

## ERRORS IN THE TRANSLATION OF QUOTATIONS IN BOLA.COM NEWS STORIES

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### **Abstract**

*This article identifies and categorizes translation errors found in the translation of quotations in football stories posted on bola.com. Using functional approach, this descriptive qualitative research employs Nord's taxonomy of translation errors as the theoretical groundwork in identifying the errors and then analyzing their functional impacts to the target quotations. After comparing the source and target translations, this research finds 13 (thirteen) errors, including pragmatic errors, text-specific errors, linguistic errors, and cultural errors. Overall, pragmatic error is found to be the most crucial type of error and most easily exposed. The findings imply that documentary translation approach in translating quotation in sport stories should not be rigidly used as this could sacrifice the expressive function that a quotation may serve.*

**Keywords:** translation errors, quotation, text function, documentary translation, sport story

### **Abstrak**

Artikel ini mengidentifikasi dan mengkategorisasi kesalahan penerjemahan yang ditemukan pada terjemahan kutipan dalam artikel berita sepakbola (*football story*) yang diposting di situs *bola.com*. Dengan pendekatan fungsional, penelitian deskriptif kualitatif ini mengaplikasikan kategorisasi kesalahan penerjemahan yang dikemukakan oleh Nord sebagai landasan teoretis dalam mengidentifikasi serta menganalisis dampak fungsional kesalahan tersebut terhadap kutipan sasaran. Setelah membandingkan kutipan sumber dan sasaran, ditemukan 13 (tiga belas) kesalahan penerjemahan berupa *kesalahan pragmatik*, *kesalahan tekstual*, *kesalahan linguistik*, dan *kesalahan kultural*. Secara keseluruhan, kesalahan pragmatik menjadi jenis yang paling krusial dan mudah terlihat. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan penerjemahan

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dokumenter dalam menerjemahkan kutipan teks berita olahraga tidak perlu digunakan secara kaku karena dapat menghilangkan *fungsi ekspresif* yang dapat terkandung dalam sebuah kutipan.

**Kata kunci:** kesalahan penerjemahan, kutipan, fungsi teks, penerjemahan dokumenter, berita olahraga.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Fusion between sport, business, and media has imposed significant impacts which transforms how sport news is delivered. With the minute-by-minute updates of sport events, online media unavoidably becomes more adaptable to such nature rather than printed media. Still, the circulation pace and space limit should not compromise the quality of online sport news. In this respect, sport journalists/translators are expected to produce accurate and communicative news stories. Sport journalists should not only be capable of dealing with the journalistic aspect but also translating aspect, especially in rendering quotation, one of the essential parts of sport stories, which “adds flavor, detail, emotion and information” (Stofer, Schaffer and Rosenthal, 2010: 65).

This article attempts to identify and categorize errors in the translation of quotations in *bola.com* football stories using functional approach, particularly by implementing Nord’s translation errors taxonomy (2018). Online football news stories are interesting to investigate considering the popularity of football around the globe (Boyle, 2006: 134). As part of digital sport journalism, where the circulation pace and time pressure are highly taken into consideration, football journalism demands the journalists to deliver news stories as speedy and accurate as possible. By investigating errors of quotation translation in online football news stories, this article encourages news readers to be more critical in understanding sport stories.

## 2. QUOTATION IN SPORT STORIES

As a product of journalism, sport stories for some people are sometimes considered petty or trivial. “In the hierarchy of professional journalism, it has been traditionally viewed disparagingly as the ‘toy

department', a bastion of easy living, sloppy journalism and 'soft' news (Boyle, 2006: 1). Paradoxically, sports news always mattered, not only to popular press (tabloids) but also to 'serious' newspapers and news agencies including *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *BBC*, etc.

