

TRILINGUAL TEXTUALIZATION TO DELIVER INDONESIAN LOCAL CULTURES TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article addresses issues surrounding translation of local texts from regional languages and cultures throughout the Indonesian archipelago into Indonesian and English. The textualization of the local culture to be documented includes: (1) folklore, (2) life-cycle rituals, (3) socio-religious rituals, (4) traditional medicine and other local wisdom, and (5) local culinary. It will discuss the formulation of the basic philosophy, themes, and values in the local texts to translate as well as principles of translation to apply. The study shows that textualization of the local texts helps support the politics of the national language, namely the use of Indonesian as the national language, the preservation of local languages as the fundamental support of the national culture, and the exposure of various local wisdoms to the global community. The availability of trilingual cultural texts will likely contribute to the promotion of human dignity.

Keywords: local texts, translation, trilingual

Introduction

Indonesia is a *Rumah Bahasa* or the home of language and culture for hundreds of languages with diverse cultures. Embedded in the local languages and cultures are countless local wisdoms. As the times progress, hundreds of languages with their local cultures will be threatened with extinction if there is no effort, in various ways, to care for and preserve them. The translation of local texts, with their local content and wisdom, from local to Indonesian and English languages, contributes to the improvement of the quality of life, efficiency, and elevation of human dignity (Bismoko, 2015). Whether in the past, present, and future, translation encompasses a very potential study area for civilization and the glorification of human dignity, or, to borrow the term coined by the Indonesian Jesuit and founder of Sanata Dharma University Driyarkara, “hominization and humanization” (Sastrapratedja, 2006, p. 3).

This article is part of a larger, ongoing research in translating local texts into the national (Indonesian) and international (English) languages conducted at Sanata Dharma University (henceforth USD), Yogyakarta. It is assumed that each member of the academic community should at least be fluent in English and Indonesian or other languages. In addition, some are communicating with the local language because USD educates students from almost all provinces in

Indonesia. This means that members of the academic community in USD have great potential to translate texts from English to Indonesian, and even into many local languages and vice-versa. Therefore, translation becomes a productive tool for improving communication efficiency. This is the reason why it is necessary to model the translation of local texts and their wisdom into national and international languages, since the cultivation, growth and preservation of local languages and cultures including their noble values are contained in local texts.

Besides, the internalization of local wisdom found in local languages and cultures proves significant for the nation's future generations so as to have a strong foundation in shaping local identity, identity, resilience and pride in a global or international context. Local languages and cultures with all their wisdom should then be introduced widely not only at the national but also international level. In turn, the localization of local cultures and languages gives the Indonesian nation the ability to appreciate and witness its own local wisdom thus enhancing national and global mobility with direct and indirect impacts for, to mention but one, improving the regional tourism industry.

Furthermore, in order to preserve local languages and cultures and their wisdom to make them more widely known, it is necessary not only to provide up-to-date, localized translation, but also a lasting and continuous one. In addition to the provision of prototypes of local trilingual textbooks for extensive reading materials for high school students in Indonesia and abroad, the sustainability of these languages and cultural conservation efforts requires a program that ensures the sustainability of the production or publication of these trilingual local textbooks.

It should be added that the novelty of research in translating local texts into Indonesian and English is inseparable from the development of information and communication technology. The translation of local texts means utilizing ICT, such as Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) software and translation memory (i.e., by uploading words or groups of words so that translations in three languages are instantly available and recognizable worldwide). It is clear here that maintaining, preserving and developing local texts for local, national, and international interests through translation programs needs to be carried out in a sustainable manner by maximizing sophisticated technology.

Theory

In the last decade, some ecolinguistic experts like Fill and Mühlhäusler (2004), Steffensen and Fill (2014), Nash and Mühlhäusler (2014) have tried to convince that languages will become extinct over time if not treated like the way people has (mis)treated environment. Nash and Mühlhäusler (2014), for example, show that the Pitkern-Norf'k language in Norfolk Island is increasingly eroded because a number of lexical and grammatical aspects are highly dependent on the conditions of the rapidly changing (degenerative) natural environment. The understanding of the place (the ecological aspect) is closely intertwined with its verbalization. According to the two researchers, if the conditions of place or ecology change, automatically the discussion thereof may also change, or even extinct.

