

WHEN EQUIVALENCE IS NOT ENOUGH: TRANSLATION ADJUSTMENTS OF PHILOSOPHICAL TEXT IN COMIC FORM

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ABSTRACT

*The tenet of good translation is to achieve idiomatic equivalence. However, when the translation work is going to be published, there should be some adjustments, either lexical or structural. The reasons for adjustment might be various: for politeness, conciseness, etc. This article discusses the translation adjustments of a Chinese philosophical book: *The Sayings of Zhuang Zi* by comparing the original translation by the translator with the published book which has been edited by publisher's editor. The objectives of this study are to find different types of translation adjustment made by the editor and to analyze the possible reasons for the adjustment.*

Keywords: *idiomatic equivalence, translation adjustment, edited translation*

ABSTRAK

*Prinsip terjemahan yang baik adalah untuk memperoleh kesetaraan idiomatis. Namun, ketika hasil terjemahan akan diterbitkan, ada beberapa penyesuaian, baik leksikal atau struktural. Alasan untuk penyesuaian ini mungkin beragam: untuk kesopanan, keringkasan, dll. Artikel ini membahas penyesuaian terjemahan dari sebuah buku filsafat Cina: *The Sayings of Zhuang Zi* dengan membandingkan terjemahan asli oleh penerjemah dengan buku terbitan yang telah diselaraskan oleh penyunting dari penerbit. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan berbagai jenis penyesuaian yang dibuat oleh penyunting dan menganalisis kemungkinan alasan penyesuaian.*

Kata kunci: *kesetaraan idiomatis, penyesuaian terjemahan, terjemahan suntingan*

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of translation is undoubtedly finding an equivalent of the source text in the target text. Catford (1965:20) writes “translation may be defined as follows: The replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL),” and maintains that “the central problem of translation practice is finding TL translation equivalents” (1965:12). Similarly, Nida (1964) also emphasized on the importance of finding the equivalence in translation. Nida even distinguished between formal and dynamic equivalence. Formal equivalence is the closest possible match of form and content between source text and target text, while dynamic equivalence is the equivalence of effect on the target reader.

Finding equivalence in the target language is not an easy task for a translator. A translator needs to employ different translation strategies or techniques to find the closest possible equivalent. The use of different strategies depends on the level they occur: at word level, above word level, grammatical, textual, and pragmatic equivalences (Baker, 1992). Baker (1992, pp 26-42) even made a taxonomy of translation strategies, which include: translation by a more general word, translation by a more neutral word, translation by cultural substitution, translation using a loan word, translation by paraphrasing, translation by omission, and translation by illustration.

Baker’s taxonomy is of great benefit for a translator. However, it would be a translator’s own decision to make the most appropriate translation for a piece of text. Newmark (1998) said that translation is a decision making process and a problem-solving task. It is a decision making process because the translator always has to decide among many choices. As Hatim & Mason (1990:12) say, translation is a matter of choice, but choice is always motivated: omissions, addition and alterations may indeed be justified but only in relation to intended meaning.” It is also a problem solving task as the translator is always “trying to solve a thousand small problems in the context of a large one.” (Newmark 1988:8).

When a piece of translation, say, one novel of Twilight series, is going to be published by the target language publisher, the task of the translator has finished the moment s/he sends the translation work to the publisher. It is now the responsibility of the publisher, in this case represented by the book editor, to decide whether the translated work is suitable for the target language reader.

An editor is a person who prepares a book to be published by checking and correcting the mistakes, making improvements, etc. (*Oxford Advanced Dictionary, 2010*). Again, the editor must undertake the decision making process and problem solving task, even though s/he does not have to think about the translation strategies as they had been done by the translator.

The task of an editor can be equalized to a translator assessor, in which s/he has to assess whether the translation fulfill at least three criteria below: a) Nature of SL message; b) Purpose and intent of SL producer/writer; c) Type of audience (as cited by Al-Qinay, 2000). However, if the work to be translated is in the form of comic/cartoon strip, another criterion should be added: the limited space. In comic strip, the original words are contained in a balloon shape. The translation, therefore, should also fit in the word balloon.

The limitation of space is especially problematic in the translation of English into Indonesian, since Indonesian is known to have long words. A simple example, such as “I love you” (8 letters) should be translated into “Aku mencintaimu” (11 letters) or “Aku cinta padamu” (14 letters). To solve this and many other problems related to the criteria above, an editor has to apply different techniques or adjustments to make the translation “publishable”.

RESEARCH METHODS

This article discusses several adjustments that the editor makes when editing the translation work. The material used for this study is the Chinese philosophical text: *Zhuang Zi* which was written in Chinese by Tsai Chih Chung, translated into English by Goh Beng Choo, and later translated into Indonesian by Clara Herlina. The English version is published by Asiapac Singapore and the Indonesian version is published by Elex Media.

