

TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES ON ENGLISH SEXUAL EUPHEMISMS IN DUKE OF HER OWN**Anita¹, Defi Julianti²**¹ English Department, Gunadarma University, Indonesia² Faculty of Communication, Gunadarma University, Indonesia**Article History**

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Abstract: People tend to use euphemisms to replace words, phrases, and clauses that will make them lose face. Euphemisms are used for certain topics, one of them is sex. Sex is considered taboo in most of societies including English and Indonesian. However, the cultures of the two societies have different points of view about sex. This is one of the difficulties that a translator must face when translating sexual euphemisms from English into Indonesian. A translator will apply certain techniques to make a translation sound natural. This study aims at describing the translation techniques that are used by a translator in transferring English euphemisms into Indonesian. The source of the data is a novel by Eloisa James, *Duke of Her Own* and its Indonesian version *Pasangan Sempurna*. The study uses a descriptive qualitative method in analyzing data. The result found that from 96 data of euphemisms, 48 data are translated using established equivalents, 12 data are translated using literal, 11 data are translated using discursive creation, 6 data are translated using explication, 5 data are translated using description, and 3 data are translated using generalization.

Keywords: Translation techniques, euphemisms, sexual euphemisms.

INTRODUCTION

Translation and culture cannot be separated. A language is influenced by the culture of the society thus a translator must have the knowledge of the culture of both source and target language. Lack of knowledge will cause a very bad translation. Translating means a lot more than transferring linguistic elements from source language to target language, it also exchanges the culture. Because of this, a translation task becomes difficult. A translator must be aware of elements that surround a word from a source language, and he must be able to re-express that word in other language that has different surrounding elements. One of the expressions that is culturally bound is euphemism.

The word euphemism originally comes from Greek *eu* (good), and *pheme* (speech or saying) thus it means speaking in a good way (Neuman and Silver, 1995). Euphemism can be concluded as an expression that is used to substitute harsh and taboo expressions that will insult the speaker and the hearer, and, furthermore as Allan and Burridge (1991) said, some third party. For examples; the word kill is replaced by the word terminate, the word copulate is replaced by phrasal verb sleep with, and the word urinate is replaced by pass water.

Euphemism is used for certain topics such as, death, religions, politics and sex. Death is taboo based on fear. Death is a mystery that cannot be fully comprehended by people that is why they are not comfortable to talk about it. Religious matters are avoided to be discussed because it is connected to belief and mysterious things. Different from

death and religion, sex is not preferable topic to discuss because it is private thing. By discussing it, one feels embarrassed and uncomfortable.

Sex is very potential for euphemisms in English. Not only the activities, but also the body parts are potential for euphemisms. Sexual euphemisms are often used in English. There are approximately 1200 words to replace the word *vagina*, 800 for *copulation*, 1000 for penis and 2000 for replacing the word *whore* (Allan & Burridge, 1991).

Translating sexual euphemism can be very difficult. It is because sexual euphemism is tightly bound with the social norms and culture of the society that uses it. There will be a gap of culture between source and target languages, therefore it is important for a translator to have knowledge about the culture, especially the culture of target language. For example, a translator must able to translate the word *courtesan* which is bound with characteristics that only English culture. The translator must able to find the closest equivalence of the word, not just simply translate it into pelacur (prostitute).

To be able to handle this, a translator is offered techniques to translate. Molina and Albir (2002), propose 18 techniques of translation that can be used as a guide to translate text. Translation technique is proposed by Molina and Albir (2002) because the need to distinguish strategy, method, and technique of translation and he need for an dynamic and functional concept of translation techniques. This research try to describe what techniques that translator used in translating sexual euphemism in a novel entitled Duke of Her own by Eloisa James.

Duke of Her own is one novel of Desperate Duchess series. The genre is historical Romance. It tells about a young lady Eleanor Lindel who was desperately looking for husband. She met a man named Leopod Dauntry, Duke of Villiers who had six illegitimate children that he had to find. Both of them finally fell in love and got married in the end. This series is very popular among women in the age of 25 until 50 years. The series have been translated into Indonesian and the translation version sold vastly.

