

## **The Translation of Makhioi Text from Batak Simalungun Wedding Ceremony in North Sumatra (Indonesia)**

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**Abstract:** *This paper discusses the translation of Makhioi text (MaT) into English in which MaT is achieved during wedding ceremony in Batak Simalungun tradition. The purposes of this article are to see how deep the translation techniques are applied by translator and to find the impact of the translation techniques to the acceptability of the text. The significance of this article is to enrich knowledge and cultural text-translation, as the reinforcement that cultural translation text has always faced many problems as well as to give some inputs to the development of translation theory, translation techniques and translation quality in order the translation products fulfils the acceptability. The study efforts to introduce one of the texts of Simalungun culture to the world since the texts have high cultural value and sublime which is nowadays eroded slowly by the global cultural influences. Until today the quality of MaT translation has less acceptability. This paper adopts the theory of Molina and Albir (2002) and Silalahi (2009) as indicated earlier by Nababan. The methods used is content analysis to determine the techniques of translation, questionnaire and interview and to assess the level of acceptability of translation quality. The researchers use seven poems known as umpassa as the data and the sources of the data are a bilingual book of "Umpassa pakon uppamni Simalungun" by Salmon Sinaga (2010) and three informants. It can be concluded that the translation techniques mainly refer to the addition and adaptation.*

**Keywords:** *Acceptability, Batak Simalungun, Cultural Texts, Makhioi, Wedding Ceremony .*

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### **I. Introduction**

#### **Background**

Culture is a country asset that should be developed and preserved in order it will not extinct in the future because culture is a tool which is able to build our spirit to liberate and promote a region or a country. With reference to this Vijay Sathe (1985) says that culture is the set of important assumption (often unstated) that members of a community share in common means that cultures have wide technocracies meaning covering knowledge, faith/belief, art, morals, law, customs, and a variety of other capabilities and habits acquired as a member of society.[1] Edgar H. Schein (1992) argues that the culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or developed by a given group as learning to overcome the problems of adjustment or adaptation to external and internal integration of formal and well realized.[2]

Indonesia is a multicultural country with a total number of 34 provinces and 1,128 tribes where each of these ethnic groups has a different culture. Culture is a very valuable asset that can be used as the foundations on which prosperity is built on and developed for life. With culture we will be known in the world one. Also with culture, we can identify man as individuals, groups, organizations or specific communities.

But how unlucky we are when a diverse and beautiful culture is not widely known to the outside world due to language barriers. In the globalization era when one country is dependent on others, the intensity of communication between these countries should be increasing in higher level; therefore, it is not enough when science and technology are absorbed from developed countries by means of translation. It is the time to introduce the Indonesian culture to other nations through the translation, so that this country is better known and attract the attention of other nations, which in turn will attract foreign tourists to visit Indonesia.

Simalungun is one of the Batak tribes in North Sumatra and is still indigenous in its every ceremony. One of the many ceremonies in Simalungun traditional culture is wedding ceremony. A number of indigenous figures here argue that implementing a wedding ceremony which is based on traditional law means there are some efforts to generate culture from old generation to the newer generation and more importantly is that traditional custom is related to socio-cultural and religious significances of Simalungun. Socioculturally, wedding ceremony shows that both parties which implement the customs have the aims to carry out obligations and when these obligations can be well performed, all these become the symbols that the married couple and their families are classified as well-mannered people. Religiously, the implementation is also aimed at receiving

the blessings from God the Almighty who is believed that He will deliver His wealth to the bride's parents along with their families.

In a translation study the wedding ceremony is generally viewed as a Simalungun language text that has the meaning or a message that can be routed and delivered in Indonesian language. We know that translation essentially relates to the process of transferring ideas/thoughts of the writer in Simalungun language to ideas/thoughts in Indonesian language. Therefore, the most important thing in any translation process is how the translation can as much as possible divert the mind of the writer in Simalungun language to the reader's comprehension in Indonesian. The translation is conducted for the benefit of the readers who become the targets but not for the local readers who are the native speakers of Simalungun language.

The process of translating the traditional cultural materials in Simalungun often meets with problems since some concepts in Indonesian language can not be translated easily with the same concepts in Simalungun language, or, at least some words in Indonesian language do not have closely related or appropriate translation with the Indonesian language. This is caused by the cultural differences between Simalungun and Indonesian languages. Therefore, a translator will find the difficulties when translating the cultural text. Consider two examples below in (1) and (2).

