"Explicitation" in Malay to English Translation of Usman Awang's *Sahabatku (Kepada Dr M K Rajakumar)*

Mansour Amini*

School of Languages, Literacies and Translation, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

Ng Shi Hui

Department of English Language and Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts, UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Ooi Huiqi

Department of English Language and Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts, UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Siau Ching Sin

Centre for Community Health Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

*mansouramini96@gmail.com; joelynshihui@gmail.com; ooihuiqi@yahoo.com;
chingsin.siau@ukm.edu.my

Abstract: Poetry, as political activism, has been extensively tailored by the poets that choose to enlighten the reality of the social issues in a nation. However, the translatability of poetic activism may come into question, as language is closely linked to the poet's personal or cultural background and the way of expression. This paper explored the strategies used in the translation of '*Sahabatku (Kepada Dr M K Rajakumar)'*, a Malay poem by Usman Awang, translated into English by Wong Soak Koon and Muhammad Haji Salleh. The analysis revealed that literal translation, verse to prose translation, free verse translation and interpretation strategy were useful for this translation purpose. The approach used by the two translators reflected their different intentions to address different audience and use of various styles. Comparative studies like this in reflecting the zeitgeist of an era could be useful for non-Malay speakers in understanding the cultural and socio-political climate of the time and eventually could help to offer more solutions to the translation problems in this genre.

Keywords: Explicitation, English, Malay, *Sahabatku*, Usman Awang

INTRODUCTION

Poetry has continuously played a noteworthy role in nourishing languages, as well as in transmission of the literal and the hidden meaning of words and language learning (Sinha, 2010; Alavi, Chow, & Amini, 2015). Poetry forms the quality of the light within which beyond diversity in traditions we ground our hopes and dreams toward change, first through language, then into idea, and into more noticeable action (Lorde 1982, as cited in Danticat, 2017).

Malay is a Language of Limited Diffusion (LLD) as it is spoken by relatively a small number of people (Haroon, 2017), therefore translations from or into Malays are not as prevalent as languages like English. Malaysian translators usually have to solve many translation problems (Ng & Amini, 2019), relying extensively on the creativity and the cultural knowledge of the translator. Muhammad Haji Salleh, the translator of '*Sahabatku*', is one of the most well-known Malaysian poets whose efforts in the translation of Malay poetry in his anthology has been appraised by many but criticized by some because of not adhering to the values of the colonizers' language (English), which seems to be a main barrier for Malay to English translations. Wong Soak Koon, a Malaysian English literature educator argues that the purpose of translation should not be to adhere to the rules of the colonizer's language, rather to it should represent the voices of the different source cultures. This is where translation in postcolonialism comes to play an important role: a need for 'acceptable' translation by English audiences, which 'faithful' to the Malaysian values and culture.

Research on the use of strategies in translation of poetry have been limited (Ali, & Mohideen, 2009). Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin (2008) reviewed empirical evidence of the elusive concept aiming at tracing the behavior of explicitation beyond cohesiveness in various literary genres. They concluded that despite literary texts are very delicate, the texts undergone shifts and demonstrated a prevailing pattern of explicitation,

Literary texts could be used as a good source of reading, teaching, and learning (Amini, Zahabi, Amini, & Hosseini, 2020). In this regard, Ali & Mohideen (2009) investigated translated Malay short stories as a resource for teaching language skills. By enlightening the meanings beyond the outward theme of war and conflict, Sinha (2010) offered a model for the translation of classical Malay poetry. Vahedi Kia and Ouliaeinia (2016) explored explicitation across literary genres and found that that narrowing was the most frequent explicitation in fiction and poetry.