Literature Review

a. Translation

Larson (1984) gave definition about translation “*translation is transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language. This is done by going from the form of the first language to the form of a second language by way of semantic structure. It is the meaning that has been transferred and must be held constant. Only the form changes.*” Thus, a translation must maintain the meaning intended by the author so the reader of a translation understand the author wants to say.

b. Translation Techniques

Molina and Albir (2002) define translation techniques as procedures to analyse and classify how translation equivalence works. They have five basic characteristics:

1. They affect the result of the translation
2. They are classified by comparison with the original
3. They affect micro-units of text
4. They are by nature discursive and contextual
5. They are functional

There 18 techniques that Molina and Albir (2002) proposed: 1) Adaptation; 2) Amplification; 3) Borrowing; 4) Calque; 5) Compensation; 6) Description; 7) Discursive creation; 8) Established equivalent; 9) Generalization; 10) Linguistic Amplification; 11) Linguistic Compression; 12) Literal Translation; 13) Modulation; 14) Particularization; 15) Reduction; 16) Substitution; 17) Transposition; 18) Variation

c. Euphemism

“A euphemism is used as an alternative to a dis-preferred expression, in order to avoid possible loss of face: either one’s own face or, through giving offensive, that of the audience, or of some third party” (Allan & Burridge, 1991:11). So it is clear that euphemism is an expression to avoid loss of face for the speaker, listener or third party.

Methodology

This research is a descriptive qualitative research. It describes the technique used by the translator in translating sexual euphemistic expression. The source of data of this research is a novel titled “Duke of Her own” by Eloisa James and its Indonesian Translation *Pasangan Sempurna*. The researcher collected the data in the form of sexual euphemistic expression, classified the data based on the translation techniques, then analyzed the classified data using the theories. After that the researcher drew a conclusion and verified the findings.

Finding and Discussion

There are 95 sexual euphemistic expression found in the novel. 48 data are translated using established equivalent, 12 data are translated using literal, 11 data are translated using discursive creation, 6 data are translated using explication, 5 data are translated using description, 3 data are translated using generalization.

The translation techniques used by the translator in the translation of euphemisms can be summed up in a table below:

Table 1. The Translation Techniques Used in Translating English Sexual Euphemisms into Indonesian

| NO | Translation Techniques | Number |
|----|------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Established equivalent | 48 |
| 2 | Literal | 12 |
| 3 | Discursive creation | 11 |
| 4 | Explication | 6 |
| 5 | Description | 5 |
| 6 | Generalization | 3 |

a. Established Equivalent

This technique uses the recognized terms (by the dictionary) as the equivalent. There is 48 sexual euphemistic expression translated using this technique. By using this technique, the translator recognize that the expressions to be translated are euphemisms and able to reproduce them in target language.

Sexual euphemistic expression in the novel covers sexual activities, tabooed parts of the body, prostitutes, etc. Expressions on sexual activities are the most common that are

replaced by euphemism. Those expressions mostly translated by using established equivalent techniques.

The word copulate has various euphemistic expression. The most common euphemistic expression used to replace the word *copulate* is *make love*. *Make love* is used 8 times in this novel and all of them is translated into *bercinta* in target language.

Example:

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---|
| Data 1 | BSu | "We can't make love in the open air. I've never heard of anything so scandalous. We are, both of us, promised to others." 165 |
| | BSa | "Kita tidak bisa bercinta di udara terbuka. Aku tidak pernah mendengar hal yang begitu memalukan ini. kita, kita berdua terikat pada orang lain."371 |

From From all of the euphemistic expressions that are used to replace the word *copulate*, *make love* is the most commonly used. In the early use, this expression is known as euphuism (an artificial, highly elaborate way of writing or speaking). The meaning of *make love* at that time is not more than to court. Actually, this expression was known as the euphemistic for the word *copulate* in 1976, however there are evidence that showed the expression was used as an euphemistic expression in 1850s (Rawson, 1981: 175). This expression is translated into the word *bercinta* in target language. In target language the word *bercinta* is an euphemistic expression that is used to replace the word *copulate* (*bersetubuh*).

Besides *make love*, sexual euphemistic expression that commonly used to replace the word copulate is *bed*. The word bed is used five times to replace the word *copulate*. All of them are translated into *tidur* or *meniduri*.

Example:

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---|
| Data 2 | BSu | "You think about bedding me," Eleanor said. 136 |
| | BSa | "Kau berpikir tentang meniduriku ," kata Eleanor |

he word *bedding* in source language and the word *meniduri* in target language have the same function, to replace the word copulate. *Bedding* is from the word *bed* which originally means a place where a husband and a wife have their union. *Meniduri* is from the word *tidur*. *Tidur* in Indonesian has two sense, to lay down to sleep or to have sex with someone. Although having different references, both *bedding* and *meniduri* are equivalents.

