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## THE ACTIONS FOR HEROES: COPING WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THROUGH *MY HERO IS YOU* CHILDREN'S STORYBOOK AND ITS INDONESIAN TRANSLATION

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### ABSTRACT

*The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the lives of people around the world very significantly. As there are changes and problems arise, there must be a way to understand and cope with this pandemic. One way to cope with this condition and better understand this Covid-19 pandemic is children's literature and translation. A children's storybook entitled My Hero is You developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC MHPSS RG) aims to help children understand and come to terms with Covid-19 by illustrating several actions to cope with this pandemic. This storybook has been translated into Indonesian, and as the original and translated version must have the same message in both, the Indonesian version must be equivalent to the original work. Thus, this study aims to observe the terms related to the Covid-19 pandemic in My Hero is You children's storybook and also its Indonesian translation and classify them into several actions. Furthermore, determining the equivalence of the Indonesian translation of the terms and actions related to the Covid-19 pandemic in My Hero is You children's storybook is also conducted to decide whether or not it is easy to be read and understood by the target readers, both children and adults. The qualitative method is applied in this research, i.e., the library method to analyze the equivalence. The result shows that in the Indonesian translation of My Hero is You; the Covid-19 pandemic-related terms are translated by using a dynamic equivalence to achieve good communication between the author and the readers for the message from the author about the actions to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic can be well understood primarily by children as the targeted readers.*

**Keywords:** actions, children's storybook, Covid-19 pandemic, equivalence.

### INTRODUCTION

There have been problems arise because of the Covid-19 pandemic, and there must be a way to understand this condition. Thus, children and parents will not lose their patience and keep their high spirits coping with the Covid-19 pandemic. One way to cope with this condition and better understand this pandemic is children's literature and translation. To make the message understandable is the presence of translation. Translation is one form of business to facilitate communication of various countries. It is also used in the object of analysis used in this research, *My Hero is You* children's storybook that has been translated to Indonesian. *My Hero is You* is a storybook –originated in English– to help children understand and come to terms with Covid-19 and have been issued on 9 April 2020. As every source language and target language must have the same message in both books, the original and the translated ones, the Indonesian version of the book must be equivalent to the original English version.

As *My Hero is You* children's storybook has values of the actions in coping with the Covid-19 pandemic, it is necessary to be analyzed focusing on the actions –they are called as the actions for heroes in the book– and their significance on the broader audience. Moreover, the translated Covid-19 pandemic-related terms must be equivalent to the original and readable to achieve good communication between the author and the readers so that the readers can well understand the message from the author. This concept bases the importance of equivalence analysis of the object. Various equivalence used will affect the result of the translated text. Nida (1964: 159) classifies equivalence into two; formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. Formal equivalence tries to remain as close to the original text as possible without adding the translator's ideas and thoughts into the translation. This is, therefore, much more of a word-for-word view of translation.

Therefore, this study aims to figure out the actions and terms related to the Covid-19 in *My Hero is You* children's storybook and its Indonesian translation. In the storybook, the actions range from the initial understanding of the virus and disease, the prevention of the Covid-19, and how to interact with people infected with the coronavirus. Due to the limitation of the research, this paper focuses on the actions in the initial concept of understanding the coronavirus and Covid-19 and how they are translated to Indonesian. Analyzing the equivalence in the Indonesian translation of the actions related to the Covid-19 in *My Hero is You* children's storybook is the second objective. As the storybook is written to help

children understand and come to terms with Covid-19, the equivalence in the translation becomes essential.

Furthermore, this research is expected to enrich translation studies repertoire, especially in the equivalence in translation, and to better understand the importance of audience design in the translation process. This research can consider the importance of the readers' response in the translation products for translators and publishers. For the readers, it is hoped to give an informative insight into how children's literature can be a way to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Objects

The objects of analysis used in this research are the Covid-19 pandemic-related terms in *My Hero is You* children's storybook, both in English and Indonesian versions. It is a storybook that aims to help children understand and come to terms with Covid-19 and has been issued 9 April 2020. It can be accessed at <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/my-hero-you>.

The storybook is also translated into Indonesian with the title *Kamu Pahlawanku* by the UNICEF Indonesia team, available at <https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/id/coronavirus/buku-cerita-kamu-pahlawanku>. The team is working on translations, involving experts and practitioners working with children (child psychologists, child protection specialists, social workers) who are also parents. Some of them also involve their children when reviewing translations.

The book – aimed primarily at children aged 6-11 years old – is a project of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. It has been produced by collaborating with more than 50 organizations working in the humanitarian sector, including United Nations agencies, national and international nongovernmental organizations, and international agencies, including UNICEF providing mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings.

During the early stages of the project, more than 1700 children, parents, caregivers, and teachers worldwide shared how they were coping with the Covid-19 pandemic. The input was invaluable to scriptwriter and illustrator Helen Patuck and the project team in making sure that the story and its messages resonated with children from different backgrounds and continents.

