

CHAPTER 3

MEANING IN TRANSLATION

"... only translation could ensure that modern man would not be deprived of the wisdom and profit of the past and that translation is probably the single most telling instrument in the battle for knowledge and modern consciousness..."

(Steiner, 1975:246)

3.1 What is Translation

Translation theory derives from Comparative Linguistics and within Linguistics, it is mainly an aspect of semantics - most questions of semantics relate to translation theory. However, sociolinguistics also has a continuous bearing on translation. Thus translation is a study of meaning and the problems and processes involved in the transfer of ***"one set of meaning encoded in language system A to a corresponding set of meaning in language system B"*** (Encyclopedia of language and Linguistics, 1994:4738). This means that a translator is not only concerned with the meaning in the source language text, but he has to also take into account the forms in the language of both the SL and TL texts.

Catford (1965:20) defines translation as,

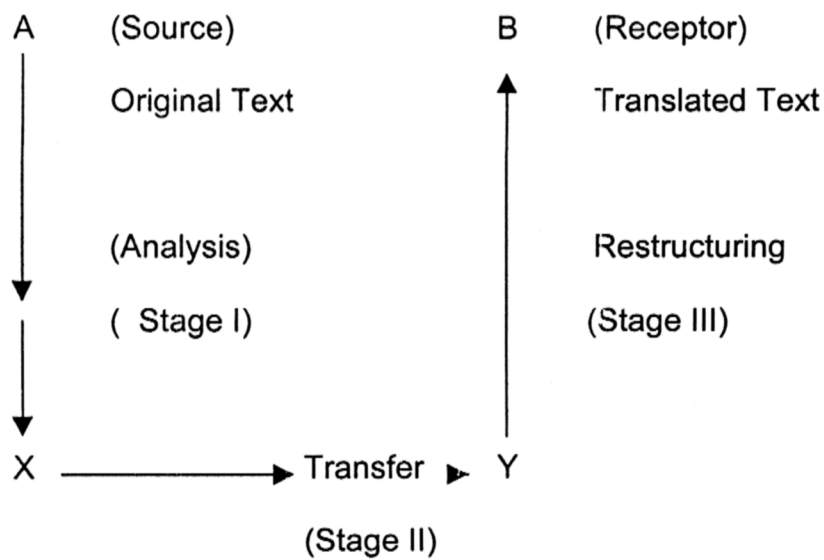
" the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language"

This does not mean total replacement of the TL texts because ***"at certain levels of language there may be simple replacement by non-equivalent TL material"*** (Catford:20). Certain concepts in a source texts may not exist in the target language culture, for example, the concept of royal address in the Malay words, *'beta'*, *'patik'* and *'hamba'* which are used by the Malays. *'Beta'* is the first person singular pronoun used by the king, while *'patik'* and *'hamba'* are used by the *'rakyat'* or commoners when addressing the king. However, there is a difference in status between these two words, i.e. *'patik'* is used by someone of high position or rank like the Prime Minister and ministers. While *'hamba'* refers to the ordinary commoner. These words are translated or replaced by *'I'* and *'you'* in English, and in the process of translation lose the *'royal'* connotation.

In his book, *'Approaches to Translation'*, (1981:17) Newmark sees translation as

" a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/ statement in one language by the same message and /statement in another language"

The translator has to ensure that the TL text carries the same message as that intended by the author. However, Newmark realizes the fact that in the process **"there will be some kind of loss of meaning due to a few factors peculiar to the environment and culture of the language, which then leads to a continuum between over translation and under translation "**(1981:20). For example the word *'latah'* is an entirely Malay concept which can only be understood by the Malays and those who share the same experience. It is a peculiar characteristic experienced and conceptualized by the Malays and not in English. It can only be translated as to get frantically excited but this does not carry equivalent meaning and effect of the word which only Malays can understand. Nida and Taber describe the translation process as having three stages as shown in Figure 1.



(adapted from Nida and Taber,1974)

The translator has to understand and analyse the meaning of the text and the effect intended by the author of the SL text. He will then have to transfer the meaning of the SL text in the language form of the TL. Therefore, he does not only have to understand the denotative meaning of the word but also its connotation. He will need to understand not only the context of the word but also the implicit meaning that is not stated in the explicit form but can be understood by people sharing the same culture. For example, an Englishman would not hesitate to say 'Thank you' to a compliment. But it would not be acceptable for most Malays to respond in such a manner. A Malay would normally say '*Tak adalah*' meaning 'I don't think so' if a person were to pay a compliment like, 'You look pretty today'. He or she will be seen as arrogant or boastful if he or she agrees with the speaker, and this culturally implicit meaning has to be understood by the translator.

From the definitions given above it can be said that the **central issues** in translation is **equivalence, form and meaning**. Translation then is basically" ***a change of form of the meaning of the SL into the receptor language TL***" (Larsen:31). In order to effect equivalence it is meaning which is being transferred and should be held constant, but, the form changes. In the process, the translator has to ensure that the meaning of the TL text is equivalent to the meaning of the SL text. This study will thus, discuss aspects of **equivalence, form and meaning**. It will then look at the process of achieving them in the translation of *simpulan bahasa*.

