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# TRANSLATION OF EUPHEMISM, SYMBOLISM, AND PARADOX EXPRESSIONS FOUND IN THE BIBLE

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#### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to analyze selected figurative language items, specifically euphemism, symbolism, and paradox expressions, found in the Bible using the techniques of translation, by Newmark. This study utilizes a descriptive qualitative method with purposive sampling technique. The Data in this research is The Bible in two different translated versions, the International New Version and the Indonesian Version. In this study there are 6 types of translation methods and 2 types of translation procedures employed to translate the bible. There are 4 sentences in Transposition Procedure, 3 sentences in Communicative Translation, 2 sentences in Free Translation, 1 Sentence in Faithful Translation, 1 sentence in Literal Translation, 1 Sentence in Functional Equivalent procedure, and 1 Sentence in Semantic Translation.

Keywords: Figurative Language; Translation Methods; Translation Procedures; The Bible

## INTRODUCTION

The Holy Bible is the world's most translated book. (Kennedy & Newcombe, 1999). Participants of the United Bible Societies, 110 biblical institutions all over the world, are contributing to the translation of the Holy Bible into 624 spoken languages, involving 426 spoken languages that had never previously had a translation of the Bible or any part of it. (Latuihamallo, 1994). "The process of translating the Holy Bible creates unique challenges because the sanctity of the The Holy Bible demands extreme accuracy, which must be implemented with full consciousness." Not all translators achieved success to do it. (Latuihamallo, 1994).

Preserved for spiritual guidance and beloved by billions of people globally, the Bible is a veritable gold mine of literary techniques and language diversity. Amidst its numerous attributes, the utilization of euphemism, symbolism, and paradoxical language stand out as notable components that lend greater depth and complexity to its stories and messages. Throughout the book, these literary devices are employed to raise concerns, address touchy subjects, and convey significant information.

The Bible is full with euphemisms, which are phrases that are meant to be mild or indirect but are actually deemed harsh or unpleasant. It conveys deeper meanings while lessening the impact of some ideas or occurrences. The usage of the word "sleep" to describe "death" is one of the most prevalent euphemisms in the Bible; it suggests a tranquil passage from this world to the next. For instance "Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope." - 1 Timothy 4:13 (NIV)

The Bible is filled with symbolism, with a variety of items, deeds, and occasions acting as powerful metaphors for more profound spiritual lessons. For instance, water frequently represents spiritual washing, rejuvenation, and purification, illustrating the transformational force of divine grace. For instance. "But, anyone who consumes the water I offer them won't



ever experience thirst. Yes, the water I give them will turn into a spring within of them that will flow to eternal life." - John 4:14 (NIV)

The Bible is full of paradoxes, which are seemingly incompatible ideas or circumstances that, when given careful thought, reveal deeper truths. They question received wisdom and encourage readers to delve into the enigmas of religion. A paradox that emphasizes the contradictory character of Christian discipleship is the idea of losing one's life in order to find it.: "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it." - Matthew (NIV) 16:25

In conclusion, the Bible's use of symbolism, euphemisms, and of contradiction phrases or paradoxes enhances the narrative fabric and entices readers to explore its depths for eternal truths. These language techniques are effective instruments for enlightenment and spiritual reflection in addition to being decorative elements in literature.

Figurative language is a figure form of speech which is employed to convey information in an unusual manner (Perrine, 1969). A literary work becomes more captivating and fascinating when it employs a variety of figurative language techniques. It is a special way for literary writers to convey their emotions and ideas while also elevating them. Based on Perrine (1982) There are four main explanations for using figurative language. Firstly, the imaginative delight derived from literacy work is attributed to figurative language. Secondly, it is an approach to introduce additional imagery into the poetry, giving the abstract substance and elevating the literary work to a more sensual level. The third technique, figurative language, involves incorporating feelings into otherwise purely informative statements and expressing perspectives alongside the facts.