Stofer, Schaffer and Rosenthal (2010: 134) assert that writing sport stories is not enough to report who won, who lost and what the score was. Sport journalists need to cover how people interacted to reach that end and use details to bring sport event to life. In order to realize it, they must assure that the sport stories are based on three essential elements: facts, information, and quotations (Stofer, Schaffer and Rosenthal, 2010: 107). By using quotations, a sport story becomes a vivid writing instead of a dreary narrative with facts and numbers. Stofer, Schaffer and Rosenthal (2010: 66) further assert that quoting sources is important to strengthen the news story with opinion or insights that journalists themselves cannot express.

With its role to add flavor, detail, emotion, and information, therefore quotation serves at least two basic text functions: *informative* and/or *expressive*. The former implies the use of language to represent or describe objects or facts whereas the latter denotes the use of idioms, repetitions, exclamations or other expressive-poetic devices, to express a person's feeling or attitude (Munday, 2016: 115). In this case, Crystal (2008: 235) defines the former as *ideational function* and the latter as *expressive* or *emotive function*. Either can exist, or in other cases, both functions co-exist in a quotation. Considering the significance of those functions, journalist need to make sure that they quote the source accurately so that the quotation performs its intended functions. In other words, translated quotation must comparably represent, at least the content and at the most, form and situation of the source as well.

### **3. TRANSLATION ERROR**

Functionalism primarily maintains that any translation action shall be determined by the function or purpose the translation intends to fulfil. If the target text is meant to document or report faithfully the

source text through formal correspondence, it is define as *documentary translation* whereas any target text intended to transmit communicatively the source message in target language to fulfill its communicative purpose is called *instrumental translation* (Munday, 2016: 131). Meanwhile, Hatim (2013: 99) stresses that with *documentary translation*, the source text is simply reproduced with no special allowance made for the target context, by using various techniques such as word-for-word, literal translation and exoticizing translation. Considering its characteristics, Nord (2018: 46) believes that *documentary translation* is the appropriate approach in translating quotation in news texts, particularly by using literal translation and emphasizing the reproduction of the source text form.

Based on this principle, Nord (2018: 68) then puts forward that “if the purpose of a translation is to achieve a particular function for the target addressee, anything that obstructs the achievement of this purpose is a translation error”. Therefore, translation error is not simply inaccuracy in reproducing source text content in target language. Rather, it is whether the inaccuracy plays role in the failure of the translation in serving its purpose. (Nord, 2018: 69) further adds that translation error occurs due to inadequate solution to any translation problem; whether pragmatic, cultural, linguistic, or text-specific one. According to Palumbo (2009: 128-129), translation problem “is seen as items, features or aspects in a given source text that pose some kind of difficulty for the translator or require the translator to provide solutions that are adequate in target language and not retrieved through automatic or routine processes”.

To be clear, Nord (2018: 69) concludes that translation error happens due to a failure to carry out the function of the target text and/or an inadequate solution to a translation problem. In this respect, Nord (2018: 70) classifies translation errors based on types of translation problem that is not well tackled:

- *Pragmatic errors*, caused by incompatibility between source-text situation and target-text situation due to inadequacy in

representing the meaning in particular situation. This can be identified by checking on the extratextual factors (sender, receiver, medium, time, place, motive, text function);

- *Cultural errors*, caused by inadequate reproduction or adaptation of culture-specific conventions, including genre, style and non-verbal behavior terms related to a specific culture standards;
- *Linguistic errors*, caused by an inadequate translation when the focus is on language structures and grammar;
- *Text-specific errors*, caused by inadequacy in translating items specifically bound to the source text such as certain figures of speech, neologism and puns which distort the text's function.

Nord (2018: 70) explicates that these errors can be drawn up into a top-down hierarchy in which the rank depends on the influence they have on the function of the target text. The more they cause impacts to the function of the target text, the more severe they are. These four error categories then become the parameter in identifying and categorizing any errors in the translation of quotations in *bola.com* sport stories.