Nasution, Sinar, Lubis, & Nurlela (2017) as well as Wong, Tan, and Amini (2019) investigated the accuracy and the use of translation techniques in translating Malay texts. Haroon and Daud (2017) explored translation of foreign words in an English novel into Malay and found that translators placed priority on faithfulness to the source text (ST). They asserted that although the classic literature could give a clue as to what the Malay literary culture was like in those periods, they may no longer reflect the modern concepts of a century that is now recovering from its colonial past. Haroon (2017) examined the form and content of introductory notes in translations published in Malaysia with a focus on the content and functions of the prefaces. She concluded that the translator's preface plays an imperative role in enabling the reception of the translated text (TT) by providing the key information to the readers and explicitation of the translator and their voice. Sharmini et al. (2018) analyzed figurative Language in Malay to English Translation of a university keynote speaker and found that complexities arise when translators try to re-create the message, the purpose and effect in the TT.

On the influence of the political climate on poetry, Marelli (2019) explored the translation of Machiavelli's Prince and the political climate in mid eighteenth-century Sweden.

Despite some research on the reflections of sociopolitical climate in poetry are conducted on other languages, there is a gap in looking into the translation of Malaysian

modern poems as the existing studies are mostly about the translation of classical Malay poems or short stories (Yap, Abu Bakar, Amini & Rafik-Galea, 2018).

For the present study, the English translation of '*Sahabatku*' by Wong Soak Koon was extracted from '*Aliran*' magazine in commemorate to the late Rajakumar while the English translation by Muhammad Haji Salleh was extracted from a tribute book to commemorate Usman Awang's 80th birthday. The poem was written by Malaysian poet Usman Awang during Malaysia's post-independence period in the late 1970's. Political poetry by Malay poets of the time attempted to call to attention the betrayal of the promise of racial unity in Malaysia's new rule as an independent country. The poet who was known for his patriotism and themes of social activism, Usman Awang, wrote the piece in reaction to the detainment of his friend, physician and social activist Rajakumar under the Internal Security Act. He is remarked to be a 'patriotic icon' whose works were socially engaged. Rajakumar vouched for the unity of the Malaysian people and won several awards. He was also one of the leaders of the labor party and Barisan Socialis during the 1960s. However, he was detained under the Internal Security Act from 1966 to 1969. In reaction, the poet wrote the poem detailing their friendship they had forged through political activism in their youth for a united Malaysia- as opposed to the segregated system employed by the previous British colonial administration. The concept of a united '*Bangsa Malaysia*' (nation of Malaysia) had been the driving force of Malaysia's fight for independence, which according to the poem, had been countered with the title of 'Bumiputera'.

Using strategies to translate poem

Throughout the process of translating poems, there are controversial elements that a translator needs to consider. This could lead to a tension between form and content when considering the translation of poem as a poetry translator might struggle to choose content over form or vice versa (Kolahi, & Shiraz, 2012; James, Tan, & Amini, 2018). Jakobson (2003) states that poetry is untranslatable and creative transposition is required in the process of translation. However, scholar like Dryden agrees that all meanings and concepts are translatable, and it is possible to convey what is said in one language into another language (Miremadi, 1995).

With regards to the untranslatability of poem, Catford (1965) suggests two types of untranslatability namely i) Linguistic untranslatability and ii) Cultural untranslatability. Linguistic untranslatability refers to the condition when the translator fails to find an equivalence in target language due to the differences between source language and target language. Linguistic untranslatability can be explained from the difference in lexical, phonetic, syntactic, and rhetoric level (Wang & Sunihan, 2014; Amini, Amini, Alavi, & Esfandiari, 2017). On the other hand, cultural untranslatability occurs when a situational feature relevant to the source culture is considered absent in target language culture (Catford, 1965). Nida (1993) classifies the elements of culture into ecological and geographical culture, social culture, material culture, religious culture, and language culture. Another study conducted by Wang and Sunihan (2014) analyzed the untranslatability between English and Chinese language. This helps in the current research to look at the differences in Malay and English languages for a better explication of how the untranslatability could be overcome.

