

Construction of “Objectivity” in Translated *Pikiran Rakyat* News Report: Thematic Structures Analysis in Covid-19 Topic

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the patterns of Thematic structures and types of translation shifts signified in *Pikiran Rakyat* Newspaper. This paper used a qualitative method to find the differences of the objectivity between the source text and target text in terms of thematic and translation shifts that appear in news report. From the findings, it is found that 31% of the clauses from the source text were shifted in the target text, which means the other 69% were remain unbiased. It means that 31% shifts were coming from the category shifts (structures, unit, class, level shifts). Hence, it comes to the conclusion that the writer adopted a faithful translation method in translating the texts. So, it is believed that translators in *Pikiran Rakyat* tried to translate the text by transferring grammatical structure from the source text to target text, specifically by focusing on the categories in the clauses.

Keywords: *Newspaper, objectivity, online media, thematic structures, translation*

1. INTRODUCTION

Translating is a process of transferring information from one language to another by a translator. Translators sometimes have various ways of thinking. According to Herman (2017), translation sometimes has different structures. It mostly uses several ways of delivering messages through what they believe. However, in translating news report, the writers are expected to be neutral.

Through the articles and news in mass media, people would be able to know the situation regarding the topic. According to Trisha (2012), the function of mass media is to provide information for the readers in order to bridge the knowledge about the issue. As these functions, the journalists do not only write the article to convey the information, but also to influence the reader. Each media has different style in delivering the information which could affect the way the reader shapes their opinion towards something. In delivering the topic, the media can provide information or take sides.

There were some studies done on Thematic structures such as analysis of thematic structures of BBC news reports in terms of their textual organization (Gómez, 1994) and Theme-Rheme analysis in

improving text in target language (Dejica-Cartis & Cozma, 2013).

On the contrary, there were some studies that focused on the structures of the translations such as research investigating contexts in translating (Nida, 2002), topical structures in news discourse (Károly, 2012) and translation on Semiotics (Al-Mohannadi, 2008). For instance, Nida (2002) conducted a study that focuses on the context of translation. In this study, Nida found that the effective way to translate is to learn from how the experts translate. Another study conducted by Karoly (2002) investigated the topical structures in translated news. The finding shows that the translator mostly changed the topical structures, depending on its event and news content.

There have been various studies conducted on the issues of the thematic construction on translated news reports. Therefore, this study compared the thematic structures realized on the online local news reports and its translation.

This study continues another study conducted by Fisilla (2020) which analyzed the thematic structures and translation shift in printed news reports. The study found that the thematic structures mainly remain the same (no shift) and concluded that the writer in printed

local newspaper managed to maintain the objectivity in the texts. In addition, Gomez (2015) analysed BBC news report and found that thematic types were mostly unmarked Theme types that answered the writers' research question.

This paper then aims to analyse the objectivity of one mass media; what is said and can be said in a given society at a given time with regard to its qualitative spectrum which is focused on the thematic structure in the translation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section talks through theories allied translated local news report both in terms of thematic structures and translation shift.

2.1. Digital Newspaper

According to McQuail (2010), newspaper is one of the mass media that succeed to carry information to a big audience in the 1980s. However, most of the newspaper company provide the information in online form today. As mentioned by Chyi and Sylvie (2001), online newspapers mostly owned by its printed newspaper company. Online newspaper becomes an easier form to give access to the reader as flexible as possible without reducing the information contained in the news report. Owning personal gadgets is one of the reasons that become the biggest target for newspaper companies to reach a larger audience.

