

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on general description of this study. It consists of seven parts, background of study, research problem, objective of study, significance of study, hypothesis of study, scope and limitation of study and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of Study

Finding the equivalence of culture-specific items (CSIs) as it contains cultural information is problematic to translate. Translating CSIs may loss or gain the certain features in the target language (TL) text which are presented in the source language (SL) text. These items often carry profound cultural connotations and associations that may not be easily conveyed or fully understood in the translation process, potentially resulting in a loss of meaning and cultural significance. In the context of translation studies, CSIs are recognized as elements that require special attention to ensure accurate and culturally sensitive renditions. As Vermeer proposed in Hornby (1988: 39-40), translators should aim to comprehend and navigate the cultural context of both languages involved. Stated by Larson (1984), it is not only the proficiency in two languages, but also be at home in two cultures since language is an integral part of culture (Tiwiyati & Retnomurti, 2017). Additionally, literature reflects the culture as the description of the society. Ratna (2012: 329) cited from Rene Welle and Austin Warran (1978) that the cultural value is one of the values that are often encountered in a work of literature. It is done to make Indonesian literature available for the foreigners who speak other languages. One of Indonesian literary works that have CSIs been translated into English is an anthology of Ahmad Tohari's fifteen short-stories entitled *Kind Looking Eyes*. For the educational purposes, delving into the translation of CSIs, the study aims to enhance cultural sensitivity, deepen

the understanding of both the source and target cultures, and provide insights into effective strategies for translating CSIs.

The concept of culture-specific items (CSIs) refers to ideas or terms that are unique to the source language (SL) and have no direct equivalent in the target culture. These concepts can be both tangible and abstract, encompassing religious beliefs, social customs, or even specific culinary items (Chesterman, 2012). It necessitates a comprehensive grasp of the cultural nuances and context that permeate both the SL and TL. By unraveling the intricacies of CSIs, translators enhance their ability to bridge the gaps between cultures and effectively convey the intended meaning. When translating CSIs, the translator's task is to identify the underlying function of the SL concept and find an appropriate target language (TL) equivalent that fulfills the same function (Bassnett, 2002) (Angatia, 2018). The extent of gain or loss experienced during translation depends on the cultural distance and disparities between the two cultures involved. Translators often rely on their creative skills to navigate these differences and find acceptable translations that accurately represent both cultures. Bassnett (2006) emphasizes that, in certain instances, the translation process can lead to the enrichment or clarification of the SL text in the TL context. Consequently, what may appear lost in the SL context can be replaced or supplemented in the TL context. To achieve successful translation, translators must possess an understanding of customs and other cultural aspects that exist between the two languages. It is not uncommon for translators to modify or expand the meaning in the TL text, resulting in the phenomena of loss and gain in translation (Sholikin, 2013).

The accurate replication of translating the source language (SL) text in the target language (TL) text becomes a challenge when dealing with culture-specific items (CSIs) (Dizdar, 2014). Translators often face a higher likelihood of experiencing loss rather than

gain when attempting to convey CSIs. This loss can manifest in various ways, such as the failure to capture the full expressive or connotative meaning of words or phrases, resulting in their deletion or unfortunate loss in translation. As Venuti (2000) suggests, a successful translation should not overshadow the original text but instead allow the pure language to illuminate it even more.

Furthermore, linguistic and extralinguistic differences between the SL and TL contribute to the occurrence of loss in translation. Linguistic differences pose challenges as each language has its own system for expressing concepts, making it difficult to find exact equivalents. Extralinguistic disparities encompass cultural and religious variations, which further hinder the translation process. These extralinguistic factors often play a significant role in the translator's inability to achieve equivalence in the target text (Alwazna, 2014). By recognizing and understanding the complexities involved in translating CSIs, translators can employ strategies to minimize loss and achieve more accurate and culturally sensitive translations. This exploration of CSIs and the factors contributing to their translation difficulties enriches the field of translation studies, shedding light on the intricate interplay between language, culture, and meaning in the translation process.

According to O'Neil (2006), language is a dynamic entity that undergoes continuous changes. This dynamism opens up possibilities for gain in translation. The extent of gain depends on the translator's expressive skills and creativity. Translators often face the challenge of negotiating the inherent differences in meaning between languages. They must carefully analyze the connection between a language and its social context. When translators successfully introduce new terminology or concepts that enhance clarity and enrich the target language (TL), it leads to a gain in translation.