3.2 Translation Equivalence and Untranslatability

A good translation according to Tytler (in Newmark, 1981),

"is one in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language as to be distinctly apprehended and as strongly felt by the native of the country to which that language belongs as it is by those who speak the language of the original work"

and that the main aim of the translator according to Rieu (in Newmark;10) is,

" to produce as nearly as possible the same effect on his readers as was produced on the readers of the original"

The principle above is variously referred to as similar or equivalent response or effect or dynamic equivalence (Nida). However, Newmark is concerned that total equivalence is impossible because if the text describes a situation which has elements peculiar to the natural environment, institution and culture of the SL there is an inevitable loss of meaning, since the substitution or translation in the translator's language can only be approximate (Newmark:7). For example, would a translator substitute '*kenduri arwah*' as 'party', 'a feast' or 'a religious feast or 'dinner in memory of the deceased'. It is impossible to translate this concept as it is a unique Malay culture and thus the same effect cannot be produced on the TL readers.

The fundamental fact that all translators face is that languages differ one from the other. However, linguists and anthropologists have discovered that, that which unites mankind is much greater than that which divides and hence there is even in cases of very disparate languages and culture a basis for communication and translation, and therefore, this is the basis of Nida's theory in his much acclaimed work, *Toward a Science of Translating*, 1964. Nida has identified two different types of equivalence – **“formal and dynamic equivalence”** (Nida:159). Formal equivalence **“focuses on the message itself, in both form and content, as in poetry to poetry, sentence to sentence and concept to concept”**. This means that the message in the receptor (TL) culture is constantly compared with the message in the source (SL) culture to determine standards of accuracy and correctness, i.e. the translator attempts to reproduce as literally and meaningfully as possible the form and content of the original.

In contrast, dynamic equivalence which is based upon the principle of equivalent effect as proposed by Rieu, aims at complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own language. It does not insist that the translator understands the cultural patterns of the source language and that total equivalence must be achieved, but the reader of the TL text must get the same effect as the reader of the SL text i.e. the relationship between receiver and message should aim at being the same as that between the original receiver and the SL message.

Newmark, (1981) however, thinks in certain instances dynamic equivalence should be realized. First, if a text describes a peculiarity of the language it is written in, the translator will need to explain it, unless it is trivial enough to be omitted. Secondly, a text relating to an aspect of the culture familiar to the SL reader but not TL reader is unlikely to produce equivalent effect particularly if it is originally intended only for the first reader. Thirdly equivalent effect will be impossible if the text describes a culture remote from the second reader's experience. The reader of the TL text will not be able to get the same effect if the translator does not understand the culture of the author. For example, the *simpulan bahasa* 'puteri lilin' means a girl who does not like to be out in the sun. The implication of this *simpulan bahasa* will be immediately understood by a SL reader but not a TL reader who does not share the same culture.

Roman Jakobson who distinguishes three types of translation – **intralingual**, **interlingual** and **intersemiotic** translation - proposes that "***while messages may serve as adequate interpretation of code units or messages there is ordinarily no full equivalence of translation*** (in Steiner :260).

(Intralingual translation is rewording a word sign by means of other verbal signs within the same language. All definitions and explanations are translation. Interlingual translation refers to translation proper i.e. an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs in another language and Intersemiotic translation is the interpretation of verbal signs by means of non-verbal sign system)

Jakobson points out the fact that even in intralingual translation there is no **equivalent** synonymy. For example the words '*cantik*', '*manis*' and '*lawa*' have different connotations. They may be translated as beautiful, sweet-faced and attractive respectively. Even though all three words generally mean to look good they are not exact synonyms. Thus if **equivalent effect** is difficult in intralingual translation it would be much more difficult in interlingual translation between languages of different cultures.

In linguistic untranslatability there may be some formal features in the SL text that do not have corresponding feature in the TL text and the item is relatively untranslatable. Certain grammatical and morphological items in English do not have Malay equivalents. For example, the 'perfect tense' which relates the idea of 'past and present' is always translated as past tense in Malay by using '*telah*'. There is no difference between the past perfect and simple past tense. For example, the sentences, 'She has taken the book' and 'she took the book' are both translated as '*Dia telah mengambil buku itu*' in Malay.

However, Newmark thinks that cultural untranslatability is less absolute than linguistic untranslatability. There may be texts in which an adequate translation equivalent is not impossible. Words like '*pondok*' and '*tekat*' can be translated as hut and golden embroidery. It is possible to find literal equivalents of both languages although the effects may not be the same. The phrase 'as white as snow' can be translated as '*seputih kapas*' although it does produce the same

effect as most Malays have not experienced winter and cannot imagine vast areas being white and snowy.

The translation of idioms takes us a stage further in considering the question of meaning and translatability for idioms are culture bound. *Simpulan bahasa* do have some corresponding idiomatic expressions even though the effects may not be equivalent. So in the “ ***process of in terlingual translation one idiom is substituted for another***” (Bassnett:29). For example the *simpulan bahasa* ‘*sekangkang kera*’ can be substituted with ‘a stone's throw’ meaning a short distance or very small. Although the effect may not be the same, as the Malay version has a negative connotation, it could serve as substitute in certain contexts. Another example is ‘*bunga bukan sekuntum*’ or ‘*kumbang bukan seekor*’ (there is more than one flower or beetle which means one should not be broken hearted by an unrequited love. It can be substituted with ‘there are other fish to fry’ although the imagery in the English idiom is less refined. That substitution is made not on the basis of the linguistic elements in the phrase, nor on the basis of a similar image contained in the phrase, but on the function of the idiom and the pragmatic effect it conveys. The SL phrase is replaced by a TL phrase that serves the same purpose in the TL culture, and the process here involves the substitution of SL sign for TL sign. Just as a metaphor in the SL is by definition a new piece of performance and has no existing equivalence in the TL the same thing can be said of idioms, as Dagut says “***what is unique can have no counterpart***” (in Bassnett : 24)

Equivalence in translation, then should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness is difficult to achieve between two TL versions of the same texts, let alone between the SL and TL version. However, the translator has the obligation to retain the meaning and effect, and also the form as far as is possible of the SL text so as not to be unfaithful to the author

3.3 Meaning

Meaning is,

“the kingpin of translation studies and without understanding what the text to be translated means for the TL readers, the translator would be lost”

(Bell,1991:79)

and the criterion of a translation is,

“to produce the greatest possible degree of the meaning of the original”

(Newmark:66)

To translate effectively one must find out the meaning of the source language and use the target language **forms** which express the meaning in a natural way. By maintaining the **dynamics** of the SL texts, it will help to evoke the same

response in TL readers as intended on SL readers. As each language has its own distinctive forms for representing **meaning** the same meaning may have to be expressed in another language by a very different form.

