demonstrate a preference for unit shifts due to their capacity to preserve naturalness in the target language without extensive syntactic restructuring. This phenomenon suggests that lexical considerations supersede grammatical constraints in translation decisions between typologically distinct languages. The dominance of unit shift indicates translational prioritization of communicative effectiveness through pragmatic lexical adjustments rather than strict structural correspondence.

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I. INTRODUCTION

People in the whole world create their own languages that will make them easier to understand each other especially in their own community, such as a country. From that case the diversity from any country's language to the other's appears. But, the diversity of these languages does not become matter anymore for people around the world to understand each other because of translation. With translation the people that need information from different language is already provided the information that had been translated into their languages. This statement also supported by the previous research that stated translation is an activity and a solution to overcome the issue of the people that need the information from the other languages (Sholekhah, 2019, p. 8). In this case, we can see that translation take a vital role

and become one of the unit of communication (Lotfipour-Saedi, 1997, p. 188).

To remember that translation is one of the unit of communication, there are so many literature works including novel that has been translated into another language. Some reasons why the researcher study about category shift. Firstly, English novel that translated into Indonesian language is not easy to understand. Some facts but unfortunately some translations are not easy to understand, and sometimes make the readers even disappointed. Because there are some translations words that are not the exact meaning from the original language, it makes the translation less equivalent and the purpose from the author did not well delivered.

In translating novels, the translator often makes some necessary changes. When the source language in the original novel translated into target language in the translated novel cannot be translated just literally one word by one word, the translator has no other choice unless to make a shift translation. Especially in the translation novel *The Alchemist*. For instance: Source language: That was what made traveling appeal to him. Target language: Itulah daya tarik berkelana baginya. In the source language word “appeal” is functioned as an adjective. In the target language, it shifts into another class of word which is a noun, that is “daya tarik”. The translator could just translate it into “Itulah yang membuat berkelana menarik baginya.” Instead of “Itulah daya tarik berkelana baginya” which is not really deliver the purpose of the original text, where the word “made” did not translated and made the word “appeal” shifted into another class of word.

Translation shift is the changes that occur in the process of translating a text to the other language, it happens because of the translator’s choice either the difference of both languages (Fouad, 2019, p. 1). There are two major types of translation shift. They are level shift and category shift. Level shift is a shift from grammatical unit in target language. Meanwhile category shift is a shift that unbounded and rank-unbounded translation, which means the translation equivalence may take place in any appropriate rank whether it is a sentence, clause, phrase, word, or morpheme (Mason, 2005, p. 2).

From some of the translations that are not really deliver the author purpose to the readers through *Sang Alkemis* the translated novel, the researcher found it necessary to do a deep analysis about the other category shift in this novel. This research is aimed to explain deeply about category shift, that is why the researcher discussed about what types of category shift that found in the translation of the novel *The Alchemist*? And what is the dominant type of category shift that found in the translation of the *The Alchemist*? The data of this research is taken from the original novel of *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho and the translated *Sang Alkemis* by Tanti Lesmana (Coelho, *Sang Alkemis*, 2021).

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Based on the background of the study above, the researcher identified the problem of the research as follows; Some translations did not deliver the exact purpose from the author to the reader of the translated novel, the use of category shift in the translated novel, and the need of category shift theory for the translators.

This research was only focused on analyzing the four types of category shift, that are Unit Shift, Class Shift, Structure Shift and Intra-System Shift, from the novel *The Alchemist* and its translation into Indonesian *Sang Alkemis* by using Catford’s theory the translation shift. The novel itself has 125 pages and 221 pages for its translation into Indonesian. For analyzing the four types of category shift the researcher only collected the data from the first 20 pages and the last 20 pages of the original novel and the translated novel, as the representative samples.

II. METHODS

This research was conducted by using qualitative descriptive method. Researcher analyzed to picked the lines or sentences that contained category shift in the original novel *The Alchemist* and in its translation *Sang Alkmeis*, then the researcher described what category shift that occurred in the original text to the translation text. The data that had been collected, classified based on what type of category shift that it was belonged to. The last to do is the researcher made some analysis about why the shift translation is needed.

The sources of data for this study are words, phrases, clauses and sentences in a total

number of 50, which were collected from the selected pages which is the first 20 pages and the last 20 pages of the novel *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho that has 125 pages and *Sang Alkemis* translated by Tanti Lesmana that has 221 pages. Researcher also used the book *A Linguistic Theory for Translation* by J.C Catford, especially page 73 until 81 which is contained the translation shift material, as the guide book for the researcher to solve the problems of this study.