Table 1. The possible Themes found in the data (Taken from Sudrutai Arunsitrot 2013, p. 163)

THEME		
Textual (optional)	Interpersonal (optional)	Topical/Ideal (obligatory)
Conjunction group: and, if, when, because, first, second, finally, then, as, so, in addition, moreover, weather, for example, most importantly, in particular, since	Mood adjunct: I think Most importantly In my opinion Most of all	Non-ellipsed: The best thing I have ever read, I, Power of life, the book ellipsed: relative nominal group: Which, who, that, why

2.2. Systemic Functional Linguistic

Systemic Functional Linguistics is an approach used to analyse language function in social circumstances. SFL determines language with wide perspective by pointing out that it has a role to convey ideas in each message. In using language, SFL theory argues that it is important to observe the organization of ideas so that cohesion and coherence in a text can be achieved. In this theory, there are three language metafunctions that help the observation of idea: (1) ideational meanings (language as a means of delivering ideas), (2) interpersonal meanings (language as a means of connecting people), and (3) textual meanings (language written as the tool to deliver messages) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013).

This study then aims to observe the textual metafunction in the news reports to gain knowledge of the purpose of the translator to minimize misunderstanding.

2.3. Textual Metafunction

Textual metafunction is one of the analysis tools to help the writer produce authentic text that can be accounted for. Authentic text is very important, especially in writing news reports. It has its own guidelines to follow as it concerns the validity of information. Thus, most of the readers consider news reports as a reliable source that is valid.

Halliday and Matthiessen (2013) pointed that in a clause, there is one message attached to another. It explains that Theme describes its Rheme in the clause. This structure is often known as Thematic structures (see Table 1).

Example of Thematic Structures:

Taken from CNN Health "US sees highest number of daily coronavirus cases since August".

Table 2. Thematic structure example found in the text

THEME	RHEME
(CNN Health) The US coronavirus death	(CNN Health) could almost double to about 400,000 by February, an influential model predicts.
(CNN Health) Florida, which over the summer	(CNN Health) became the country's hotspot, is "ripe for another large outbreak," an infectious disease expert told CNN

As can be seen from Table 2, Theme is the main information. It is followed by Rheme, which is attached to the Theme of the clause. Paltridge (2008) claimed that Theme and Rheme may be recurrent in the text. The

more Themes in one topic, the more chances that the bias can be identified in the text. As a result, the objectivity of the writers can be identified by comparing the shift of the Thematic structures found in the translated text.

2.4. Translation

Translating from one language into another can be tricky. It should be carefully checked if the writers are transferring the exact information through the news report without putting their opinions into it. Newmark (1988) proposed a flattened V diagram on translation methods as shown in Table 3.

There are 8 translation methods that Newmark (1988) suggested. The first is *Word-for-word* translation. This method tends to translate every word from one language to another. In using word-for-word translation method, translators often put the most equivalent words in the target language. Hence, there may not be much change in the structures of the text if using this method. The second method is *Adaptation* translation. Newmark (1988) claimed that this translation method is the most flexible method compared to the others. This method is usually used to translate the script of plays that allows the translator to improvise what is being written. The third translation method is a method called *Faithful* translation. This method is more likely to transfer the grammatical structure from the first language to another. In *Faithful* translation, the clauses are first broken down before the grammatical structures are analyzed. From there, the translator then transfers the information relying on the structures of the sentence. The fourth translation method is *Free* translation. The translation process of this method usually does not depend on the grammatical structures of the languages. The translator has a tendency to paraphrase it and make a longer version of the source text. The fifth method is *Semantic* translation. *Semantic* translation is a translation method that is taking more into artistic values (beauty and natural style of word choice). The sixth translation method is *Idiomatic* translation. This translation method often uses idioms that may not be available in the source text. The seventh translation method is *Literal* translation. This method mostly translates to the most similar grammatical structure. Other than that, it partly does the *word-for-word* translation as well. Last but not least is *Communicative* translation. This method aims to translate the exact content available in the source text based on what society believes, so the reader can accept what is being delivered through the text.

Table 3. Flattened V diagrams on translation methods by Newmark (1988)

SL Emphasis	TL Emphasis
Word-for-word translation	Adaptation translation
Literal translation	Free translation
Faithful translation	Idiomatic translation
Semantic translation	Communicative Translation

2.5. Translation Shift

Translation shift is the changing process in terms of grammatical structures. Catford (1965) claimed that it is only the form that is shifted in the translation. Therefore, the translation shift that occurs in every translation is only to change the form while the content and validity will stand still in the text. Furthermore, translation shift is divided into five classifications such as level, structure, class, unit, and intra-system shift.