Translating the form of one language literally according to the corresponding form in the TL language often changes the meaning and the finished product will not be a good translation. Meaning must therefore, ***“have priority over form in translation. It is meaning which is to be carried over from the SL language to the TL, not the linguistics forms”*** (Larsen :10). Thus in the translation of *simpulan bahasa* meaning cannot be translated literally as the figurative aspects of meaning will be lost. A literal word-for-word translation will not make sense at all. Meaning in translation then, specifically in the translation of *simpulan bahasa*, can be treated in various ways as shown in Figure 2. Hidalgo defines the transfer of meaning in translation as being perfect fit, near fit, 50% fit and no fit at all.

Figure 2 : The transfer of meaning in Translation

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-----|----------|
| (a) | Perfect Fit | (b) | Near Fit |
| (c) | 50% fit | (d) | No Fit |

(adapted from Hidalgo,1987:79)

Figure 2(a) indicates the meaning of the *simpulan bahasa* is completely transferred to the TL text and the form of the SL text is retained, i.e. an idiom is used as the corresponding equivalent of the *simpulan bahasa*. This is a case of full translation. For example the *simpulan bahasa* '*diam ubi*' (quiet tapioca) can be translated as '*still water runs deep*' i.e. a person who behaves quietly, nevertheless thinks a lot and has strong feelings. The meaning and effect on the TL readers is similar to that of the SL readers. Another example is '*membuka tembela*' (to break a rotten egg), which has been frequently translated as '*to wash one's dirty linen*' and the meaning is similar in both instances i.e. to discuss in public one's private matters.

Figure 2(b) shows a case of over translation. The meaning of the original text, in this case the *simpulan bahasa*, is not only totally transferred in the English translation but further details are added to make it more specific than the original text. An example would be the translation of '*hidung tinggi*' (high nose). This has sometimes been translated as 'to be so proud' and '*stuck up*'. In this case the translator has added detail to get the nuance of meaning of the SL text.

Figure 2(c) shows a case of under translation whereby the transfer of meaning is partial. Under translation occurs when the TL idioms do not convey the meaning of the original text. This tends to occur when the target language does not have idioms to the corresponding *simpulan bahasa* as the concept might not exist in the TL society. For example '*gila isim*' is sometimes translated as 'religious

fanatic' and this does not convey the exact meaning. '*Gila isim*' refers to 'someone who has gone slightly mad in his pursuit of religious knowledge'. This is a case of undertranslation. Another *simpulan bahasa* that is sometimes partially translated is '*bermain kayu tiga*' (to play with three sticks). It has been translated as 'to betray'. The word 'betray' means being 'disloyal to a friend, a company or one's country' while the Malay *simpulan bahasa* has the implicit meaning of 'being unfaithful to one's lover or spouse'.

Figure 2(d) illustrates the case where meaning has not been transferred at all. This could be a case of literal translation where the form may be retained but the meaning does not make sense. It could also be an omission of *the simpulan bahasa* in the transference of meaning in the TL text. For example '*banyak mulut*' (many mouths) in the novel '*Saga*' (Abdul Talib Mohd Hassan, 1976) has been translated as '*loose tongue*' and this is a case of wrong translation as the *simpulan bahasa* means 'a person who like to carry tales' while '*loose tongue*' means 'to talk freely'. Another example of wrong translation in *Saga* is the *simpulan bahasa* '*pisau dan mentimun*' which is literally translated as '*the knife and cucumber*'. As a result the meaning does not make sense at all.

Three aspects of meaning that should be considered in effective translation are **linguistic**, **cultural** and **discourse meaning** (Hidalgo:81). However, for the purpose of this study only linguistic and cultural meaning will be discussed as part of the theoretical framework, as these are the components that have a

'direct bearing' (Ragavan, 1991:42) on the translation of *simpulan bahasa* or idioms. Furthermore, the issue of cultural meaning is likely to be the one to cause problems in translation as idioms are culture based in any language and are peculiar to that language. Whereas discourse meaning which looks at language structure, style and function requires a more comprehensive study of both the source and target language text.

3.3.1 Linguistic Meaning

Lyons defines linguistic meaning as ***"any utterance that consists of the lexical meaning of the separate words plus structural meanings...is the devices that signal structural meanings which constitute the grammar of the language"*** (1968:435). This means that linguistic meaning refers to the meaningful relationships which exist within language which is basically grammatical and lexical in meaning in nature as the meaning of a sentence is the product of both the lexical and grammatical i.e. ***"the meaning of the constituent lexemes and of the grammatical constructions that relate one lexeme, syntagmatically to another"*** (Lyons:156).

