

# Semantic Analysis of Translation on Bilingual Children Story Books

Maryani<sup>a,1,\*</sup>, Ika Puspita Rini<sup>b,2</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Institute of Health Science Surya Global, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia

<sup>b</sup> Civil Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup> marry.tenang@gmail.com\*; <sup>2</sup> pita.marya@gmail.com

\* corresponding author

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## ABSTRACT

English has an important role in the world. Many parents try to introduce English to their children as early as possible. One way is to introduce bilingual children's story books as a medium for learning English at home. Therefore, it is necessary to control the quality of bilingual storybooks so that children can learn vocabulary properly and easy to understand and can use it in basic communication. The purpose of this study is to determine the semantic accuracy of the Indonesian and English equivalents and to determine the suitability of Indonesian and English equivalents for use by children. The research design used was a qualitative research design. The type of research was content analysis. The subject of this research was linguistic semiotics, which was a bilingual books. This story book was taken at random. The object of this research was the meaning contained in the Indonesian and English texts. The data analysis technique used is the equivalent method using the CEFR assessment. The results show that there are equivalent and not equivalent meanings, various CEFR levels, inconsistencies translation, and word for word translation technique. The conclusion in this study is the equivalence of the meaning of Indonesian - English words is mostly achieved. Based on the CEFR level, it is found that the A2 level is mostly at the beginner or basic user level. However, it is also found that the English equivalents are not suitable for children or for beginners based on CEFR levels such as C1 and C2 levels. There are inconsistencies in translation from the source language to the target/target language. Most of the translation techniques use word for word techniques.

## I. Introduction

In the era of globalization, the development of information and technology is very fast. The exchange of information and technology at the international level is carried out using English. TESOL UMY volunteer lecturer, Phil Taylor, M.Ed., in an international seminar with the theme "The Challenges and Strategies of Teaching and Learning English for Communication Skills in the 21st Century" stated that 95% of scientific research publications use English as the medium of instruction. (BHP UMY, 2010). Therefore, English has a very important role. People who do not want to be left behind by the development of information and technology must be able to master English. This causes the need for learning English to increase. Based on a survey conducted by one of the study programs at UMY, it also showed an increasing public interest in English (BHP UMY, 2010).

The high public interest is also shown by the increasing number of parents trying to introduce English to their children as early as possible. Restuningrum (2018) states that parents believe that giving children exposure to a second (foreign) language when these children have received sufficient exposure to their mother tongue is very important. This is in line with the opinion expressed by Santrock (in Khairani, 2011) that children learn foreign languages more easily than adults. Gleason (in Sophya, 2013) also argues that children are able to learn languages quickly and almost without great effort. Therefore, parents do various ways so that their children are exposed to

English. The ways that may be done by parents are to send their children to international schools or schools that have an English curriculum, or by sending their children to English language courses.

In addition to submitting English language learning to formal/non-formal educational institutions, parents also have a role in providing exposure to English at home. The parent's presentation can be done in various ways, for example, inviting the child to speak English, singing together in English or reading English stories. Research conducted by Farihatin (2013) shows that reading storybooks to children at home can improve children's basic literacy skills. Therefore, parents who want their children to master English can take advantage of reading English story books. English story reading can be done by using bilingual story books. Bilingual here means dual language, namely English and Indonesian. Children who have been introduced to foreign language learning will help them get to know a second language both at home and at school. Based on Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI/Indonesia Dictionary) (2018) defines bilingualism as the ability to use two languages well and concerned with or contains two languages. Meanwhile, according to Hurlock (1993), bilingualism is the ability to use two languages. This ability is not only in speaking and writing but also the ability to understand what others communicate orally and writing. Children who have bilingual abilities understand foreign languages as well as children's understanding of their parents' languages. Children are able to speak, read and write in two languages with the same ability. In the market, parents can get bilingual story books very easily. Parents only need to choose bilingual story books that they like and educate. Children's story books are usually also supported by good illustrations for children.