The analysis of the translation adjustments is only based on two parameters as stated by Hatim and Mason (1990) and Newmark (1988), i.e.: 1) Lexical Properties: jargon, idioms, loanwords, catch phrases, collocation, paraphrases, connotations and emotive aspects of lexical meaning; 2) Grammatical/syntactic Equivalence: word order, sentence structure, cleaving, number, gender and person (agreement), modality, tense and aspect. There are two main objectives of this study: first, to identify the type of adjustments made by the editor; and second, to analyze the possible reasons for the adjustment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis will be divided into two main parts: lexical properties adjustments and grammatical/syntactic adjustments. Lexical adjustments deal with the semantic aspect of a particular word such as synonym or antonym; while the grammatical adjustments deal with the syntactic aspects such as word order or sentence structure. Different techniques of adjustment will be discussed either for lexical or grammatical part. For easy reference, these abbreviations will be used: OS = original sentence, TS = translator's sentence, ES = editor's sentence.

Lexical Properties Adjustment

The analysis of lexical adjustment is based on Baker's (1992) taxonomy of translation strategies while also incorporating semantic analysis of sense relation.

Replacement

This technique involves replacing a word with another word which has similar meaning or different meaning.

Table 1 Replacement with synonym

OS	Therefore, feelings of anger, sadness and joy or happiness is man-made and not natural
TS	Maka rasa marah, sedih, gembira atau bahagia adalah buatan manusia dan tidak alami.
ES	Jadi rasa marah, sedih, gembira atau bahagia adalah buatan manusia dan tidak alami.

Table 2 Replacement with synonym

OS	The snake relies on its scales to slide,
TS	Ular mengandalkan sisiknya untuk meliuk
ES	Ular mengandalkan sisiknya untuk melata

Table 3 Replacement with synonym

OS	Why don't you stop to take a look?
TS	kenapa guru tak berhenti untuk melihatnya?
ES	kenapa guru tak berhenti memandangnya?

Table 4 Replacement with co-hyponym, i.e. words which belong to the same category

OS	The flight, the knowledge and vision of the little sparrow are different from that of "Peng"
TS	Penerbangan, pengetahuan dan visi walet kecil berbeda dari 'Peng'
ES	Penerbangan, pengetahuan dan visi pipit kecil berbeda dari 'Peng'

Table 5 Replacement with meronym (part of other word)

OS	The minute these trees grew as thick as a fist' girth,
TS	Ketika pohon pohon ini setebal kepalan
ES	Ketika batangnya setebal kepalan

Table 6 Replacement with more scientific word

OS	With the secret formula, troops of the Wu state were spared from catching chilblain *
TS	Dengan formula rahasia itu, pasukan negara Wu terbebas dari radang dingin *
ES	Dengan formula rahasia itu, pasukan negara Wu terbebas dari perniosis

The obvious reason for replacement is to use more formal word and more appropriate word. For example, the translator made a mistake in translating 'sparrow' with *wallet* ('swallow'), so it is changed into *pipit*.

Omission

This technique involves deleting the translated word.

Table 7 Omission of implied word

OS	From then on, Zhuang Zi shifted his vision away from worldly matters
TS	Sejak saat itu, Zhuang Zi mengalihkan visinya dari masalah duniawi
ES	Sejak itu, Zhuang Zi mengalihkan visinya dari masalah duniawi

Table 8 Omission of hyponym

OS	The music of flute made by man comes either from the flute or the panpipe .
TS	Musik suling buatan manusia berasal dari suling atau pipa .
ES	Musik suling buatan manusia berasal dari suling.

Table 9 Omission of illustrated word

OS	We fish live in water
TS	Kita ikan hidup di air
ES	Kita hidup di air

Table 10 Omission of synonym

OS	The use of man-made laws is only transient or transitional.
TS	Penggunaan hukum buatan manusia hanya bersifat sementara atau transisi
ES	Penggunaan hukum buatan manusia hanya bersifat sementara.

Table 11 Omission of prefix

OS	Liar!
TS	Pembongong!
ES	Bohong!

The omission technique is used when the meaning of the word is implied by the context or by the illustration. For example the word 'fish' is not translated because the picture shows that the fish is talking. Similarly, when two words have the same meaning like 'transient or transitional', only one word should be translated.

Addition

This technique involves adding article, quantifier or affix to the translated word. The resulted word still has the same part of speech as the translated word. This technique can also mean adding word which does not exist either in the source text or in the translation.

Table 12 Addition of prefix -me

OS	Do not measure length by standards set by men.
TS	Jangan ukur panjang dengan standar manusia
ES	Jangan mengukur panjang dengan standar manusia

Table 13 Addition of previously non-existent word

OS	The blackness of the crow is not the result of daily dyeing.
TS	Hitamnya gagak bukan karena mencelup tiap hari
ES	Hitamnya gagak bukan karena mencelup tinta tiap hari.