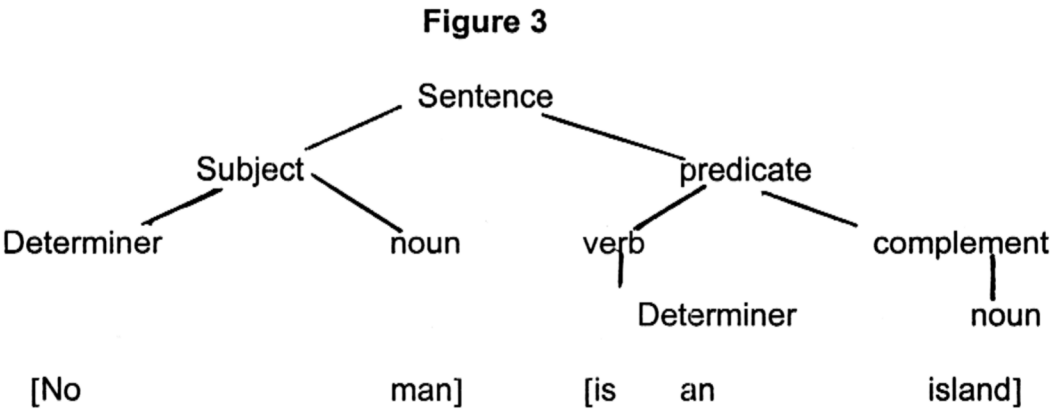
Lyons (436) further describes grammatical items as ***'closed sets'*** that is ***'one of fixed and usually small membership, for example the set of personal***

pronouns, tenses, genders...” while lexical items are “*open set*” that is “*one of unrestricted, indeterminately large membership, for example the class of nouns or verbs in a language*”.

Newmark (26) identifies grammatical meaning as,

- A sentence, which may be a declaration in the form of a question, an order, a wish or an exclamation;
- A clause consisting of the topic (e.g. She thanked the woman), the previously mentioned information introduced perhaps by a definite deictic - the, this, that - and the comment introduced by an indefinite deictic - a, some, many - the new information (e.g. ‘....who helped her’)
- A word group, which may comprise entities, events or relations.

Word group according to Leech (1974:11) refers to , “*constituent structure by which larger units are built up out of smaller units; or by which we are able to analyse a sentence syntactically into its constituent parts*”. This can be illustrated by a tree diagram in Figure 3.



Lexical meaning on the other hand, according to Newmark (26) can be viewed in three different ways as dictionary items :

- i. having four types of senses - concrete(literal), **figurative**, technical and colloquial;
- ii. having four degrees of frequency - primary, secondary, collocational and nonce(word invented for one particular occasion).
 - Primary meaning refers to the meaning suggested by the word when it is used alone e.g. the word 'break' in isolation means to separate an object into (two) parts as a result of force or strain
 - Secondary meaning is dependent on the context in which a word is used e.g. in the sentence, 'Let's break for tea'. The word 'break' means to stop doing something for a while.
 - Collocation is concerned with how words go together i.e. **which words may occur in construction with other words**, (Larsen:100) for example, 'to wash the car' and 'to bathe the baby', 'the king abdicated', 'the principle resigned' and 'a herd of elephants' and 'a flock of geese'
- iii. core and peripheral e.g. the core meaning of 'assure' are 'provide, secure, insure, guarantee' and 'ensure' while the peripheral meaning comprise of 'verify, stabilize' and 'settle'.

In this study the focus is on the **figurative meaning**, which according to Larsen(141) is "**meaning based on associative relations with primary sense**

and cannot be translated literally; and one class of figurative expressions which occurs in all languages but which is very language specific is idioms. Idioms are expressions of at least two words which cannot be understood literally and which function as a unit semantically and idioms are part of the lexicon of a language as they are phrases with fixed meanings, e.g. 'strike a bargain' and 'under the weather'. In this study, *simpulan bahasa* as idioms are part of the lexicon of the Malay language as they are Malay figurative expressions with fixed meanings and have to be analysed as a semantic item.

Another aspect that has to be considered in linguistic meaning is **ambiguity**. Ambiguity can exist in a word or sentence that can be interpreted in more than one way. Linguistic ambiguity according to Newmark "**may be lexical or grammatical**" (24).

- Grammatical ambiguity - for example, 'in new schools and kindergarten' can be analysed as new schools only, but all other kindergartens or it can mean all new schools and new kindergartens.
- Lexical ambiguity - concerns the interpretation of words. For example, in the sentence, 'I found the chair fascinating'. The word 'chair' is ambiguous as 'chair' can be analysed as a piece of furniture, the chairperson of a meeting, an honorary professor or scholar, or even the punishment of death by means of an electric chair. An example of ambiguity in *simpulan bahasa* is '*ambil hati*' (take liver). This expression can mean to be hurt or

to please someone and one needs to know the correct interpretation to transfer the meaning in translation.

Thus in the translation of idiomatic expressions, particularly the *simpulan bahasa* one has to avoid a literal word for word translation of these expressions into English. The receptor word or phrase which has the equivalent meaning will be the correct one to use in translation and the translator must be equipped with the grammatical and lexical meaning of both the source and target languages so that equivalent effect can be achieved.

3.3.2 Cultural Meaning

One of the most difficult problem in translating is found in the difference between cultures as language is ***“an index to culture and this means that language reflects the culture of its speakers”*** (Asmah,1987:112). This means that people speaking a particular language perceive life and act differently from those speaking another language. Halliday says that,

“It was Malinowski who first pointed out that in order to understand a text, it was necessary to extend the notion of ‘context’, beyond the word and sentences on either side and to include in it features of the non-linguistic environment and

what he called ‘the context of situation’ and ‘the context of culture’

(in Leckie-Tarry, 1992:24)

Therefore, translation from one language to another cannot be done adequately without a knowledge of the two cultures, in this case Malay and English (western culture) as well as the two language structures. The people of a given culture look at things ***“from their own perspective”*** (Larsen:137). The English language and its speakers tend to be direct and precise in communication, while Malay and its speakers are indirect and non-explicit as a result of the culture which expects its speakers to observe politeness. Many words which look like they are equivalents are not. They have special connotations. For example the word *‘lembut’* (soft, tender) suggest positivity much more consistently in Malay than its English equivalent *‘soft’*. Depending on the context, ***“the English expression ‘soft spot’ can suggest either a positive or negative feeling”*** (Tham, 1990:52).