Nida and Taber (1969) supported the translatability of poem 'anything that can be said in one language can be said in another language, unless the form is an essential element of the message' (1969: 4). In other words, if we were to put more emphasis on the content of the poem itself, it is not untranslatable. Therefore, this opposes to the untranslatability as stated by some of the previous researchers. Rose (1981) also stressed that a poetry translator must be excellent in the source language and immerse himself in the language cultural and depths of poetic. It is important that the translator identify himself /herself wholeheartedly with the

original poet at all levels. Poem translators must be able to penetrate the original text, release himself/herself in the uniqueness of the poem, and able to successfully meet the poetic atmosphere of the target language so that the translation fits in the target language (Yap, & Amini, 2020). This could explain why most successful literary translators are poets.

Lefevere's (1975) seven strategies for poetry translation are comprehensive and have detailed explanations on each strategy (Sen & Shaole, 2010). Kolahi and Shiraz (2012) applied the seven strategies for poetry translation by Lefevere in analyzing the English translations of Sohrab Sepehri's poems. They found out that literal translation was the most frequently used strategy among the English translators of Sepehri's poems. Literal translation emphasizes fidelity of the ST. However, the essence of the poems such as Sepehri's mood, tone and imagination were not recognized by the translators.

As explained by Lefevere (1975) the strategies that cover the poetic features of formal and contextual are phonemic, literal, metrical, verse to prose, rhymed, free verse, and interpretation translation.

Phonemic Translation
This strategy attempts to reproduce the source language sound into the target language. It attempts to produce an acceptable paraphrase of the sense. Nevertheless, this can be rarely achieved as the sound of source and target language usually have a big difference.

Literal translation
Word-for-word translation or literal translation is like a myth and usually leads to undesirable results. Nonetheless, he admits that this strategy can help the translator to understand the text at hand.

Metrical translation
This strategy attempts to reproduce the source language meter. The translator should reproduce the original meter into target language.

Verse to prose translation
This strategy attempts to change the original form of the poem into another literary genre. However, this method might distort the sense, communicative values and syntax of the ST.

Rhymed translation
This strategy attempts to transfer the original rhyme of ST into target language. According to Bassnett (2014), this strategy requires translators to understand the process of artistic creation that the author went through.

Free verse translation
This strategy attempts to enable the translators to get the accurate equivalents in the target language. The content is the primary concern of the translator. Formal features such as rhyme and rhythm are not given much importance in this strategy.

Interpretation
This strategy attempts to make a complete change of form. Main concepts of the original poem are extracted, and the translator recreates the translated version of the poem based of the translator's style and his interpretation towards the original poem. Bassnett (2013) stated that the translator who applies these strategies must master both SL and TL in a way that he/she clearly understands the characteristics and spirit of the ST author.

In this research, the focus will be on the translatability of the poem by examining the English translation of the poem 'Sahabatku' by Usman Awang using the seven strategies of poem translation as proposed by Lefevere (1975). The translations are analyzed to understand the strategies employed in explicating the intended meaning. Explicitation, one of the translation universals which has received much attention and is studied more than the other universals. Pym (2005) refers to explicitation as a means of risk management in the context of translation, like managing risks in management. In other words, explicitation as a stylistic translation technique consists of making explicit in the TL what remains implicit in the SL from either the context or the situation.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative study using textual analysis method based on the approach proposed by Pym's (2005) explicitation technique, and Lefevere's (1975) seven translation strategies. Two English translations of the Malay poem 'Sahabatku' by Usman Awang translated by Wong Soak Koon and Muhammad Haji Salleh were analyzed. Firstly, the original Malay poem was read carefully line by line to observe the lexical choices by the translators. Then close attention was paid to words and their equivalence in both versions of English translations. This was to identify if the translators were successful in transferring the meaning and the way they related to the context of each stanza and finally as a whole (poem). Next, the researchers compared translations in terms of the seven strategies proposed by Lefevere (1975). When more than one strategy was identified in each stanza, all were listed for the analysis. This step was to scrutinize the way each translator had chosen to translate using a specific strategy. Then, the process of the poem translation through the explicitation of what went through the mind of translators while they were translating was explored. The background of the poem was considered to explore the possible reasons why the translators chose to translate in a certain manner. Finally, the different ways each translator chose to translate in terms of words, phrases or sentences were explicated (Pym, 2005) to discover the intention that the translators wish to bring out to the target readers.