This book was a project developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC MHPSS RG). The project was supported by global, regional, and country-based experts from Member Agencies of the IASC MHPSS RG, in addition to parents, caregivers, teachers, and children in 104 countries. A global survey was distributed in Arabic, English, Italian, French and Spanish to assess children's mental health and psychosocial needs during the Covid-19 outbreak. A framework of topics to be addressed through the story was developed using the survey results. The book was shared through storytelling to children in several countries affected by the Covid-19.

### Research Approach and Method

The qualitative method is applied in this research. As stated by George (2008: 5), the qualitative method designates any research whose results are captured in words, images, or non-numeric symbols. The qualitative method applied in this research was the library method. According to George, the characteristic of the library method is that “it involves identifying and locating source that provides factual information or personal or expert opinion on a research question”. In the library method, the researcher uses Nida's theory of equivalence and related studies compared to the current research.

Before collecting the data, the researcher read the book *My Hero is You* in English version first and then the Indonesian version. The researcher finds that there are many Covid-19 pandemic-related terms in the story, and they are collected by underlining the phrases and sentences that contain the Covid-19 pandemic-related terms both in ST and TT. During highlighting these terms, the researcher also put the data from the English and Indonesian versions into the column on the data table. These terms are distinguished between the terms in the English in the left column titled “ST” and in the right column, the terms in the Indonesian version of Covid-19 pandemic-related terms titled “TT” are placed.

After reading and collecting the data, not all of the Covid-19 pandemic-related terms were analyzed due to research limitations. The data are selected based on the plot of the storybook, and it focuses on the actions in the initial concept of understanding the coronavirus and Covid-19 and how they are translated to Indonesian.

Moreover, the researcher selects the data by considering how the terms are primarily used in everyday life. Then the researcher compares the Covid-19 pandemic-related terms in the column SL and TL to determine the types of equivalence of those terms.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As *My Hero is You* is a storybook aiming to help children understand and come to terms with Covid-19, the translation analysis of the Indonesian version of this book is essential. The translation method and process to ensure the readers, especially children as the targeted readers, understand the actions that they can do to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic are seen from the equivalence. The Indonesian version of *My Hero is You* storybook, entitled *Kamu Pahlawanku*, employs dynamic equivalence in the translation method, mainly when the story involves the terms and actions related to the Covid-19 pandemic. One example of the dynamic equivalence utilized in translating the Covid-19 pandemic-related terms is found in the following datum.

ST	TT	Equivalence
But even Sara’s mum cannot find a <b>cure for the coronavirus</b> .	Tetapi, bahkan ibunya pun tak bisa menemukan <b>obat untuk penyakit akibat virus corona</b> .	Dynamic

The story in *My Hero is You* starts with Sara and her mother, a scientist, discuss the coronavirus and its danger as there is no cure for the disease yet. Even the scientists, including Sara’s mother, have not found the cure yet. In Table 1, the original phrase **a cure for the coronavirus** is translated as *obat untuk penyakit akibat virus corona* ‘cure for the disease caused by coronavirus’. Interestingly, the Indonesian version added the word *akibat* ‘caused’ that does not originate from the source text while the literal translation is considered acceptable. Therefore, it is concluded that this story emphasizes that the coronavirus causes the dangerous disease, and the cure for the disease has not been found yet. Thus, it will raise the initial awareness of the children to pay attention to the danger of the coronavirus. Furthermore, the understanding of Covid-19 as a dangerous disease is also highlighted in the following datum.

ST	TT	Equivalence
“What does <b>COVID-19</b> look like?” Sara asked her mum.	“Bu, apa sih <b>penyakit COVID-19</b> itu?” tanya Sara kepada ibunya.	Dynamic

COVID-19 is translated as *penyakit COVID-19* in the Indonesian version, which also employs dynamic equivalence from comparing the source and target texts. The phrase *penyakit COVID-19* in the Indonesian version of the children’s storybook means COVID-19 disease. It might be seen to be redundant as COVID-19 already stands for Coronavirus Disease 2019, and there is a double use of the meaning ‘disease’ if the word *penyakit* is used in the Indonesian translation. However, it can be understood that the translators aimed at emphasizing that Covid-19 is a disease, a dangerous disease. Therefore, to make it stand out and impactful, the word *penyakit* is added to catch the readers’ attention and understanding. The effort to make the actions that can be done to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic more impactful yet easy to understand is also seen in the following datum.

ST	TT	Equivalence
“But <b>it spreads in the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick, and when they touch people or things around them.--</b> ”	“Tapi, <b>virusnya bisa menyebar lewat batuk atau bersin dari orang yang sakit atau terinfeksi, dan menjangkau orang lain atau benda disekitarnya.--</b> ”	Dynamic

The dynamic equivalence is again used to make the Indonesian book’s information more impactful and easy to understand. The source text in the previous table is adapted to be more transparent and informative by putting aside the literal translation method, yet the same effect is still achieved. It is seen from the word *it* that is translated to be *virusnya* ‘the virus’, indicating that the virus is the focus of attention. Moreover, the verb phrase **spreads in** is translated to be *bisa menyebar lewat* ‘can be spread

through’ while translating ‘spreads in’ literally as *menyebarkan* is considered acceptable and understandable for Indonesian readers. However, the Indonesian version of this information highlights how the virus can spread, and the use of the word *lewat* ‘through’ is effectively used to carry this emphasis.

