The Accuracy and the Acceptability of
Ten Popular Indonesian Song Translation
from Indonesian into English

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ABSTRACT

Songs are short pieces of music with words that are sung (Cambridge Dictionary) or in Bahasa Indonesia we can call it "Nyanyian" or "Lagu". A Million of Indonesia's good songs still need to be explored because they are worth being known by more Indonesians and also people from all around the world. In this paper, I collected, translated, and analyzed the ten Indonesian Pop Songs. The analysis of the translation is important to help me as the translator of those songs, to be better by assessing it and it could be an example for others to do this good little movement. The purpose of the study is first, to analyze the Accuracy of the ten songs translation and also to analyze the Acceptability of the ten songs translation.In this study, my songs translation shows the level of Accuracy and Acceptability aspect which are connected with the theory I used in this paper. I used the theory from Mona Baker's (2018), Equivalence at Word Level. There are two main types of meaning in words and utterances that I used; Propositional Meaning for the Accuracy analysis and Expressive Meaning for the Acceptability analysis.

Keywords: Accuracy; Acceptability; Song Translation

INTRODUCTION

Song is a short piece of music with words that are sung (Cambridge Dictionary) or in Bahasa Indonesia we can call it "nyanyian" or "Lagu". It is a beautiful poem with rhyme and melody which makes people feel something in their heart and starts to question their perspective and meaning of life, it is like a language for every person around the world. From all that we know, some songs which were written in English are translated into Bahasa Indonesia and we all could sing those songs with the same tone, me notation, same beat, same cadence, and same melody. But just a few songs in all media which come from Bahasa Indonesia lyrics translated into English lyrics. So, because of that reason I feel challenged and made a project which translates Indonesian Pop Songs in Bahasa Indonesia into English lyrics with the same theme, which is "love" that is a common theme for Indonesian artists. I decided to translate ten popular Indonesian songs which I love. I also want that ten chosen Indonesian Pop Songs will be known and understood by many more foreign people outside Indonesia, especially those who like to listen to songs which have English lyrics. I chose the ten songs because usually an album (LP) consists of ten songs on average and I applied them in an album compilation of my ten Indonesian songs translated.

The translation of the songs could be judged from the accuracy and the acceptability of the translation. Analyze the accuracy and acceptability for the music enthusiast in the scope of the Propositional Meaning and Expressive Meaning (Baker, 2018). Basically, I analyze the project of myself in translating from Indonesia to English. In this study, I used theory from

Mona Baker's book. In her book "In Other Words", Equivalence at Word Level. I just analyzed the accuracy which could be based on the propositional meaning and the acceptability which could be based on the Expressive Meaning because these two theories could be used to analyze the aspect of Accuracy and Acceptability of my ten Pop Indonesia Songs translation. I did not review the Strategy Theory one by one but I only picked up the sub-theories to develop what I was trying to discuss using Word Level and Above Word Level.

I focus on the research and analysis about the way that ten Indonesian Pop songs with Bahasa Indonesia lyrics translated into English and the quality of the songs translation in terms of the accuracy and the acceptability of the ten popular Indonesian songs translation based on my interpretation of the data.

METHOD

I used Qualitative Approach (Crewswell, 2014) which involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It also can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or to generate new ideas for research that produces a new understanding, view and perception. I believe it suited my concern and willingness in analyzing the ten Indonesian song translations. It helps to discover new thoughts and my views to the reader in a text form, in a deeper way. I used Word as the smallest unit and Phrase as the biggest unit. The result of the study presented textually and it is based on my interpretation as a researcher.

I am the person who collected, translated, and analyzed the data from the study. The data is the ten songs translated into Indonesian. I put the list of the ten songs which taken as a data to support the analysis of this study, with the artist names and the titles;

1. Last Child – Bernafas Tanpamu
2. Ungu – Kekasih Gelapku
3. Anneth – Takkan Berhenti Mencintaimu
4. Glenn Fredly – Kisah Romantis
5. Kerispatih – Aku Harus Jujur
6. Misellia – Akhir Tak Bahagia
7. LYON – Delusi (Ft. Rizky Febian)
8. Keisya Levronka – Tak Ingin Usai
9. NIDJI – Biarlah
10. Dewa 19 – Dewi

The steps when I were translating all of the ten songs are mostly like these;
1. Listening to the songs three times
2. Reading the lyrics
3. Listening and reading the lyrics of the songs twice
4. Listening, reading and translating the songs at the same time twice
5. Revising and singing the translation of the songs

The analysis of the ten songs which were chosen and translated is based on word meaning which is known as Propositional Meaning and Expressive Meaning.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This discussion is divided into; Accuracy and Acceptability based on Propositional Meaning and Expressive Meaning with the sub parts of the Acceptability; Addition and Change to complete the discussion in a more simple way. I only put two examples of each part.

Accuracy

Accuracy is all about the correctness from the source language to the target language. I picked from my seventh song (LYON – *Delusi* (Ft. Rizky Febian)) in the pre chorus part ***"Harapkan dirimu berpaling lagi padaku"*** that is translated into***"I'm just longin' for you to be turned again to me"***. As simple as it transferred the whole point, message, and meaning from Indonesia into English beside it has the same beat and cadence or rhythm from the original lyrics. Next, I picked from my eight song translation (Keisya Levronka – *Tak Ingin Usai*) on the pre-chorus part, ***"Satu yang harus kautahu"*** translated into ***"One thing that you have to know"***.

