# Thematic Shift in Translating English Narrative Text into Indonesian

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Keywords:     Thematic Shift, Translation, Narrative, Text.

Abstract:     This research deals with the thematic shift on students' translating themes. Based on the fact, thematic shifts which occur in students' translation are not fully understood. The objective of this research is to find out whether the change of the thematic shift is found in the translation of narrative text from English into Indonesian. The research was a qualitative research which analyzes written material. There were nine narrative texts analyzed as the object of the research selected from English textbook of students. They were translated from English into Indonesian. The research found that the changing of thematic shift is found in students' translating themes. Types of thematic shift emerge from the translation of the theme are unmarked theme and marked theme. This research sums up that thematic shift is the shortcoming of students. Furthermore, it proposes that aptitude and knowledge of languages are necessary when the students translate the text.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Translation is an important skill that should be learnt and mastered by the students. Because mastering translation will make us easier to understand foreign language. If the students can not master or can not be able to translate as well, they will not obtain the intention of what talks about. According to Catford (1965:1) says, "Translation is an operation performed on languages: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another." Translation is a tool to deliver meaning from source language (SL) to target language (TL). To make sure the meaning is perfectly delivered, a translator must re-construct the text by translating the words from SL to TL and arrange the words based on the structures of sentence in TL so the structures are suitable with TL and there will be no loss of intention.

In translation there is translation shift. Translation shift is the change of grammatical position of source language in its translation into target language. There are two types of translation shift, they are level shift and category shift. Translation shift occur in translation when a change of structure, unit and system are found in target language. When the students translate a text from source language into target language, in their translation will be found translation shift. For example, when the students translate this phrase "Beautiful Girl", it will be "Perempuan Cantik". From the example, we can see that it is structure shift. It is called structure shift because in English, the word *Beautiful* as modifier precedes the word *girl* as the head. But in Indonesian, it is different rank, in which the word *perempuan* as the head precedes *cantik* as modifier.

Besides the intention and structure, there is another thing which should be considered by the students if they want to create a good translation, that is the theme of the source text. Theme is the universal meaning of a story. This is the core of the story meaning. The theme can be known after reading the whole story. But in translating, the theme can change the structure, unit, and system are found in target language and it can be called thematic shift. Thematic shift occurs when the theme in source language is translated into different type of theme and grammatical functions in the target language. Based on the background of this research, the problem can be formulated as following: How is the changing of the thematic shift that found in students' translation? It discusses 2 types of thematic shift that found in translating English narrative text into Indonesian. In conducting this research, there are some expert literatures which support the theories which are included in this study: Catford (1965), Nida and Taber (1982). Oirsouw (1984), Newmark (1988), Eggins (1994), Halliday (1994), Hyland (2004), Ary (2010), Farrokh(2011).

## 1.1 Definition of Translation

Catford (1965:20) states that translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL). This means that translation will make a text change its form or structure. When Indonesian text or sentence is translated into English, both surely have different structure or form since both of these languages are distantly different mainly their families. For example, we have the words *"air mata"* in Indonesian, if the two words are translated into English, it will be *"tear."* The liquid which flows from eyes is called *air mata* in Indonesian and it consists of two words. After translating it to English, it stands alone in one word *"tear"*. This clearly explains the change which happens to both of languages after having translation. It can be concluded that translation is an attempt to equivalently transfer meaning from source language into target language which changes structure or form of language. Although translation work is trying to transfer the meaning to TL, it will never be as original as its source.

Jakobson in Bassnett (2002:23) distinguishes translation in three types :

1. Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language.
2. Interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
3. Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems.

## 1.2 Translation Shift

Translation shift occur in translation when a change of structure, unit and system are found in target language. It means that the changes happen among the ranks of sentence, clause and group of word. Catford (1965:73) defines translation shifts as the departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from SL to TL. He further categorized translation shift into two types; they are level shift and category shift.

## 1.3 Level Shift

Level shift occurs when an item at one linguistic level in SL has its translation equivalent at different level in TL (Catford, 1965:73). The only possible level shift in translation is the shift from grammar to lexis

and vice versa. This case can be found among English and Bahasa Indonesia in which have different linguistic level. To make this explanation clearer, it can be described with the example as following.

English (SL) : He is eating a noodle soup.
Indonesian (TL) : Dia sedang makan mie rebus.

## 1.4 Category Shift

Catford (1965:76) states category shift refers to some shifts which share a particular feature - departures from formal correspondence in translation. Category shift is divided into four types namely structure shift, class shift, unit shift, and intra-system shift.