Euphemisms are polite words that are used to replace offensive words that are seen as unpleasant or embarrassing. Euphemisms are commonly used when discussing topics like sex, religion, and death; Only words or phrases that denote something that itself denotes something else, or has a range of references beyond itself, are considered symbols. Anything that represents something is a symbol in the widest sense; A paradox is a claim that, despite appearing illogical or contradictory on the surface, can be understood clearly. (Abrams, 1999). In literature work, figurative language employed to accentuate imagery and give words more power. Sometimes, metaphorical language, or just metaphor, is used to describe figurative language according to (Knickerbocker & Reninger, 1974). Literary works use figurative language to emphasize both the author's inventiveness and the beauty of language. There are instances of figurative language in both poetry and prose, as well as the Bible.

According to Nida, Classifying texts based on their form and content can help identify translation issues. Texts can be classified into five types, which overlap somewhat. Cult histories, elaborate mantras, Koranic and Bible translations, and secret society memorized texts are examples of texts with uncommon figurative meanings (p.91). Since the Holy Bible, or parts of it, have been rewritten for a longer period of time as well as into a greater number of languages (2,233 since the beginning of year 2000), it is not shocking that a number of the arguments over translation fundamentals have focused on how to properly translate a book that is considered to have been inspired by God (p.108).

Hartono (2014, 355) explains that in When translating figurative language, a translator needs to be able to preserve the emotional impact, visual appeal, and imaginative pleasure without changing the meaning precisely while also making the translation socially and culturally acceptable in the target language. According to Colston (2015), Figurative language in literary works can be difficult to translate because its hidden meaning must be disclosed.

To produce a high-quality translation product, methods must be used. Methods will assist translators in completing the translation. Newmark (1988) The first is SL (source language) emphasis, which means that when translating the text, the translator adheres to what is common in the source language, such as structure, lexis, and culture.



The core idea of translation is the exchange of meaning from one language to the other. like this one: The act of translating involves transferring the meaning of the original language into the receptor language"(Larson, 1984). Nida & Taber (1982) Translating entails producing in the recipient language the most natural similar to the original language message, first when it comes to meaning and then in in terms of style.

#### **METHOD**

This study takes on a descriptive qualitative method. The descriptive study is appropriate for exposing facts about the problem to be discussed. Following Wiersma (1995), Qualitative research describes phenomena in words rather than numbers or measures. Specifically, the researcher employs a document analysis technique in this study. The document analysis technique is used to identify specific data in physical documents, whether written or visual. (Ary et al., 2010). The documents in this study were in the form of written material, namely The Bible both in The New International Version and The Indonesian version.

The procedure in this paper consists of four steps. In the first step, the writer selects the bible to be analyzed. In the second step, the writer reads the Bible and notes the figurative language. The third step involves comparing both versions of the data. The fourth step involves analyzing the data using Newmark's theory.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### **Results**

According to the analysis, figurative items found in the Bible, such as euphemism, symbolism, and paradox, are used in six different translation methods and two different translation procedures. The table below shows the results of the translation techniques:

**Table 1.** Translation Techniques of Figurative items

Figurative Items	Translation Method	Translation Procedure
Euphemism	2	2
Symbolism	2	2
Paradox	3	2
Total	7	6

Analysis data is shown below:

## 1. Symbolism

SL: "Let us break their chains."

TL: "Marilah kita memutuskan belenggu-belenggu mereka."

The word "...chains..." in the SL translated into "...belenggu-belenggu..." signifies 'sin' anaphorically refers to a statement "...they have sinned arrogantly." (Job 36:9) uses the symbolism. Further, Abrams in his book 'A Glossary of Literary Terms (7th ed.) stated in the most general way, a symbol is anything that indicates or represents a certain thing. (Abrams, 1999). Foley & Hall (2003) stated that "...Anaphoric is a reference within a text to a previous mentioned item."



In KII (113) 'chain' *n rantai* and according to KBBI (1263) *rantai n* **4** *belenggu*. The plural form of 'chains' is translated also into another plural form '*belenggu-belenggu*', and reduplication occurs here. According to TBBBI "...when the form of the base is a distinguished noun, the repetition expresses the meaning of the plural or diversity of the meaning of the base noun..." *Pengulangan sintaksis* ... *apabila bentuk pangkalnya adalah nomina terbilang, perulangan itu menyatakan makna keaneragaman pada nomina pangkal*... (p298).

