Teaching Communicative Translation
Through Skopos Theory

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Abstract. Communication is considered successful when the people involved understand each others. Since there are many languages around their world, languages can also be a barrier in communicating. People with a particular language cannot interact with other who has different language than his to link this shortage, it requires the role of a translator. Nowadays many people are just taking the opportunity to be translators just because they are bilingual without any awareness of what it is called as successful in translation People with a particular language cannot interact with other who has different language than his. In this regard, this paper will discuss what aspect are necessary to be a professional translator. This understanding will lead us to know how to teach translation to students in order to achieve a communicative translation.

Key words: communicative translation, Semantic translation, Skopos theory

Introduction

Languages help people to interact with each other. It bridges the people to communicate their feeling, their thought, their idea, etc. It is a means of communication (Kenworthy, 1991: v). Communication is considered successful when the people involved understand each other's. Since there are many languages around their world, languages can also be a barrier in communicating. People with a particular language cannot interact with other who has different language than his. To link this shortage, it requires the role of a translator. He / she will reproduce the language to another language. He / she should be bilingual. However, as Kaya (2007) mentions that bilingualism is not enough to be a professional translator. In this regard, we will discuss what others aspect that are necessary to be a professional translator. This understanding will lead us to know how to teach translation to students in order to achieve a communicative translation.

Semantic vs Communicative Translation

Before going further, it is better to look for the method used in translating. Actually, there are several methods used. However, Newmark (1981: 22) only proposes two methods of translation which he considered to be appropriate in translating any text. They are semantic and communicative translation. Both of them are claimed to be able to fulfill the aims of translation i.e accuracy and economy (Newmark 1998: 47). However, as those are explained further, there lies a great difference.

According to Newmark (1981: 39), Semantic translation attempts to create the syntactic and semantic structure of the Target text as close ad the original. It tries to maintain the original contextual meaning and culture. In dealing with specific / cultural term, it helps the reader with providing the connotation only. Therefore, the target text will sound to be over translated because of the awkwardly and complexity of the language in target text. Therefore, Newmark concludes that this method gives emphasize on the source text. It tries to be as specific as the source text.

Communicative translation is stand in the other hand (Newmark, 1981: 43). It emphasizes more on the target text. Therefore, it attempts to bring the same effect of the source text readers to the target text readers. In this respect, the translator should be able to make the language of the target text can be perceived smoothly and acceptable to the target readers. Certainly the content should also be comprehensible for them. It is because it normalizes the original language (Newmark, 1998: 243) and the translator in this method should write naturally to his own language of target text. Then, as the Skopos theory give emphasize on the target text purpose, it can be concluded that the Skopos theory is following the communicative translation.

The Application of Skopos Theory in Teaching Translation

Nowadays many people are just taking the opportunity to be translators just because they are bilingual without any awareness of what it is called as successful in translation in Skopos theory (when the target readers can interpret successfully the intended message in the translation). Being bilingual, they are just transferring the language to other language without considering whether the translation is communicative / understandable to the readers. To create a communicative translation task, it basically requires communicative competence (Colina, 2003: 42). As she explained further, the students, who have acquired this competency will feel much easier to do the task. Unfortunately many students do not have this competency when entering the translation classroom. Such condition certainly gives obstacle to achieve a successful translation. Therefore, they do need guidance from the teachers of translation and exercises to make them much better. The Skopos theory is proposed in the translation teaching as it is stated as a good model in teaching translation (Colina, 2003: 11). It will guide the students to understand and acquire the components that are necessary in achieving communicative translation.

In Skopos theory, the translator is required to make the translation version (target text / TT) as communicative as the original version (source text / ST) for the target readers. It means that the translation / TT should be able to be accessed by the target readers though they do not share the same culture and language that shape the ST (Colina, 2003: 25). Unfortunately, many of the translators do not aware of and even neglect

this importance. As an example, the following prescription is quoted below:

ST :   Adults use 4 pills each time, children (below 15 years of age to 8 years of age) use 2 pills each time, and take three times a day. Use with warm water after meal.