The fact that the receptor language is spoken by people of a culture which is often very different from the culture of those who speak the source language will automatically make it difficult to find equivalence. This is more so when the concept to be translated refers to something which is not known in the receptor language culture. For example, *‘latah’* is a phenomenon which exists in the Malay community and is well understood by the Malays. The translator may translate it

as 'to get frantically excited' or 'hysterical mimicry', but this does not transfer the actual meaning of '*latah*' as it is culture based, a shared experience among the Malays but something new for the TL readers.

Before we move on to the various aspects of cultural differences in Malaysia, a brief account of the history of translation in this country and its contact with several languages, most importantly, English will be given. This is because the translation of *simpulan bahasa* will be affected by the differences in English and Malay culture.

The Malay language is influenced greatly by Sanskritic, Arabic and other colonial languages, particularly, English. The Sanskrit and Arabic influence has contributed to the enrichment of the Malay language, particularly **"in terms of its vocabulary"** (Asmah,:23). To use the term translation in its broadest meaning, Sanskrit was first translated into Malay through the rendition of the great Hindu epics '*Ramayana and Mahabharatha*'. This brought the trappings and symbols of a Hindu court into the Malay court. Some of the Sanskrit words that convey the sense of pomp and grandeur in Malay ceremonial life are, '*maharaja*' (the great king), '*putera dan puteri*' (prince and princess), '*mahligai*' (palace), '*perdana menteri*' (prime minister), '*mahkota*' (crown), '*singgasana*' (throne), and '*dirgahayu*' (longlife). Other commonly used words are, '*suami, isteri, loba, cinta, suria, cahaya*' and '*dinihari*'. These words can be translated as

'husband, wife, world, greed, love, light' and 'dawn' respectively. These are universal concepts and can be translated in most languages.

Then came the Arabic or Islamic legacy which dominates Malay vocabulary. Asmah (240) states that "***actual translation really started with the translation from Arabic to Malay of the Holy Quran***". Evidence of the first translation from Arabic to Malay is based on inscriptions found on the well known '*Batu Bersurat Terengganu*' which contains an edict in Malay instructing Muslims to obey the regulations laid down by the local ruler. This Islamic legacy has led to a great number of Arabic loanwords in the Malay language, for example, '*akhirat*' (hereafter), '*iblis*' (devil), '*Nabi*' (prophet), '*wahyu*' (destination), '*akhlak*' (morals), '*amal*' (good deeds), '*dakwa*' (accuse), '*mahkamah*' (court) and '*masjid*' (mosque).

European contact with the Malays began with the Portuguese attack and subsequent capture of the Malay kingdom of Malacca in 1511. This marked the beginning of western influence and intervention in the Malay States, and in 1824 when the British signed the '*Pangkor Treaty*' with the Sultan of Perak, began the longest colonial rule in the country. The presence of the British was greatly felt in the political, social and economic aspects of the country though the British claimed non-interference in the cultural-religious aspects.

British colonization marked the beginning of English instruction in many schools and later saw the need for translation. Systematic translation from English to Malay started in 1924 with the establishment of '*Pejabat Karang Mengarang*' at the *Sultan Idris Training College* in Tanjung Malaim to provide academic texts and this task was taken over by *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* which was established in 1956.

We can see then that it is not so difficult to translate English texts into Malay as the language is familiar to the Malays. In fact, Malays are exposed to British culture through education and the media . However, the situation is different in translating from Malay to English as the borrowing and assimilation have been unilateral and it is hypothesized that many Malay concepts have no equivalents in the English vocabulary. It is also generally agreed that some British are ethnocentric and therefore, may not know much about Malay life and culture.

The Malays are exposed to western culture through education, the media and through British influence during colonization. The same can't be said of the English. As *simpulan bahasa* are the idiomatic expressions of the Malays which reflect their cultural peculiarities and idiosyncracies it will pose greater problems in translation .

Language is a part of culture and a writer's worldview will be reflected in his text. English and Malay do not only belong to two different language families, they

also belong to two different cultures and therefore, convey different cultural meaning. By cultural meaning we refer to a people's **Weltanschauung** (Hidalgo,1987;Taib Osman,1988) which is meaning viewed in terms of the ecology, material culture, society, religion, language and political situation in Malaysia.

i. Ecology

Differences in ecological features will cause some difficulties in finding translation equivalents in the TL text. Certain ecological features in the SL text will not convey the same effect in the TL text. One just needs to observe the difference in climates between Malaysia and the Western countries to see how ecological features will lead to problems in translation. How do we get equivalent effect among readers who experience the four seasons and readers who only get either the sun or the rain throughout the year. Although some of the terms for these seasons and other ecological features do exist in the language, it is not a shared experience and thus, do not produce the same effect. A much quoted example that would clearly show this is 'white as snow' which has always been translated as '*putih seperti salji*'. This obviously does not produce the same effect on Malay readers who may not have the same experience as snow.

