

THE EQUIVALENCE OF TRANSLATED SONGS LYRICS AND THEIR EFFECTS: THE CASE OF TRANSLATED ECCLESIAL SONGS

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Abstract

This study aimed at describing the equivalence of ecclesial song lyrics, which belong to the content word, the meaning of the sentences and their effect on church songs. The method used in this study is descriptive and qualitative by using music, language, and intercultural approach. The data collection method used questionnaires technique, interview, documents and content analysis. The data used are 5 documents of songs chosen purposively as the primary data. Based on the data being analyzed, the results of this study were: 1) The translated content word located in the same bars and equivalent was around 27.07%, the translated content word located in the same bars, but not equivalent was 18.34%, the translated content word located in the different bars, but equivalent was 11.79%, the translated content word located in the different bars and not equivalent was 2.62%, and the untranslated words were 4.17%. 2) The translation of equivalence beautiful lyrics showed the beauty of the song was equivalent at 17.02%, the beauty of the song was less equivalent at 29.78%, the beauty of the song was not equivalent of 61.70%. 3) The differences of structure caused the incorrect dictions or choice of words and missing words in the translated lyrics.

Keywords: ecclesial songs; equivalence; song effects, song lyrics

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INTRODUCTION

The song lyric is essentially a language in its formulation which is not separated from the rules of music such as the rhythm, melody and harmony of the song. In addition to being beautiful, the lyrics have to adjust the beauty of the music. In lyric adjustment, an English song composer has its own characters to make the kind of lyrics, pattern, theme or rhythm

of the song. He always carries a personal character and cultural background on the song and the lyrics that give distinctiveness of the song. These characteristics can usually be notified if it was observed deeply ranging from the form of songs, melody, harmony and style in a song lyric. A composers and his composition (including music and lyrics) are unity that work together to bring a specific message and meaning. People who can assess this type of music

are usually the art critics or the composers.

Song translation problems rarely discussed by linguists, especially in the field of translation. Though there are so many translated songs already, i.e. songs that have changed the lyrics from one language into the other languages. This has been going on as if there is no problem at all with the song translation. This ends up with the situation that a song is considered to be a language too, so it does not matter if the song is translated into another language, without seeing the difference in the character of the two languages involved, structural adjustment, and the background of the creation of the song until the effects when the song is sung.

Equivalence in the translation process as stated by Nida (as cited by Mc Guire, 1980, p. 160) is on the stage of the transfer. At this stage, the translator must be able to transfer the message to the target language. Therefore, the equivalence is the issue that will be faced by translators. Catford (1975, p. 21) states.

“the central problem of translation practice is that finding the target language translation equivalences. A central task of translation theory is that of defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence.”

Equivalence between the source and translated text is the main thing that is sought after in the translation process. As the realization of the translation process, in practice, translation always involves equivalence.

Suharto's research (2004) associated with the song accent in lyrics proves that the majority (97.31%) stress of words in the English song lyrics created by native speakers in accordance with the song accent. This proves the song writer of native speakers always pay attention to these things. The match rate of songs created in English native speakers is very high, both between song accent and word stress. Meanwhile, the English songs that made by authors of Indonesia in general still feel awkward in accentuation.

Research results in the field of phonetics have led some authors to propose that, in French, words are marked by an initial stress (melodic stress) and a final stress or final lengthening (Di Cristo, 1999; Astesano, 2001). The results were supported by Patel and Daniel (2003) in a seminar paper that they tested the very interesting hypothesis that the language of a culture influences the music of that culture. As a consequence, the prosody of a composer's native language may influence the structure of his music. The authors chose to compare speech and music from England and French because English and French provide prototypical of stress-time vs syllable-time language (i.e., language that rely more on the stress patterns vs. on syllabic duration)

The rhythm of music by Kennedy and Bourne (1996) in the “Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music” covers everything related to aspects of time in music. Aspect is beat, accent, bar, tone groups in knock, knock groups in bars, bars in the phrase groups, and so on. The rhythm is measured movement of the tone groups, namely the effects produced by regular and systematic grouping. Rhythm is also a tone group which is moving in sequential patterns and in repetition. These patterns can produce a lot of rhythm based on the rhythm groups. This is due to the measured rhythm and tempo set by the tone group owned by those components. So the rhythm is always associated with a tempo which also determines the character of the music.