Table 14 Addition of quantifier

OS	It was an era in which the strong states devoured the weak, the majority overpowered the minority; a chaotic and pain-stricken era .
TS	Ini adalah masa dimana negara kuat memakan yang lemah, mayoritas mengungguli minoritas; masa yang kacau dan menyakitkan. Penderitaan dunia seperti jurang tak berdasar.
ES	Ini adalah masa dimana negara kuat memakan yang lemah, mayoritas mengungguli minoritas; suatu masa yang kacau dan menyakitkan. Penderitaan dunia seperti jurang tak berdasar.

The addition technique is basically used to make a word more standard or formal, for example by adding prefix in the word *ukur* becomes *mengukur*, even though the meaning is still the same.

Borrowing

This technique involves using the original English word, or it is not translated into Indonesian.

Table 15 Keeping the original SL word

OS	Hui Shi leans against the Chinese parasol
TS	Hui Shi bersandar di payung China
ES	Hui Shi bersandar di parasol China

Table 16 Keeping the original SL word

OS	You sounded like an orator from what you said in the day.
TS	Kau terdengar seperti ahli pidato dari kata kata yang kau ucapkan siang tadi.
ES	Kau terdengar seperti orator dari ucapanmu siang tadi.

The borrowing technique or keeping the original source language word might have two purposes. The use of ‘parasol’ instead of *payung* (umbrella) may prevent ambiguity resulting from the word itself. *Payung* is used to cover ourselves from the rain, while ‘parasol’ is the name of the tree which looks like an umbrella. On the other hand, the use of ‘orator’ indicates that Indonesian might have been familiar with this word and do not consider it as a foreign word.

Stylistic Change

This technique involves the change of word form for stylistic reason, such as more formal form.

Table 17 Change of word form

OS	Why feel disappointed?
TS	Kenapa merasa kecewa?
ES	Mengapa kecewa?

Table 18 Change of address form

OS	May I know what books you are reading?
TS	Bolehkan kutahu buku apa yang kau baca?
ES	Bolehkan kutahu buku apa yang anda baca?

The use of more formal form is done to indicate status relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor in the story. While the translator used the pronoun *kau*, the editor changed it into *anda* because in this context, the speaker is the wheel-maker and the interlocutor is the king. *Anda* is considered more formal and appropriate for this situation.

Grammatical Adjustments

The analysis of grammatical adjustment is based on Newmark's account of transposition or shift. Newmark (1988:85) defined transposition as a translation procedure involving a change in the grammatical form from SL to TL. However, the object of analysis of this study is the translator's sentences and the editor's sentences, both of which are in TL (Indonesian).

Word Class Shift

This involves the change of one part of speech into another.

Table 19 Change from verb into noun

OS	The conservation of life means not to conserve body but to conserve mind and spirit to keep it alive.
TS	Pemeliharaan hidup bukan berarti memelihara tubuh tapi memelihara pikiran dan roh untuk membuatnya hidup.
ES	Pemeliharaan hidup tidak berarti pemeliharaan tubuh tapi pikiran dan roh untuk membuatnya hidup.

Table 20 Change from a noun into a verb

OS	To Confucius, Lao Zi has attained the Tao of nature and has an endless capacity for change .
TS	Bagi Konfusius, Lao Zi telah mencapai Tao alam dan punya kapasitas untuk perubahan .
ES	Bagi Konfusius, Lao Zi telah mencapai Tao alam dan punya kapasitas untuk berubah .

These changes mostly deal with formality, in which the edited translations are considered more formal.

Phrase Shift

This involves the change of one type of phrase into another.

Table 21 Change from noun phrase into verb phrase

OS	Do you know if there is a common standard that can be applied to the acquiring of knowledge?
TS	Tahukah kau bila ada standar umum yang bisa diterapkan pada pemerolehan pengetahuan?
ES	Tahukah kau bila ada standar umum yang bisa diterapkan dalam memperoleh pengetahuan?

Table 22 Change from noun phrase into verb phrase

OS	but it doesn't have the freedom it enjoys in the open
TS	tapi ia tak punya kebebasan yang dinikmatinya di tempat terbuka.
ES	tapi tak bisa menikmati kebebasan

Table 23 Change from a noun phrase into a verb phrase

OS	And a large sea-shell to hold its urine.
TS	Dan kerang besar untuk menampung air seninya
ES	Dan menampung air seninya dengan kerang besar

These changes also deal with formality, in which the edited translations are considered more formal.

Form Shift

This involves the change one syntactic unit to another, for example a word is changed into a phrase or a clause, and vice versa.