Not only the word *lewat*, but *orang yang sakit atau terinfeksi* ‘sick of infected people’ in the target text also offers more information than the original version, the clause people who are sick. This choice is in line with the Covid-19 case; not all infected people appear sick. There are people infected by Covid-19 that have no symptoms at all and look healthy. Thus, it gives understanding to the readers that the virus can spread not only by sick people but also by asymptomatic people that are actually infected but still look fine. This information will make the readers more cautious and careful when they are close to others, not only sick people.

Furthermore, the dynamic equivalence in the previous datum allows the Indonesian translation to be more uncomplicated and easy to understand without redundancy that might happen when the formal one is applied. This flexibility is shown in the clause **when they touch people or things around them** in the source text translated to *menjangkau orang lain atau benda di sekitarnya* ‘reach other people or things around them’. Although the translation is not a literal one and is different, mainly ‘when they touch people’, the information and understanding are still clearly delivered. The message is still understood that the virus can reach other people without physical contact or touch. The droplets sizing of coughs and sneezes that contain the coronavirus can get other people or things around them if the Covid-19 infected people do not wear the proper masks. This translation also prevents the over-fear of children interacting with others and touching them as social life is also essential to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic. Socializing with others is still a vital process in children’s development. Thus, children can still associate with the proper understanding while following the health protocols to prevent the coronavirus and Covid-19 spread.

Understanding the infected people is also a piece of essential information for children as it serves as the base of their actions during the interaction with other people. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze how the translators this detailed information as in the following table.

ST	TT	Equivalence
“People <b>who are sick</b> get a fever and a cough and can have some trouble breathing.”	“Orang yang tertular akan mengalami demam dan batuk. Mereka bisa juga sulit bernapas.”	Dynamic

The agreed concept that not all of the coronavirus-infected people appear to be sick is also seen in the previous datum. The subject **people who are sick** is translated to *orang yang tertular* ‘people who are infected’ to emphasize that being infected must be prevented. The Indonesian translation is also straightforward with the possible symptoms of the Covid-19, i.e. *demam dan batuk* ‘fever and cough’. It also describes the symptoms in two separate sentences instead of a single sentence in the source text. Therefore, the readers’ focus and attention will be drawn to each sign more. Moreover, the noun phrase *trouble breathing* is translated to *sulit bernapas* ‘hard to breath’ to emphasize and impact as it is in the form of verb complement that is the direct attribute of the subject. Thus, the effect of the Indonesian version is also attempted to be more explicit.

The direct action to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic is also shown in the following datum when Sara’s mother asks Sara to be safe.

ST	TT	Equivalence
“That’s <b>why I need</b> you to be safe, Sara.--”	“Itulah alasan Ibu ingin Sara tetap sehat.--”	Dynamic

Meanwhile, in the target text, the phrase *tetap sehat* ‘stay healthy’ is used to translate **to be safe**. In Indonesian, the word safe means *aman*. As this Covid-19 pandemic is closely linked to health, the word *sehat* is considered more impactful and straightforward than the word *aman* as the literal meaning of safe. It is understood that when people are healthy, then they are safe.

Moreover, the dynamic equivalence in *alasan Ibu ingin* ‘the reason Mom wants’ also gives a more direct effect than its original version, ‘why I need’. *Alasan* ‘reason’ is a clear and explicit description of the idea ‘why’, and the word *ingin* ‘want’ is more substantial than ‘need’. Thus, by looking at the dynamic equivalence and the word choices, the translators primarily set the goals for the Indonesian readers

directly and easily understand the concept of the coronavirus and how it can spread, Covid-19 as the dangerous disease and its symptoms, and most importantly the idea to always be safe and healthy during this Covid-19 pandemic.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

To sum up, in the Indonesian translation of *My Hero is You* children's storybook, the translators mostly employ dynamic equivalence. This type of equivalence enables the children as the targeted readers to quickly understand the Covid-19 pandemic-related terms, including how to cope with it: understanding the disease and how it spreads, how to prevent and how to interact with the Covid-19 infected people. These terms are vital in achieving the purpose of the storybook writing, i.e. delivering the message from the book's creators.

As a suitable communication medium, the message delivered in Indonesian must be trusted from the source. The translation must have the closest meaning to the original as possible, even though the message will change in the communication process caused by the difference between English and Indonesian. In *Kamu Pahlawanku*, the translated Covid-19 pandemic-related terms must be equivalent to the original and readable to achieve good communication between the author and the readers to understand the message from the author. Therefore, dynamic equivalence is considered suitable to reach this goal.

It is also suggested that future researcher pay more attention to the translation analysis in literature for children and young adults and also current issues like the Covid-19 pandemic.

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