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by Eko Setyo Humanika

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**DEVELOPING A SKOPOS-BASED TRANSLATION ACTIVITY;
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TO A TRANSLATUM**

Eko Setyo Humanika
Universitas Teknologi Yogyakarta (UTY), Indonesia
Jl. Prof. Dr. Soepomo, S.H., No. 21 Yogyakarta
eko_humanika@yahoo.com

Abstract: Activities in many Translation classes are subject to criticism for their monotonous model. Students are involved in a series of similar procedure repeatedly; analysing a source language text, transferring the meaning, and restructuring it in a new text conforming target language norms in terms of its accuracy, readability and acceptability. This paper proposes a translation activity on the basis of Skopos theory principles. Skopos theory highlights the importance of 'purpose' of translating as one of the determining factors in defining the way translating is carried out (*end justifies the means* (Nord, 2001)). The proposed Skopos-based translation activity accommodates the reader-oriented translation model. With this framework, the translation activity is led to a specific focus depending on the specific target language readers. In this sample model, not only do the students translate texts guided by the 'translation brief', but they are also to test the level of their *translatum's* comprehensibility to their target readers.

Keywords: *skopos*, purpose, translation brief, *translatum*, reader-oriented

Translation teaching needs revisiting. The bottom-up procedure practiced in the Translation classes so far does not make translation 'down to earth'. As stated by Haryanto (2013), translation education is not parallel with the great challenges of translation business. The teaching goes in a traditional and monotonous way and, as a result, lessens the students' motivation.

Skopos theory offers a concept that attaches translation teaching to the real challenges in the translation business world. Its orientation to the purpose of the translation and the target readers can be applied in translation teaching to make it more effective and focused.

Skopos Theory as an Approach to Translation

Skopos theory (*Skopostheorie*) is an approach to translation which was developed in Germany in the late 1970s, and which reflects a general shift from predominantly linguistic and rather formal translation theories to a more functionally and socio-culturally oriented concept of translation (Baker and Malmkjær, 2001, p. 235). The word '*skopos*' (means 'purpose'), derived from Greek, is used as the technical term for the purpose of a translation.

In Skopos theory, translation goes through *skopos*, coherence and fidelity rules (Vermeer in Nord, 2001, p. 32). The first rule, as the main principle of Skopos theory, states that translation is always determined by its *skopos*. The *skopos* of a particular translation task may demand a free or a faithful translation, or anything in between, depending on the purpose for which the translation is needed. Chesterman (in Arduini and Hodgson Jr., 2007, p. 69) underlines that the translator's understanding of the *skopos* determines the kind of 'similarity' to be aimed at.

The second rule says that the target language (TL) text should conform to the standard of 'intratextual coherence' meaning that the receiver should be able to understand it. Translated text has no value at all if it cannot be understood by the target reader. A message has been understood, according to Snell-Hornby (2006, p. 54), when the reader (or user) can make sense of it both in itself and in relation to his/her given situation'.

The third rule says that target text (TT) should conform to 'fidelity' rule. Its relationship with the source text (ST) should be maintained. This relationship, Vermeer calls it 'intertextual coherence' or 'fidelity', bears the 'fidelity rule' which says that intertextual coherence should exist between ST and TT, while the form it takes depends both on the translator's interpretation of the ST and on the translation *skopos*. One possible kind of intertextual coherence could be a maximally faithful imitation of the ST.

In Skopos theory, intertextual coherence has lower status than intratextual coherence and both are subordinate to the *skopos* rule. If the *skopos* demands a change of function, the standard is not intertextual coherence with the ST but the adequacy or appropriateness with the *skopos* and if the *skopos* demands intratextual incoherence, the standard of intratextual coherence is not valid anymore.

Skopos theory views translation as an 'offer of information' (*Informationsangebot*) in TL and target culture (TC) based on offer of information in the ST and SC (Vermeer in Nord, 2001, p. 12). The writer of the

ST is, therefore, only considered as indirect participant. In the framework of this theory, one of the most important factors determining the purpose of a translation is the addressee, who is the intended receiver or audience of the TT with their culture-specific world knowledge, their expectation and their communication needs (Nord, 2001, p. 12).