Ahmad Tohari's anthology "Kind Looking Eyes," translated by Tirsia Tanagara,

comprises fifteen short stories written between 1983 and 1997, showcasing Indonesia's rich indigenous culture and traditions, particularly those of the Banyumas region. The translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) in the English version of the book involves both losses and gains. With the aforementioned background, the primary objective of this study is to explore the semantic aspects of translating CSIs in *Kind Looking Eyes* and examine the potential losses or gains in meaning that may arise during the translation process. The academic purposes of this research are to develop translation skills, enhance cultural sensitivity, deepen understanding of the source and target cultures, and contribute to research in the field of translation studies. By analyzing the translation of CSIs, this study aims to shed light on the challenges and strategies involved in accurately conveying cultural nuances and meanings across languages, thus contributing to the broader understanding of translation practices and cultural exchange.

1. 2 Research Problem

The study's problems are stated as follows, based on the research background:

What are the loss and gain of culture-specific items in *Kind Looking Eyes*?

1. 3 Objective of The Study

Based on the problem stated above, the objectives of this study are to analyse the translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) using Bell's theory (1991: 84) proposed three approaches to compare and contrast how far, as an ideal translation, the lexical meanings in a concept which are unshared in the source language can achieve the closest natural equivalent that can cause loss and gain in CSIs translation.

1. 4 Significance of The Study

The researcher hopes that this study can be useful not only for the researcher herself, but also for those who are related to this study:

1. 6. 1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study reveals the loss and gain in English translation of CSIs in Ahmad Tohari's short stories anthology, "Kind Looking Eyes". The researcher hopes that this study will contribute to encourage more references in CSIs translation in the field of English education by laying the groundwork for future teaching and learning method development. The researcher also expects that the findings will serve as a guide and source of knowledge for future scholars who are interested in the similar topics.

1. 6. 2 For Practical Significance

1. 4. 2. 1 For the teachers

The researcher assumed that the findings of this study will be useful in selecting appropriate ways for utilizing translation in order to improve the quality of the teaching process.

1. 4. 2. 2 For the students

The researchers assured that the findings of this study will assist students to communicate English flexibly. Students might be more excited and motivated to learn more about CSIs translation.

1. 4. 2. 3 For other researcher

Knowing the implementation of CSIs translation for teaching and how to apply them is crucial for other scholars. The researcher anticipates that the findings of this study will provide significant information for the future application of strategies in teaching English. It is also expected that additional

scholars will conduct research connected to this study to make it more thorough for the development of translation methodologies.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

To ensure the research remains focused, this study has established a clear scope and identified its limitations. The research specifically centers on analyzing the translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) in the English version of Ahmad Tohari's short story collection, "Kind Looking Eyes," using Bell's theory (1991). The main objective is to identify any instances of loss or gain in the translation of CSIs within the text.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

There are some terms in this study which should be defined clearly, in order to avoid misunderstanding. The terms are:

1.6.1 Loss and Gain in Translation

Loss and gain in translation, as described by translation scholar Mona Baker (Angatia, 2018), involves the complex dynamics of preserving or modifying cultural-specific elements during the process of transferring meaning from the source language to the target language. It requires careful consideration of linguistic, cultural, and contextual factors to ensure the accurate representation of the original text while accommodating the nuances and peculiarities of the target language and culture.

1.6.2 Culture-Specific Items

Cultural-specific items (CSIs), as defined by translation scholar Roger T. Bell, refer to concepts or elements within a particular culture that may pose

challenges in translation due to their cultural connotations and associations. These items often require in-depth knowledge of the source and target cultures to ensure accurate representation in the translated text. Bell's theoretical framework emphasizes the importance of understanding and transferring the cultural significance of CSIs in order to maintain the intended meaning and cultural context in the target language (Bell, 1991).

1. 6. 3 Kind Looking Eyes

Ahmad Tohari's anthology, "Kind Looking Eyes," contains a rich portrayal of culture-specific items (CSIs) that are deeply embedded and worthy of study. These CSIs reflect the diverse indigenous culture and traditions of Indonesia, particularly in the Banyumas region. The exploration of CSIs in this anthology provides valuable insights into the cultural nuances and significance within Tohari's literary works.