#### **4. METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

This research is a product-oriented research using descriptive qualitative approach in the form of textual analysis and case study. The data are samples of quotations' translation in football stories. There are eight direct quotations to be analyzed taken from five football stories posted on *bola.com* during September until October 2019.

Data collection is performed by firstly reading the quotations in the football stories posted on *bola.com*. The second step is reading the corresponding source quotations in the football stories from which *bola.com* took as the source. Then, each pair is compared one another. The parameter of data selection is based on the characteristic of translation error as proposed by Nord (2018): inadequate solution to a translation problem, either pragmatically, culturally, linguistically, or text-specifically.

Following Nord's functional model of analysis (Munday, 2016: 132-134), the data analysis goes as follows: (1) compare the intended text function and purpose of source quotations to decide the functional type of translation to be produced (*documentary* or *instrumental*); (2) recognize any lexeme and/or sentence structure of source quotations which are problematic to translate in target language; (3) decide the translation strategy that will be necessary to adopt; (4) recognize any translational action in the target quotations which fails to reproduce those source quotations' elements adequately; and (5) categorize any failure found based on Nord's error taxonomy.

## 5. FINDING

This section starts with the detailed functional analysis of each source quotation and its corresponding target quotation.

### Data 1

Source quotation : "Exactly what I thought **of him** when I saw him playing for our Under-16s."

Target quotation : "Persis apa yang saya pikirkan **tentang dia** ketika saya melihatnya bermain untuk Timnas Inggris U-16."

Based on the news story, this quotation is spoken by the England national football team manager, Gareth Southgate, when being asked about the performance improvement of a young England player, Mason Mount. The source quotation expresses that Southgate is not surprised since he once coached Mount while still played for the England Under 16s team. The source quotation carries out informative function, i.e. the fact that Southgate has already known the quality of Mount. With such literal translation strategy adopted, the target quotation performs the function in the same way as the source quotation does. In other words, the target quotation is a *documentary translation*.

However, looking at the source quotation, there is a translation unit *thought of him* which is syntactically acceptable in English but quite problematic when translated into Indonesian. At least, the translator needs to choose whether to translate it literally or to deal

with “of him” creatively. There might be two translation alternatives which seem to be better than the target quotation above: (1) “**Dia** persis apa yang saya pikirkan ketika saya melihatnya bermain untuk Timnas Inggris U-16”; and (2) “Persis apa yang saya pikirkan (**omitted**) ketika saya melihatnya bermain untuk Timnas Inggris U-16.” These alternatives are more natural in Indonesian than keeping up with the source structure “Persis apa yang saya pikirkan **tentang dia...**” which sounds awkward and redundant considering the existence of personal pronoun suffix “-nya” referring to Mount in the following clause.

Seemingly, the translator opts to go literally and preserve the source language syntactic structure instead of using semantic translation strategy which takes more account of the aesthetic value in the target language” (Newmark, 1988: 46). As a result, such translational action might lead to *linguistic error*.

## Data 2

- Source quotation : “He’s a quality player, an intelligent footballer, **presses well**, has **a real eye for goal**, good quality. So, nothing **I’ve seen** surprises me at all.”
- Target quotation : “Dia pemain yang berkualitas, pesepak bola yang cerdas, **pemain yang bagus**, memiliki **mata yang bagus untuk mencetak gol**, kualitas yang bagus. Jadi, tidak ada **yang saya lihat dari dirinya** yang mengejutkan **saya** sama sekali,”

This quotation comes from the same news stories as that of data 1. Southgate makes comment about Mason Mount’s quality as a young football player. This one comes to adds detail and information about how good Mason Mount are according to Southgate. Therefore, *informative function* is carried out. Both source and target quotations perform similar function and therefore the target quotation is a *documentary translation* by adopting highly literal/faithful translation strategy.