A closer and more realistic comparison is cotton, and the translation '*putih seperti kapas*' goes down well with Malay experience. However, this still

does not produce equivalent effect as the original because in the SL readers, will be invoked images of vast areas of land covered with snow, whilst most Malaysians would not have even seen a cotton plantation.

Similarly, equivalent effect cannot be achieved among western readers who have not experienced the '*musim tengkujuh*' or 'rainy season'. How would they be able to imagine long periods of rain and '*banjir kilat*' (flood lightning) which refers to 'flash floods' as it is not a shared experience. A western reader will also not be able to imagine '*musim kemarau*' (drought) that is dreaded by the Malays, as an Englishman or woman sees summer as a season of fun and holiday. That is why the beauty of Shakespeare's line, "*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day*" is difficult to convey to Malay readers who live in a land of eternal summer.

ii. **Material Culture**

In most cases, as with the ecological differences, the Malays are exposed to the material culture of the British through education and the media. The Malays know what a Christmas tree looks like, they have seen Halloweens on television and imported goods are abundant in Malaysia. However, the same cannot be said of the English as their knowledge of Malay culture is limited and this may lead to untranslatability or inequivalence. For example, how would the word '*telekung*' (special attire worn by Muslim Malay women in prayers) and '*pulut kuning*' (a dish of glutinous rice that

has special significance in Malay ceremonies) be translated. Does a translator give a literal translation of 'glutinous rice' for the latter or explain the former. These are things that the translator has to understand and takes into consideration before he is able to transfer the meaning into the TL text

iii. Social aspects

Malay social practices can be very complex and this will cause problems in translation. For example showing affection and kissing in public which is acceptable in English culture are taboos in Malay culture. English movies showing love scenes are accepted as part of western culture, but if a Malay movie were to have a kissing scene it would create controversy. The Malays can accept ***"western science and technology but not their permissiveness and yellow culture"*** (Asmah :116).

The Malay kinship system stresses on age or generational differences. For example Malay differentiates between older and younger brother and also older and younger sister. An elder brother is called '*abang*' and sister '*kakak*'. In some families different terms are used to address one's siblings. They may have an '*Abang Long*', '*Abang Ngah*', '*Uda*' and '*Abang Cik*' in a descending order of age. English does not differentiate between older and younger brother or sister and this may lead to problems in translation. The system gets more complicated beyond the

nuclear family, for example, among uncles and aunties. If an uncle is older than one's father, than he can be called '*Wak*' or '*Pak Long*'. But if he is younger than one's father he may be called '*Pak Cik*' or '*Pak Ngah*' or '*Acu*' depending on his position in the family, and this is just one variety or dialect of the Malay language. Therefore, a translator has to understand these differences in Malay culture so as not to misinterpret the text.

iv. Religion

Religion plays an important role in shaping the culture, language and world view of society and this usually creates problems in translation. Just as *Christianity* and the *Bible* have influenced the lives of the English, Islam and *The Holy Quran* too have the same impact on the Malays who are mostly Muslims. Although both religions may have different prophets and gods, there are some similar concepts and beliefs in Christianity and Islam as '*ugama langit*' (religion sky). Both religions for example, believe in '*Adam dan Hawa*' or 'Adam and Eve', 'judgement day' and heaven and hell.

Problems nevertheless, are rife in the translation of Islamic concepts into English. For example, although Christians believe 'Jesus Christ' to be 'the son of god', Muslims believe that 'Jesus' or '*Nabi Isa*' is one of the 'prophets' of '*Allah*' and that there is only one god. Therefore, the

translator has to be sensitive to all these religious values and concepts to convey the meaning intended by the writer.

v. **Language**

Malay and English language are different in terms of phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. One aspect of the language that will cause problems is finding equivalent pronouns. The table below shows the different standard form of Malay pronouns used in the different contexts with its corresponding pronouns in English.

English	Intimate	Neutral	Official	Royalty	Titled
<i>I</i>	<i>aku</i>	<i>saya</i>	<i>saya</i>	<i>Patik, beta</i>	<i>Saya</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>Engkau, kau, awak</i>	<i>Saudara(i),cik, Encik</i>	<i>Tuan, puan, anda, kamu</i>	<i>Tuanku</i>	<i>Tan Sri, Datuk, Tun</i>
<i>He/she</i>	<i>Dia, ia</i>	<i>Dia, ia</i>	<i>beliau</i>	<i>baginda</i>	<i>Datuk etc</i>
<i>we</i>	<i>Kami, kita</i>	<i>Kami, kita</i>	<i>kami, kita</i>	<i>Beta, kita</i>	<i>Kami, kita</i>
<i>they</i>	<i>mereka</i>	<i>mereka</i>	<i>mereka</i>	<i>Duli-duli</i>	<i>Datuk-datuk etc</i>

(adapted from Mariah Mohd Nor, 1922:55)

The table above shows the many forms of pronouns to to suit different contexts and speakers. The Malay term of address in the second person singular does not state gender unlike the English ‘she’ and ‘he’. ‘Saya’ is a common but more refined way of the first person singular pronoun compared to ‘aku’. A younger speaker will always refer to him/herself as ‘saya’ and not

'aku' when speaking to someone older or of a higher status. Nevertheless, it is strictly unthinkable to use 'saya' when speaking to a Malay Sultan. A minister in the presence of the Sultan will refer to him/herself as 'patik' and the 'rakyat' or commoners 'hamba'. Therefore, a translator must be aware of these differences in connotation in the Malay system of address.

vi. **Political and Legal Situation**

When Malaysia gained its independence in 1957, it inherited the British legal system based on the English Common Law. However, there is a move to digress from dependency and presently the Malaysian Criminal Law is based on the Indian Penal Code and with the resurgence of the Islamic movement in the country, 'Syariah Law' based on Islam is implemented for Muslims in matters of family, marriage, divorce and inheritance. Thus the translator has to be aware of these differences when transferring meaning relating to legal matters

Although Malaysia is a democratic country, it does not allow total freedom of speech, mainly because of its multi-racial component as certain issues like economic privileges might be sensitive to certain races. These differences have to be taken into consideration in translation.