## 1.5 Structure Shift

This shift appears if there is a formal correspondence between SL and TL. Indonesian and English, for instance, both of these languages have formal correspondence which will have structure shift when translation is done from Indonesian into English and vice versa. This can be presented in the following example.

English (SL) : Beautiful girl.
Indonesian (TL) : Gadis cantik.

## 1.6 Class Shift

Class shift occur when the translation equivalent of a SL item is a member of a different class from the original item. This means that class function to define the role of certain word in structure of a sentence, clause and phrase. With this definition, we can account that class shift occurs when class of member in SL is translated into different class of member in TL. This can be presented in the following example.

English (SL) : They insist on *higher* wages.
Indonesian (TL) : Mereka menuntut *kenaikan* gaji.

## 1.7 Unit Shift

Unit shift will change the rank of source language in target language. Unit shift possibly change sentence to clause and clause to phrase. Unit shift occasionally alter the larger rank into lower rank and vice versa. This can be exemplifies as following

English (SL) : *My father* is very nice.
Indonesian (TL) : *Ayahku* sangat baik.

## 1.8 Intra System Shift

Intra system shift is departures from formal correspondence where one system in the SL has its translation equivalent in a different non-corresponding system in the TL. Intra system shift occur internally within a system. For example, English has the article such as *a/an* and *the* where the use of them will be affected by the concord. English has also the singular and plural terms which affect verbal form in sentence.

For example :

English (SL)    : He ever said to Amin, his classmate, that he didn't have a bravery to speak English because of those *factors.*

Indonesian (TL) : Dia pernah mengatakan kepada Amin, teman sekelasnya, bahwa dia tidak    memiliki keberanian untuk berbicara bahasa Inggris karena *banyak faktor.*

## 1.9 Thematic Shift

Thematic shift occurs when the theme in SL is translated into different type of theme and grammatical functions in the TL. According to Farrokh (in Yuanita Damayanti, 2012:34) shift occurred when the form in the source language has a new form or different form from the target language. She adds that shift could minimize the inevitable loss of meaning when rendering a text from one language into another language. The thematic shift occurs through three processes:

1. Shift by changing the grammatical function of the theme
2. Shift by adding one or more themes
3. Shift by deleting one or more themes in the translated text.

Theme and rheme are described as a method for structuring information. According to Halliday (1994:37) theme is "the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned. The remainder of the message, the part in which the theme is developed, is called the rheme". Rheme is the most important elements in the structure of the clause as a message because it represents the very information that the speaker wants to convey to the hearer. For examples of this theme + rheme structure:

Table 1: Theme and Rheme.

| Theme | Rheme |
|---|---|
| The duke | has given my aunt that teapot |
| My aunt | has been given that teapot by the duke |
| That teapot | the duke has given to my aunt |

In a declarative clause, the typical pattern is one in which theme is conflated with subject. For example: *The duke has given my aunt that teapot*, where *The duke* is both subject and theme. Halliday (1994:44) states that unmarked theme is "a theme on to subject. The subject is the element that is chosen as theme unless there is good reason for choosing something else. And marked theme is a theme that is something other than the subject. The most usual form of marked theme is an adverbial group, example *today, suddenly, somewhat distracttedly,* or prepositional phrase, example *at night, in the corner, without much hope*, functioning as adjunct in the clause". Example of unmarked theme:

Table 2: Unmarked Theme.

| Unmarked Theme | Marked Theme |
|---|---|
| You can't store protein | Protein you can store |
| Thus you can't store protein | Thus protein you can't store |
| In the same way you can't store protein | In the same way protein you can't store |

According to Halliday (1994:53), the theme can be divided into:

1. Textual theme
2. Interpersonal theme
3. Experiental (topical theme)

## 1.10 Textual Theme

According to Halliday (1994:53) textual theme is "any combination of continuative, structural and conjunctive in that order. A continuative is one of a small set of discourse signallers, *yes, no, well, oh, now,* which signal that a new move is beginning: a response, in dialogue, or a move to the next point if the same speaker is continuing. A structural theme is any of the obligatorily thematic elements. A conjunctive theme is one of the conjunctive adjuncts". Textual theme almost always constitute the first part of the theme, coming before any interpersonal theme. It functions to relate the meaning of the particular clause to other parts of the text. Further, these elements do not express any

interpersonal or experiential meaning, but they are doing important cohesive work in relating the clause to its context.

For example: *On the other hand* maybe on a week-day it would be less crowded.

From the example above, we can see that the textual theme of the sentence is "on the other hand".