In this novel there are only two euphemized parts of body translated using established equivalent.

Example:

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---|
| Data 3 | BSu | "I must say, it doesn't seem fair to me that you inherited those eyes and that bosom ." 44 |
| | BSa | "Aku harus bilang, sepertinya tidak adil bagiku karena kau mewarisi mata itu dan payudara itu." (98) |

B

osom is commonly used to replace the word *breast* in the source language. This word has

become a euphemism for the word *breast* since long time ago. In Victorian era this word were widely used as the queen wanted to clean up the language. The word *bosom* is translated into *payudara*. In the target language, *payudara* is the mildest word that refers the breast of a woman. *Bosom* and *payudara* have the same function, to signify the word *breast*. Both are equivalents.

| | | |
|------|-----|---|
| Data | BSu | Her bottom was very round under her thick robe.99 |
| 4 | BSa | Bokongnya sangat bulat di bawah jubahnya yang tebal. (221) |

In the source language, the word *bottom* is a euphemism to replace the word *buttocks*. In the 18th and 19th century before it became a euphemism for *buttocks*, this word was used to be a synonym of the word endurance or stamina of a horserace (Rawson, 1981:39). This word is translated into *bokong*. *Bokong* in the target language is also euphemism for the word *buttocks*. Both are equivalents.

Prostitute is also a subject to be euphemized. Because *prostitute* is the oldest profession in the world, its euphemistic expressions is vast. This research found several expressions to replace the word *prostitute*, but only one that is translated by using established equivalent technique.

Example:

| | | |
|------|-----|---|
| Data | BSu | "If I do not subdue them, keep them working, they will betray their origins. They will become nightwalkers , like their mothers." 110 |
| 05 | BSa | "Jika aku tidak mengatasi mereka, membuat mereka tetap bekerja, mereka akan memperlihatkan asal usul mereka. Mereka akan menjadi perempuan jalang , seperti ibu-ibu mereka." (245) |

Nightwalker in English has two meanings. The first one is someone who roams around at night and the second one is prostitute. *Nightwalker* with the second meaning was used in older times. It is not used as a euphemistic expression for the word *prostitute* anymore nowadays. This word is translated into *perempuan jalang* in target language. *Nightwalkers* and *perempuan jalang* have the same functions. Both are replacing the word *prostitute* in each language, thus they are equivalents.

b. Literal

Literal technique is word-for word translation. When a translator uses literal technique it means that they translate the text with their literal meaning in the target language not the meaning in the context. In this novel, there are found some sexual euphemistic expressions translated using this technique.

Examples:

| | | |
|------------|-----|---|
| Data 06 | BSu | "A courtesan would never come before her client," Leopold said in her ear. "And if she did, she'd have to come again, just to make up for it." 173 |
| | BSa | "Seorang pelacur tidak akan pernah datang sebelum pelanggannya," kata Leopold di telinga Eleanor. "Dan jika dia melakukannya, dia harus datang kembali hanya untuk memperbaikinya." 390 |

The word *come* in the source language means *orgasm*. It is found that this word is the euphemism of the word *orgasm* before 1650 (Rawson, 1981:54). This word is translated literally in the target language into *datang*. *Datang* is the dictionary meaning of the word *come*. Because it translated literally, the word loses its intended meaning in the target language.

| | | |
|------------|-----|---|
| Data 07 | BSu | "Because if they want to be shaking the sheets , they don't need sheets to be doing it, if you know what I mean." 197 |
| | BSa | "Karena jika mereka ingin menggoyangkan kain seprai , mereka tidak membutuhkan seprai untuk melakukannya, jika kau mengerti apa maksudku." 444 |

Shaking the sheets in the context above means having sex or copulating. It is translated literally into *menggoyangkan kain seprai*. In the target language *menggoyangkan kain seprai* does not have any implicit meaning. It has the same meaning with *shaking the sheets* literally, not implicitly. The translator should translate the expression the source language with euphemistic expression so the intended meaning of the author can be understood.

| | | |
|------------|-----|--|
| Data 08 | BSu | "Whatever it was, I don't see why that change entails dressing like a shameless wagtail ," her mother said, reverting to her former theme. 73 |
| | BSa | "Apapun itu, aku tidak melihat mengapa perubahan itu menuntut untuk berpakaian seperti burung kutilang yang tidak tahu malu," ujar ibunya kembali ke tema |

