

**THE TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH PERSONAL PRONOUNS INTO INDONESIAN:
A CASE STUDY IN THE ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT**

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Abstract

This article deals with the translation of English personal pronouns into Indonesian. The objective of this research is to find out how the English personal pronouns are translated into Indonesian in the English New Testament. The research used the qualitative research to carry out the study. In discussing about the translation of pronouns, the theory of Mildred Larson (1984) was used to analyze the data. The result shows that in translating those 518 data, the English pronouns, the situational context of the verses, forms of the pronouns and the structure of the sentences in source language and target language must be taken into consideration. Situational context describes the reason why something is occurring and the appropriate behavior and actions are associated with the situations. So, in translating pronouns the situational context, who speaks to whom, where, when the conversation happen and what positions, functions and forms the pronouns are all taken into consideration. It is in this way that the translation of source language into target language sounds natural.

Keywords: Translation, Personal pronouns, Situational context

INTRODUCTION

This article is based on the translation of English personal pronouns into Indonesian. Translation consist of studying the lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context of the source language text, analyzing it in order to determine its meaning, and then reconstructing this same meaning using the lexicon and grammatical structure which are appropriate in the receptor language and its cultural context (Larson, 1984). In other words, he says that translation consists of transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language.

Parts of speech consist of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and determiner that are used in sentences.

Pronouns are words that take place of nouns in sentences.

(1) John said to Anna that he is going to sell his car to her next month.

In the example above, the word “he” is a personal pronoun that refers to “John”, the word “his” is a possessive pronoun showing the ownership of the car (belong to John), and “her” is a personal pronoun that refers to Anna.

Pronominal systems as well their usages, to some extent, are different from language to language. Therefore any translator is obliged to understand the two pronominal systems of the source language and receptor language before he or she starts translating. For example, in translating the pronoun we into Indonesian, one must consider the situational context. The pronoun we can

be translated into *kami* or *kita*. Observe the following sentence.

(2) We had dinner together last night.

This sentence can be translated into *Kami makan malam bersama tadi malam* or *Kita makan malam bersama tadimalam* in Indonesian. *We* is translated into *kami* if the pronoun *we* refers to the speaker or writer and others on his part but does not include other people on the listener or reader side. On the contrary *we* is translated into *kita*, which is inclusive, when the pronoun “we” includes the speaker or writer and the listener or reader and possibly other parties.

In English, the first person plural pronoun *we* is often used when the real meaning is second person *you*. The reason for the use of *we* is to show empathy and understanding. For instance a nurse says to the sick child, “It’s time for *us* to take *our* medicine now.” Clearly, the pronoun *we* in this sentence does not refer to the nurse but to the child whom she is addressing, *you*.

To translate the pronouns, the translator would need to look for the natural way to communicate second person, and the feeling of empathy carried by the source language sentences. In another word, the translator’s goal should be to reproduce in the receptor language a text which communicates the same message as the source language but using the natural grammatical and the lexical choices of the receptor language (Larson (1984:17).

Catford (1965: 20) states that translation may be defined as the replacement of textual material in one

language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL). Model of translation process includes activities examining the lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation and cultural context, subtitles source, analyzes it to determine its meaning and reconstruct the same meaning by using the lexicon and grammatical structure which are appropriate in the receptor language and its cultural context (Larson, 1984:4).

The use of pronoun is to prevent the repetition of nouns, and to make speaking and writing more rapid and less encumbered with words (Gower, 1986:111). The central pronouns, as one of the subclasses of pronouns, have in common the distinctions of *person* (1st, 2nd, 3rd), *gender* (masculine, and feminine,), and *number* (singular and plural). In addition, most personal have distinction of case.

In English, it distinguishes between first, second, and third person. First person refers to the speaker, second person to the one being talked to, and third person to someone other than the speaker and hearer. In English third person singular, there is a further division based on gender (masculine, feminine, and neuter) (Larson 1984:120). There are no components of meaning in English pronouns which distinguish *familiar* and *formal*.

In Indonesian language, there are some forms of pronouns (Soetarno and Harmasto, 1988): those forms which refer to one (singular) and some which refer to more than one (plural). There are forms that show exclusiveness and inclusive. There are some which indicate naturalness. In Indonesian, the forms of pronouns differ concerning first, second, and third person, number

(singular, plural), and but not concerning gender (masculine, feminine, neuter). There is no difference between masculine and feminine. In other words, the pronoun is the same. The form for subject and object in Indonesian pronouns are the same.

METHODS

The method of study which was used was qualitative research.. The data were collected from the *New English Testament* (1979) and the *Kitab Suci* Indonesian version, Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia (1979). To collect the data, firstly I read the bilingual bible, searched for the verses which contain pronouns, and then noted them.