Table 24 Change from noun clause into a noun phrase

OS	That is because the bird may be well preened and fed in the cage
TS	Itu karena ayam itu mungkin dipelihara dan diberi makan di sangkar,
ES	Penyebabnya ayam itu mungkin dipelihara dan diberi makan di sangkar,

Table 25 Change from noun phrase into a pronoun

OS	And stopped bothering himself with the activity.
TS	Dan berhenti melakukan kegiatan tersebut.
ES	Dan berhenti melakukannya.

Table 26 Change from a verb into a verb phrase

OS	The horse is bridled.
TS	Kuda dipelanai
ES	Kuda diberi pelana

Table 27 Change from a pronoun into a noun phrase

OS	If one employs the wrong method to implore someone toward kindness, one may bring on a crisis.
TS	Bila seseorang menggunakan metode yang salah untuk memintanya bersikap baik, ia mungkin menciptakan krisis.
ES	Bila seseorang menggunakan metode yang salah untuk memintanya bersikap baik, salah satunya mungkin menciptakan krisis.

Table 28 Change from an adverbial clause into an adverbial phrase (reduced clause)

OS	It's because when the tiger is struggling with its prey , it is highly provoked.
TS	Karena ketika macan sedang berjuang dengan mangsanya , ia sangat terangsang.
ES	Karena ketika berjuang memangsa korbannya , macan sangat agresif.

Table 29 Change from a noun phrase into a noun clause

OS	Tell me your reason, otherwise I shall order your death!
TS	Sebutkan alasanmu, kalau tidak kuperintahkan kematianmu.
ES	Sebutkan alasanmu, kalau tidak kuperintahkan orang membunuhmu!

These changes also deal with formality, in which the edited translations are considered more formal.

Word Order Shift

This involves the change of word order in the phrase or sentence.

Table 30 Change of word order in adverb phrase

OS	Will a monkey be?
TS	Apakah monyet begitu juga?
ES	Apakah monyet juga begitu?

Table 31 Change of word order in adjective clause

OS	The fools always think they are enlightened, which makes them fools in the final analysis.
TS	orang bodoh selalu merasa mereka tercerahkan, yang menjadikan mereka orang bodoh pada akhirnya.
ES	orang bodoh selalu merasa mereka tercerahkan yang akhirnya menjadikan mereka bodoh.

These changes also deal with formality, in which the edited translations are considered more formal.

Omission

This involves the deletion of a whole phrase, clause or sentence.

Table 32 Omission of the subject and verb

OS	I'm reading the great words of a sage.
TS	Aku baca kata kata agung orang bijak.
ES	Kata kata agung orang bijak.

Table 33 Omission of the whole sentence

OS	What are you talking about? Tell me your reason, otherwise I shall order your death!
TS	Apa katamu? Sebutkan alasanmu , kalau tidak kuperintahkan kematianmu.
ES	Sebutkan alasanmu , kalau tidak kuperintahkan orang membunuhmu!

Table 34 Omission of a noun phrase

OS	Talking of big the Eastern Sea is really big.
TS	Bicara tentang besar Laut Timur sangat besar.
ES	Laut Timur itu sangat besar.

Omission techniques are mostly done because the meaning of the sentence is already implied. For example is the sentence 'Talking of big the Eastern Sea is really big'. The phrase 'talking of big' is not translated because the sentence following it discusses that 'the Eastern Sea is big'; therefore it is considered redundant. Beside implied meaning, omission of the translation can also save a few spaces.

Pattern Shift

This involves the change of sentence pattern from one pattern to another.

Table 35 Expansion of S-V-O into S-V-O-OC

OS	If you make a pillar
TS	Bila kau buat pilar
ES	Bila kau membuatnya jadi pilar

Table 36 Change from a cleft sentence into S-V-SC pattern

OS	It is important to penetrate knowledge and go beyond it.
TS	Penting untuk menembus pengetahuan dan melampauinya.
ES	Menembus pengetahuan dan melampauinya adalah penting

CONCLUSION

The translators' tasks end when they submit their translations to the publisher. It is now the responsibility of the publisher, herewith represented by the book editor to decide whether those translation works are suitable for the targeted readers. When comparing my submitted translation and the published book, I found that the editor has done a lot of adjustments. Basically, the adjustments made by the editor do not change the meaning of the translation; therefore it is not the problem of finding the equivalence anymore. There are five types of lexical adjustments found in this study, i.e. replacement, omission, addition, borrowing, and stylistic change. For structural adjustments, there are six types, i.e. word class shift, phrase shift, form shift, word order shift, omission, and sentence pattern change. Overall, the editor makes more structural adjustments than lexical ones. Several reasons are identified, such as the use of more standard and more appropriate words, to make the sentence more concise thus saving more space. However, there's a question that I'd like to pose: as a translator, should we only strive for finding equivalence?

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