1. Simalungun: *Sai tubuhan lalakma. Tubuhan tobu. Saitubuhan anakma. Tubuhan boru*  
Indonesian: Agar pengantin diberkati Tuhan memperoleh/melahirkan anak laki-laki dan perempuan.  
English: 'So that the couple (will) be blessed by God to have son(s) and daughter(s)'.  
2. Simalungun: *Tubuhma hayu anak pakon tobu. I buttuni tapian. Sai tubuhma anak pakon boru na jitu-jitu. Na lang panahit-nahitan.*  
Indonesian: Agar pengantin memperoleh anak laki-laki dan perempuan yang pintar-pintar dan sehat-sehat.  
English: 'So that the couple (will) have smart and healthy son(s) and daughter(s)'.

By considering such condition as being shown in examples above, the researcher pays her interests to study the translation text of *Makhioi* in Simalungun wedding ceremony. With the aims to make it understood by public the Simalungun culture remains stay in the traditional practices, especially *Makhioi* and other societies are hoped to pay also their interest to Simalungun customs. In its realization, there are so many Simalungun people who do not live in their mother land since they have migrated to some other provinces in this archipelago; as a result, they have no longer children and/or grandchildren who know Simalungun language and local traditional practices.

### **The Problems**

The problems in this research are: what is the technique of translations applied in translating the MaT into Indonesian language?; and what is the impact of translation techniques being used to the quality of the translation in terms of acceptability?

### **The Objectives**

The objectives of this research are to describe the technique of translations applied in translating the MaT into Indonesian language and to describe the impact of translation techniques being used to the quality of the translation text in terms of acceptability.

### **The Significances**

The significances of this research are oriented to enrich knowledge and cultural translation texts; in addition, they are also addressed to reinforce the theory that cultural translation text has always faced many problems, and therefore, they are hoped to give some more inputs to the development of translation theory, especially the translation techniques which are related to translation quality in terms of acceptability. Moreover, all these efforts are meant to introduce and popularize one of the texts in Simalungun culture to the worldwide and to create any possibilities of interests for foreigners in travelling to Simalungun in specific and to Indonesian in general. As understood the efforts of cultural text retention have received higher value culturally because culture is slowly but sure eroded by the global cultural influences. The influences enter many segments

of life; as a result, life becomes the targets of change by the global culture and this entrance is considered dangerous when the local people do not have any initiatives to protect themselves. This research is inspired by critical condition in Indonesia where the obedience of local culture by most young generation has reached peak; this means that MaT appears to be essential that it can bridge the old generation with the young one. If this is achieved successfully MaT becomes the tool for protection of culture in Simalungun.

## II. Review of Literature

### The History of Simalungun

Bataknese is one of the ethnic groups in Indonesia. This name, as Ethnologue argues,[3] refers to a collection of tribes, for examples, Batak Alas-Kluet, Batak Angkola, Batak Dairi, Batak Karo, Batak Mandailing, Batak Simalungun, and Batak Toba. Batak Alas-Kluet [btz] lives in two areas, in Aceh Province; 1: inland from Tapaktuan, and 2: northwest towards Kutacane; and eventually in Sumatera Utara Province. 195,000 (2000 census). It includes 80,000 Alas, 50,000 Kluet, and 65,000 Singkil. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Alternate Names*: Alas-Kluet Batak *Dialects*: Alas, Kluet, Singkil (Kade-Kade). Alas dialect may be more similar to Karo Batak [btx], 81% cognate (Soravia 2002), while Kluet and Singkil may be more closely related to Pakpak Dairi [btd]. *Classification*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Northwest Sumatra-Barrier Islands, Batak, Northern *Comments*: Many reject the label Batak for its cultural connotations. Unclear whether this is a single language. Batak Angkola [akb] occupies Sipirok town area; inland from near Sibolga city towards southern provincial border. 750,000 (1991 UBS). *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Alternate Names*: Anakola, Angkola. *Dialects*: None known. Reportedly similar to Mandailing Batak [btm], but distinct sociolinguistically. *Classification*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Northwest Sumatra-Barrier Islands, Batak, Southern. *Comments*: Christian, Muslim.