The main theory applied here is **Faithful Translation** since the word 'chains' is plural and the target language preserves the structure and context of the source language 'belenggu-belenggu' in the target language. In his book 'A Textbook of Translation', Newmark (1988) stated that a faithful translation aims to replicate the source language precise contextual meaning while obeying to the TL's grammatical structures. (p.46)

SL: "Truly he is my **rock** and my salvation."

TL: "Hanya Dialah gunung batuku dan keselamatanku."

The word "...rock..." in the SL translated into a phrase "...gunung batu..." signifies 'strength' cataphorically refers to a word 'power' in a statement "Power belongs to you, God" (Psalms 62:11) uses the symbolism. Additionally, according to BibleTools, rock means to immovable Foundation

(https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/695/Rock-as-Symbol.htm) (Retrieved on February 08, 2024). "A symbol can be defined broadly as anything that represents another entity." (Abrams, 1999). As stated by Foley & Hall (2003) Cataphoric references is substitutes that refer to a certain occurrence that takes place later in a sentence. (p.328).

In The Oxford American Dictionary of Current English (1999:694) the word 'rock' n 6 a firm and dependable support or protection.

Therefore the translation method applied is **Free Translation** since the word 'rock' undergoes unit shifts from word to a phrase '*gunung batu*'. According to Newmark, Free translation recreates the topic without its form, or its substance without the structure of the original. (2002:46). Refers to Catford (1965), A unit shift caused by an adjustment in rank can occur between words, phrases, and clauses.

SL: "Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death."

TL: "ya Engkau, yang mengangkat aku dari pintu gerbang maut,"

The word "... the gates of death." In SL translated into "... pintu gerbang maut." Signifies 'afterlife' anaphorically refers to a statement "before I go to the place of no return, to the land of gloom and utter darkness." (Job 10:21) uses symbolism. According to Abrams (1999), The concept of "symbol" only refers to a word or phrase that represents an object or event, which in turn represents something or implies a range of meaning beyond itself. According to Foley & Hall (2003), Anaphoric refers to a previously mentioned item in a text.

In KII (285) 'gate' n 2 pintu gerbang; (176) 'death' n 2 maut. The plural form of 'gates' is translated into the singular form 'pintu gerbang' and intra-system shifts occur here, according to Catford (1965) Intra-system shift is a change happen internally, inside a structure; Thus,



when the source language (SL) and target language (TL) have formally identical structures, it is not committed when translation uses a non-corresponding term in the TL structure.

Therefore the TL text undergoes the **Transpositions Procedure** proposed by Newmark. The plural form of 'gates' is translated to the singular form of 'pintu gerbang', in his book "A Textbook Of Translation" Newmark (1988) stated a 'shift' (Catford's term) or 'transposition' (Vinay and Darbelnet) is a translation procedure that occurs when the grammatical structure changes from SL to TL. A particular form is the transition from singular to plural.

SL: "Lord, who may dwell in your **sacred tent**?"

TL: "Tuhan, siapa yang boleh menumpang dalam kemah-Mu?"

The word "... sacred tent" in the SL translated to "... kemah-Mu" signifies 'tabernacle' anaphorically refers to a statement "Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from everyone whose heart prompts them to give." (Exodus 25:2) uses the symbolism. According to Nida, a culture may adapt a symbol; for some ethnic groups, a path could function as a means of explaining their traditional way of life. For as long as people can remember, every generation has followed the same path. (p.24). According to Foley & Hall (2003), stated that Anaphoric refers to a previously mentioned item in a text.