The number of the data that were analyzed was 517 data consisting of (1) first person pronouns (175) that are divided into two, they are singular pronouns 111 data consisting of subject 47 data, object 20 data, and possessive 44 data and plural pronouns 64 data consisting of subject 27 data, object 20 data and possessive 17 data, (2) second person pronouns 114 data that are divided into two, they are singular pronouns 39 data consisting of subject 11 data, object 10 data, and possessive 18 data and plural pronouns 75 data consisting of subject 22 data, object 11 data, and possessive 42 data, and third person pronouns 290 data that are divided into two, they are singular pronouns 191 data consisting of subject 107 data, object 43 data, and possessive 40 data and plural pronouns 99 data consisting of subject 36 data, object 24 data, and possessive 39 data.

To analyze the data, the following procedures were done. Firstly, reading some theories concerning translation and pronouns both in English and

Indonesian and picked out the theories that can be used to analyze the data. Before analyzing the data, sentences that contain pronouns in the gospel Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were noted and then all the pronouns were underlined and classified according to their types. In discussing about the translation of pronouns, the theory of Mildred Larson (1984) was to analyze the data. The personal pronouns that were analyzed are those pronouns which function as subjects (I, we, you, he, she, they), objects (me, us, you, his, her, them) and possessive pronouns (my, our, your, his, her, their) to discuss and answer the problem of the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this article, the researcher discussed the data and analyzed them according to some theories of pronouns both in English and Indonesian language. Concerning the translation the theory proposed by Larson is used.

The personal pronoun is a pronoun that refers to a person and is divided into three forms, they are first person pronouns, second person pronouns, and third person pronouns. The first person singular of English personal pronoun is *I* as a subject. While in Indonesian there are some forms: *saya*, *aku*, *-ku* and *daku*. Nevertheless, the forms of *saya* and *daku* are not found in the translation of first person pronouns in this *New Testament*. *Saya* is used in the formal form and generally used in written or official utterances such as speeches and lectures. *Aku* is used in informal situations and it is used to show more intimacy between the speaker or writer and listener or reader. An informal situation is one which is relaxed and friendly and not very serious or official. And the first personal

pronoun *Daku* is generally used in literally works.

The object form of English first person singular is *me* and *aku*, *-ku* in Indonesian. The possessive form of English first person singular is *my*. While in Indonesian there are *saya* and *-ku*. Nevertheless, the form of *saya* is not found in the translation of first person pronouns as possessive in the *New Testament*. *Saya* is used when the situation of conversation is in formal. *Ku* is a short form of *aku* and is used when the conversation is in the informal situations.

Being different from the English first plural pronoun *we*, Indonesian pronoun has two forms, they are an inclusive form (*kita*) and exclusive form (*kami*). The pronouns *we* are means *kami* when the pronouns refer to the speakers and exclude the listeners or readers aside. The pronouns *we* means *kita* when the pronouns *we* can cover all of the participants in the conversation. The pronoun *us* as object can mean *kita* or *kami* depending on the context. The pronoun *us* is translated into *kami* when it refers to the speaker and does not include the listener/reader in the conversation. Meanwhile the pronoun *us* is translated into *kita* when it includes the speaker or writer and the listener or reader in the conversation. The possessive form *we* in English is *our*. The pronoun *our* is used to assert ownership and comes before a noun. But in Indonesian one, it comes after a noun and is distinguished into *kita* (inclusive) or *kami* (exclusive).

The second person pronouns have uniqueness compared with other pronouns. The singular form of second person pronoun is *you* in English, but in Indonesian one, there are *kamu*,

engkau, *dikau*, *anda*, *kau-*, and *-mu*. *Kamu* and *-mu* are used when the speaker talks to young people who have been known well and for a long time, and have close relationships regardless of age or social status. *Engkau* is used when the speaker talks to people with higher social status. *Dikau* is used in literally works. *Anda* is meant to neutralize the relationship like the word *you* in English that is used when the speaker does not want to be too formal or too close and not directed at one particular person. *Kau* is informal form and stands for *engkau*.

The plural form of second person is *you*, while in Indonesian one is *kalian*. *Kalian* is used when the persons who we want to speak to are more than one, younger, and have lower social status than the speaker. The singular and plural forms of the possessive form of *you* are similar, i.e *your*. It is used to explain ownership of something. In Indonesian language *-mu* is used when the speaker talks to young people who have been known well and for a long time, and have close relationships regardless of age or social status.

The third person pronouns in English consist of singular and plural, as well as masculine and feminine. Meanwhile in Indonesian, third person pronouns are distinguished between singular and plural and there is no difference between masculine and feminine. The singular forms of the third person pronoun are *he* (masculine) and *she* (feminine). In Indonesian language, the third person singular pronouns are *dia*, *ia*, *-nya* and *beliau* that are used for masculine and feminine. *Dia* can be used as a subject (in front of verb), an object, and can be attached after prepositions. *Ia* can be used as a subject, *-nya* can be used as an object,

and can be attached to prepositions to state ownership of things. *Beliau* can be used to assert respect for someone.

In English, the forms of the third plural person as subject, object, and possessive are different, but in Indonesian, the form of the third plural person is same that is *mereka*. *Mereka* is used to everybody and refers to more than one person and it is generally used for human being.

