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Translator: A Cultural Mediator or a Cultural Manipulator?

Harris Hermansyah Setiajid
Universitas Sanata Dharma
Anggota JLTC No. 0039

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Translation has been a vital part of literary systems worldwide, as it allows literary works to cross linguistic and cultural barriers. However, the process of translation is not always straightforward, as it involves not only linguistic but also cultural and social factors that can influence the outcome of the translated work. In this regard, translation has been viewed as a form of rewriting, as translators must not only convey the meaning of the original text but also rewrite it to suit the cultural and linguistic expectations of the target audience.

One of the most significant contributions to the notion of translation as rewriting is that of André Lefevere (1992), who argued that translation is not a neutral activity, but rather an act of rewriting that involves manipulation and intervention in the original text. Lefevere (1992) viewed translation as a process of “cultural poaching,” where translators use the original text as a source of raw material to create a new work that reflects the cultural and linguistic expectations of the target audience. This process involves not only linguistic manipulation but also cultural adaptation, where the translator must take into account the cultural and social context of the target audience.

In the Indonesian literary system, the notion of translation as rewriting is highly relevant, as Indonesia is a country with a rich cultural and linguistic heritage, consisting of hundreds of ethnic groups and languages. Indonesian literature has been shaped by various cultural and linguistic influences, including Javanese, Balinese, and Dutch colonialism. The translation of Indonesian literature has played a crucial role in the dissemination and preservation of its cultural heritage and has allowed Indonesian literature to reach a wider audience.

The translation of Indonesian literature has been influenced by various factors, including the cultural and linguistic expectations of the target audience,

Lefevere (1992) viewed translation as a process of “cultural poaching,” where translators use the original text as a source of raw material to create a new work that reflects the cultural and linguistic expectations of the target audience. This process involves not only linguistic manipulation but also cultural adaptation,

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the availability of translation resources, and the cultural and social context of the original text. The translation of Indonesian literature has also been affected by political and social factors, such as censorship and government policies.

where the translator must take into account the cultural and social context of the target audience.

Translation as rewriting in Pramoedya's works

The relevance of Lefevere's notion of translation as rewriting can be seen in the translation of Indonesian literature, as translators must navigate the cultural and linguistic differences between the original text and the target audience. The translation of Indonesian literature involves not only linguistic manipulation but also cultural adaptation, as translators must take into account the cultural and social context of the target audience. This process of cultural adaptation is particularly important in the translation of works that are deeply rooted in Indonesian culture, such as the works of Pramoedya Ananta Toer, one of Indonesia's most renowned writers.



Pramoedya's works have been translated into various languages, including English, Dutch, and German. The translation of Pramoedya's works involves not only linguistic manipulation but also cultural adaptation, as his works are deeply rooted in Indonesian culture and history. Pramoedya's works deal with themes such as colonialism, nationalism, and social inequality, and translators must take into account the cultural and social context of the target audience to convey the meaning of the original text accurately.

The translation of Pramoedya's works has also been affected by political and social factors, as his works have been subjected to censorship and government policies. Pramoedya's works were banned in Indonesia during the New Order era, and his works were only translated into English after the fall of the Suharto regime. The translation of Pramoedya's works into English and other languages has allowed his works to reach a wider audience and has contributed to the dissemination of Indonesian literature worldwide.

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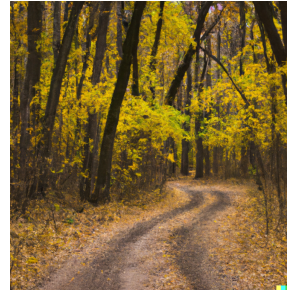
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The notion of translation as rewriting, as put forth by André Lefevere, is highly relevant to the translation of Indonesian literature, as translators must navigate the cultural and linguistic differences between the original text and the target audience. The translation of Indonesian literature involves not only linguistic manipulation but also cultural adaptation, as translators must take into account the cultural and social context of the target audience. The translation of works deeply rooted in Indonesian culture and history, such as the works of Pramoedya Ananta Toer, highlights the remaining question whether translators are cultural mediator or cultural manipulators.



References

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