This present study is in line with the claims made by Nash and Mühlhäusler but adapted for the Indonesian context given the far more diverse and sometimes drastic changes in the environment, culture and society in Indonesia. The predictions of Steffensen and Fill (2014) and Nash and Mühlhäusler (2014) necessarily serve as a warning for all languages in countries that have hundreds of local languages. For Indonesia, this is an urgent issue because the 646 indigenous languages in Indonesia, verified as of October 2016 by the Ministry of Education (See Kompas, 7 August 2017), and their local wisdom will gradually become extinct if not duly preserved. The implication is a huge loss because the wealth of humanitarian values of Indonesia will simply disappear, unless some rescue action is done, among others through textualization and translation of local cultures.

Therefore, there are at least 3 (three) strategic reasons why the textualization of local cultural texts is done in three languages. The first is local content. Indonesia is very rich and unique; and the uniqueness of each regional culture needs to be introduced as widely as possible through translation. The textualization and translation of the local cultures is supported by creative writing frame involving three languages, namely local, national, and international languages. As such, it will also contribute to the efforts in preserving language and culture that align with the strategic issues institutionalized by the university, i.e. integration of the nation, social harmony, language, literature and culture.

The second is target language. Trilingual texts contribute to the politics of the national language, especially regarding the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* as the national language, and the preservation of local languages as the support of national culture. Translation allows local wisdom to be increasingly recognized locally, nationally and internationally. Thus, these trilingual texts will also contribute to the promotion of human dignity and prestige which is in line with the institutional vision and mission.

Lastly, sustainability is the third rationale. This textualization produces 5 (five) prototypes of texts with local contents: (1) folklore (myth, legend, folktales), (2) life-cycle rituals (birth, marriage, death, and other rites of passages), (3) socio-religious rituals (e.g. Grebeg, Nyale, & Tabot), (4) traditional medicine and other local wisdom, and (5) local culinary. This prototype is indispensable as a basis for translating local contents more and more widely which will be presented using creative writing models.

To ensure its continuity, the task of translating local texts and the wisdom thereof in all corners of the archipelago needs to collaborate with various parties such as speakers of local languages, local government, and potential users of translation products. English Language Studies in Indonesia should call for and play an active role in promoting human dignity by, among others, preserving local language and culture for local, national and international interests. The study or research in English using a classicist way which disregards the values of humanity is but a setback and a big loss to the nation (Bismoko, 2009, p. 8). The target of this trilingual textualization of local cultures is therefore high school students. The strategic reason is that they are the next generation who must develop, preserve and will in turn pass the language and culture of the nation to the next generation.

Philosophical Foundation and Method of Translation

In producing trilingual texts of local culture, this study uses as its philosophical foundation that of Ricouer (2004), i.e. translation is an act of intercultural communication aimed at the target language users. The philosophy of functional-communicative translation is necessary to make the translation paradigm from Indonesian to English and vice-versa (Dangin et al., 2016). On the basis of this functional-communicative dimension, good translation is an acceptable translation (cf. Prabandari, 2012). The study of criteria and analysis of translation acceptability has grown rapidly since Catford offered linguistic translation analysis in 1965. The essence of translation is the equivalent representation of the source language to the target language, in terms of stylistics, references, and linguistic features. Its acceptability needs to be complemented with standard instruments such as the model made by, for instance, NAATI (National Accreditation Authority of Translators and Interpreters) to assess the quality of translation, which includes the stylistic, referential, and linguistic components for translation products to be qualified and acceptable (Tanuwijaya et al., 2016).