In fact, such strategy has backfired particularly when dealing with football-related terms. There are two terms in the source quotation

which become problematic and mistranslated. First, *real eye for goal* is translated into *having a good eye* (in a literal meaning) *to score goal*. In fact, this idiom is conventionally popular in football genre that refers to the quality of a football player that makes goal scoring look easy for him, as if he knows where the goal is. In Indonesian football genre, it is called *insting/naluri gol*. Such mistranslation is a failure to deal with football genre related to source-culture standard and, thus, is a form of *cultural error*. Recalling that *real eye on goal* is an idiom, such inadequate translational action is a kind of *text-specific error* since the *expressive function* is not fulfilled.

Next, *presses well* is a syntactic structure which describes Mason Mount's style of play that constantly challenge opponents and never gives them chance to control the ball. The terms *pressing*, *to press* and *pressure* are some of terminology technically related to football genre. Unfortunately, it is translated in an unspecific manner: *pemain yang bagus* (*a good player*). Along with the failure in translating *real eye for goal*, these errors are included as *cultural errors*.

The syntactic structure *I've seen* should be omitted in order to be efficient and to avoid repeating the words *yang* and *saya*. Therefore, the translation alternative can be: *Jadi, tidak ada yang mengejutkan (saya) sama sekali*. Since this one is related to grammatical aspect, this error can be categorized as a *linguistic error*.

### Data 3

Source quotation : "We've **had him marked** as a player from the first time I saw him at St George's Park."

Target quotation : "Kami **telah menandainya** sebagai pemain sejak pertama kali saya melihatnya di St George's Park (pusat latihan Timnas Inggris)."

This quotation also comes from the same news story on Gareth Southgate's opinion about Mason Mount. In comparison, both source and target quotations carry *informative function*, that is revealing the fact that Southgate has monitored Mount for a long time. Therefore, the

target quotation is defined as a *documentary translation*. However, its literal/faithful strategy proves inadequate solution to a translation problem in the form of causative structure. *Had him marked* implies that Southgate has asked his assistants or scouts to monitor Mount closely for such a long time. Instead of translating it *memantau* or *memperhatikan*, it is rendered as *menandai* which denotatively means “to give a symbol, grade, etc. on something or someone”. In other words, such literal/faithful strategy diverts the content of the source quotation. The poor choice of word has made the target quotation sound awkward. Thus, this error can be categorized as *pragmatic error*.

#### Data 4

Source quotation : “Liverpool's **spine** has come from [Virgil] Van Dijk at £75million...”

Target quotation : “Sedangkan **tulang belakang** Liverpool ada di Virgil van Dijk seharga 75 juta pounds...”

This quotation is taken from a news story about how a Manchester United legendary player, Gary Neville, looks at the rise of Liverpool this season compared to his former club Manchester United whose performance is struggling. Functionally, both source and target quotations carry informative function well. They describe the fact that Gary Neville points out about Virgil van Dijk, a quality center back with expensive price who has made Liverpool dominant this season.

Yet, the *documentary translation* that the target quotation exemplifies fails to represent the intended meaning of the word *spine*. Again, it is caused by literal/faithful translation strategy which is employed excessively. *Spine* in this context is a metaphor which should be rendered in the same way as in Indonesian metaphoric counterpart: *tulang punggung*. Thus, such mistranslation does not only lead to *pragmatic error* due to the failure in communicating the intended meaning of the word *spine* but also causes *text-specific error* since the expressive function is not fulfilled.

#### Data 5

Source quotation : “Manchester United get the right three players **in that group** and they won't be far away.”

Target quotation : “Manchester United mendapatkan tiga pemain yang tepat **dalam hal itu** dan mereka tak berbeda jauh.”

This quotation comes from the same news story as in **Data 4**. Gary Neville further stresses his optimism about the decision Manchester United made by buying three new good players. They are believed to bring the club back in track and challenge Liverpool. Before mentioning this quote, Neville states that Liverpool bought van Dijk, Fabinho, and Alisson and they were transformed overnight. By using this comparison, Neville assures that the new players Manchester United has bought are from the same group of quality players as van Dijk, Fabinho and Alisson. Hence, the unit *in that group* refers to a group of quality players. Both source and target quotation carry informative function as they deliver Neville's opinion about the new players would give impacts on Manchester United.