The second element of music in a song is melody. In general, so far melody is defined by using western reference. Melody is always associated with pitch and rhythm. Rhythm groups and rhythmic sequence unfold with each high and low tones are called as horizontal melody because the movement of the melody is always tied to the tone before and after the group of the melody horizontally. The harmony of the melody could not be separated from the transfer of one tone to other tones with a certain rhythm. The beauty of

the phrase group does not mean anything if it is not supported by the phrase before and after. This relationship can also be called as a syntagmatic relationship (Beker, 1990, p. 15).

In the real contour, intonation is also not free from the pause (juncture) or stop or joints. Pause is the stopped sound in a statement flow. The pause will determine the character of spoken sentences as well as the expression of utterances, for example, the sad, happy, excited expression and many others. The discussion about intonation in language will be discussed in another section below by dividing the sub elements like the elements of music/song above in order to be compared easily. Tone, duration, and soft or hard point exist in language as well as in music. In a sentence structure, a word has a high or low tone, length of tones and word stress. In English, the word stress has an important role in the formation of intonation, while in Indonesian is not. In the Indonesian morphological level, intonation is not distinctive but in the syntactic level is distinctive. Even in English certain characteristics as said by Gilbert (n.d. p. 12) that in the English, there are three characteristics of stressed syllable (1) it has higher tone, (2) it has longer sound in pronouncing it, and (3) the vocal gets louder stress.

Uttering a sentence in English actually rhythmic, so rhythms in the text of the song should, wherever possible, be adapted to the rhythm of the song. Crutenden (1986, p. 24) states that

“English is often described as a stress-timed language. What this means is that a general rule of English rhythm is that we take an equal amount of time from one stressed “.

According to Verhaar (2001, p. 57) accents and stress is a tricky thing in suprasegmental sounds. When stress is interpreted as a case of amplitude, i.e. the high volume of the sound, then the stress will be easy to understand. The problem is the syllable which is under stress does not only get louder voice but also high-

pitched. Some linguists equalize stress with the accent. The works of linguists which differentiate tone accent and stress accent even doubled the problems (Verhaar, 2001, p. 58).

METHOD

The problems in this study were the equivalence of translated lyrics especially words which are included as the content word, as well as the effects caused by the translation of the song. Thus, this study includes a description of the type of qualitative research. Seen from its goal, this research is considered to be applied evaluative research. This research approach is music/song composition and linguistic approach. This approach is used in order to give deep focus for the study.

Analyzing the effect of the songs from the aspects of musical and non-musical (lyrics) can only be seen in depth from musical view. In accordance with the required data, the data collection techniques are as follows: 1) questionnaire, 2) content analysis. Because the data in the form of texts or documents of the song so that the content is considered to be very important in the study. The analysis method used in this study was interactive analysis. This analysis consisted of data reduction, data presentation, and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 12). The song being analyzed were (1) “*He’s Everything to Me*”, (2) “*Jesus, Revealed in Me*”, (3) “*Send Out Thy Light*”, (4), “*This I Know*”, and, (5) “*No, Not One*”.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzes three main points, (1) equivalence of lyrics, including the content word. These are words that belong to the verb, adjectives, noun, and adverb, (2) equivalence of song structure that are the location of words in each section bar between the word that comes from the lyrics of the original song which use source language (SL) with the words of the translated lyrics called target language.

age (TL), and (3) the effect of the song that is by comparing two lyrics with sentences ranging from the elements of music and literature.

Equivalence of Content Word

Based on the data analysis, it was found that the sentence structure of TL was different from the sentence structure of SL especially the number of syllables of TL which was generally more than SL. This led to sentences lyrics of TL generally longer than the sentences lyrics of SL. Consequently, because of the number of syllables of TL must be the same as the number of the SL syllables, the number of syllables of the TL was reduced (see Figure 1).