In addition to content analysis and the type of text from the grammatical and lexical structural aspects above, the analysis of culturally distinctive terms and mechanical matters in the source language and its target language requires an adequate theoretical foundation. Translation theories that continue to grow since the 1990s are “foreignization” and “domestication”. The first is the technique of preserving the peculiarities or distinctiveness of the original cultures (e.g. persons’ names, homegrown cuisine, historical figures, street names or local institutions), while domestication is a free translation style to minimize the strangeness of foreign texts within target language. In *Translation Invisibility* (1995) Venuti calls it “sending readers abroad” vis-à-vis “bringing authors home”. Literal word-for-word translation does not usually apply to such local texts as proverbs for which reason knowledge about the culture of the source and target languages is indispensable in order to achieve idiomatic translation (Dewi, 2018, p. 240). The translation of academic texts from Indonesian to English, according to Apriyanti et al. (2016), uses a lot of foreignization or assimilation techniques, whereas literary texts such as poetry typically use a number of distinguishing markers such as capitalization or italics. The translation of local cultural texts here employs this dynamics of foreignization-domestication strategy.

In addition to the basic philosophy of translation, the practice of translating local culture texts attempted in this study also makes use of various free and paid electronic translator machines/software with its advantages and disadvantages. Paid software such as, for example, Wordfast, according to Apriliana et al. (2016) has a comparative advantage because of the Translation Memory facility that allows faster and more efficient translation. Similarly, the paid translation engine SDL Trados 2014 and Across (free) are proved effective. Both devices are equipped with the Translation Memory and Alignment Tool features to ensure accurate and effective translation of Indonesian texts into English, (Kurniawati et al., 2016).

Note must be taken here that verbal communication is the essence of language studies. Most verbal communication is done between people from the same language background. In today's globalized world, progressively more people from different nationalities have to communicate. In most countries, including Asian countries such as Indonesia, the language used is English as a lingua franca (Yano, 2001), or better known as "World English" (Graddol, 2006). It is thus clear the importance of translation to improve communication.

The findings of Foley and Deocampo (2016) also have relevance to the study of translation, especially on linguistic hybridity. Their research on blog users in Singapore and the Philippines shows that local languages are sometimes tucked into English usage as lingua franca. Responding to the question of linguistic hybridity, the translation of local texts in the three languages employed in this study, however, take a different strategy. Since the resulting translation products are formal or official texts, namely the extensive reading books for the enrichment of high school students, the widely used translation strategies are domestication-foreignization (Hatim, 2001; Bassnett, 2002 and relevant studies mentioned above). This strategy prioritizes the communicative function of language as its foundation.

Theory Application

Firstly, the five local cultures selected as prototypes to appear in trilingual (Indonesian, regional and English) texts are (1) folklore, (2) life-cycle rituals, (3) socio-religious rituals, (4) traditional Indonesian medicine and (5) local culinary. Given that pedagogical values are ingrained in the local wisdom that should be introduced nationally to learners as early as possible, it is determined in advance the various cultures derived from 5 (five) different regions in Indonesia as samples to represent Indonesian local cultures. The selection of local settings is done on the basis of expediency with no personal/ideological interests involved. Hopefully, further projects can cover all local cultures throughout Indonesia. As it is, for this initial undertaking, trilingual textualization of local cultures is prepared as follows: (1) folklore "Legend of Sikidang Crater" from Dieng Plateau, Central Java, (2) Minangkabau marriage ritual "Babako", (3) socio-religious ritual "Grebeg Mulud" in Yogyakarta, (4) traditional medicine "Pendamban" from Banjar, South Kalimantan, and (5) local culinary "Ronde" from Peranakan Chinese-Indonesian culture. The followings are details of each prototype, its socio-historical background, significance and technique/strategy in translating the prototype.

Folklore

That folklore is a good learning material has been proven by a number of studies available in the field (e.g. Pennebaker, 2000; Erkaya, 2005; Worth, 2008), although none specifically mention its relation to the translation of folk tales in three languages to be introduced to the whole world. Manifold (2013), for example, uses fascinating imaginary stories to prove their educative values in his art class. The scarcity of trilingual translation of traditional stories presented via creative writing makes this study important and contributes to the study of folklore.