In producing a *translatum*, the translator is guided by a 'translation brief' (*Übersetzungsauftrag*), an instruction prepared by the commissioner or initiator (*Bedarfsträger*) of the translation activity. This brief is so important that Nord says translating without clear instruction is like swimming without water (2001, p. 78). Translation brief includes details concerning the purpose of the translation, information about TT addressee (socio-cultural background, expectations, sensitivity or world knowledge), time, place, occasion and medium on the intended communication and the function the text is intended to have.

Looping Model, Text Analysis in Translation

Translation activity in Skopos theory goes in a 'top down model'. Instead of starting it by analysing a translation unit, such as sentence, phrase, or word, the activity starts with a macrostrategy. With this strategy, Nord (2005) calls it *looping model*, the translator analyzes extra and intratextual factors. Extratextual factor includes sender (who send the text?), intention (what for?), recipient (to whom?), medium (by which medium?), place (where?), time (when?), motive (why?), and text function (with what function?). The result of the analysis on these factors is then compared with the corresponding factors in the prospective TT situation to give the translator insight of how s/he goes with the translation method and strategy.

Intratextual factors covers subject matter, content, presupposition, non verbal elements, lexis, sentence structure, and suprasegmental features. In intratextual analysis, Skopos theory underlines the importance of text analysis. Chatarina Reiss, one of Skopos theory key figures, mentions three types of text; informative (such as news texts, business correspondence, official documents, technical texts, scholarly articles), expressive (literary genres such as novels, short stories and poetry) and operative (advertisements, political propaganda, satirical prose). Categorizing text into typology, however, is not easy. Nord (2005) and Haryanto (2013) say that a text is possibly intended for more than one function. There may be text segments or even utterances aiming at different functions.

In general, establishing equivalence between ST and TT becomes the purpose of translating activity. However, Reiss (in Nord, 2001, p. 38) explains that there are two exceptions from the general purpose of achieving equivalence between ST and TT; (1) when the TT is intended to achieve a different purpose or function from that of the original and (2) when the TT is addressed to readers which are different from the readers of the original text. In this case, Reiss and Vermeer (in Baker and Malmkjær, 2001, p. 236) address 'change of function' (*Funktionsänderung*). When the function changes, the standard for the translation is not the target text's equivalence to the source one, but the adequacy or appropriateness to the *skopos* of the TT, which also determines the selection and arrangement of the content.

Skopos-Based Translation Teaching, a Sample Model

As an application of Skopos theory in translation teaching, a sample model is proposed. This model is developed in a six step teaching procedure (see also Haryanto, 2013), with a preliminary note, concerning text to translate and a translation brief prior to it.

a. Text to translate

Referring to Nord (in Goussard-Kunz, 2009, p. 26), it is suggested that the text to be translated is 'a text situation'; authentic text from recent publication and on topical issue. As an example, this model uses a text on Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus (MERS CoV). This is a guidance released by John Hopkins University (JHU) through its office for Critical Event Preparedness and Response (CEPAR) in May 2014 and can be found in Hopkin's website. The release is meant to protect the health and safety of the entire Johns Hopkins medical and academic community, as well as its overseas employees. This text has more than one function; some parts are informative and some others aim at operative function. In term of its level of difficulty, the selected text is easy to translate. The purpose this sample model is more pedagogical, i.e. to develop students' 'skopos attitude'; to be consistent with the brief instructed by the commissioner.

b. Translation brief

As the commissioner of the project, the lecturer prepares a written translation brief for the students. In the brief, the following guidance are explicitly stated. (1) The intended text function: in this sample model, the target text type is more operative than informative, for it contains information of what MERS is and, more than that, how to prevent its infection. The text is reader-oriented. (2) The purpose of the target text: to give explanation and warning on the danger of MERS CoV and how to prevent it. (3) The target readers: the readers of the target texts are lay people not having access to the source text. They are pilgrims who plan to go to Saudi Arabia for Hajj and Umrah. They do not have sufficient knowledge on medical science, nor are they familiar with medical terms. (4) The medium: the target text is delivered in a written form, given to the pilgrims as a

brochure, containing the warning of the danger of MERS CoV. As a pedagogical model, this brief states explicitly that the translators (i.e. the students) are assigned to translate ONLY parts which are relevant for the target readers interest; what MERS CoV is and how to prevent the infection.