In the sentence of the first song above, the sentence "Send out thy light" required three syllables because there were three notes, but only one word in the TL which was in pairs in a string melody that was "pour out", while "thy" and "light" words were not translated. Likewise, in the second sentence of TL which only translated two words of three words in SL

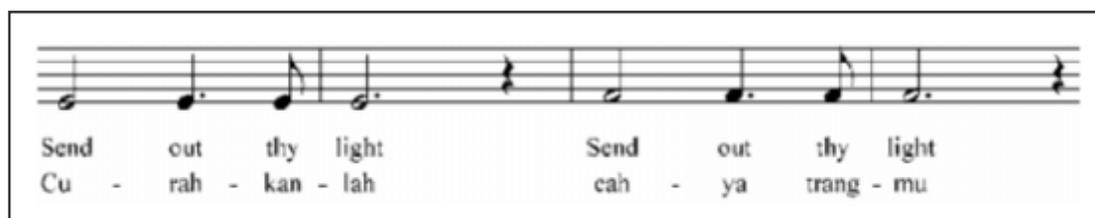
sentences, i.e. "send out thy light" (three words) into *cahya trangmu* (two words).

Equivalence of Song Structure

The structure of the song included the form of songs, the elements that constitute the song, including song rhythm, melody, harmony, texture and lyrics. The elements that make up a song pattern would determine the character of a particular song. Changes in the song, such as being translated, might alter the effects of a good song at the level of words, sentences, and the overall impression of the song.

Based on the analysis of all songs, the location of the bars between the two languages were not always the same, but varied enough and could move at the same bars, next to the bars or even far from the bars in SL. It also worked for the meaning of words between bars. The word couples that lied in the same bars were not always equivalent and vice versa. Table 1 was the result of the analysis of the structure of the song, especially the location of the bars, and its meaning.

Figure 1. Example of Comparisons Two Lyrics



Tabel 1. Equivalence of Language Structure

	Song 1	Song 2	Song 3	Song 4	Song 5	All Songs
Located in the Same Bars - Equivalent	24,59%	33,3%	20,2%	35,29%	33,33%	27,07%
Located in the Same Bars - Less Equivalent	22,95%	2,96%	6,75%	20,58%	24,24%	18,34%
Located in the Different Bars - Equivalent	8,19%	11,11%)	(21,6%)	(11,76%)	0 %	(11,79%)
Located in the Different Bars - Not Equivalent	(4,9%)	0 %	(4,0%)	0 %	0 %	(2,62%)
Not Translated - Lost	(39,3%)	(29,62%)	(47,2%)	(32,35%)	(42,42%)	(40,17%)

Equivalence of the Song Effects

Song effect is another impact as the result of changes of rhythm, melody, arrangement, composition, and lyrics. The song will experience the different effect if it gets some changes, depending on the type of changes. If it gets basic changes such as changes in rhythm, melody and harmonization it will change its character. Soft song can turn into hard if the rhythm and harmonization are changed. In the world of the composition, these things are very common. Songs can be reorganized in accordance with the arranger. Thus the song that has been re-arranged by another music director may have the same character, it turns to be a more beautiful, more complex, or more assertive song depending on the impression of what it is to be conveyed by the arranger. The song that has a good melody that is the one which has lyrics that matches with the melody will sound so beautiful. The beauty of a song can also be affected by the suitability between the song character and theme.

The changed song's lyrics such as being translated will result in a change of character if the song composer does not understand the aspects of language and music, especially the character of SL song. Changes in the character in this study were very likely to occur because the structure of the two languages involved were different. Song translators should adjust words in the lyrics as the number of syllables, rhythm and melody and it was compounded if SL song lyrics containing literary arts. The results of the analysis of the beauty of the song equivalence can be seen in Table 2.

Equivalence of the Content Word and Song Structure

Based on the data description of the word equivalence including the content words (see Table 1) showed above, the content word class were varied. From the four categories made, namely equivalence, less equivalence, not equivalence and not translated/lost, more focus was given on the high percentage of the content words which were not translated. Overall of the 5 songs that were analyzed, the percentage reached 40.17 % words were not translated. This number was almost the same as those considered to be equivalent which were 38.86%. Meanwhile, those belonged to the less equivalent reached 12.66% and 9.60% were not equivalent.