In conclusion because ***"all meaning is culturally conditioned and each society will interpret a message in terms of its own culture"*** (Larsen:431)

it is inevitable that the author's worldview will come through in what he writes. The translator, therefore, has to consider this so that the SL writer's meaning is transferred into the TL text and the TL readers will get the same effect as the SL readers.

3.4 Form

Form refers to the "**surface structure of a language and that the speech sounds in their phonological, lexical and grammatical structures constitute the form of a language**" (Beekman, 1981: 8). Beekman explains that sounds are structured into such units as phonemes, syllables, phonological words and larger groupings and they present the phonological structure of a language. A list of these combination of sounds represent the lexicon of a language. Each such segmentation is then manifested in various contrastive phonological shape. Thus Beekman sees the lexicon as the organization of sounds to symbolize different cognitive notions. These same sounds may be analysed as to how the lexical items are arranged and modified to form the various grammatical units such as words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

As English and Malay are different in terms of its phonology, lexicon and grammar, *simpulan bahasa* which has its form in Malay (refer 2.6) cannot be translated literally as the translated form will not make sense in English. There

are two possible ways in which the *simpulan bahasa* can be successfully translated:

- i. The *simpulan bahasa* retains the idiomaticity of the expression in English. The TL may use the same image as a basis for comparison in certain situations, while in others, different image which share the same characteristics and meanings are used. For example '*kucing bertanduk*' (cat with horns) can be translated as 'to ask for the moon'. The image used is different but the meaning of 'impossibility' is transferred.
- ii. The *simpulan bahasa* loses its idiomaticity in English i.e. the conversion of the *simpulan bahasa* to sense. For example, the *simpulan bahasa* '*makan cuka*' (eat vinegar) can be translated as 'to be jealous or envious' and '*lintah lapar*' (leech hungry) can be translated as an opportunist.

In conclusion the translator has to be proficient in both Malay and English as he needs to know whether there are TL idioms with the same effect and sense in the translation of *simpulan bahasa*. If corresponding idioms are not found in English the translator has to ensure that the writer's intended meaning is conveyed through sense translation .

3.5 The Translation Procedure

The procedure used for the translation of *simpulan bahasa* in this study will be based on Newmark's translation procedure for metaphors (Newmark :88-90). This procedure can be applied because ***idioms have been identified as metaphors*** (Larsen:249; Newmark:124). An idiom is a 'dead metaphor' and a *simpulan bahasa* is an idiom of the Malay language, therefore the same translation principles may apply for *simpulan bahasa*. Translating idioms literally will usually result in nonsense because idioms are special collocations of words with their own meaning. Sometimes it will be necessary to translate with a non-figurative expression but sometimes a suitable target language idiom can be used.

The difference between the translation of a dead metaphor and a live metaphor is that a person using the former, that is an idiom, no longer thinks of the comparison on which it was based. A reader does not think about the primary sense of the word but only the idiomatic. Larsen (248) says that " ***a live metaphor on the other hand is one which is understood after considering the comparison which is being made***". For example in the sentence, 'a heart of stone', the 'heart' is being compared with 'stone'. The 'heart' is seen as hard as 'stone' and this metaphorically refers to 'a person who refuses to give in or compromise'.

Although Newmark and Larsen (1981:124,249)) think that it is not necessary to keep the image in a **'dead' metaphor** as it has lost all metaphorical sense, it is possible in some instances to keep the **image** of the *simpulan bahasa* in the TL even though one need not think of the comparison which is being made as *simpulan bahasa* are phrases with fixed meanings.

Newmark suggests seven main procedures for translating metaphors (1981:88-90)_arxd these procedures will be applied to the translation of *simpulan bahasa* (which are **'dead metaphors'**).

(1) Reproducing the same image in the TL language -

provided that the image has the same sense and effect. This procedure according to Newmark is common for one-word metaphors and is much rarer in the translation of idioms and depends on cultural overlap. Even though one need not think of comparison as in the translation of 'live metaphors' it is possible to translate *simpulan bahasa* with the same image without losing the effect and meaning. For example 'batu loncatan' can be translated as 'stepping stone' and 'darah daging' is translated as 'flesh and blood'. Other *simpulan bahasa* that reproduces the same image in English are 'kayu tunggul' that is translated as 'dead wood' and 'menjolak sarang tebuan' becomes 'to stir a hornet's nest'. Meaning is completely transferred here.

- (2) **Replace the image in the SL with a standard TL image, which is acceptable in the TL culture.** In the case of idioms which are complex '**dead metaphors**' (refer 2.2) Newmark thinks that the idioms are often converted to sense in the translation process, even though they can be translated to TL idioms, simply because "**they are so stereotyped**". Nevertheless, replacing the image in the SL with a standard TL image is possible in the translation of *simpulan bahasa*. For example 'hati'(liver) is the Malay equivalent of the word 'heart' and there are many *simpulan bahasa* that include this word. 'Patah hati'(broken liver) can be translated as 'broken hearted', 'berubah hati' (change liver) is 'a change of heart' and 'tidak sampai hati' (not reach liver) as 'didn't have the heart'. Meaning is transferred, although the form differs slightly.