TT :   Untuk orang dewasa sehari 4 butir. Anak - Anak (Dibawah umur 4 sampai dengan 15 tahun) Sehari 2 butir. Makan 3 x sehari. Di minum dengan air hangat sesudah makan.

The ST and TT above are far different especially about the children age instruction and the language is difficult to comprehend for the readers. The TT's readers probably need at least three times reading in order to understand the instruction but still with different message with the ST. Therefore, it can be judged that the translation is very poor. It creates misinterpretation to the original message.

The ST above is probably not good enough (have slight error); however, it is the role of the translators to find the intended meaning and then translate it as per the required purpose in translating. Understanding to the ST is essential for translator. It is not merely understanding on the basis of the linguistic features but also the situational features of the ST (Colina, 2003: 17). When the translator is already aware and internalizes the situational features of the ST, Colina affirms that this will help the translator during the translation process. They will be able to decide the units of a ST that are relevant to the TT, what are needed to be changed, what strategies should be used, etc (Colina, 2003: 16-18). Therefore, eventough the ST is far from good, or even ambiguous, if the translators have internalized the ST, they will be able to find strategies in the translation process.

In the translation process reading comprehension toward the ST is very essential. The students should thoroughly understand the message of the text. Probably it sound easier said than done. Therefore the teacher should cautiously select the text that will be translated. It should not be too long (especially for beginning students), but quite challenging. If the students get the wrong message (though a slight one), later it will cause difficulty to get them back in the right track and might result in error translation. As a consequence, the teacher should stand as a guidance to help the students in comprehending the text, including its situational features.

Besides understanding the ST, the teacher should also create awareness to the students that the situational features of the TT should also seriously be taken into consideration. Understand the TT reader will help the translator to construct the TT in term of deciding what language structure should be used, language style should be performed, language expression will be suitable, and etc. Since this TT will reveal the professionalism of the translator, in the translation teaching the teacher

should be a facilitator when the students unable to cope with the required situational features of the TT. The TT here is considered communicatively when the target readers can interpret the translation successfully with the intended / expected message (Hatim, 2001: 75).

The intended / expected message above means the purpose / the function. Skopos, as it was named, means purpose / aim (Hatim 2001: 74). This theory, according to Vermeer (as quoted in Venuti 2000: 221), is claimed that there should always be a purpose in every activity including translation. Therefore, in constructing the TT, there should be a purpose. This is the core of translation activity. In order to achieve a communicative translation, the purpose of doing the translation should always keep in mind in order to construct the TT. The purpose here comes within the Translation Brief that will perform as guidance on what the translation should be. Since students of translation do not possess (enough) experience in producing communicative translation, it is suggested that the translation brief is always provided for the students of translation in the beginning level (Colina, 2003: 21). In translation process, translation brief will be the bridge between the ST and TT. It provides information / instruction that are needed to create the target text. With this information / translation brief, the translator can compare the situational features of the ST and TT and then decide which features of ST should be retained, adapted, or changed (Colina, 2003: 19 – 21). As it is explained further, Colina emphasizes the necessity of this information provided in the translation brief to the translators to help them taking the appropriate strategies in order to make an adequate translation decision. The strategies here include all features of the TT i.e linguistic features, textual features, pragmatic features, and cultural features.

However, in the process of producing an adequate communicative translation is not an easy task. They should have what it is called by Cao (as quoted in Colina 2003: 27) as Communicative Translational Competence that can be obtained through a great number of practices. According to Cao (1996), this communicative translational competence consists of three sub competence i.e translational language competence, translational knowledge structure, and translational strategic competence. Translational language competence is necessary in order for the translators to organize the language so that the result will be structurally and contextually appropriate to the target readers. Translational knowledge structure helps the translators to understand about the world and specify the necessary knowledge which should be performed in the translation task. As for the translational strategic competence, this competency will decide the language and the knowledge that should be perform in the translation. Those three competencies work simultaneously in translating as to cope with the communication barriers that occur, especially in cross-cultural understanding between the languages.