The translated folklores may include myths, legends, and folktales that live throughout Indonesia such as “Legend of Sikidang Crater”. The word “legend” comes from the Latin word meaning “something to read”. It is an account about the actions of a person agreed upon in the past by the story-tellers and listeners (Dewi, 2016, p. 18). Because it is considered real, legend is usually associated with a particular place or site and the heroic action of the main character. Sikidang Crater where this legend is originated, for example, is located in Dieng Plateau, Banjarnegara District, Central Java, precisely in the Garung District. The remaining volcanic crater is unique because it is always boiling and occasionally sprinkles of hot water jumps from the crater like a deer (kidang in Javanese), hence the name. Visited till now by domestic and foreign tourists alike, Sikidang Crater also bears the extraordinary love story between Shinta Dewi and Kidang Garungan. According to the local legend, Princess Shinta Dewi, received the proposal of the rich Prince Kidang Garungan without meeting him before. What a surprise it was when the princess found out that her future husband had a face like that of a deer. To cancel the marriage, Shinta Dewi requested that the prince make a well within 24 hours. With his supernatural power, Prince Kidang Garungan dug the hard soil rapidly to form a big dig and the well was almost ready. Meanwhile, the gradually more desperate princess ordered her servants to close the dig with soil burying the prince inside the well. Being deceived, Garungan shouted angrily as he mustered all his energy to burst the well. Before dying, the prince made a curse that all the descendants of Shinta Dewi be born with jumbled messy hair.

To translate this folktale, the first of the three translation categories (interpreting, scientific/ technical, commercial/business translation) by Samuelsson-Brown (2010) is applied. Some of the criteria to meet include: a sense of language, cultural knowledge about the subject of translation, an understanding of a similar work and creative writing skills. The translation of literary works puts more importance on the meaning, therefore the translator must be adept when moving from one creative style to another. Thus, “Legend of Sikidang Crater” is textualized to emphasize the promotional value of the site, i.e. the crater, the haircut ritual and Garung’ s potential for vacation industry, instead of the sinister side of the princess’ story.

Life-cycle

Life rituals that fall into this local culture category include birth, marriage, death and other human life rituals. The different ethnic groups in Indonesia produce diversity of customs, philosophies and beliefs behind every ritual of life passed by members of their respective member of each group. Any local culture is full of moral values that deserve to be narrated and preserved from time to time.

Educators, policymakers and parents can use the narrative of the very rich rituals of life in Indonesia to introduce local culture as well as character education. To compare, Yim et al. (2009) studied 392 children aged four to five from 29 kindergarten schools and 57 early pre-school teachers in Hong Kong to test their views on Confucian values represented in traditional stories from four Chinese festivals. Confucian values are centered on five virtues: Ren (virtue), Yi (truth), Li (courtesy), Xiao (pious), and Zhi (wisdom), while the four selected Chinese festivals are: (1) Lunar New Year , (2) Dragon Boat festival, (3) Chung Yeung

festival, and (4) Mid-Autumn festival. The results show that Ren (virtue) and Yi (truth) are the most popular values to response, while the value of Li (courtesy) tends to be the most unpopular category. It is surprising that the young generation in Hong Kong sampled in the research pay little attention to courtesy. It can be concluded here that the educational aspects, character formation, and moral values contained in local culture need to be constantly socialized. Local culture is not supposed to be static, but dynamic to implant and care for according to the needs and contexts of the time.

One example of ritual life in Indonesia that is rich in meaning is marriage. Although all marriage ceremonies share common values, the marriage ceremony of West Sumatra “*Babako*”, for example, can be used as an example of a prototype in this category. Marriage in Minangkabau tradition is organized by the mother, while the father’s relatives are responsible for the “*Babako*” ceremony. The ceremony to release the “child of pusako” or the daughter to be married is carried out by the father and his family. The bride-to-be is picked up, given advice and guidance about family life, then delivered at home the next day. The delivery also comes with properties for party such as wedding dress, jewelry, raw materials, groceries and many more. In addition to the value of education (courtesy, respect for parents and relatives), *Babako* is also a proof of solidarity and cooperation between families. The message is that wedding ceremony should not become a heavy financial burden for both sides.