## 1.11  Interpersonal Theme

According to Halliday (1994:53) interpersonal theme is "any combination of vocative, modal, and mood-marking. A vocative is any item, typically a personal name, used to address; it may come more or less anywhere in the clause, and is thematic if preceding the topical theme. A modal theme is any of the modal adjuncts, whenever it occurs preceding the topical theme. A mood-marking theme is a finite verbal operator, if preceding the topical theme; or a WH-interrogative when not preceded by another experiental element".

Interpersonal theme includes elements that reflect the kind of interaction taking place among speakers and is often functioning to code the speaker's or writer's personal judgment on meaning. Eggins (1994:278) also states the constituents which can function as interpersonal themes are the unfused finite, in interrogative structure, and all four categories of modal adjuncts: mood, vocative, polarity and comment.

For example:

So *why* worry.

From the example, we can see that the interpersonal theme is "why".

## 1.12  Experiental (Topical Theme)

The experiental (topical theme) is part of the rheme. According to Halliday (1994:52) topical theme is "the role as a representation, the clause sets up a model of human experience, in terms of processes that take place around us and inside us. The processes are construed by the grammar in terms of three components:

1. The process itself
2. The participants in that process, like the Actor and Goal
3. Any circumstantial factors such as time or place.

The theme of a clause ends with the first constituent that is either participant, circumstance, or process".

Participants represent things or people involved in carrying out the process or things or people affected by process. Participants are realized by nominal groups (group of words which serve as subject or complement). Circumstance is any peace of circumstantial information about the process within its own clause. Circumstance is realized by adverbial groups, prepositional phrases and even by nominal group. Circumstance answers such questions as when, where, why, how, how many, and as what.

For example:

Please doctor don't *give* me any more of that nasty medicine.

From the example above, we can see the topical theme of the sentence is the word "give".

## 1.13  Narrative Text

Narrative text is a story with complication or problematic events and it tries to find the resolutions to solve the problems. An important part of narrative text is the narrative mode, the set of methods used to communicate the narrative through a process narration.

## 2  METHODS

The method of this research is qualitative research. Subject of this research are students at translation class at the third semester which consist of 29 students. The researcher chooses Translation Class as the subject of research because the students in class like in learning English but still more students have the low ability in English. Object of this research is the difficulties faced by the students in thematic shift in translating English narrative text into Indonesian. There are 9 different narrative texts which will be translated from English into Indonesian. The texts was taken from English textbook of students. The English textbook namely The World 2 comprises 124 pages which is written by F.A. Soeprapto & Mariana Darwis and published by Yudhistira. These texts generally consist of simple and compound sentences. Each text consists of 3-5 paragraphs.

The techniques of collecting data that the researcher did are:

1. The researcher gives 9 different texts to 29 students.
2. The researcher asks the students to translate the text into Indonesian and find the theme of the text.
3. The researcher collects the data.

## 2.1 Technique of Analyzing Data

1. After the data has been collected, the researcher chooses 13 data randomly.
2. The researcher analyzes the theme of each text in students' translation.

## 3 DATA ANALYSIS

Table 3: Data Analysis.

| Data | Source Language | | Target Language | | Thematic Shift | | Ket |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Theme | Rheme | Theme | Rheme | Marked | Unmarked | |
| 1. A frog that got greedy and consequently | A frog | that got greedy and consequently | *Seekor katak* | *yang serakah dan kena akibatnya* | | ✓ | - |
| 2. A man who not grateful his live, and wanted to live forever | A man | who not grateful his live, and wanted to live forever | *Laki-laki* | *yang tidak mensyukuri hidupnya, dan ingin hidup selamanya* | | ✓ | - |
| 3. The man who feared to dying. | The man | who feared to dying | *Lelaki* | *yang takut pada kematian* | | ✓ | - |
| 4. The farmer failed to pulled the beet. | The farmer | failed to pulled the beet | *Seorang petani* | *yang gagal mencabut buah bit* | | ✓ | - |
| 5. The fox kind. | The fox | Kind | *Si rubah* | *yang baik hati* | | ✓ | - |
| 6. The daughter of the King and queen that spoiled and finally she disappeared into the sea because her arrogance. | The daughter of the King and queen that spoiled | and finally she disappeared into the sea because her arrogance | *Anak dari raja dan ratu yang manja* | *dan akhirnya dia tenggelam ke dalam laut karena keangkuhannya* | | ✓ | - |
| 7. Sarah expelled with her mother andshe hid in a big melon and she met with Prince and they marry and they live happily. | Sarah | expelled with her mother and she hid in a big melon and she met with Prince and they marry and they live happily | *Sarah* | *yang diusir oleh ibu tirinya dan ia bersembunyi di peternakan melon dan ketika itu ia berjumpa dengan pangeran dan mereka menikah dan hidup bahagia* | | ✓ | - |
| 8. The child from the king and the queen that spoiled and finally she disappeared because her arrogance and finally the people know penyusuk beach. | The child from the King and the Queen | that spoiled and finally she disappeared because her arrogance and finally the people know penyusuk beach | *Anak dari seorang ratu dan raja* | *yang manja dan akhirnya ia pun menghilang karena keangkuhannya dan akhirnya orang mengenal pantai penyusuk* | | ✓ | - |