An Example of the Skopos Theory Application in Translation Teaching

As it is said, exercise to expertise; to be able to create communicative translation requires many exercises. In the teaching context in Skopos theory (Colina, 2003: 53), teachers only stand as guidance / facilitator / expert that offer information and resources which are needed by the students. Meanwhile, the students do not act as passive receptors, who observe teachers' performance and explanation but much on using the teachers' guidance, feedback and input from classroom discussion to improve their competency in communicative translation. Therefore restating again that it is a good model in teaching communicative translation, an adapted example from Colina (2003) is given here to give an obvious outlook on the procedure to teach translation using Skopos theory.

The example provided is only one text type i.e brochure. This text type is universal but packed in particular language and culture which sometimes requires to be adapted into another language and culture that follows (Colina, 2003: 15). Starting the lesson by introducing several text types of brochure in both languages would be useful as this will enhance their view about the vacancy's language. This understanding is hoped to help them in comprehending the situational factors of both languages. When comprehension exist, the students will feel much easier to apply them with the guidance from the provided translation brief to create a communicative translation. Since a good translation does not come from one single work / translating, making draft, revising and re-revising would be allowed in the classroom. This kind of practices, where the students are exercising in translating and the teacher is being an expert guidance will gradually improve the students' competency in producing communicative translation.

Example of Translation Classroom activities

Text to read

Lourdes Guided Tour

Group Size: 2 - 7 people

Destination: Toulouse
Season: January - December
Languages: English, French, German
Minimum Cost: 125 Euro (EUR) Per group
**Maximum Cost: 350 Euro (EUR) Per group**

Lourdes is one of those incomparable cities of the world where one can experience a special sensation. From a tiny village, the city has become one of the most visited of France ever since the virgin Mary appeared to young Bernadette Soubirou in 1858. As you follow the footsteps of Bernadette you will learn about the life of the young girl and the symbols attached to this uncommon site that attracts more than 6 million visitors each year whether they be pilgrims or not.

Discover the sanctuary of Lourdes with your own fully bilingual guide. Visit of the first chapel and of the two church's built afterwards. Visit of the grotto, possibility of buying and lighting candles. Possibility of bathing in the holy water of Lourdes (reservations in advance only). After a guided tour of the sanctuary you will follow the footsteps of Bernadette Soubirou and her family as you visit the boly mill, the 'cell' and the church where Bernadette was baptized.

> **You will enjoy:**
> - **An itinerary that follows the footsteps of Bernadette**
> - **The discovery of the sanctuary and the grotto**
> - **The possibility of attending mass in English (reservation required)**

- ✓ Trigger the students' background knowledge about advertisement for example the language style, the language structure, the form, the content, etc.[brainstorming]
- ✓ Introduce the language of 'advertisement' by giving some samples of brochures to the students.
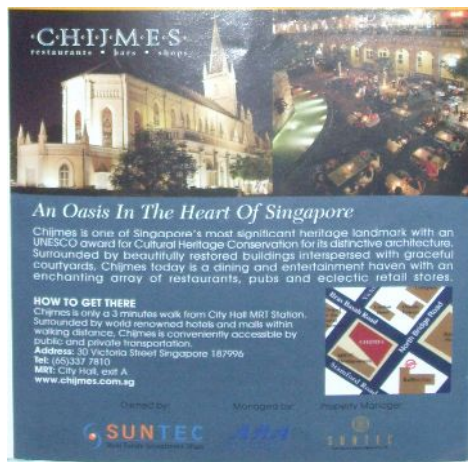
- ✓ Find what kind of information / features that the students get from the above advertisement, what they feel toward the advertisement (interested, bored, etc).
- ✓ Let the students exercising to translate the above advertisement in small group discussion as to let them familiar with the text genre.
- ✓ Discuss the groups' work for the whole class so the others groups can evaluate and give comment.
- ✓ Make a list of the good points from the students' comments as a reference in translating brochure.