Batak Dairi [btd] inhabites southwest of Lake Toba; area around Sidikalang town, south to coast; also in Aceh Province inland. 1,200,000 (1991 UBS). *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Alternate Names*: Dairi, Pakpak, Pakpak Dairi *Dialects*: Diari and Pakpak dialects are sociolinguistically distinct. *Classification*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Northwest Sumatra-Barrier Islands, Batak, Northern *Comments*: Christian. Batak Karo [btx] possesses the north central area west and northwest of Lake Toba; Aceh Province, small border areas. 600,000 (1991 UBS). *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Alternate Names*: Karo Batak. *Dialects*: Singkil. *Classification*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Northwest Sumatra-Barrier Islands, Batak, Northern *Comments*: Christian, traditional religion. Batak Mandailing [btm] keeps the southern interior area extending from Padang Sidempuan, across borders with Riau and Sumatera Barat provinces. 1,100,000 (2000 census). *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Alternate Names*: Batta, Mandailing Batak *Dialects*: None known. Sociolinguistically different from Angkola Batak [akb]. *Classification*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Northwest Sumatra-Barrier Islands, Batak, Southern *Comments*: A general form of Batak common to a wider area than Angkola. Muslim.

Batak Simalungun [bts] employs the area of northeast of Lake Toba; Pematangsiantar town area. 1,200,000 (2000). *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Alternate Names*: Simelungan, Timur *Classification*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Northwest Sumatra-Barrier Islands, Batak, Simalungan. The last, Batak Toba [bbc] subjugates the Samosir island; east, south, and west of Lake Toba. 2,000,000 (1991 UBS). *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Alternate Names*: Batta, Toba Batak. *Dialects*: None known. Reportedly similar to Angkola Batak [akb]. *Classification*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Northwest Sumatra-Barrier Islands, Batak, Southern *Comments*: Christian.

Specifically, Simalungun has 30 districts with 438 660 ha or 6.12% of the area of North Sumatra Province. Tanah Jawa subdistrict covers an area of 49 175 ha, while the smallest area, that is Dolok Pardamean, conceals the extent area of 9045 ha. All sub-districts consist of 306 villages and 17 urban villages (kelurahan).

### Makhioi

All tribes in Indonesia have their own traditional clothes and so does the Simalungun. In case of wedding ceremony the Simalungun male and female people wear the clothes which is in general termed as *Ulos*. Specifically in Simalungun this *Ulos* is named *Hiou* which has various kinds of ornaments. *Hiou* was in the past related to magic; it was believed to have another "power" of religious nature in which the power could be used to provide protection, that is why it is considered sacred and magical.

In one legend the *Hiou* was regarded as one of the three sources of warmth for humans (whenever it is compared to the Sun and Fire), but it is classified as the most convenient source of warmth because it can be used at any time. Simalungun has a habit of *Mambere hiou* (to give hiou/ulos) which symbolizes warmth giving

and affection to the recipient in any wedding ceremony. *Hiou* can be worn in a variety of forms covering some parts of body, such as overlaying the head, upper parts of body, the lower part of body, shoulder and other parts. The process of giving *khioui* is called *Makhioi* which is normally accompanied by uttering poem. The poem is in the form of humming or folk poetry which usually contains advice and prayer. Normally, such a poem consists of four lines when written; each row has of 8-12 syllables, with a-b-a-b rhyme patterns in the beginning and with a-a-a-a (not to be a-a-b-b, or a-b-b-a) at the end. Rhyme was originally an oral literature but it is now found only in written rhyme. All forms of the poem consist of two parts, namely Rhyme and contents. Rhyme is the first two lines, often associated with nature (characterizing the agrarian culture of the community), and usually does not have a relationship with the second part which conveys meaning and these last two lines become the content; this content is considered the purpose of the poem. Readers are requested to pay attention the examples in (3) and (4).

3. Simalungun: *Tubuhma hayu anak pakon tobu. I buttuni tapian. Sai tubuhma anak pakon boru na jitu-jitu.*

*Na lang panahit-nahitan.*

Indonesian: 'Agar pengantin memperoleh anak laki-laki dan perempuan yang pintar-pintar dan sehat-sehat'.

English: 'So that the couple (will) have smart and healthy son(s) and daughter(s)'.

4. Simalungun: *Isuan ma timbahou. I bonani kahombu. Anggo domma marjabu. Jumpahan anak jumpahan boru*

Indonesian: 'Kalau sudah berumah tangga kiranya diberkati Tuhan memperoleh keturunan anak laki-laki dan perempuan'.

English: 'When (you) are married, may God (will) bless (you) to have son(s) and daughter(s)'.