If *wagtail* is translated into Indonesian literally it will be *burung kutilang*. However, in this context *wagtail* means someone who acts like a wagtail. A bird that usually wags its long tail up and down. This utterance is uttered by a mother that was angry when she saw her daughter dressed like a naughty girl or a prostitute. The translation missed the intended meaning of the author. The translator should translate the word *wagtail* with euphemism that replaces the word *prostitute* such as *wanita nakal* or *wanita murahan*.

c. Discursive Creation

According to Molina and Albir (2002) discursive creation technique is to establish a temporary equivalence that is totally unpredictable out of context. Usually it is used to translate a title of a films or novels to attract attention. However in this novel, the translation used the discursive creation completely lose their meaning or it can be said wrong translation.

Example:

| | | |
|------------|-----|---|
| Data 09 | BSu | "A brassy baggage , waiting in her bath for a man to wander by so she can entice him with her skills." 183 |
| | BSa | " Sesuatu yang menyerupai alat tiup , menunggu di dalam bak mandinya agar seorang laki-laki mampir sehingga dia bisa memikat laki-laki itu dengan kemampuannya." 412 |

Brassy baggage is a euphemistic expression to refer a *prostitute*. The word *brassy* is an adjective formed from the word *brass* which is euphemism for prostitute. *Baggage* is literally a luggage; however in this context *baggage* means a woman that look like baggage (means not thin). So a *brassy baggage* can be said a *prostitute*. This expression is translated into *sesuatu yang menyerupai alat tiup* (*something that is like an inflatable device*). The meaning in the target language is totally unpredictable out of context and the translation is wrong.

| | | |
|------------|-----|---|
| Data 10 | BSu | Eleanor raised an eyebrow. "I would have thought that most young men felt possessive about other attributes of bonny Bess." 95 |
| | BSa | Eleanor menaikkan sebelah alisnya. "Aku pikir semua pria muda merasa posesif terhadap sifat lain Bess yang cantik." (213) |

Attributes in this context is a euphemistic expression for the word *breasts*. The utterance is uttered by a woman about a girl named Bess who has big breasts and most of young men adored. The translator translated the word *attributes* in the context into *sifat*. *Sifat* is neither the literal meaning of the word attributes nor the contextual meaning of the word. The translation is totally out of context thus it lose the intended meaning.

| | | |
|------------|-----|--|
| Data 11 | BSu | "Why don't they just sing what they mean: I tupped him for a month?" 88 |
| | BSa | "Mengapa mereka tidak menyanyikan apa yang mereka maksudkan: aku mengharapkannya selama sebulan?" (198) |

The meaning of the word *tupped* in the source language is *copulated*. *Tupped* is a euphemism to replace the word *copulate*. Literally it is a ram copulate with a ewe. In this

context it becomes a euphemism. The word *tupped* is translated into *mengharapkan*. The translation is completely out of context. The word *mengharapkan* is equivalent with word *wanted* or *desired*.

| | | |
|------|-----|---|
| Data | BSu | A ducal doxy , that's what she was. 75 |
| 12 | BSa | Doktrin yang berkenaan dengan seorang duke , seperti itulah dirinya. (168) |

A *ducal doxy* means a duchess that is a prostitute. This expression is to describe a duchess who acts just like a prostitute. *Doxy* is a euphemism to replace the word *prostitute*. Originally this word used to describe a sweetheart, a girl who looks like a doll (Holder, 2002:114). A *ducal doxy* in the source language is translated into *doktrin yang berkenaan dengan duke* which is totally out context. The translation is completely wrong. *Doxy* is not equivalent with *doktrin (doctrine)*.

d. Generalization

When a translator uses this technique, they use a general term or neutral term to be the equivalent. It is usually done because in target language there is no exact equivalent. This research found some of sexual euphemistic expression that are translated by using this technique.

Examples:

| | | |
|------|-----|--|
| Data | BSu | "You were unlucky. He is a debaucher who took the first chance he could to leave you in the dust and marry the oh-so-pretty Ada." 42 |
| 13 | BSa | "Kau tidak beruntung. Dia adalah orang bejat yang mengambil kesempatan pertama yang dia miliki untuk meninggalkanmu begitu saja dan menikah dengan Ada yang oh-begitu-cantik." (95) |

In the source language the word *debaucher* is used to describe a man who likes to assault women sexually. It is translated into *orang bejat* in Indonesian. In Indonesian *orang bejat* is used to describe a person, who has low morality. It does not have to be a man; *orang bejat* can be a woman as well. *Orang bejat* is more general than *debaucher*. *Orang bejat* is broken in every aspect not only sexual matters. Indonesian does not have a euphemism that is exactly has the same meaning with *debaucher*.

e. Explicitation

Explicitation is to introduce information from the ST that is implicit from the context or the situation (Molina & Albir, 2002). This research found some of sexual expression that is translated by using this technique. When euphemism is translated explicitly, it becomes neutral word or even dysphemism.