| English | Theme | Rheme | Theme (TL) | Rheme (TL) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9. The kind duck always to give of any kind to someone if she can. | The kind duck | always to give of any kind to someone if she can | *Bebek yang baik* | *yang selalu memberikan apa yang mampu ia beri kepada seseorang* | | | - |
| 10. True love can not be separated. | True love | can not be separated | *Cinta sejati* | *yang tak bisa dipisahkan* | | ✓ | - |
| 11. The little mouse who hold his words. | The little mouse | who hold his words | *Tikus kecil* | *yang memegang perkataannya* | | ✓ | - |
| 12. When the Princess was arrested by a terrible dragon and saved by Thomas just the poorest boy. | When the Princess | was arrested by a terrible dragon and saved by Thomas just the poorest boy | *Putri* | *yang diculik oleh naga yang mengerikan dan diselamatkan oleh Thomas yang hanya seorang anak miskin* | | ✓ | Marked Unmarked |
| 13.Forever love | Forever | Love | *Cinta* | *sampai mati* | | | Marked Unmarked |
| Percentage | | | | | 2 (15,38%) | 11 ( 84,61%) | 2 (15,38%) |

## 3.1 Findings

Having analyzed data of the research, it has yielded findings that thematic shift is found in translation of students' theme. It found two types of thematic shift in students' translation. The thematic shift that is found are unmarked and marked theme.

## 3.2 Unmarked Theme

The first type is unmarked theme which is found in 11 data analyzed with the percentage are 84,61%. Unmarked theme is the most predominant which has been discovered in students' theme. Students success to construct meaning of the sentences when it is translating text from English into Indonesian. The students' success is associated with the true meaning among words in a sentence which construct a true pattern in Indonesian. In 11 data, there is no the changing of the unmarked theme. The unmarked theme in Source Language is also the unmarked theme in Target Language. There are not the changing from unmarked theme to marked theme that found in data analyzed.

## 3.3 Marked Theme

The second type is marked theme which is found in 2 data analyzed with the percentage are 15,38%. Marked theme occur when students render each word in a sentence which in fact the meaning that should be transferred. Translating each word of a sentence consequently makes unnecessary words appear in target language. In the data 12 and 13 for instance have indicated the occurrence of marked theme. In the data 12 and 13 also there are the thematic shift that found. The changing of the theme can be seen in the Source Language : *When the Princess* that changed become *Putri* in Target Language. In data 13 also, the theme in Source Language is *Forever* that changed become cinta in Target Language. The data show that there are the changing of the theme; that are from marked theme to unmarked theme that influences meaning of words and the existence of words. The changing from marked theme to unmarked theme are found in 2 data with the percentage are 15,38%.

## 3.4 Discussion

This research yields that thematic shift is found in translation of students' theme. The findings function to clarify thematic shift which emerge from students when they are translating a text such as narrative. This is all clearly discussed in the analysis of the data in

which exemplifies and explains how thematic shift between source language and target language appear and inevitably change the meaning that ought to be conveyed. Types of thematic shift found in this inquiry advocate people including students who have been very much relying on thematic shift. This is worth to know things have been discovered in this research in order to obtain a better understanding about thematic shift which is expected to elucidate how students' theme makes shift and how students should avoid such shift happens. By looking at the findings, it states that the shift from marked theme to unmarked theme is predominant which comes up in the data. This is able to points out and takes into account that thematic shift tends to have problem from marked theme to unmarked theme which means to require more attention put upon this matter.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

This research will be apt to bring out an obscure idea without a succinct conclusion which is expected to straight state the main point, significance, new insight, and also limitation of this research. Thus, this research can be sum up as following:

1. It is inevitably denied that thematic shift is found when translating narrative text from English into Indonesian. Of the problem discussed in this research, it is expected to proffer breakthrough for the multitude. This research eventually has analyzed and proved that thematic shift significantly distort meaning from Source Language into Target Language.

2. This research is same as other researches which invariably have limitation. This scientific paper has limitation for focusing only diminutive data which diminish other discoveries of types of thematic shift. Besides, this analysis is only conducted to find out and analyze types of thematic shift in students' themes without discovering things which underlie the cause of shift. However, all these deficiencies can be improved by conducting another research which pay attention to these weaknesses.

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