Acceptability means sequences in a given context depending on how it fits into its surrounding textual environment (Baker, 2018). It is more dynamic than the Accuracy itself because it is more situational and depends on the side of culture, time period, and how it would fit with the target language readers and listeners.

Table 1. *Takkan Berhenti Mencintaimu*

INDONESIA	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Menemanimu di saat kau jatuh *'Kan kulakukan untukmu* *Cinta datang dan tumbuh pada dirimu*	**Stay beside you near when you fall and it gets you down** Love is coming and growing **gracefully on you**

I add ***"Stay beside you near when you're fall and it gets you down"*** bold the point of view of the writer that she's being serious to stay still when the world turns the lover down. I also add ***"gracefully on you"*** to fill the feeling of tenderness and beauty to be more complete inside of the phrase and to the listener.

Another example, I picked from *Biarlah*.

Table 2. NIDJI -*Biarlah*

INDONESIA	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Aku sudah berlari	I have **run and run and run**
Tapi engkau terus berlari	But you were keeping **yours** faster
Berikanlah aku kekuatan	Give me all strength I need, **strength on my feet**
Sakit tetap mengukir	Scars keep **carving on my way**
Jalan hidupku	**Carving on the journey**
Dalam hidupku	**Journey of my own**

This repetitive (***run and run and run***) makes it feel more complete and gives an impression that the writer does this more than one shot. And in the next verse I add "yours" just to make it clear ***"dia yang pergi"*** and not the writer. I added ***"strength on my feet"*** to make the writer willing to move on and forget her. Just to make it more catchy and build up step by step, **"carving on my way, carving on the journey, journey of my own"** that actually means ***"carving on my journey"*** but I didn't want this to be that simple.

Change is needed to suits the lyrics translation with the cadence, beat, and again it has to be sing-able. I decided to change to support my interpretation of the songs. The example is from *Aku Harus Jujur.*

Table 3. *Aku Harus Jujur*

INDONESIA	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Maafkan, kali ini aku harus jujur *Aku mencoba dan aku tak mampu* *Aku tak sanggup menjadi biasa*	Sorry for this time, I gotta **say to you the truth** **I have tried** and I, realize I just can't be **Impossible for me** to be **like the other men**

I choose to change from just **"to be honest"** to **"say to you the truth"** to make it sound more trusting and reliable. I change a little bit from the present tense **"aku mencoba"** which is supposed to be **"I try"** but I change it into past perfect tense **"I have tried"** to make it clear that the writer has done it and he failed to be as the lover wants. Instead of translating it into **"I can't"**, I decided to change it into **"impossible for me"** to state more of the writer's feeling, he can't do that because it is impossible for him. I chose **"like the other men"** that stated that the writer is impossible to be **"normal"**, to be **"ordinary"** like the others, and I wanted to give a more detailed statement on my translation.

Next, the example *is* from *Dewi*;

Table 4. *Dewi*

INDONESIA	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Beri kesempatan *Tuk bisa menebus dosaku kepadamu* *Kaulah hidupku* *Belah lah dadaku* *Hanya karena aku lelaki dan dia wanita*	Give me your **another** **Shot** that makes you will do forgive me for what I've done **Love of my own life** **Cross my heart and you'll see** Just because **I'm a boy and she's a girl** means we're together

I changed the perspective, the writer ask for a shot, a change from the lover because I want to highlight the manner of the writer that know *"kalo dia ga kasih kesempatan ya sama aja, kesempatannya milik dia sepenuhnya"*. I think to convince the lover, the writer has mentioned the lover that she is everything, and **"love of my own life"** speaks louder than just **"you're my life"**. Instead of translated into as literal as **"cleft my chest"** or **"crack my heart"** that sounds really weird, I chose to translate it with the other term **"cross my heart"** because it fit with the cadence, culture, and everybody knows what the meaning, it's like beyond *"serious"*. I decided to put a perspective from a fresher side, a boy and girl. I didn't want to use the words **"man and woman"**. I think I wanted to bring the youngster vibes here to make it different and fresh at the same time.

CONCLUSION

Accuracy is the correctness of the song translation from Indonesian into English based fully on my interpretation as the writer. The Acceptability, because it depends on the given context, depends on the situation, condition, and circumstances, so I put "Addition" and "Change" which are color-coded to make it easier to be noticed by the readers (Baker, 2018). The analysis of the ten Pop Indonesia songs which were chosen and translated is based on word meaning which is known as Propositional Meaning and Expressive Meaning. In song

translation, "Addition" and "Change" could be done to make the songs nice to hear besides paying attention to the meaning of the lyrics in the original language.

As a suggestion for the next research, it will be better if there is more research about the story behind every song which is going to be translated. It will make a difference in terms of the richness of the translation because it comes from either the songwriters of the song's point of view and also from the translator himself. It will make the result of the translation become more natural and richer, especially in the aspect of the Acceptability (Expressive Meaning). Another suggestion is they can try to analyze other Indonesian songs and translate from Indonesia into English or other languages with the other themes.

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