### **Translation technique**

Molina and Albir (2002:507) states that "translation method refers to the way of a particular translation process is carried out in terms of the translator's objective, i.e., a global option that affects the whole texts". [4] They also say that the translation technique is a procedure to analyze and classify how translation equivalence in progress and can be applied to various lingual units. Translation techniques have five characteristics: 1. Translation technique affects the translation, 2. Techniques are classified by comparison to the source language text, 3. Techniques are micro level, 4. Technique is unrelated but based on the particular context, and 5. Techniques is functional.

Silalahi (2009) quotes Molina and Albir as saying that the type and technique of translation can be classified as the followings: 1. adaptation, 2. amplification, 3. borrowing, 4. calque, 5. compensation, 6. description, 7. discursive creation, 8. establish equivalence, 9. generalization, 10. linguistic amplification, 11. linguistic compression, 12. literal translation, 13. modulation, 14. particularization, 15. reduction, 16. substitution, 17. variation, 18. transposition, 19. addition, and 20. deletion.[5]

### **Quality of translation**

Acceptability of results of translation is that the translation should not be contrary to the rules, norms and culture prevailing in the society targeted readers. See Table 1 to check whether the results of the translation are acceptable.

**Table 1. The Instruments of Measuring the Level of Translation Acceptance**

3	Translation feels natural; technical term commonly used in the field of literature and familiar to the reader; phrases, clauses and sentences that are used are in accordance with the rules of Indonesian.	Acceptability
2	In general, the translation has been felt natural; however there is a slight problem in the use of technical terms, or there was a slight grammaticality.	Less Acceptability
1	Translation is not natural or feels like the work of translation; technical terms used are not commonly used in the field of literature and not familiar to the reader; phrases, clauses and sentences used in accordance with the rules of the English language.	Unacceptability

The measurement instrument of acceptance rate is a guideline for the translation of key informants in determining the level of acceptability of the translation. Scale provided ranges from 1 to 3. Each score given is a reflection of the level of acceptability of the translation.

### III. Research Method

#### Research design

This study uses a descriptive-qualitative approach. This study also involves the content analysis and gets help from some key informants.

#### Data and data source

The data of this research is *umpassa* which consists of 7 (seven) *umpassa*. Here the researcher would like to analyse the second parts of the *umpassa* called content which consist of phrases. As stated before rhyme usually does not have a relationship with the second part which conveys meaning. The data sources of this study are: textbook of “*Uppasa pakon Uppamani Simalungun*” by Salmon Sinaga, in 2010 [6] and informants. In this case the informants are involved to determine the level of acceptability of the translation.

#### Techniques of data collection

The techniques of data collection in this research are: analysis of documents (content analysis), questionnaires and interviews with informants.

#### Technique of data analysis

The data analysis technique follows the analytical model developed by Miles and Huberman, that is, interactive analysis. The analysis is performed through three components: 1). data reduction; 2). data display and 3). drawing of conclusions and verification (Miles and Huberman in Sutopo, 2006: 113- 116).

### IV. Discussion

#### Analysis

Consider the data in (5) below to get to know the technique of addition applied by the translator.

5. Simalungun: *Sai tubuhan lakkama. Tubuhan tobu. Saitubuhan anakma. Tubuhan boru*

Indonesian: ‘Agar pengantin diberkati Tuhan memperoleh/melahirkan anak laki- laki dan perempuan’.

English: ‘So that the couple (will) be blessed by God to have son(s) and daughter(s)’.

In the previous *umpasa*, the translator in translating it does not translate rhyme, but translate the content of the poem. Furthermore, in translation *umpasa* above, translator uses additional techniques which can be seen in the existence of the word “**and**” in Indonesian whereas such word is not found in Simalungun; all this is done in order to be accepted into Indonesian. Furthermore, the phrase “Agar pengantin diberkati Tuhan” appearing in the target language shows that the translator in translating the source language text uses a technique

of addition. This technique is intended that the reader knows that *umpasa* is presented to the couple at the time of the wedding day. Furthermore, the above translation indicates that the translator always refers to God in any expectations contemplated by *umpasa* even though no written word “Tuhan” in the text in Simalungun.

6. Simalungun: *Sai tubuhan lakkakma. Tubuhan tobu/sikkorong. I dologni Purba Tua. Sai Tubuhan anakma Tubuhan boru. Hasoman nasiam sayur matua*

Indonesian: ‘Agar pengantin diberkati Tuhan memperoleh/melahirkan anak laki-laki dan perempuan yang bisa jadi teman sampai sayur matua (panjang umur)’.

English: ‘So that the couple (will) be blessed by God to have son(s) and daughter(s) who can be (their) friends until old age’.