The translation required here is a light translation, suited to the sense of taste and aptitude of the targeted readers, in this case, high school students. Samuelsson-Brown (2010) suggests “simplified English” skill, that is the application of simplified English for certain types of texts. The terms in the local languages are translated according to appropriate principles, including foreignization-domestication (Venuti, 1995).

Socio-religious Ritual

Recent inter-religious conflicts, widespread misunderstanding (chiefly via social media) and extremism in Indonesia have injured Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution on religious freedom which is the fruit of a prudent agreement of the Founding Fathers of the NKRI or the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. In order for religion not to be used as an issue easily igniting sectarianism, inter-religious dialogue is needed so that religious followers can respect each other’s differences and diversity. Cultivation of mutual respect, good understanding and good practice of religious life, which is harmonious and peaceful, can sometimes be seen from the implementation of socio-religious rituals in Indonesia.

The celebration of “*Grebeg Mulud*” in Yogyakarta, for example, can be used as one sample of this socio-religious ritual prototype. Originally intended as an event that was held by the King of Jogja to distribute alms to the people, Grebeg is a form of religiosity of the society since ancient Javanese times in giving thanks to the Creator. Since Islam entered Java, Grebeg has been celebrated on every major Muslim day such as Shawwal, Eid al-Adha and Prophet's Mawlid. In this event, a mountain of crops and various snacks market with the pray and blessings from the religious leader (ulama) is paraded for grabs (Javanese: *digrebeg*) by

crowds of people regardless of their religions/beliefs. This ritual can be a social driving force for harmony in order to improve social cohesion.

The translation of local cultural texts that fall into this category of socio-religious ritual, like the previous category, requires text analysis in advance to determine the type of text. The equivalent concept of Reiss postulated in 1976 which is a refinement of Buhler's theory of three types of text in translation (informative, expressive, operative) is useful in translating texts such as "*Grebeg Mulud*". In addition to the correspondence of each type of text with its linguistic function, Reiss adds the language dimension according to the existing communicative situation. Cultural narratives are usually not merely pure information but evoke certain behavioral responses or appellative functions to persuade the readers (the recipients of the translation) to take a certain stance. The translation of socio-religious ritual texts is not only meant to indicate data accuracy, but it is also intended to increase knowledge while helping readers to appreciate diversity.

Traditional Medicine

When talking about local wisdom as an educational focal point, Tilaar (2015) mentions traditional medicine as one top local culture. Medicinal plants thrive in Indonesia and are beneficial to nourish health. Medicinal plants and cosmetics have been used naturally by the ancestors since the time of yore, but this potential has not been managed optimally. The success story of the benefits of herbal medicine in three languages helps straighten the view that traditional medicine is associated with mystical and irrational powers.

Local wisdom in the form of traditional medicine "*Penamban*" from Banjar, South Kalimantan is chosen here as a sample for the local wisdom of this largest island in Indonesia which is widely known throughout the world. Thus far, most people have known herbal medicine as a traditional natural medicine from Indonesia, especially Java. The collection or harvesting of the plants are not that much different from ordinary herbs, but the names of the plant species, processing methods, and other relevant information about the history and practice of herbal treatment are not always the same from one region to another. The plant sap called "*tlutuh*" by people in Central Java, for example, is known as "*dhadhak*" in East Java.

The translation of this type of popular scientific texts requires a different strategy than the previous texts. The principle of informative text translation and the equivalent theory is applied here. The use of footnotes, glossaries, and scientific names (Latin) is also used to translate foreign terms.

Local Culinary

Maintenance of local culture is incomplete if it does not include food and its significance for continuing education in the global era. The values of local culture will be easily eroded by global capitalism, whereas culture, according to Amartya Sen (in Tilaar, 2014: 17), is the bond of national unity. It is no exaggeration that local culinary plays a role in the nation's efforts to care for its culture. Teak (2014) discusses "*tumpeng*" or cone-shaped rice as one of the local culinary that is full of Javanese cultural values, while Susilawati et al. (2016) uses Cirebon cuisine as a means of learning science. From the aspect of sustainability

development, the importance of local culinary is conducted by Entas et al. (2017) to show the model of culinary tourism industry in Metro, Lampung. Textualization of local culinary in three languages supports Indonesia's educational efforts that should be known by the global community as well.