This function-based six step translation teaching procedure then goes in the following step.

1. Students analyze extra and intratextual factor of the SL text

The students analyze extra and intratextual factor of source language to 16 With this analysis, the students will note the sender, intention, recipient, medium, place, time motive, and function of the SL text and the characteristic of the text.

2. The students analyze the translation brief

In this step, they can confirm and negotiate the brief with the commissioner (in this case the lecturer). They have to note what function the intended text has, who the target readers are, what medium the text is going to be delivered in, and what the *skopos* of the translation activity is.

The example of analysis result of the source text (relevant factors noted only) and its comparison to the prospective TT is the following.

Table 1: Comparison of ST and Its Prospective TT

No	Factor	ST	Prospective TT
1	Sender	Critical Event Preparedness and Response (CEPAR) office of John Hopkins Univerity (JHU)	Public Relations Office, the Department of Religious Affairs, Republic of Indonesia
2	Recipient	John Hopkin faculty staff and students	Pilgrims planning to go to Saudi Arabia for Hajj and Umrah
3	Time	2014	2014
4	Place	United States	Indonesia
5	Text type	Informative – Operative	Operative - Informative
6	Medium	Written form, in a website	Written form in a brochure
7	Motive	To protect the health and safety of the entire J H, academic community, and overseas employees.	To inform and to warn the pilgrims the danger of MERS and the way to protect them from infection.

3. The students read the text

In this steps, the students read the text intensively and place emphasis on items where translation problemes may appear. By this 'reading with translation intention', as Gasdar (2000) calls it, the students underline the specific features as the focus of the translation. In the MERS text as the sample in this model, for instance, the students read the text and analyse the style of the information presentation on the text (question and answer model). They also decide the focus of the translation based on the translation *skopos*. As the translators, they judge which parts are important for the pilgrims to note (MERS, its danger and the way to protect pilgrims from infection).

4. The students translate the text

With the *skopos* in mind, students translate the SL text. Referring to Reiss (in Nord, 2001, p. 38) in operative text translation, the students are guided by the overall aim of provoking the same reaction in the audience. In this case, the students may even change the content and stylistic features of the original if they do not serve the intended purpose. Some exmples of the changes may be as follows:

SL Text	TL Text
Stylistic: Question and answer model	Descriptive and imperative
Irrelevant information: guidance for clinical staffs and some other information.	Omitted; not needed by pilgrims
Too specific information (italic): Middle East respiratory syndrome is a viral syndrome caused by a coronavirus, <i>named for the crown-like spikes on its surface.</i>	Omitted; too specific (italic)
Uncommon unit of measurement: Fahrenheit	Use the Celcius one.
Medical terms: pneumonia, gastrointestinal	Paraphrase or explain the terms.

In term of its level of difficulty, the MERS text is relatively low. However, as mentioned in the previous part of this paper, the focus of this teaching model is to introduce the students to a *skopos*-based translating activity.

5. The students check their *translatum*'s level of comprehensibility

The students conduct a 'small research' to check their *translatum*'s level of comprehensibility. This activity is quite challenging. By doing this to the real target of their *translatum*, the students involve themselves in 'a process'. They can learn many things from the process where they involve in. The comprehension checking can be done in some ways, such as giving the target readers comprehension test, interviewing them, asking them to rewrite and so on.

6. The student discuss the final *translatum* and evaluate the process

As the last step, the students discuss with the lecturer the final *translatum* they produce after they go through all processes of this function-based translation procedure. In this step, they can also check if their *translatum* have conform with the *skopos* of the translation. As the initiator or commissioner, the lecturer have authority to judge the level of conformity of their *translatum* with the *skopos* of the translation.

Conclusion

Skopos theory promotes a more functional and sociocultural view. Instead of orienting translation to linguistic and formal level as equivalence-based translation theory does, this theory puts purpose of translating and orientation to target reader on priority. The proposed model on the basis of Skopos theory in this paper has shown the treatment to an offer of information in ST by using translation brief prepared by a commissioner or initiator to produce a reader-oriented *translatum*.

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