According to KII (646) 'tent' *n tenda*, *kemah*;(554) 'sacred' *ks keramat, suci, kudus*. The word 'sacred' converted to a word using capitalization referring to God in TL "-Mu". According to TBBBI "...The first letter of each proper noun is written in capital letters...a word that refers to the God or a particular deity." *Nama diri* ... Setiap huruf awal dari nama diri ditulis dengan huruf kapital. ... Nama diri Tuhan atau dewa yang mengacu pada individu tertentu dari Tuhan atau dewa. (p.271)

Class Shifts occur in a word 'Sacred' as Adjective to a word '-Mu' as Possessive determiner. Catford defines class shift as a transition when the translation equivalent of an source language item belongs to a different class in the target language item. This means that source language has a completely different class from target language. (Catford, 1965).

Therefore the translated text uses the **Transposition Procedure** proposed by Newmark. The phrase 'sacred tent' is translated t '*kemah-Mu*', The bound form of *maha-* and basic words or suffixes that refer to God's name or attributes are written separately with capital letters as specialization. The Translator chose to convert the word sacred to the use of Capitalization suffixes that indicate God. According to Newmark (1988) The third form of shift occurs when literal translation is grammatically possible but does not correspond to natural usage in the target language.

## 2. Euphemism

SL: "A number of you have **fallen asleep**" TL: "Dan tidak sedikit yang **meninggal**"

The phase '... fallen asleep' in SL is translated to '... *meninggal*' signifies 'death' anaphorically refers to a statement "That is why many among you are weak and sick ... " (1 Corinthians 11:30) uses euphemism. Euphemisms are commonly used when addressing sex, death, and death. (Abrams, 1999). According to Foley & Hall (2003), stated that anaphoric refers to a previously mentioned item in a text.



According to KII (251) 'fallen' is a past form of 'fall', the word 'sleep' n thus the the phrase 'fall asleep' according to Merriam Webster Dictionary is indicated idiom. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary 'sleep' v to be in a state resembling sleep as of quiescence or death. The phrase 'fallen asleep' is translated to a verb 'meninggal' therefore class shift occur here, Catford defines class shift as the transformation of an SL item that has a classification different compared to target language. This means that SL has an entirely different class than TL. (Catford, 1965).

Thus, the translation theory used is **Communicative Translation**. Translating accurately and contextually from the original into a language that readers can easily accept and understand is the aim of communicative translation. The translation word 'meninggal' makes the message more understandable than translating the word 'fallen asleep' to 'tertidur' Because it transfers the SL's contextual meaning to the TL.

SL: "They draw near to the **pit**"

TL: "sampai nyawanya menghampiri liang kubur"

The word '... the pit' is translated into '*liang kubur*' which signifies 'graveyard' cataphorically refers to a statement "... and their life to the messengers of death." (Job 33:22) uses euphemism. According to Nida (2001) euphemism is using acceptable ways of speaking about something bad or taboo (p.79). As defined by Foley & Hall (2003) a cataphoric reference serves as an equivalent word that refers to something later in the sentence. (p.328).

In KII (478) 'pit' *n* **1** *lubang* and according to KBBI (948) '*lubang*' *n* **1** *liang* – *kubur* a hole for burying corpses "*lubang untuk menguburkan mayat*". Unit shifts occur in a word 'pit' translated to '*lobang kubur*'. Catford stated unit shift to be an adjustment in rank, deviations from formal correspondence where the translation equivalent of a unit at the same level in the SL is a unit at another level in the TL. (Catford, 1965).

As a result, The text is translate using **Literal Translation**. The word 'pit' translated precisely to the word '*lubang kubur*' and preserve the TL Gramatical structure, as it is said in Newmark (1988) book about Literal Translation, The SL grammatical structures are transformed to their closest TL substitutes, but the words that are lexical are translated individually and out of context.

SL: "but he soon passed away and was no more;"

TL: "ketika aku lewat, lenyaplah ia,"

The phrase "... Passed away ..." in SL translated into '... *lenyaplah* ...' meaning 'death' cataphorically refers to a statement "... was no more; though I looked for him, he could not be found." (Psalms 37:36) uses euphemism. Euphemisms are commonly used when addressing sex, death, and death. (Abrams, 1999). Based on Foley & Hall (2003) a cataphoric reference is an equivalent word to refer to a matter afterward in the sentence (p.328).