FINDINGS

Wong's translation will hereby be referred to as Translation 1, while Muhammad Haji Salleh's version will be referred to as Translations 2.

Stanza 1, 2 and 3
The first main difference between the two translations is in their choice of word. While both translators try to remain precise in their translation of the text (literal translation), their word choices reflect the varieties of possibilities for equivalence in the translation of poetic expression (Yaqubi, Tahir, & Amini, 2018). Wong's translation utilized more simplistic words to describe '*Aliran*', hence an extensive vocabulary was used. Wong employed the Verse to Prose translation strategy as she aimed to provide a target text (TT) that can be easily read and interpreted. This gives a more 'neutral' tone compared to Salleh's translation, whereby Salleh used more evocative words and phrases like '*began to flare up, broadcasted, recognized, embracing*'. The words used create the imagery of a rebellion and agency that the poet and Rajakumar had participated in their youth. In a way, this is how the translation strategy of interpretation explicates the spirit of the era for a reader that is not familiar with Malaysian

history. The translators tried to present the messages of the poem for their readers according to their specialties in their field.

In stanzas 2 and 3, the tone created by the two translators is different as Wong's tone remained quiet and neutral, as exemplified in her translation: '*To gather stars from the universe / With delicacy and poetry/ With books and theories/ Without burning our hands/ Without immolating the body'*. The scene created is calmer and dream-like. This indicates a nostalgia that looks back to a memory. Salleh approaches the verse with '*that picked the stars of the universe with fingers and poetry/ with books and theories/ hands burning other hands/ without charring the body'*. The tone portrayed here is more active and urgent, as though the memory is being felt at the very moment by reader themselves.

Stanza 4

Free verse translation is another strategy proposed by Lefevere's (1975) which is employed in these first stanzas. For the most parts, the poet did not utilize a rhyming scheme in the original text, except for in Stanza 4, where each line ends with the letters *-an*. This scheme was used to place emphasis and draw attention to that section of the poem. As English holds a different sound system, the translators have opted to focus on the contents of the message over the stylistic choices of rhyming. This is seen through the word choices used to emphasize the issue of race in the source context, as seen in '*the one free race* versus *a free people'*. Here the difference is seen in how Wong decided to remain the poet's reference of the racial tensions in the era, while Salleh had concealed that detail. She brings over the racial tensions experienced by the poet at the time. Malaysia had seen a period where there were national and communal feuds between the Chinese and Malay communities following the riots after the 13th of May 1969 general elections.

The following lines '*When they drive a wedge between us/ The distance grows/ I get the title 'bumiputra' and not you'* explicates the issue in a neutralized style. In Salleh's translation, '*when we are divided/space becomes enormous/I am called 'bumiputera' and you aren't'* both retain the word 'Bumiputera' from the source language but Wong's decision to describe the way segregation feels to Malaysians at the time is more accurate. *'Driving a wedge'* illustrates segregation as an ongoing forced process, while '*When we are divided'* softens the split to something that has already been in action. The choice to conceal the concept of race in Salleh's translation may be to drive the attention away from that issue, as the translator himself is a propagator of a united national identity regardless of race. However noble his choice is, this softens the brevity of the line. It can be concluded that the choice to retain the term Bumiputera by both translators is purposeful. The term literally translates to 'Earth Prince', a term unique to the Malay language that represent the natives of Malaysia, whose ancestry had not been a result of the British colonial intervention and excludes Malaysians that are of Chinese or Indian descendants. This term is the cause of the tension felt by the Malay poet to his Indian friend. While both are close friends, as indicated by the affectionate term '*Sahabatku*' better translated into 'My brother' than 'My friend', they are not seen as equal due to the unfair enforcements of those laws of the time.