Examples:

| | | |
|------|-----|--|
| Data | BSu | Not even the highest paid courtesan in the world could manage the sultry look that Eleanor seemed to wield at a moment's notice. 114 |
| 14 | BSa | Bahkan pelacur dengan bayaran tertinggi di dunia pun belum tentu bisa memperlihatkan tatapan penuh gairah yang sepertinya Eleanor lakukan, jika diperhatikan. (254) |

Courtesan is a euphemism of the word *prostitute*. *Courtesan* is considered the most elegant prostitute compared to others. Originally courtesan was used to describe a female courtier, however, by 1635 it had come to mean a kept mistress or prostitute (Neaman & Silver, 1990:278). *Courtesan* is translated into *pelacur*. In the target language the word *pelacur* is not a euphemism. It is considered rude to say the word *pelacur* openly.

| | | |
|------|-----|--|
| Data | BSu | "They're bastards ," Anne put in cheerfully. 141 |
| 15 | BSa | "Mereka adalah anak haram ," Anne menambahkan dengan gembira. 315 |

Although now it is often used in a swear word, *bastard* was used to be a euphemism. The word comes from the Old French *fils de bast*, packsaddle child, where the *bast*, or packsaddle, often was used as a bed by mule drivers (Rawson, 1981:32). *Bastard* is used to describe a child that illegitimately born (born outside marriage). This word is translated into *anak haram* (sinful child/forbidden child). *Anak haram* and *bastard* has the same meaning, however, *anak haram* in the target language is considered rude. A child born outside marriage in Indonesian society is considered sinful.

| | | |
|------|-----|--|
| Data | BSu | "Why did you paint a pizzle on that rock?" he inquired, pulling off his stockings at last.163 |
| 16 | BSa | "mengapa kau menggambar penis di atas batu?" tanya Villiers, akhirnya menarik lepas stokingnya. |

Pizzle is oftenly used in older times used as a euphemism to replace the word *penis*. *Pizzle* literally means the penis of an animal especially bulls. This word is translated explicitly into *penis* in Indonesian. Just like in English *penis* is not a euphemism in Indonesian.

f. Description

Description technique is to replace a term or expression with a description of its form or/and function (Molina & Albir, 2002). It usually done when there is no exact equivalent in the target language. There are some sexual euphemistic expressions that are translated using this technique.

Examples:

| | | |
|------|-----|--|
| Data | BSu | "I wish to marry someone who will not only mother my bastards , but launch them into proper society when the appropriate time comes..." 11 |
| 17 | BSa | "Aku berharap untuk menikahi seseorang yang tidak hanya akan menjadi ibu bagi anak-anak di luar nikahku , tapi mempersiapkan mereka untuk kehidupan bermasyarakat yang layak saat waktunya yang tepat tiba..." (22) |

Bastards are children born outside the marriage or without marriage. It is translated into *anak-anak di luar nikah* (children born outside marriage). The translator chose to translate the word by describing the meaning of the word.

| | | |
|------|-----|--|
| Data | BSu | "You turn me into a lecher ," he stated. 154 |
| 18 | BSa | "Kau mengubahku menjadi seorang pelepas nafsu berahi ," ujar Villiers menegaskan. 347 |

Lecher means someone who loves to have sexual relationship with woman or a womanizer. In Indonesian there are some equivalents for that expression, for example *cabul*, *orang gasang*, atau *orang jangak*. However, the translator uses a description to be the equivalent of *lecher*, *pelepas nafsu berahi*. (someone who love to have sex).

Conclusions

After doing the analysis, this research comes into conclusions:

1. The techniques used in translating sexual euphemistic expressions are various, and those techniques will affect the quality of the translation.
2. It also found that the knowledge about a particular term should be owned by a translator to avoid bad translation.
3. When translating sexual euphemistic expressions, a translator must able to detect whether a word, a phrase, or clause is a euphemistic or not, so the translation will not be misleading.
4. Cultural background does not determine a person will use euphemistic expressions in expressing something that will cause them or other persons losing face.

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