

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of The Study

Poetry translation has become an important part of developing intercultural language, preserving literary history, and facilitating the exchange of ideas across language barriers. Poetry, with its metaphors and culturally rich vocabulary, presents a challenge for translators (Shah & Pokhriyal, 2024). Shepherd (2008) argues that poetry is difficult to translate because of its resistance to facile communication. Frost (1995) stated that poetry is what is lost in translation. Similarly, Jakobson (1959) believed that poetry is, by definition, untranslatable. However, translation is a rewriting of the source text. All acts of rewriting, regardless of purpose, reflect a particular culture and poetics, thus shaping how literature functions within a society (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1992). Otherwise, the figurative language from the original text must be conveyed with the same meaning or sense into the target text. One of the fundamental concepts in translation studies aimed at achieving this objective is the concept of equivalence.

Equivalence in translation refers to the concept that a relationship of equal value can exist between the source language and the target language. This value can manifest in different forms, such as form, meaning, or function. The key idea is that the value doesn't need to be the same in every case, but rather that some level of equivalence can be established between the two languages, whether through maintaining the form, the reference, or the function (Pym, 2023). Once equivalence was viewed as a process of this transformation, scholars rapidly began to discover several distinct types of equivalence.

Nida & Taber (1982) stated that equivalence in translating involves reproducing for the target language readers the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, in terms of meaning and style. They focus on both the content and form of the message to reproduce the same effect as the original text. Nida (1986) then proposed the concept of “functional equivalence”, which focuses on the concept of function. It means that a reader of a translated text should be able to understand it in such a way that they can imagine how the original reader would have interpreted and valued the text (Wang, 2024).

Nida's Functional Equivalence theory differs from the earliest theories that focus on verbal comparison between the source language and the target language. Nida introduces a new approach to achieving equivalence, emphasizing the relationship between the readers and the text (Colina, 2015). To achieve functional equivalence, translators must adhere to specific rules and principles in terms of lexical, syntactic, and discourse equivalence. The principles make functional equivalence a broad and flexible model that gives deeper insights than standard translation methods (Wang, 2024).

Particularly within literary texts such as poetry, where language is deeply embedded in a figurative language style, the role of translation becomes increasingly complex and essential. Nida's approach moves beyond literal or formal correspondences and emphasises the receptor's response, thereby acknowledging the dynamic and interpretive nature of translation. Thus, this paper uses functional equivalence as one of the possible approaches to translate the poetry.

This notion was inspired by several researchers, such as (Zhou, 2022), who coined the notion of applying functional equivalence in the translation of Prose; (Ma, 2014) who states that Nida's functional equivalence provides translator with guidance to the translation of poems; and (Feng, 2024) claims Nida's functional equivalence as an important theory in translation to conveyed the cultural information that can be helpful to improve translation quality of literary text and reduce readers reading burden.

Research on the implementation of functional equivalence in other literary works has been discussed in many previous studies. For instance, Pan (2022) focuses on the implementation of functional equivalence in the translation of Chinese idioms into English using a social semiotic approach. The study concludes that achieving functional equivalence in idiom translation is complex but essential for preserving cultural nuances and developing cross-cultural communication.

Another study conducted by Duan & Li (2024) investigates the translation of culture-loaded words (CLWs) in *The Three-Body Problem* through the lens of functional equivalence theory. (Duan & Li, 2024) conclude that functional equivalence theory is effective for translating cultural nuances in science fiction; however, improvements are needed to achieve better emotional resonance and cultural depth in translations. Similarly, Li (2017) focuses on the challenges of translating business English. To address these challenges, Li (2017) study employs the functional equivalence theory to explore effective translation strategies. The paper also provides recommendations for enhancing the quality of business English translations, ensuring that they are both precise and reliable.

However, this study will explore the implementation of Nida's Functional Equivalence theory in the translation of three of W.S. Rendra's selected poems, titled "Khotbah," Sajak Sebatang Lisong," and "Pemandangan Senjakala." Rendra's work is rich with cultural elements, metaphors, and other figurative language that make the task of translation particularly demanding. Perrine (1977) defined figurative language as any expression that differs from normal, literal language. (Sandy et al., 2021) stated that it should not be understood literally, as it employs words to convey a meaning that differs from their literal sense, requiring us to interpret the relationship between the two elements involved. Perrine (1977) stated that figurative language compares different things to produce an effect and is not intended to be taken in a literal, but in an imaginative way.