Children's story books at least have two of the three criteria which according to Ur (Khairani, 2011) are a source of attention for children, namely pictures and fairy tales. With illustrations and stories that are interesting for children, bilingual story books can be a medium for learning English for children at home. The interesting illustrations that are usually found in bilingual story books and the use of Indonesian in bilingual story books make it easier for children to master English vocabulary. The use of bilingual storybooks as a medium for learning English is also easier to do. Parents can read to their children the storybooks or children can read on their own as a form of independent English learning.

Therefore, it is necessary to control the quality of bilingual story books. Quality control is needed so that these children can learn appropriate and easy-to-understand vocabulary and can use it in basic communication. Montessori (Khairani, 2011) states that a good and correct way of speaking must be introduced to children, because these children will use the skills they get to communicate with their environment. The quality of translation of bilingual story books that is not good will cause problems. Problems that may arise, for example an inappropriate word equivalent will cause misunderstandings if the word is applied by children in communication, the choice of an equivalent word that is too difficult for children to pronounce will make children frustrated to pronounce it so they stop learning. Therefore, it is important for publishers, translators and editors to understand the stages of vocabulary that can be used in the bilingual story books they publish. In the Indonesian Big Dictionary (KBBI) (2018), equivalent words or synonyms are defined as language forms whose meanings are similar to or the same as other language forms. Meanwhile in the Linguistics Dictionary (2008), Kridalaksana mentions that word equivalent is a condition in which a word can be substituted (replaced) with other words in the same context and the meaning of the context does not change. In other words, the two words can be said to be synonymous. Another opinion that is not much different is expressed by Soedjito (1992) according to him, synonym is the similarity of meaning or meaning, two or more words that have the same meaning.

Ki Hajar Dewantara (in Pamungkas, 2017) states about the Three Education Centers, namely home, school and community. All of them has a very important role in supporting the learning process of children. Bilingual storybook publishers, translators and editors are part of the community. Therefore, they have an obligation to provide good learning media for children. Publishers, translators and editors must be able to control the translation in bilingual story books so that the child's learning process can be achieved. Translation, according to Halliday (in Manfredi, 2008: 59) is "*a meaning-making activity*". When humans communicate, they carry out an activity to make meaning. It has similar opinion of Schulte & Biguenet which states "*all acts of communication are acts of translation*" (Tou, 2008: 17). Thus, translation is related to the communication process that can involve various forms of semiotics. In other words, translation is a semiotic process (Matthiessen, 2001: 51). Through Translatics theory, Tou (2008: 15) defines translation as "...

*translational semiotic communication (TSC) and in its turn as metasemiotic*". According to Translativity's view, the phenomenon of translation is first viewed and interpreted as a phenomenon of Translational Semiotic Communication (KST) and is ultimately viewed and interpreted as a metasemiotic phenomenon (Tou, 2008: 24).

Translation as a form of metasemiotic phenomena can take the form of two linguistic texts that appear simultaneously. Two linguistic texts are texts that use two different languages. Tou (2008) states that *"the two linguistic texts in the two languages simultaneously realize the TSC text in that the two realizing linguistic texts in the two languages come to the participants in the same temporal location of a TSC event or text (and even also in the same spatial location)"*. This means that a bilingual text is a form of translation that appears at the same time and it is accepted by the recipient at the same time. Therefore, a translator, editor or publisher must pay attention to the quality of the translation in order to get quality translations.

However, not all publishers, translators and editors pay attention to the quality of translation in bilingual story books. This can be seen in the preliminary data found in bilingual story books on the market. For example, finding the equivalent of an English word that is not suitable to be introduced to children. The equivalent of an English word that is not suitable to be introduced to children is the word *'slumber'*. *'Slumber'* is used as the equivalent of *'sleep'* in Indonesian. The word *'slumber'* is not suitable to be paired with the word *'sleep'* when it is associated with the introduction of English words for children. The word *'slumber'* does mean sleep, but according to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary 3rd Edition, the word is used in the context of writing literary works or is used to give the impression of being proficient in English. There is an equivalent of the word *'tidur'* which is more communicative and more suitable for use by children, namely *'sleep'*. Therefore, the research on "Semantic Analysis of Translation on Bilingual Children Story Books" is interesting to study. The purpose of this study is to find out about the semantic accuracy of the Indonesian and English word equivalents and to determine the suitability of the Indonesian and English equivalents for use by children.