1. Level Shift

According to Catford (1965), *Level shift* occurs when grammar shift to lexis (vocabulary).

For example:

[ST]: I am **working**

[TT]: *Aku sedang bekerja*

2. Unit Shift

Unit shift is the shift of unit from source text such as word to a phrase.

For example:

[ST]: My **watch** is expensive

[TT]: *Jam tangan saya mahal*

3. Structure Shift

Structure shift occurs when the element of a sentence is shifted.

For example:

[ST]: **The book** is thick

M H

[TT]: *Buku itu tebal*

H M

H: Head M: Modifier

4. Class Shift

Class shift appears when class of words in source text are shifted in the target text.

For example:

[ST]: He is walking **slowly**

Adv

[TT]: *Dia berjalan lambat*

Adj

5. Intra System Shift

Intra System shift occurs within the system that shows a shift in singular and plural.

[ST]: Sundanese **people** are humble

[TT]: *Orang Sunda ramah*

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This paper used a qualitative method. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1995), qualitative research is an analysis of the occurrence in the real surroundings that people figure out as daily issues. This analysis aims to verify the research question that occurs in the society. Thus, this method suits to help the study to examine the objectivity of news reports by breaking down the clauses. In particular, the study investigates the differences between the source text and target text in terms of Thematic shifts.

3.1. Data Collection

The data were collected from two printed news reports followed with its translation selected from 18th September to 23rd September 2020. The news reports were Covid-19 related because this issue has currently become the center of attention for many countries all around the world. Hence, this study aims to find the objectivity of the translators towards current issues in the field. The news reports were taken from the international online section of Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper Company. Cassidy (2007) claimed that information in the online news reports is more reliable than the printed news reports. Therefore, readers put internet as the main information source. In addition, online news reports were also easier to access as the internet continues to develop its features to provide information more up to date.

The international section of Pikiran Rakyat was the source of data for this study. The editors of this newspaper were mainly taken from *Routers* and *The Guardian*. This study chose Pikiran Rakyat because it was the awardee of “The Most Organized Media Group” in 2011. Additionally, this newspaper has a

motto of inviting readers to contemplate the information provided in the newspaper. Thus, the motto was reliance as the benchmark to the credibility of the newspaper company.

3.2. Data Analysis

The data were examined using Halliday’s and Newmark’s Framework, specifically the Textual Metafunction and Translation Shift. There were several stages to achieve comprehensive findings. First, the data was separated into two classifications: Source Text (ST) and Target Text (TT). Second, the clauses provided in the texts are sorted into a table. Then, the clauses were examined to find out whether the thematic construction and the translation were shifted. After the shifts were found, the percentages of the shifts showed in the data were calculated. Finally, both ST and TT were compared to find the stability of the objectivity and translation written by the editors.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Thematic Shifts

The finding of the analysis shows that there are three shifts occurred such as Theme, Rheme and no shift. The study reveals that there are changes in translating news in order to deliver the information to the local readers. From the total of 59 clauses, there are 31% Theme shift and 2% Rheme shift, while there are no shift found in the 67% remaining clauses. As shown in Table 4, the Thematic structure shifted in 15 clauses. Thus, the analysis found that the translator managed to maintain the objectivity by staying unbiased.

In addition, there are Theme types that shifted, as well as its meaning. Thus, it concludes that Theme types that are shifted might shift its meaning either.

Table 4. Findings on Thematic Shift

Types of Translation Shift of Thematic structure			
No	Types	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Theme Shift	15	31%
2	Rheme Shift	1	2%
3	No Shift	33	67%

[ST] “**Last week**, however, the World Health Organization (WHO) said its own trial of 11,266 patients” (Taken from Al-Jazeera).

[TT] “*Sebagai informasi tambahan, pada pekan lalu WHO menguji beberapa obat yang diklaim bisa digunakan*”.