Research regarding the figurative language was conducted by Sandy et al., (2021), who identify and interpret the types and meanings of figurative language used in selected poems by Thomas Hardy. Sandy et al., (2021) conclude that figurative language in Hardy's poems serves to convey abstract emotions such as sorrow and love more vividly and symbolically. Similarly, Laimena & Que (2022) analysed the figurative language used in Laksmi Pamuntjak poems. Laimena & Que (2022) conclude that Pamuntjak's poems uses a rich variety of figurative language to express themes such as love, freedom, and survival, helping readers engage emotionally and interpret the deeper meanings in her poetic expressions.

Therefore, a translation process is needed to produce an accurate, natural, and clear translation of these poems. (Newmark, 1988) stated that translation is the rendering of a text's meaning into another language in the way the author intended the text. Based on Newmark (1988), there are several translation

procedures, namely literal translation, transference, naturalisation, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, descriptive equivalent, synonym, transpositions, modulation, compensation, reduction and expansion, paraphrase, couplets, and componential analysis. The procedure is very important because it is used to determine the equivalence meaning of figurative language in poetry and achieve functional equivalence.

To strengthen the research, the writer has collected several studies that apply Newmark's translation procedure. The first study, conducted by (Puspani & Indrawati (2018), analyses the translation procedures used in translating English poetry into Indonesian. The study identifies various translation procedures based on Newmark's. The study concludes that the translator aimed to convey both the meaning and aesthetic value of the original poem, ensuring that the target text has a similar impression on the readers.

Meanwhile, Eskandari et al (2023) investigate the English translations of Persian poet Parvin E'tesami's work, applying Newmark's cultural translation strategies. It reveals that translators often use strategy couplets (combined strategies) and modulation to handle cultural expressions while preserving poetic form and meaning. Literal translation is frequently used but supplemented with culturally specific techniques when necessary to retain depth and nuance.

Despite the existence of previous studies, none have specifically used the Nida functional equivalence to the translation of figurative language in poetry using Newmark translation procedures. Therefore, this study aims to bridge that gap by analysing the translation of WS Rendra's poems using Nida's functional

equivalence theory to examine the procedures employed and their effectiveness in preserving the figurative language in the target text.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What kinds of figurative language are used in the Indonesian versions of W.S. Rendra's selected poems?
2. What types of translation procedures are used in translating of W.S. Rendra's selected poems?
3. How is Functional Equivalence implemented in W.S. Rendra's selected poetry?

1.3. Scope of The Study

This study focuses on analysing the figurative language, translation procedures and the theory of functional equivalence in W.S. Rendra's selected poems, titled "Khotbah," "Sajak Sebatang Lisong," and "Pemandangan Senjakala," which have been professionally translated by Harry Aveling. The method for this study is descriptive, employing a qualitative approach to analyse the poems through Perrine's framework of figurative language, Newmark's translation procedures, and Nida's theory of Functional Equivalence. It will assess whether the translation successfully maintains the figurative language and conveys the same equivalence level as the source text.

1.4. Limitations of The Study

This study will use Perrine's figurative language and Newmark's translation procedures to analyse how the translation achieves functional equivalence. This study is limited by the lack of similar previous research on functional equivalence, especially in the context of Indonesian-English translation

studies. Most previous study was conducted in Chinese Literature (C-E). Additionally, this study will focus solely on the figurative language that appears in the three translations of W.S. Rendra's poems.

1.5. Purpose of The Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the kinds of figurative language that appear in the poems, analyse the types of procedures applied, and examine how functional equivalence is implemented in poems.

1.6. Significance of The Study

The study aims to contribute to the development of translation studies in general and specifically on the application of functional equivalence theory through the lens of literary devices such as poetry. By examining the figurative language, translation procedure, and functional equivalence used in the translation of W.S. Rendra's poems, the writer can gain knowledge of the translation style that has been used by Harry Aveling to express the same ideas, emotions, and experiences as in the source language, which have huge differences in cultures.