## II. Method

This research design is a qualitative research design. The type of research that will be used is content analysis. This research is about translation involving two languages (Indonesian and English) in a bilingual story book, so this research will not specifically take a certain place as a place of research. So that the process of collecting and analyzing data can occur anywhere with the condition that the source of the data (bilingual storybooks) is with the researcher. The subject of this research is linguistic semiotics, namely bilingual story books (Indonesian and English). The bilingual story book which is the subject of this study was taken by random sampling. The object of this research is the meaning contained in the Indonesian text and English text. The meaning is translated in Indonesian words and/or phrases and English words and/or phrases contained in the research subject. The instruments used in this research are writing instruments, laptops and researchers as Human Instruments. The data analysis technique used in this research is the matching method.

## III. Results and Discussion

### A. Results

Based on the result on the equivalency of meaning, we found that there are the meanings that are equivalent and not equivalent such as follows:

Table 1. Equivalency of Meaning

	Data Number	Word	
		English	Indonesian
Equivalent	4.3	fair	Adil
	4.4	bless	memberkati
	3.2	stronger	Kuat
Not equivalent	4.2	Land	Negeri
	13.19	Peasant	Petani
	5.10	Worst	Buruk

Based on the data above, it can be explained that the equivalent words as in data 3.2 are the word 'foliage' which mean *dedaunan*, data 3.11 the word 'race' means a *lomba lari*, data 4.10 the word 'ancient' means *kuno* and data 4.19 the word 'cast (a spell)' means to pronounce (mantra), all these words have the meaning properly in English so there is no equivalent meaning in the translation and it is appropriate for L2 learners because the equivalent words used are simple and still equivalent. Meanwhile, unequal words, it can be seen in data 4.1 the word 'ancient time' means *Zaman dahulu*, the word is better replaced with the word 'previous time' the word is more simple and familiar to children. Furthermore, in data 4.11 the word 'servant' means the *hamba* should be interpreted directly to himself or can be replaced with the word 'I' (*aku/saya*), then data 4.12 the word 'whiskers' means *kumis*, actually the word 'kumis' is more easily recognized by the word 'mustache'. it is not whiskers because the word means *cambang* .

There are words that should not use for beginner levels, which is A1 based on CEFR levels. The improper word levels that we found are:

Table 2. CEFR Level Founded

Level	Examples	
	Data Number	Word
A2	3.2	stronger
	3.9	agree
	4.6	Decide
	4.46	Hurt
	5.10	Worst
	7.11	Gift
	7.13	Wand
	17.20	Wonderful
	23.24	trance
B1	3.1	Appear
	4.3	fair
	4.6	Items
	4.8	Unfair
	5.5	Light
	6.8	celebrate
B2	3.3	feared
	3.12	pessimistic
	4.4	mockery
	4.14	Educated
	5.6	Dawn
C1	6.6	kingdom
	3.10	reluctant
	4.12	Scholar
C2	13.19	peasant
	3.1	inhabited
	3.13	implementation
	4.20	cast (a spell)
	7.12	Wave
18.21	hopped	

Based on the data above, it can be explained that the equivalent words as in data 3.2 are the word 'foliage' which mean *dedaunan*, data 3.11 the word 'race' means a *lomba lari*, data 4.10 the word 'ancient' means *kuno* and data 4.19 the word 'cast (a spell)' means to pronounce (mantra), all these words have the meaning properly in English so there is no equivalent meaning in the translation and it is appropriate for L2 learners because the equivalent words used are simple and still equivalent. Meanwhile, unequal words, it can be seen in data 4.1 the word 'ancient time' means *Zaman dahulu*, the word is better replaced with the word 'previous time' the word is more simple and familiar to children. Furthermore, in data 4.11 the word 'servant' means the *hamba* should be interpreted directly to himself or can be replaced with the word 'I' (*aku/saya*), then data 4.12 the word 'whiskers' means *kumis*, actually the word 'kumis' is more easily recognized by the word 'mustache'. it is not whiskers because the word means *cambang* .