As shown in the example above, it gives more patterns that 31% of the clauses were shifted from the source text to target text, which means the other 70% remains unbiased. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2013), Theme is the focus of a clause. Thus, when Themes are shifted, the focus of the clause will automatically be shifted as well.

4.1.2. Translation shift

In terms of translation shift, it is found that the frequency of single translation shifts occurs more frequently compared to double translation shifts.

As shown in Table 5, in the single translation shift, the structure shift occurred the most for 27%, followed by the class shift which occurred 25%. The unit shift and intra-system shift become the least frequent shift in single translation shift with 15% and 8% respectively. In addition, double translation shifts were also found in the texts. Unit and intra system shift appeared the most in the double translation shift with 7%.

Table 5. Findings on Translation Shift

No	Types	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Single translation Shift		
	Structure Shift	60	27%
	Class Shift	57	25%
	Unit Shift	34	15%
	Intra System Shift	19	8%
2	Double Translation Shift		
	Structure and unit shift	10	4%
	Unit and intra system shift	15	7%
	Class and unit shift	3	1%
3	No Translation Shift		27
			12%
Total		225	100%

However, there is not many occurrences on the structures and unit shift, which only appears in 4% of the texts. Class and unit shift become the least of the appearance in the texts for only 1% of total shifts occurrences. Lastly, the no translation shift occurs for 12% from all the clauses. From the findings, it is concluded that 31% shifts were coming from the category shifts (structures, unit, class, level shifts). Hence, it comes to the conclusion that the writer was translating the words by adopting the *faithful* translation method. Moreover, it is believed that Pikiran Rakyat tried to translate the text that makes translator transfer the grammatical structure from the source text to target text by focusing on the categories in the clauses.

The example of single shift translation can be seen in the following sentences.

[ST] “Gilead **becomes the first and only company** to receive approval for a COVID-19 treatment in the US, according to the company.” (Taken from Al-Jazeera).

[TT] “Gilead **juga menjadi yang pertama dan satu-satunya** yang mendapatkan izin produksi dan penggunaan Remdesivir di Amerika Serikat.”

The shift occurs when ‘becomes the first and only company’ translated into ‘*juga menjadi yang pertama dan satu-satunya*’. The structure of the words in the clause is shifted.

Double translation shift can be seen in the example below:

[ST] “He said that if **coordinated measures** were not taken, “a microscopic virus could push millions of people into poverty and hunger, with devastating economic effects in the years to come”.” (Taken from Reuters)

[TT] *Menurutnya, jika langkah-langkah terkoordinasi tidak dilakukan virus 'mikroskopis' itu dapat mendorong jutaan orang jatuh ke dalam...*

The word ‘coordinated measures’ in the clause is translated into ‘*langkah-langkah terkoordinasi*’. The word mentioned is processed by double translation shifts namely structures and intra system shift.

4.2. Discussion

Despite the translation strategies, translating news reports have not put much attention on the thematic structures. Editors tend to put aside the importance of Thematic structures to keep the news report remains unbiased. It is found that the effective way to translate is to learn from how the experts translate (Nida, 2002). According to the previous study, translators mostly changed the topical structures, depending on their events and news content (Károlyi, 2002). To improve the translation skill in translating news reports, translators are expected to be neutral (Herman, 2017). Earlier studies have tried to analyse news reports by breaking down the news reports and observes the structures. Beside those efforts, this study has also examined the Thematic structures appeared in both source texts and target texts.

5. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that first, translators in Pikiran Rakyat tried to manage the pattern of being unbiased in writing the news reports. Though it is found that 31% of the clauses from the texts were shifted from source text to the target text, it means the other 69% remains unbiased. Second, it is found that the translators applied some types of translation shift that were coming from the category shifts (structures, unit, class, level shifts). Hence, it comes to the conclusion that the translators

were translating words by adopting faithful translation method. Finally, as realized in the data analysis, it is concluded that translators in Pikiran Rakyat tried to translate the text by transferring the grammatical structure from the source text into the target text, specifically by focusing on the categories in the clauses.

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