Stanza 5

The relationship between Usman Awang and Rajakumar is explored in stanza five. The doctor seems to be the person that saved Usman Awang's life when he was admitted to the hospital for a heart attack and lung issues, as explicated in Wong's translation. Wong takes a more lyrical and intimate approach, describing their moment of brotherhood: '*you were the first to hear its beat/ listening to blood coursing in the artery'*. Salleh, again, is able to amplify the seriousness of these two lines as *'you were the first to listen to its rhythm /to measure the blood's pressure in the pulse channel'*. The latter proposes something more medical, using a

Verse to Prose translation strategy. Hence, it shows the fear that the poet (voice) might have felt in that situation. The two translators were able to explicate the relationship between the poet and Rajakumar as a bond that transcends race.

Stanza 6
In Wong's translation, the attempt for faithful adherence to the original can be seen. In Stanza 8, Wong used literal translation. As in the first sentence, the ST '*percayakah'* was translated word by word into '*do you believe?'*. In the second line, '*aku dapat pula'* is translated '*I too can'* while '*mendengar detak jantungmu'* literally which means '*your heartbeat'*. As in the third line, it was translated word by word to adhere to the literal meaning of words in the SL. For instance, '*detak jantung'* here means '*heartbeat'* while '*dulu'* means the time that had passed, or '*time passed'*. In the fourth line, '*kehidupan baru'* means '*new life'* while '*for a new society'* is the same as '*untuk masyarakat baru'*. It is noticed that even the syntactic structure of the ST and TT is similar in this line. In line 5, '*impian'* literally means '*the dream'* while '*satu bangsa merdeka'* is translated into '*a liberated race'*. The word '*merdeka'* in SL can mean independent. It is translated into '*liberated'* instead of independent. This is because the word '*liberated'* portrays a spirit that is free from social conventions and hence it represents the tone and mood that the original author intended to express in a better way. In line 6, *k'ebenaran dan keadilan'* means '*truth and justice'*. The phrase *yang sama* in SL is translated into *of the same.* The syntactic structure of the translated version in line 6 is different from the SL, probably due to the different syntactical structures of Malay language and English language. In Malay language, the adjective '*sama'* is placed after the noun while in English language, an adjective is usually placed before a noun. In line 7, the sentence '*sebagaimana pesan nenek moyang'* was translated into '*an ancestral wisdom advice'*. For line 7, Wong used the interpretation strategy in which the TL is semantically the same as the SL, even though it did not reflect the exact word by word meaning. Translated literally by M.H. Salleh. '*Pesan, nenek moyang'* literally means '*saying of our forefathers'*. However, Wong translated the phrase into *ancestral wisdom advices* to denote the cultural norms of the source context. The noun *wisdom* does not have any equivalent word in the SL, but Wong's translation strategy implies that the Malay culture always sees the saying from ancestors as 'full of wisdom'. In lines 8 and 9, the ST was embedded with a Malay proverb '*hati kuman sama dicicah, hati gajah sama dilapah'*. This Malay proverb means the equal allocation of something without being biased.

In this stanza, compared to Wong, Haji Salleh did not use literal translation completely. He added some words from his own interpretation of the original poem. As a Malay poet himself, he can maintain the meaning of this stanza and recreate a stylistically similar stanza. In the first line of this stanza, Salleh added the pronoun 'we'. The possible reason could be his intention to emphasize the solidarity that the original author intends to build with the readers. In line 2, the word '*begin'* that did not appear in the ST was embedded in his translation. Salleh used the interpretation strategy to translate this sentence. It could be predicted that the word '*begin'* was able to create a better ripple effect among the TL readers as it symbolizes the image that was being portrayed in the following line 4 and 5, which are '*new life, new people, a free nation'*. All of these imply something 'new' in this context and it marked a new beginning. In line 6 and 7, however, literal translation is employed as it represents the literal words of the ST. In line 8 and 9, the proverb was creatively translated by Salleh. As compared to Wong's preservation of the original Malay proverb, Salleh chose to translate in a way that shows the people share the same tiny or big amount of food together regardless of anything. Even though the form in original ST was changed, this creative translation of the Malay proverb enables target readers who have little background knowledge of Malay language and culture to understand the proverb.