Still in the use of additional technique in (6) the data shows a word which is deleted meaning the rhyme of *umpasa* is not translated. Furthermore, the translator also uses the technique of addition, it can be seen at the addition of the phrase “bisa jadi” (it can be so). The phrase “diberkati Tuhan” (it is blessed by God) is also an addition.

7. Simalungun: *Bittang na rumiris. Ombun na sumorop. Anak pe riris. Boru pe torop*

Indonesian: ‘Agar pengantin diberkati Tuhan memperoleh keturunan laki-laki dan perempuan yang banyak’.

English: ‘So that the couple (will) be blessed by God to have many son(s) and daughter(s)’.

In (7) the phrase “memperoleh keturunan” (obtaining descendants) is an addition because this is not found in the original source. The word “*pe*” is removed so in this case, the translator at the same time uses the technique of deletion. This is done so that there is no repetition of the result.

8. Simalungun: *Riahni parpokkalan. Hotang panakkat para. Ulang hanami ngolngolan. Podas martupang ma abara*

Indonesian: ‘Agar pengantin cepat diberkati Tuhan memperoleh keturunan. Jangan sampai orangtua (tondong) lama menanti’.

English: ‘So that the couple (will) soon be blessed by God to have descendants; don’t let (your) parents to await so long’.

In (8) the phrase “*martupang ma ambara*” is an idiom in Simalungun language. The translator has translated the text by using adaptation technique so the translation is “memperoleh keturunan” (obtaining descendants). Meanwhile, the uses of additional techniques can be seen from the appearance of phrases “agar pengantin” (in order the couple) and “diberkati” (be blessed).

9. Simalungun: *Ruttun rabing-rabing. I buttuni tapian. Podas marabing-abing. Dapotan passarian*

Indonesian: ‘Kiranya pengantin cepat dapat keturunan (anak, boru) dan dapat rejeki/berkat’.

English: ‘May the couple will soon have descendants and get wealth’.

Consider the phrase “*marabing-abing*” in (9) which is an idiom but it is translated as “dapat keturunan” (can obtain descendants); in this case, then, the translator applies the adaptation techniques. However, he also uses the technique of addition to the phrase “kiranya pengantin” (it is hoped that the couple) in the target language.

10. Simalungun: *Tubuhma hayu anak pakon tobu. I buttuni tapian. Sai tubuhma anak pakon boru na jitu-jitu.*

***Na lang panahit-nahitan.***

Indonesian: ‘Agar pengantin memperoleh anak laki-laki dan perempuan yang pintar-pintar dan sehat-sehat’.

English: ‘So that the couple (will) have smart and healthy son(s) and daughter(s)’.

In (10) we can find the phrase "*na lang panahit-nahitan*" which is translated as "sehat-sehat" (fine) so in this case, the translator uses the transposition technique because in the original source we find negative word which is then transformed as positive word in the target language. Furthermore, there is the addition of the word "pengantin" (couple) in the target language, so, in this case, that the translator is also using additional technique.

11. Simalungu: *Isuan ma timbahou. I bonani kahombu. Anggo domma marjabu. Jumpahan anak jumpahan boru*

Indonesian: ‘Kalau sudah berumah tangga kiranya diberkati Tuhan memperoleh keturunan anak laki-laki dan perempuan’.

English: ‘After marriage the couple will be blessed by God to have son(s) and daughter(s)’.

In (11), the phrase "*jumpahan anak jumpahan boru*" is idiom and it is translated as "memperoleh keturunan anak laki-laki dan perempuan" (to have son and daughter). Here, the translator applies the adaptation techniques.

### **Findings**

1. The translator in translating the *umpasa* does not translate the rhyme of the seven *umpasas* presented in the ceremony of *Makhioi*.
2. For each data, there are always additional techniques used by the translator to make his readers understand the true meaning of each *umpasa*.
3. There are some pieces of data that require adaptation technique in the translation of phrases in Simalungun.
4. There is one datum which is contrary to the elimination technique.
5. Having done some interviews with three informants, the researcher concludes that the result of the text translation shows 62% of acceptability.

## **V. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Conclusions**

1. In this study, the data is generally identified by using addition technique.
2. There are some data translated by using adaptation technique.
3. The result of the text translation is categorized as less acceptability.

### **Recommendations**

1. It is hoped that the local Simalungun language is inserted in the local curriculum
2. Government should be more proactive in organizing some events related to the culture.

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