A word which is included as the content word is a word that is very important to determine the meaning of a sentence. If a sentence lacks of a content word, the meaning of the sentence will be affected. The more the missing word in a sentence, the meaning is increasingly getting more and more blurred. A translated text which misses its content words or the content words are not translated will end up with losing its intended meaning. Another thing that can cause the existence of not equivalent meaning of a sentence is the problems of the equivalence in translating the content words.

The next point of this study is the structure of the song. The structure of the songs in this study only analyzed the location of the content words in the joint of bars between the content words in SL with words in the TL and equivalence of those words. In the language field, the location

Table 2. Equivalence of Beauty of The Song

	Song 1	Song 2	Song 3	Song 4	Song 5	All Songs
The Beauty of the Song is Equivalent	14,28%	12,5%	3,0%	1,25	1,25%	17,02%
The Beauty of the Song is less Equivalent	7,14%	50%	1%	25%	37,5%	29,78%
The Beauty of the Song is not Equivalent	78,57%	37,5%	55,55%	75%	50%	61,70%

or position of words between SL and TL is not an issue as long as its meaning does not change especially if the structure of the two languages involved are different. However, in music, especially songs, the changed location of the stress causing different effects. A lyrics (words) sometimes have to follow the up and down of a melody or to give the impression that melody song with the lyrics suit each other (Puspito Kelly, interview on January 10, 2009). At this point, the song effects have not been discussed yet. The equivalence here was just analyzed to find out the percentage of displacement bars layout and its meaning after being translated .

Analysis of the data was divided into: 1) located in the same bars - equivalent, 2) located in the same bars - not equivalent, 3) located in a different time bars - equivalent, 4) located in different bars - not equivalent, and 5) not translated/lost. Based on the description and analysis of data about the equivalence of song structure (Table 1) shows the variety of the result. From 229 words including the content word located in the same bars and equivalent were 62 (27.07%) and words that include the content word but were not located in the same bars and not equivalent were 42 words (18.34%). Other data indicated that the content words in TL with moving bars reached 33 words (14.41%), but the percentage of words with moving bars but equivalent were big enough, they were about (11.79%) compared with moving bars but not equivalent that were only 6 words (2.62%).

The shifting of the word position is something that cannot be avoided in translation, especially if the two structures of the languages is different. The shifting position (location-bar), especially if the number of syllables are different causes

the location of the next words in TL shifted while the number of syllables in the song has been limited. Restricted, because the translated song should not change the original melody, so the number of syllables is the same as the original song (SL). This was the thing which made it difficult to translate the lyrics of the songs. Another consequence of this situation was some number of words in the SL were not translated. The amount words including the content word in this study which were not translated were around 40.17%. This showed how difficult the selection and placement of the right words in the translation of the lyrics of the songs (see Figure 2).

Effect of Translated Song

The beauty of the translated lyrics (TL) is equivalent with lyrics of SL sentence if the meaning of the sentence is already equivalent and the musical and literary aspects are already beautiful equally.

The sentence in the song lyrics above was equivalent. The beauty of the two sentences could be accepted too, because the meaning of the sentence had also been equivalent too. The rhyme was not the same as SL sentence, but the translator had already set the end of the sentences to be equivalent:

*Dalam iman kuberjumpa-Nya
Kumerasakan karunianya
Tuhan yang berada dalam surga
Juga berada dalam ku slamanya*

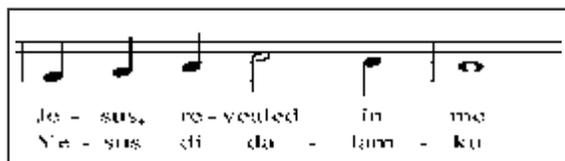
The beauty of the lyrics through a sound equalization at the end of the sentence in other forms can preserve the beauty of the lyrics literally. In terms of the structure of the song, especially phrasing technique, it was considered to be consistent (there are no musical rules are

Figure 2. Example of the Shifting of the Words Position



violated). Because the aspects of language, music and literally had already met the beauty of this sentence and this means it is equivalent.