Stanza 7

In the first line, '*when can we extinguish*' in English is translated literally from the ST '*bilakah kita dapat memadamka'n*. However, in line 2, Wong used the interpretation strategy by including his personal interpretation in his translation. For instance, the word *madden* does not exist explicitly in the literal meaning of the ST. Instead of translating the word '*membakar*' into '*burning*', as Salleh did, Wong replaced it with '*madde'n*. Since the concept of ethnic differences have been causing certain races to experience inequality, it could be infuriating and, therefore, can be interpreted as '*madden*' the people. In line 3, Wong applied free-verse translation as she maintains the equivalence in TL instead of translating it literally. The rhyme and meter in original SL were not maintained. *How longs allow the flames to be stoked* translated from '*dan membiarkan curahan minyak yang kian menyala*' which means '*to allow the pour of oil that keeps burning*'. The word '*stoked*' was translated cleverly as it has the metaphorical meaning of '*different elements that stoke up a burning fire*'. This leaves imagination to target readers to speculate what possible elements, such as inequality and racist could stoke up the tense condition. In line 4, Wong employed literal translation strategy again. This is especially prominent when '*bermuka dua*' was rendered word by word into *two-faced*. The possible reason that Wong translated it this way is to denote implicitly on the notion that powerful elites act differently from what they promised.

Salleh's translation emphasizes the tone of the first line by adding the word '*ever*'. Interpretation strategy was used to translate this line. Salleh was able to represent the strong mood and tone expressed in the ST, and that the poet felt exhausted of waiting and hoping for the equality to happen in this country. In line 2 and 3, literal translation was employed by Salleh so that the target reader can understand the context better. In contrast to how Wong has translated this part, a target reader who do not know about the social political condition of the 1960's-1980's Malaysia might not be able to understand why the ethnic differences caused 'madness' among the people. The translation of *oil flow that burns higher* was simple and direct as the target readers need to think further as what Wong's readers might do. Then, in the fourth line, Salleh chose to use the word '*hypocrite*' to criticize those who have two faces. Despite Wong's connotation, Salleh's lexical choice is straightforward and may be easier for target readers to understand.

Stanza 8

Wong uses literal translation to render the whole four lines of this stanza. '*Bilakah*', '*mempertaruhkan*' and '*nasib*' mean '*how long*', '*hand over*' and '*fate*', respectively. In line 2, *tak berdosa* literally means *without sin*. In line 3, *generasi* and *keturunan* were translated literally into *generation* and *heirs* respectively. In line 4, Wong used the word '*covet*' to stress on the strong emotion on how certain people desire something that do not belong to them, such as the profit and power in this context. The choice of word '*covet*' by Wong showed a good example to the readers that literal translation is also possible to render the precise meaning and emotion through correct word choice.

Salleh, on the other hand, used interpretation translation strategy in this stanza. In the first line, his translation '*when will we be able to ensure*' does not match the literal meaning of the ST. Salleh interpreted the sentence in his own way that he was so anxious to see how long the people still need to wait, to hand over our own fate to someone else. In line 2, the children '*without sin*' was rendered to an adjective '*innocent*'. In line 3, the '*generation*' and '*heirs*' were summarized as '*those*' in Salleh's translation. Salleh interpreted '*those*' as the '*lineage victims*'. He interpreted it metaphorically, which indicates that the future generations and heirs will become embroiled in the consequences of those who count profit and power, as represented in line 4.

Stanza 9
Wong employed free verse translation in this stanza. The poem in SL has the rhyme of 'ab ab ac ac'. However, the English translation by Wong only tries to render the meaning and spirit of the poem. As this stanza was about the aspiration to eliminate the social rank difference to achieve the real independence of the nation, Wong's translation expresses the equivalent spirit that existed in the ST. From line 1 to line 3, the English translation portrays the content of the ST accurately even though the rhyme and rhythm in the ST was neglected in this translation. In line 4, Wong retained the Malay word *'merdeka'* from the ST to enhance that spirit.