- (3) **Translation of metaphor by simile, retaining the image.**

Newmark sees this as "***the obvious way of modifying the shock of a metaphor, particularly if the TL text is not emotive in character***". Although this procedure is rarely used in the translation of idioms, it will still be applied in this study. Even though meaning may be transferred, it may not have the same effect as the original idiom in SL text. For example the *simpulan bahasa* 'lipas kudung'(cockroach maimed) in the novel 'Saga' (150) is translated as 'zooms around here and there like a scrambling cockroach' (Saga,1992:151).

(4) Translation of metaphor by simile plus sense or a metaphor plus sense.

This procedure according to Newmark can help both *"both the layman and the expert"* understand the metaphors in the TL text *"if there is a risk that the simple transfer of the metaphor will not be understood by most readers"*. In the study there is a possibility that a *simpulan bahasa* is translated with a TL idiom plus sense. For example 'meniti buih'(cross the bubbles) in 'Saga' (265) is translated as 'like you're trying to cross a bridge of bubbles'.

(5) Conversion of metaphor to sense.

Newmark suggest that this translation procedure is common in the translation of metaphors and is to be preferred to any replacement of an SL by a TL image which does not convey the same sense. In the translation of *simpulan bahasa* it is hypothesized that this procedure will be used when there are no equivalent TL idioms. For example in 'Saga', the *simpulan bahasa* 'lepas tangan' (288: release the hand) is translated as 'aren't responsible', 'biar putih tulang'(151: white bones) becomes 'I'd rather die than give in' and 'tidak berhati perut'(126: no liver and stomach) is 'callous'. Although meaning may be transferred , it

might not convey the same effects as the SL idiom which has acquired a completely form in the TL.

(6) **Deletion.**

Newmark suggest that *"if the metaphor is redundant, there is a case for its deletion, provided the SL text is not authoritative or 'expressive'"* and *simpulan bahasa* may also be treated this way. Besides redundancy, there is a possibility that the concept does not exist in English. This results in zero transfer of meaning. For example the *simpulan bahasa* 'tulang empat kerat'(bones four pieces) in 'Saga' (49) is deleted as the translation will result in redundancy. However 'paku Belanda' (206:nail Dutch) in the novel which means 'fixed price' should not be deleted as the *simpulan bahasa* is not redundant and the translator should convey the writer's intention.

(7) **Same metaphor combined with sense.**

Occasionally, the translator may wish to ensure that a metaphor is understood by adding a gloss. In the case of *simpulan bahasa*, the expression may be literally translated into English using the same image plus sense. This will result in undertranslation as idioms cannot be translated literally even though the sense of the *simpulan bahasa* is added. For example 'quran buruk' in 'Saga'(133) is translated as 'like an old Quran which can neither be read nor thrown'. However, the TL readers must know the

importance of '*Quran*' in '*Islam*' for them to get the effect of the *simpulan bahasa*.

Besides the seven procedures suggested by Newmark, *simpulan bahasa* in this study can also be treated in three other ways.

(1) Replace the image in the SL with a suitable TL image,

without losing the effect and meaning of the SL. This is another common way of translating idioms as each language has its own way of expressing a concept. An English idiom with the same sense and meaning can be used to translate *simpulan bahasa*. Examples are '*pagar makan padi*' (fence eating rice) which has the same meaning as 'biting the hand that feeds one', '*sejangkang kera*' (step monkey) can be translated as 'a stone's throw' and '*angkat bakul*' (lift basket) is the equivalent of 'to blow one's own trumpet'. Meaning is transferred using an idiom with a different image.

(2) Literal or word for word translation of *simpulan bahasa*

which gives the wrong sense in the TL text. Examples are '*cacing kepanasan*' (Saga:166) which is literally translated as 'when one worm gets hot'. This expression which means 'a nervous and anxious person' may be understood by people who are familiar with Malay culture but not TL readers whose knowledge of the culture is limited. There is zero transfer of meaning in this procedure. This is a case of poor translation.

(3) Wrong sense of *simpulan bahasa*.

This is a case of misinterpretation or incompetent translation. For example '*tanah haram*'(Saga:49) has been wrongly translated as 'restricted land'. The *simpulan bahasa* means 'illegal settlement' while 'restricted' means 'limitation'. As a result meaning is not completely transferred in this procedure. The procedures that will be used in the analysis of the translation of *simpulan bahasa* will be summarised in Table 5.

Table 6: The Translation of *Simpulan bahasa*

PROCEDURE	EXPLANATION
S.B -> ID 1	Using TL idiom; same image
S.B -> ID 2	Using TL idiom; similar image
S.B -> ID + simile	Image retained + simile (by using as and like)
S.B->simile+sense/ID + sense	Use of simile + meaning or idiom +meaning
S.B -> sense (meaning)	Meaning or sense translation
S.B -> deletion	<i>Simpulan bahasa</i> deleted in meaning or form
S.B. -> ID (literal) + sense	TL isiom (literal) + sense or meaning
S.B. -> ID 3	Using TLidiom- different image;same meaning
S.B. -> literal	Literal translation = wrong translation
S.B -> misinterpretation	Meaning not transferred

S.B = *simpulan bahasa* (source language)

ID = idiom (target language)

The procedures above suggest that it is possible to translate *simpulan bahasa* into idioms. Nevertheless, a translator has to remember what the author intends to say i.e. **the meaning** - takes precedence over how he say it i.e. the form – *“as it is meaning that determines the form as*

meaning is the essence of all communication" (Beekman,1981:15).

Thus in the translation of *simpulan bahasa* one has to bear in mind that form cannot take precedence over meaning as priority in form will not convey the effect intended by the writer.