According to the Cambridge Dictionary the phrase 'passed away' n to go out of existence. In KBBI (916) 'lenyap' a 1 musnah and according to TBI (2008) 'musnah' v binasa. In TBBBI "Suffixes -lah added to a word 'lenyaplah' is an imperative clausa serve to reduce the command tone." ... '-lah' digunakan untuk menghaluskan nada perintah dalam kalimat imperatif. ... (p.405)



The phrase 'passed away' translated into '*lenyaplah*' using **Functional Equivalent Procedure** purposed by Newmark. This popular procedure, employed to cultural words, involves the application of a culture-free word, occasionally with a new particular term; it thus neutralizes or generalizes the SL word, and sometimes adds an additional term. (Newmark, 2002)

SL: "Do not take away my soul along with sinners,"

TL: "Janganlah **mencabut** nyawaku bersama-sama orang berdosa,"

The phrase "Take away" in SL translated into "*mencabut*" meaning 'death' cataphorically refers to a statement "... it is better for me to die than to live." (Jonah 4:3) uses euphemism. Euphemisms are commonly used when addressing sex, death, and death. (Abrams, 1999). As stated on Foley & Hall (2003) a cataphoric reference is an equivalent word to refer to a matter afterward in the sentence (p.328)

Baesd on Merriam Webster Dictionary the word 'take away' as in eliminate n to put an end to or get rid of. In KBBI the word 'cabut' - nyawa ki membunuh

Therefore the translator used **Communicative Translation** in the translation by emphasizing the word in the target language by selecting an understandable word. According to Newmark (1988) Communicative translation seeks to convey the original's exact contextual meaning in such a way that the language and content are easily acceptable and understandable to the readership. (p.47)

## 3. Paradox

SL: "whoever **loses** their life will **preserve** it."

TL: "barangsiapa kehilangan nyawanya, ia akan menyelamatkannya."

There are contradictory meanings to the words 'loses' and 'preserve'. According to The Oxford Dictionary of Current English the word 'lose' n 2 be deprived of (a person) by death (p.525); 'preserve' n 2 maintain (a thing) in its existing state (p.706). According to Abrams (1999) Paradox is a statement that contradicts itself.

In KII (386) 'life' n 4 jiwa and according to KBBI (2008:639) 'jiwa' n nyawa. The plural form of 'their' is translated into the singular form 'nyawa-nya' with the using pronoun '-nya' as the subject described the word 'barangsiapa' n sembarang orang (TBI:47). According to TBBBI "Pronouns ... Positioned as a subject or in front of a verb, 'ia' and 'dia' can both be used. Only the forms 'dia' and '-nya' can appear when it functions as an object or is located to the right of what is described." Pronomina ... "Ia" dan "dia" dapat digunakan saat berfungsi sebagai subjek atau di depan verba; namun, jika berfungsi sebagai objek atau berada di sebeiah sebei

Therefore the translation method applied is **Transposition Procedure** proposed by Newmark. As Newmark stated "The third form of shift occurs when literal translation is grammatically acceptable but does not correspond to natural usage in the target language." (p.86). The use of pronouns in the TL text adapts TL equivalent grammatical structure.

SL: "Anyone who wants to be **first** must be the very **last.**"



TL: "Jika seseorang ingin menjadi yang **terdahulu**, hendaklah ia menjadi yang **terakhir** dari semuanya."

There are contradictory meanings to the words 'first' and 'last'. In KII 'first' -ks. 1 yang pertama contradictorily to the word 'last' -ks. 1 yang terakhir. According to Abrams (1999) paradox is a remarks that appears to be logically contrasting or absurd, but which can be interpreted in a way that makes sense.

In the TL text, there is a use of articulation 'yang' and prefixes 'ter-'. According to TBBBI, "As an articulation, a word 'yang' forms a nominal phrase from a verb, adjective, or other class of words that are definitional or definite. The same characteristics will appear if the word is between a noun and its adjective." Sebagai artikula, kata yang berasal dari verba, adjektiva, atau kelas kata lain yang berfungsi sebagai definisi atau takrif. Jika kata mengantarai nomina dengan pewatasnya, sifatnya akan sama. (p.403) "This level in a sentence is expressed by using the affix 'ter-' or divider 'paling' before the adjective." Tingkat superlatif ... Pemakaian afiks "ter-" atau pewatas "paling" sebelum adjektiva menunjukkan tingkat kalimat. (p.216)

Thus the translation method applied is **Free Translation**. According to Newmark (2002), Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original.