Figure 3. Example of the End Phrase



In the context of this song, the meaning of the sentence was equivalent. Two content words were translated correctly. The word "revealed" which was translated word by word turned to be less equivalent, but if it was put into the lyric it became equivalent, eventually. Musically, the sentence was already fit all the content words that were in the same bars. The lyrics that were at the end of the song which belonged to a repetition of the title track seemed to be so firm. Moreover, the syllable "me" which was translated to be "my" fall on the same beats and in the position of strong beat (see Figure 3).

In terms of literary art, particularly from the composition form of the words, the sentences taken from the songs have been set by the translator to be congruent. The an example below is the translation of the song lyric.

Christ, the transforming light,
Touches this heart of mine
Piearching the darkest night
Making His glory shine.

O, to reflect His grace
Causing the world to see,
Love that will glow till others shall know.
Jesus, revealed in me

Translation:

*Kristus terang dunia
Yang menerangi ku
Hidup gelap gulita
Jadi terang sungguh
Kasihnya mulia,
Anugrah bagi ku
Kasih tulus kunyatakan trus*

Yesus di dalamku

The stanza 1 at SL that had a rhyme pattern "a b a b" or called as cross rhyme which had a similar sound for the first and third lines and another same sound for the second and fourth lines were translated with the same type of rhyme i.e cross rhyme. The special line for the sentence 'Jesus in me' was set to be equivalent by equalizing the end sound in the line, i.e. sound /-u/ in line 2 and line 4. This is the same as the rhyme in line 2 and line 4 in the TL which had end sound of /-i/.

Similarly, in the last stanza the same pattern between SL with TL was made by using an exact rhyme though the location was different. In SL line 1 had the same rhyme with line 3 and line 2 had the same rhyme with line 4. The stanza in TL also used approximate rhyme that showed a similarity in sound between stanzas. If the first stanza called as exact rhyme as marked by the similarity of sound between two or more words so that it became so easy to identify, then in the second stanza called as approximate rhyme. In this stanza there was a shift from exact rhyme to the change of sound so that only half of the sound turn to be equivalent. Another half of the stanza could be seen from the line 2 and 3 or 3 and 4 which have similar sounds between /-u/ and /-us/.

CONCLUSION

Equivalence of content word were vary enough. From the all content words in the original song lyrics (SL) only some of them were translated. From the translated words, only some words were equivalent. The rest of them were less equivalent and not equivalent or even not translated or lost. The reason of the untranslated words were because the structure of the sentences from the two involved languages (English and Indonesian) are different. This caused the syllables put in the bars became different because the number of syllables in the Indonesian were bigger than those in English. This ended up with difficulties in

putting the syllables in the bars. Eventually, the limited melody affects the choice of syllables and words and caused the words in SL to be untranslated or lost.

The meaning of the lyrics of the 5 songs was generally varied. From the 5 songs there were around 48 sentences, and 17 sentences (35.41%) were considered to be equivalent, 19 sentences (39.58) less equivalent and 12 sentences or 25% were not equivalent. The existence of high number or percentage of not equivalent words was because most of the content words were not translated. This was also the cause of the less equivalent words. The limitation of the words in TL compared to SL during translation process was caused by the structure of the sentences which ended up with difficulties in choosing the words in the TL. Eventually the meaning of the sentences was also affected.

The different phrases between two involved languages and different dictions being used can affect the beauty of the songs. The song lyrics which is generally longer than in source language (English) cause the loss of words in the translated ecclesial lyrics. It also causes the switching accent in the target language, thereby reducing the beauty of the song. In addition, loss of words also reduces the meaning of the sentence. Therefore, the translated ecclesial songs which are not equivalent to the source are not good to be used in some holy activities in churches. This is because the unequivalent songs are considered to have possibilities to mislead the Christians or followers. Besides, the beauty of the translated songs may also far from the real beauty of the source songs. If they are still used in the churches, it is better to also include the real texts or lyrics.

The translator seems to be too faithful to the original melody and physical form of original songs, causing phrases translated into awkward ones. In the science of harmony, as long as, do not change chords or harmonization song, singers can add a melody in a song. The goal is to beautify the song. This technique is called improvisation. Thus, theoretically transla-

tors can perform techniques to improvise song by adding a certain melody especially to overcome the shortcomings caused by longer beats in translated sentences.

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