In collecting data for this study, the researcher used documents analyzing by (Flick, 2007). The researcher was taking the data from two documents which were the original novel and its translation. All of the data that had been collected were put in a table and shown as table of data. (Matthew B. Miles, 2014, p. 50) present three streams in examining the information after the course of information gathering. They portray the significant periods of information examination The data analysis process involved three key stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing with verification. In the data reduction phase, the researcher summarized and selectively focused on text containing potential category shifts, disregarding passages without relevant translation phenomena. This filtered data was then organized into tables during the data display stage, providing a compressed yet informative visual representation of the findings that facilitated pattern recognition and analysis. Finally, the researcher drew and verified conclusions based on the displayed data, with the complexity of verification varying according to the nature of each translation shift—some required extensive elaboration while others could be verified more concisely. This systematic analytical approach ensured comprehensive identification and examination of category shifts within the translated novel.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There were fifty data found for this study, which collected from regarding novel that systematically selected as the samples for the analysis. The objectives of this study is to find out the types of category shift in the novel *The Alchemist*, and to figure out which type of the category shift is dominant among the other. From data that had been collected there were four types of category shift that found. They are; Class Shift (19%), Unit Shift (40%), Structure Shift (31%) and Intra-System Shift (10%). And the dominant type of category shift is Unit Shift.

Class Shift

SL: The **boy's name** was Santiago

TL: *Anak laki-laki itu bernama Santiago*

The source language used a possessive form which is “s” for the noun “boy” which means the possession of the name for the boy. It formed as “boy’s name”. In the translation, the translator not literally translated it into the same form from the original text, the translator used another class of word, that is verb. “*bernama*” in Indonesian becomes a verb, from the basic “*nama*” which is noun added by prefix which is “*ber*”. The translator could translate it as “*Nama anak lelaki itu adalah Santiago.*” It could make no changes in every rank of the sentence. But for the native readers of the target language, it would sound less natural and too stiff to read.

Unit Shift

SL: Dusk was falling as the boy arrived with his **herd** at an abandoned church.

TL: *Senja sudah menjelang ketika dia tiba bersama kawanan dombanya di sebuah gereja yang terbengkalai*

Word “herd” as we see in the source language has meaning as “kawanan” in the target language. The author did not put word sheep anymore since it is obvious that in the very first place the readers already knew that the author intended by the herd is the boy’s sheep. But, the translator chose to still use the “domba” and translated as “kawanan domba”. In this line unit shift happened from word to clause. From low level to higher level, which is one word to two words.

Structure Shift

SL: But for the past few days he had spoken to them about only one thing

TL: *Tapi selama beberapa hari belakangan ini hanya satu yang dia bicarakan pada domba-dombanya*

He had spoken to them about only one

thing S V O C

Hanya satu yang dia bicarakan pada domba-dombanya

C S V O

In the translation the structure of the sentence above shifted, in order to adjust the target language structure. Sentence above could not just literally translated each word, or the meaning will be missed. That is why the translator used the structure shift to make the translation make sense.

Intra-System Shift

SL: Talked

TL: *Berbincang-bincang*

Talked is a past form of verb talk. It translated into *berbincang-bincang* in Indonesian. *Berbincang-bincang* usually used in Indonesian to show the talking that took a long time. There is a repetition added by prefix *ber* to show it is an adverb.

In order to answer the third formulation of the study the researcher would like to discuss it. Based on the analysis above, it can be seen that most of translation shift is unit shift where the shifted is because of the different count of words in the source language and in the target language. Meanwhile (Catford, 1965: 6) uttered, that the most frequent category shift that occurs in translation is structure shift. Since the grammatical and the structure of both languages must be have huge differences. But, in this study after the analysis, the researcher found another possibility category shift that dominant, which is unit shift.

In English they usually have their own words to say something that in Indonesia does not have it. For example: in Indonesian we only can say “*sangat besar*” in English instead of “very big” they have word “enormous”. It is obvious, that the text is originally only one word but became two words in the translation.

The change of count of word also applied in return, where the original text is more than one word in English but in Indonesian it became only one word. For the example, "The old man knew how to read." It translated into "*Orang tua ini bisa membaca.*" "knew how to" is simply translated into "*bisa*" instead of "*tahu bagaimana untuk*" or "*tahu caranya*". Unit shift is the shift from the lower level to higher level, and also from the higher level to the lower level. The factor that make unit shift is dominant is, it is very common forus to find the translation is longer than its original language, or the original language is longer than its translation. It occurred most of the time. The other factor why is unit shift used more often than the other shift is because it is easier to apply, the translators do not need to think about the structure or grammar to find the equivalent translation.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis presented, it can be concluded that unit shift is the most dominant type of category shift found in the translation of the novel "The Alchemist" from English to Indonesian, constituting 40% of all shifts identified. This finding contradicts Catford's (1965) assertion that structure shift typically dominates translation processes. The prevalence of unit shift appears to stem from inherent lexical differences between English and Indonesian, where single words in one language often require multiple words in the other to convey equivalent meaning, or vice versa. Examples such as translating "herd" to "kawanan domba" (word to phrase) or "knew how to" to simply "bisa" (phrase to word) illustrate this pattern.

The dominance of unit shift over other types (structure shift at 31%, class shift at 19%, and intra-system shift at 10%) suggests that translators prioritize natural-sounding translations in the target language, even when this necessitates altering the unit count. The research indicates that unit shift may be favored by translators because it's relatively straightforward to implement without complex grammatical restructuring. This finding contributes to translation studies by highlighting how lexical differences between languages often drive translation decisions more significantly than grammatical structure differences, particularly when working between languages with distinct linguistic roots like English and Indonesian.

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