Salleh also employed the free-verse translation by giving priority to the content rather than the rhyme and rhythm. The difference between Salleh and Wong's versions is in the choice of words like *'erase'* vs *'bridge'*, *'starving poor'* vs *'poverty and hunger'* , *'exceedingly rich'* vs *'overflowing wealth'* , *'social groups and stations'* vs *'two social ranks'* and the retain of *'merdeka'* vs the rendering of *'freedom'*. All these words choices adhere to each translator' style and they do not reflect significant difference in meaning, except for the *'merdeka'* vs *'freedom'.* Salleh chose to translate the word '*merdeka*' into '*freedom*' which is technically correct. However, Wong's rendering to preserve the word '*merdeka*' as it is a key word that represent the spirit of the poem seems more appropriate. Salleh's version, on the other hand, would be better for readers who have little background information on the history of Malaysia.

Stanza 10
Wong used literal translation strategy in this stanza. '*Bilakah semua warga negara'* literally means '*when can all citizens',* while '*mendapat hak'* means '*enjoy rights'*. In line 2, Wong translated the vocabulary literally, but she adjusted the structure of her translation syntactically to have a fluent translation. In line 3, literal translation is used as it adheres to the ST faithfully. Once again in line 4, she chose to retain the phrase '*Bangsa Malaysia'*. This indicates the patriotism portrayed in the ST and it was placed at the end of the whole poem to serve as a reminder for Malaysians to defend their nation's peace.

Salleh used free verse translation in this stanza. He changed the grammatical structures in lines 1 and 2. For instance, instead of translating '*rights, service and justice that are equal'*, Salleh translated it into '*equal rights, service and justice'*. As for line 3, the rendering of '*single name'* is considered to have weaker representation compared to Wong's translation of '*one race'*. In this context, the ST expresses the '*Bangsa Malaysia'* as a single united race. As for line 4, the translation to '*Malaysian'* although is correct semantically, lacks a united patriotic spirit that is portrayed in the Malay word '*Bangsa Malaysia'.*

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Analysis of the translation strategies used in the explication of the two English translations of 'Sahabatku', translated by Wong and Haji Salleh to English, and exploring the possible reasons for choosing the strategies yielded a critical understanding of the poem from different angles.

Using the poetry translation strategies proposed by Lefevere (1975), it was found that literal translation, verse to prose translation, free verse translation and interpretation strategy were the most frequent strategies in the translation of the poem. Phonemic translation was not used by translators in this context as Malay language and English language have different sound systems. Metrical and rhymed translation strategies were not used by the translators as the ST producer (poet) did not put much emphasis on these sections.

Overall, it can be concluded that the two translators approached the poem with different intended audiences in mind. Wong's translation is more suitable for local Malaysian readers or readers who have richer background information about the history and social-political background. Salleh's version mainly targeted for English readers who have little knowledge about the social-political atmosphere of Malaysia. This has resulted in a difference in strategies when dealing with the ST. While both were able to explicate patriotism in their own styles, Wong opted for a more nostalgic, and calm imagery, Salleh tended to be more evocative and dramatic. Also, the translator decidedly revealed their views on the aspects that make up a patriotic Malaysian. This is shown by their decisions to either conceal or reveal the issue of race in the ST, as well as the borrowing from the source language into the TT.

The findings of this study from a poem that reflects the socio-political climate of Malaysia during the period, highlighting the racial tensions, can be used to interpret the poem more accurately. The English translations of works that reflect the zeitgeist of an era is helpful for non-Malay speakers (Amini, Ibrahim-González, Ayob, & Amini, 2015) in understanding the cultural and socio-political climate of the time. The translations solutions identified in the present and similar studies on literary translation (e.g., Tan, Amini, & Lee, 2021) could be utilized in solving translation problems. Poetry translators are encouraged to pay a close attention to the strategies to interpret the source poem's layers of meaning, to transmit this interpretation consistently, and/or to (re)create a poem in the TL, which is decipherable and pleasant as an autonomous, literary text. This study could also be useful for future research that involves the translation of other literary genres such as dramas.

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