One of the culinary items selected to be featured as a local culture is "*Ronde*". This hot sweet ginger-scented drink with balls of marbles made from glutinous flour is only found in Indonesia. According to Bromokusumo (2013), *Ronde* is a cross cultural culinary of China and Indonesia which takes its name from Dutch "*rond*" which means round. In its' country of origin, *Ronde* is served with meat broth when the whole family gathers to celebrate the last day of the entire series of days celebrated according to the Chinese Lunar calendar (December 22 on the international calendar). The basic ingredients of *Ronde* are glutinous flour and sticky water that has its philosophical meaning of gluing family and kinship relationships.

The translation of local culinary texts would be more interesting if presented in the type of text that belongs to Reiss' fourth type, the audiomedial text. This text combines visual images, images, music, and so on with all three types of text along with their respective linguistic dimensions. Aspects of hybridity, integration, assimilation and cultural tolerance that can be read behind this local culinary history for example, can be shown through interactive and multidimensional translation. This is where the understanding and creative writing skills are required, in addition to the mastery of the two languages, general knowledge and intercultural understanding, as well as ICT application.

Suffice it to say for now that the discussion of local culture in the five categories above becomes the basis for producing trilingual texts of local cultures with creative writing as a frame. This creative writing model is chosen because the texts are designed as an enrichment reading materials for learning language and culture in high school level. The strengthening of local culture by maintaining its sustainability will affect the growth of regional languages. In the context of Indonesia, in addition to being a local cultural language, regional languages are the language of familiarity and pride of regions whose usage is a complement, not a competitor, against the national language (Sastrapratedja, 2013, p. 12). The availability of local cultural textualization in local languages, national languages, and international languages is an advantage for the Indonesian nation to establish a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multilingual national identity as part of the world's citizens. Humans in the view of current language philosophy, continued Sastrapratedja, not only do people form a language but people are formed by language. Thus, the strengthening of local culture and regional languages support the national language policy in building national character and global citizenship.

Conclusion

This paper has shown the urgency of Indonesia, with hundreds of languages and cultures, to care for its wealth through trilingual translation of local cultural texts. Local languages and cultures contain local wisdom that will eventually be threatened with extinction if not well maintained and preserved. The treasures of Indonesian human values will be lost if not guarded. The effort to translate local

cultural texts is believed to help develop and preserve the various languages and cultures of the nation along with its noble values so that it can be more widely known both in national and international scopes.

Because English plays an important role for the nation's civilization from time to time, translation studies are conducted for the development of institutional potential of Sanata Dharma University through its flagship programs, English Language Studies, to further enhance the contribution of this institution to the community. As a part of a larger, ongoing research on the translation of local cultural texts from regional languages throughout the archipelago into Indonesian and English, this paper deals only with the formulation of basic philosophy, themes, and values in local cultural texts to be translated which include : (1) legend of Central Java (2) marriage rituals in West Sumatra, (3) socio-religious rituals in Yogyakarta, (4) traditional treatments from Borneo, and (5) local Peranakan culinary. The five local cultural prototypes discussed serve as a means of education materials as well as accounts of collective life for members of the community that must always be cherished and nurtured. Each prototype becomes a model for the development of subsequent local cultural trilingual texts until the entire wealth of the archipelago is well documented.

This article has also shown that the translations of each prototype follow the principles in translation such as acceptability, a functional-communicative interpretation and a number of strategies such as text analysis, equivalence, literary and non-literary, etc. The selection of appropriate theory and/or translation principles is necessary to enable the results of the translation products help convey the worth and cultural values of the nation that still need to be continually explored, studied and socialized to reach a wide audience.

Finally, the documentation of local cultural texts is expected to support the politics of the national language, namely the use of Indonesian language as the national unifying language, the preservation of local languages as the support of national culture, and the exposure of local wisdom to the global community. These trilingual cultural texts are expected to contribute to the promotion of human dignity.

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