Table 3. Inconsistency Translation

Data Number	Word	
	English	Indonesian
4.7	flask	Buli-Buli
4.8	jar	Buli-Buli

There are some inconsistencies in the translation, such as data number 4.7 (flask) and 4.8 (jar). Both are used for Indonesian word *buli-buli*. Inconsistency should be avoided in term of L2 learners in beginner level because it will confuse the beginner level and the mastery of word might not be achieved.

Table 5. Translation Technique

Data Number	Word	
	English	Indonesian
3.1	appear	tampak
6.14	inhales	menghirup
6.15	powder	bubuk
7.11	gift	hadiah
11.15	participant	peserta
11.31	Abdominal pain	Nyeri perut
14.25	Young woman	Wanita muda

Based on table above, it can be explained that the data sources in the form of words such as appear (3.1), inhales (6.14), powder (6.15), gift (7.11), participant (11.15) are literally translated into Indonesian become tampak, menghirup, bubuk, hadiah, peserta. While the data in the form of phrases such as abdominal pain (11.31) and young woman (14.25) were translated into Indonesian become nyeri perut, wanita muda. From the explanation above, it is clear that the translation technique used is word-for-word translation. This type of translation allows the translator to find words in the target language that are equivalent to the source language. However, it also has weaknesses, such as the level of equivalent words that are not suitable for certain CEFR levels of targeted L2 learners.

## B. Discussion

Based on the meaning equivalency, the bilingual books for children have several words that were not translated properly because the English words are not equivalent to the Indonesian words. For example, hamba is translated into “servant” (4.11). Even though hamba in Indonesian, indeed, is equal to servant, the meaning of hamba in the text actually refers to “I”. Hamba is a polite form to refer I especially in the context between a titled peer and a commoner. Another example is the word kumis is translated into “whiskers” (4.22). The English version is not equivalent to the Indonesian word; whiskers mean “the hair that grows on a man’s face; beard”, while kumis means bulu (rambut) yang tumbuh di atas bibir atas, biasanya hanya terdapat pada laki-laki; misai. Both are facial hair that grows on a man’s face, but they have different location on the face. In short, kumis is equal to moustache, while whiskers are equal to cambang in Indonesian.

Nonetheless, most of all Indonesian words are translated equally into English. However, there is still a problem in the word choice itself, even though it is equivalent, which is the CEFR level. The books actually are for Indonesian children who are introduced to English or are starting to learn English. Therefore, based on CEFR level, those children are on beginner level or A1 level. However, the researchers found that the English equivalents are not in the A1 level. The level found, besides A1, are ranged from A2 level to C2 level, so the CEFR levels are very differed. For example, *mengucapkan (mantra)* is translated into “cast (a spell)” (4.20); the English version is indeed equal to its Indonesian version. However, the English word “cast (a spell)” has C2 level of CEFR. Therefore, it is not proper to use in books for children who are beginning to learn English. It will be much better if the word *mengucapkan (mantra)* is translated to “say” in English, which is synonymous with “cast”. Even though, the word “say” is not 100% equal to its Indonesian word, the children will be more familiar with the word and the repetition method is achieved, so then the

children will be easier to remember the word in English. In the end, hopefully, the children are able to master one English word properly.

Besides using synonymy to achieve the proper CEFR level, it is also possible to achieve the suitable level by changing the sentence structure. For example, *tampak* is translated into “appear” (3.1). Even though they are equivalent, “appear” has B1 level of CEFR. To achieve A1 level, it is possible to change the structure of the sentence without changing the meaning:

[Indonesian] ... *tampak sekelompok rusa yang terdiri dari 20 ekor* ...

[English] ... it **appears** a group of deer that consists of 20 ...

The English version will be fit to A1 level when the structure is changed:

... **there** are 20 deer ...

Based on the results, it can be seen that even though the meaning equivalency is achieved, it does not mean that the equivalent word is suitable for certain level of L2 learners. Therefore, it is important to choose the most suitable translation technique.

#### IV. Conclusion

Overall, it can be concluded that the equivalency of Indonesian - English word meaning is mostly achieved; however, many of those English equivalents are not suitable for children or for beginner level based on CEFR levels.

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