Still, the literal strategy has led the translator to render *in that group* inadequately, even out of the context. Such structure can be omitted. If the translator insists, the alternative translation can be *Manchester United mendapatkan pemain tepat yang berkualitas*. This error can then be categorized as *pragmatic error* since the intended meaning of *in that group* is not represented adequately.

#### **Data 6**

Source quotation : “Paul's been brilliant and he is a creative midfielder that we need, but then it is up to the others **to step up**”

Target quotation : “Paul sangat brilian dan dia adalah gelandang kreatif yang kami butuhkan, tetapi kemudian tergantung pada yang lain **untuk melangkah**”

This quotation is stated by Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, the manager of Manchester United, giving his verdict on Paul Pogba's latest condition

who has been injured for quite a while. Both source and target quotations represent what Solskjaer thinks about the availability of Pogba to play for Manchester United. Hence, they both carry informative function. Using literal/faithful translation strategy, the translator attempts to faithfully reproduce the form of the original. This action embodies a *documentary translation*.

Yet, such strategy has cost the meaning of the unit *to step up*. Contextually, this unit is mentioned by Solskjaer to assert that Pogba's availability to play depends on his physical fitness and the other player's readiness. Solskjaer wants to say that unless Pogba is fully fit, his place would be filled by other players who are much fitter and more ready physically. Such phrasal verb would be problematic, particularly if the translator translates it without heeding the context. Based on the context, this phrasal verb denotes *to play* or *to perform* (*untuk bermain* or *untuk tampil*). In fact, the rendering in the target quotation takes place literally with the phrasal verb is translated *untuk melangkah*. This makes the target quotation incoherent in meaning. Hence, it is categorized as a *pragmatic error*.

#### **Data 7**

Source quotation : “**You’re our man**. There’s no one else. Don’t worry.”

Target quotation : “**Kamu orang kami**. Tidak ada orang lain. Jangan khawatir,”

This quotation is stated by Khaldoon al Mubarak, Chairman of Manchester City, to Josep Guardiola, Manchester City manager, is response to the club's bad result against Everton. Disappointed and frustrated after the match, Guardiola locked himself in his office. Then, Mubarak came to console him and praise him by saying the quotation above. Then, the expression *you're our man* or *you are the man* pragmatically means to praise someone for having done something well. This is problematic since any translator who has insufficient source and target language competence, would fail to deliver the message appropriately.

In this respect, source quotation serves not only *informative function* by representing the fact that Manchester City chairman still supports Guardiola despite the bad result, but also *expressive function* since Khaldoun uses an idiomatic expression *you're our man*. Such expressive device is an effective means "to express or emphasize feelings or attitudes" (Wales, 2011: 151). However, the target quotation is made literally and rigidly sticks to how documentary translation is supposed to be. As a result, the meaning is not communicated adequately.

As the idiomatic expression is translated literally *kamu orang kami* which cost its intended meaning, this can be categorized as a *pragmatic error*. In addition, it can also be categorized as *text-specific error* since it fails to fulfil the *expressive function*.

#### Data 8

- Source quotation : **"It is always is about the show. You have to do it today and tomorrow.** It is not about experiences and what happened three months ago."
- Target quotation : **"Sepak bola itu harus melakukan pendekatan per pertandingan.** Kalian tak bisa mengaitkan dengan hasil yang kami raih tiga bulan lalu."