There are two matters to consider when translating pronouns (Larson 1984:127). First, the source language and receptor language systems to the greatest extent are different. The translator needs to know the meaning components of the two systems in order to be able to translate properly using right receptor language forms. It is important that he/she will not let the source language forms distort his/her use of the correct receptor language form. Second, the translator must remember that there are extended usages (secondary senses) of pronouns as well as of nouns and verbs. Whenever a pronoun in the source language is being used in a secondary sense, there is a potential translation adjustment which will have to be considered by the translator. The FIRST PERSON PLURAL pronoun of English would probably be translated with a SECOND PERSON pronoun. For example, "It's time for *us* to take *our* medicine," would be "It's time for *you* to take *your* medicine.

The result shows that out of 518 data, first person singular as the subjects amounts to 47 data. *I's* which are translated into *aku* consist of 35 data (75%), *ku-* 10 data (21%), *zero* 1 datum (2%), and into other pronoun, i.e *kita* is 1 datum (2%). For the first person singular as the objects there are 21

data, they are: *me* translated into *aku* (16 data or 76%), and *-ku* 5 data (24%). For first person singular as the possessives: 43 data consisting of *my* which is translated into *-ku* (42 data or 98%), and *zero translation*: 1 datum (2%). For the first person plural pronouns as the subjects there 27 data, they are *we* which is translated into *kita* (12 data or 44%), and *kami* (15 data or 56%). For the first person plural pronouns as objects, there are 20 data. They are translated into *kita* (10 data or 50%), and *kami* (10 data or 50%). The first person plural pronouns as possessive pronoun consists of 17 data. They are translated into *kita* (4 data or 24%), and *kami* (13 data or 76%). Second person singular as the subjects consist of 11 data. The pronoun *you* is translated into *engkau* (100%), for second person singular as the objects there 10 data, they are: *you* which are translated into *-mu* (4 data or 40%), *engkau* 5 (data 50%), and *zero* translation (1 data or 10%).

Second person singular as the possessives consist 18 data. The possessive *your* is translated into *-mu* (100%), and for second person plural as the subjects which amount to 22 data, *you's* are translated into *kamu* (18 data or 82%), and *zero* translation (4 data or 18%). For second person plural as the objects there are 11 data. They are: are translated into *kamu* (7 data or 64%), and *-mu* (4 data 36%). Second person plural as the possessives consists of 43 data, they are *your* which are translated into *-mu* (41 data or 95%), *engkau* (1 data 2.5%), and *zero* (1 data or 2.5%).

The third person singular as the subjects consists of 86 data. They are *he's* which are translated into *dia* (1 data or 1%), into *ia* (21 data or 24%), into *noun* (56 data or 65%) and

zerotranslation (8 data or 10%). The third person singular as subjects consist of 21 data. Twelve *she's* are translated into *ia* (57%), seven *she's are translated into nouns* 7 (33%) and 2 data (10%) are not translated. The third person singular as the objects amount to 22 data, they are: *him* which is translated into *dia* (10 data or 45%), *-nya* (5 data or 23%), zero translation (4 data or 18%), and *noun* 3 data (14%). The third person singular as objects consist of 20 data, they are *her's* which are translated into *dia* (4 data or 20%), *-nya* (10 data or 50%), *zero* (3 data or 15%), and *noun* 3 data (15%).

The third person singular masculine as possessives consist of 32 data. They are: *his's* which are translated into *-nya* (20 data or 62.5%) and nouns (12 data or 37.5%). The third person singular feminine as possessive ones consist of 32 data, they are the pronoun *her's* which are translated into *nya* (100%).

The third person plural as subjects consist of 36 data. They are *they's* which are translated into *mereka* (25 data or 69%), into *noun* (4 data or 11%), and into *zero* translation (7 data or 20%). The third person plural as objects consist of 24 data. They are *them* which are translated into *mereka* (13 data or 54%), *noun* (1 datum, or 4%), and *zero* translation (10 data or 42%). The third person plural as the possessives consist of 40 data, they are *their's* which are translated into *mereka* (26 data or 65%), into *nya* (11 data or 27.5%), and into *zero* translation (3 data or 7.5%).

CONCLUSION

Pronouns are words that are used to replace nouns. There are two matters to consider when translating pronouns. First, the source language and receptor language systems will be different. Second, the translator must remember that there are extended usages (secondary senses) of pronouns. In translating English pronouns into Indonesian, there are four possible things that will happen, namely: English pronouns translated into pronouns, nouns, zero, and other personal pronouns.

Based on the data which have been analyzed, it can be concluded that to translate the pronouns one must consider the situational context of the verses, forms of the pronouns and the structure of the sentences in source language and target language. Situational context describes the reason why something is occurring and the appropriate behavior and actions associated with the situation.

The forms of the pronouns, singular and plural forms, have to taken into consideration. Furthermore, the structure of sentences including subjects, predicates and objects of the sentences are of importance to note. Furthermore their usages depend on who uses them. Therefore the translation of pronouns must be depending on their situational context, who speaks to whom, where, when the conversation is happening and what positions, functions and forms the pronouns that are going to be translated. So, the translation of source language into target language will be clear and natural.

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- Nevertheless, the forms of *dikau*, *anda* and *kau* are not found in the translation of second person pronouns in the *New Testament*.