SL: "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

TL: "sebagai orang berdukacita, namun senantiasa bersukacita."

There are contradictory meanings to the word' sorrowful' and 'rejoicing'. In KII (600) 'sorrowful' *ks sedih* in TBI '*sedih' a 'duka*' contradictorily to the word 'rejoicing' *kb. kegirangan, kegembiraan*, in TBI '*kegembiraan' a kesukacitaan*. According to Abrams (1999), Paradox is a statement that contradicts itself.

The transposition procedure occur here as the word 'sorrowful' as an adjective converted to the word 'berdukacita' as a verb. As stated by Newmark, "A 'shift' (Catford's term) or 'transposition' (Vinay and Darbelnet) is a translation procedure involving a change in the grammar from SL to TL." (Newmark, 2002:85). The change from the class of adjectives to verbs is marked using prefixes ber-, in TBBBI "Intransitive verbs with the prefix 'ber-' can also be derived from adjectives. The meaning of this prefix is "in a state"" ... Verba taktransitif dengan prefiks "ber-" dapat berasal dari adjektiva, yang berarti "dalam keadaan".(p.149)

Therefore, the translation going through **Transposition Procedure**, as stated by Newmark in his book "A Textbook of Translation", "A second type of shift is required when an SL grammatical structure does not exist in the TL." (p.85)

SL: "poor, yet making many rich."

TL: "sebagai **orang miskin**, namun **memperkaya** banyak orang."

There are contradictory meanings to the word 'poor' and 'rich'. In KII (486) 'poor' *adj miskin* contradictorily to the word (544) 'rich' *adj kaya*. According to Abrams, paradox is a remarks that appears to be logically contrasting or absurd, but which can be interpreted in a way that makes sense. (1999:201).



The word 'poor' translated to phrase 'orang miskin' meanwhile the phrase "making many rich" is translated to "memperkaya banyak orang" going through grammatical structural changes. The word 'poor' translated to 'orang miskin' used **Semantic Translation** ... typically overtranslate, goes after nuances of meaning, but aims for concision in order to replicate pragmatic impact and the phrase "making ... rich" is translated into 'memperkaya' used **Communicative Translation** ... typically under-translate, to be clear, straightforward, and brief, and constantly writes in a natural and resourceful manner.

#### **Discussion**

After analyzing the translation techniques used in chosen figurative items, such as euphemism, symbolism, and paradox, the researcher discovered six translation methods and two translation procedures. The translation methods used include Communicative Translation, Semantic Translation, Faithful Translation, Free Translation, Communicative Translation, and Literal Translation. Transposition and Functional Equivalent Procedure are the two translation procedures used.

Because of the numerous instances of adding affixes to translation results and changing positions and grammatical classes, transposition is the most commonly used translation technique in the data.

## **CONCLUSION**

The data analyzed is a figurative expression found in the Bible, so the researcher selected three figurative expressions to be analyzed: euphemism, symbolism, and paradox. Each figurative expression occurs four data. Aside from figurative expression, the researcher looked at the translator's techniques for translating figurative expression from the English version of the Bible into the Indonesian version. The researcher identified 12 data points, which included translation techniques. According to Newmark's (1988) theory, there are eight categories of translation method and seventeen categories of translation procedure. The researcher discovered six types of translation method and two types of translation procedure that translators use to translate the Bible. Transposition Procedure -The most dominant translation techniques- contains four sentences, 3 sentences in Communicative Translation, 2 sentences in Free Translation, 1 Sentence in Faithful Translation, 1 Sentence in Literal Translation, 1 Sentence in Functional Equivalent procedure, and 1 Sentence in Semantic Translation.

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