This quotation is stated by Mauricio Pochettino, Tottenham Hotspur manager, in response to his team's loss in an absolute score to Bayern Munich. As quotation, both source and target texts carry informative function about the fact of Pochettino's response to his team's bad result. However, the information between the two are not congruent. The part of the source quotation typed in bold implies that Pochettino intend to say that any poor result is normal in football and should not affect the consistency of his team performance. He says, "*It is always about the show (football game). You have to do it today and tomorrow...*"

However, instead of speaking about consistency, the target quotation speaks about the importance of flexible approach that fits to each football match and opponent. This is a kind of distorted information. There is no coherency between the content of source and target quotation. Hence the quality of informative function that the target quotation performs is poor. It is a form of *pragmatic error* and the severity is major since it alters the overall meaning of the quotation.

## 6. DISCUSSION

From eight data being analyzed, type of error that mostly occurs is *pragmatic error*. Totally, there are six *pragmatic errors* take place. Mostly, they occur since the translations are performed out of the context of the whole stories, for examples **data 3, data 5, data 6, and data 8**. Even, the error in **data 8** has altered the overall content of the source quotation. In the meantime, the *pragmatic errors* in **data 4** and **data 7** are caused by literal approach that the translator rigidly follows. As the consequence, the choice of word is poorly selected. This finding has concurred with the notion proposed by Nord (2018: 70) that *pragmatic error* sits at the top level in the hierarchy of translation error in that it is the most important a translator can make, and the most easily exposed.

The next type of error mostly occurs is *text-specific error* (three times). This indicates that in terms of functional perspective, the translation disregards the fulfillment of the whole text functions that a source text may have. The translator seems to overlook the basic principle that quotation is essentially not only used to add detail and information but also flavor and emotion. In **data 2, data 4, and data 7**, the source quotation come with idiomatic expressions that are inadequately reproduced in the same way (idiomatically) in the target language. The translator seems to ignore the principle that as a *documentary translation*, target quotation should reproduce the form.

Another aspect that deserves highlight is the fact that a quotation does not merely serve *informative function* but also *expressive function*. With quotation, a reporter or journalist can reveal the informant's

feelings and attitudes to the news being reported. This function of course could not be well-communicated using formal correspondence or literal translation strategy. This means there needs to be a rethinking to the idea suggested by Nord (2018: 46) that quotation in news texts should be best translated in a literal manner by reproducing the source text form and focusing on lexical unit of the source texts.

In fact, quotation, particularly that in sport stories, is a complex piece of writing. It does not only support the news stories with additional information and details but also indicate the informant's feelings and attitudes towards the sport event being reported. It is true that quotation must be translated accurately, and documentary translation approach is the appropriate one. As Hatim and Munday (2004: 290) point out, documentary translation entails that signs are simply substituted for signs. However, the target quotation does not necessarily have to compromise the emotional aspect and styles of the original. For instance, if the source quotation is in the form of metaphor or idiomatic expression, the target quotation needs to reproduce it using the comparable metaphor or idiomatic expression in target language. In brief, the principle of *documentary translation* in translating quotations in sport stories should be adapted appropriately and not strictly used.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings and discussion, there are some conclusions to draw. First, there are 13 errors out of eight target quotations taken from five football stories posted on *bola.com* during September until October 2019. All types of error as proposed by Nord (2018) occur. They cover six *pragmatic errors*; three *text-specific errors*; two *linguistic errors*; and two *cultural errors*. This overall configuration which highlights *pragmatic error* as the most crucial type of error also matches the notion suggested by Nord (2018).

Second, the errors found also reveals the importance to rethink the idea that translating quotation in news text should be carried out in

a literal manner. It is true that a quotation should be translated accurately using documentary translation approach, but it is undeniable that quotation is not only about information and factual details (*informative function*) but also flavor and emotion represented through expressive devices (*expressive function*). Therefore, in dealing with quotations in sport stories, documentary translation approach should not be rigidly adopted in order to be able to reproduce the content, form and situation of the quotations.

Further research can be conducted by considering larger samples of quotations and relate them to the sport story as a whole text. Therefore, the quality of translation of sport story as a whole can be measured functionally.

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