Pre-Translation Activities

Read the text entitled 'Lourdes Guided Tour'

[The text appears to be simple and comprehensible. However, it could also lead to misleading perception to second language readers due to different beliefs. Some terms might lead to different perspectives / idea to the source text. In this regard, it is better to build the students background knowledge about the text genre]

Step1. Source Text Analysis

A class discussion will be necessary as to build the same concept among the students about the test genre. This is a mixed text, both informative and persuasive. The informational section intended to give information to the readers about the visiting area. The other section tries to persuade the reader to join in the tour. The purpose of this discussion is to remind the students that the most advertising text also perform an informative function in order to convince the readers.

Step2. Translation Brief

The text is to be translated to Indonesian so that the readers, who are domiciled in Indonesia, might know about Lourdes and visiting it through the tour agency.

Translation Brief	Source Text	Target Text
Function	To inform and persuade	To inform and persuade
Addressees	Internet browser	Christians people
Time of Reception	2007	2007 and later
Place of Reception	English speaking country	Indonesia
Medium of Transmission	Written	Written
Motive for Production	To advertise via website	To advertise via brochure

Step 3. Target Text Analysis

[Please note that the language of advertisement is quite different with everyday language use. It should be short but able to attract the readers' attention]

Assignment
➢ Based on the Translation Brief above, translate the ST to TT (for first draft). The result should be sent through mailing list so that the others students can evaluate and give comments.

Pragmatic Factors & Translation Decision

Step 1.

Compare the situational factors in ST & TT. Notice the differences in the pragmatic factors of the TT imposed by the translation brief. Think about how these changes will affect translation strategy. The text function and the medium for transmission remain the same. The remaining briefs are different, and then under the brief guideline, there are some considerations in the pragmatic factors such as the following:

Pragmatic Factors	Source Text	Target Text
Currency	Europe currency (EURO)	Indonesian currency (Rp)
terminology	English	Indonesian
structure	Tenses	No tenses
Words dictions	Attractive & persuasive	Attractive & persuasive

Step 2.

Text Types and Genres: Structural, organizational, and syntactic features
[Provide a brief introduction to the topic – overview the relevant aspects]. Examine the structure of the ST in terms of micro text types. For example at the first paragraph, is it informative, operative, narration, or persuasion? Are there any language markers for this? [after the students have had time to think, ask their idea and create a summary on the board].

Step 3.

As a reader and native speaker of Indonesian, you must have some in contact with various instances of this text type and genre (advertisement – brochure). Find out some features that can help the reader identify it as such in Indonesia (to make it communicative to the readers) – allow the students to brainstorm.

Step 4.

Parallel Text Analysis. In small group discussion, analyze the examples of vacancy in Indonesian and the English vacancy. Explain how those are related, and the patterns. Find also the terminology used. Write the summary [as per in step 2] and continue with step 3.

Step 5.

Through the study of pragmatic factors in the ST and TT, the function of the source needs to be maintained. In other word, the TT should be an advertisement (to attract readers to join in the Lourdes tour).

Focus on Language

I. Terminology

Step 1. Help the students to find out the best equivalents for difficult term such as, footsteps, pilgrim, sanctuary, grotto, holy mill, etc
Step 2. Analyze how the pragmatic factors above affect the terminological decision.

II. Structure

[Focusing the pragmatic factors of the target text (i.o the structure of the source text) in producing the target text].

Assignment

➢ Revising the draft (translate the ST to TT) based on the information given in the discussion above. As usual the result should be sent through mailing list so that the others students can evaluate and give comments.

Post Translation Activities

On the basis of your translation of this vacancy, discuss how the culture of the source text affects the target text.

Conclusions

Skopos theory gives a way out to create a communicative translation as this theory focuses on the target readers' needs. Therefore the translation will be a result of an adaptation of ST of any features that need to be retained / changed from a long observing, researching and trial & errors as to make it communicative to the TT readers (Colina, 2003: 16). It is not a result of one / two single process only. As Kaya (2007) concludes, "bilingualism is a necessary condition for translation activity but it is not enough to be a professional translator". It requires training, and practices. When the translator students have been familiar and competent with the translation strategies, they can be independent and refine their work by themselves.

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