



Multi-Language Translated Drama Scripts as Reference Information for Actors

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ABSTRACT

Background: Drama texts translated into various languages are a form of communication across linguistic boundaries and a window that reveals the richness of diverse cultures. For actors, engaging in the performance of a multilingual script provides an incredible opportunity to explore the nuanced complexities of different cultures. Actors learn new words and soak up the soul of a culture that may be very different.

Purpose: The main aim of this research is to (1) find out the extent to which language variations are used in translated drama scripts and (2) the extent to which language variations influence the way actors understand and portray characters.

Design and methods: This research uses a content analysis method on intralingually translated drama texts sourced from the Matara Production archives.

Results: The results of this research reveal (1) that three languages are used (English, Indonesian and Sundanese) and (2) that multiple languages are used to show narrative diversity, subtlety of relationships in roles and cultural context. The importance of using regional languages in specific cultural contexts becomes clear, as in the depiction of the local ghost, Kuntilanak, which adds another layer of cultural richness. It can be concluded; this research highlights the significance of the use of multiple languages in the expression and communication of actors. Multilingualism allows actors to convey characters with greater depth, creating an immediate bond with multilingual audiences. Language is not only a means of communication but also a key holder of cultural identity, bringing to life cultural aspects that are difficult to explain in words.

Keywords: Multilingualism, translated drama scripts, actor references

Introduction

Drama texts translated into various languages are a form of communication across linguistic boundaries and a window that reveals the richness of diverse cultures (Siddiq & Nur Ali, 2023). For actors, engaging in a performance of a play that has been translated into many languages provides an incredible opportunity to explore the complex nuances of different cultures. Interpreting and acting in a translated play requires more than just mastering new words. The actor is indirectly guided to understand the norms, values and social context inherent in the culture from which the script originates. This is the foundation for them in depicting characters with extraordinary depth and authenticity.

In this context, the actors have a rare opportunity to experience the cultural atmosphere underlying the story. They learn words and take part in a journey across linguistic boundaries to understand the essence of a culture that may be very different from the one they previously knew. The importance of translating drama scripts into various languages for actors is related to understanding word for word and getting into the soul of a narrative (Ambanilah et al.,

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2021). They become a bridge between the original text and the viewer, depicting characters with a depth that might not be achieved if limited to one language.

In the performance process, actors who work with translated drama scripts can offer a broader perspective to the audience. They open a window for the audience to see that there are universal emotional similarities and conflicts behind linguistic differences. This is what makes a translated drama performance not only a performance but also an immersive cultural experience. By presenting drama scripts in various languages, actors become performers and ambassadors for cultural fusion. They facilitate cross-cultural understanding and enrich the theatre experience for audiences, opening the door to a deeper appreciation of the world's diversity.

Previous research offers a broad overview of the understanding of drama texts from various perspectives. Several studies have explored relevant aspects, such as performance perspective (Li, 2023), the concept of metaphor (Guan & Zhang, 2021), the transfer of story vehicles into scripts (Nurhasanah, 2022), the formal equivalence of classical Chinese drama (Jing, 2021), quality of direct translation procedures for folklore texts (Gani, 2018), vocabulary frequency (Suwanaroa & Polerk, 2020), regional language translations (Tarusan & Mendoza, 2023), character creation (Bening, 2019), character roles in translated texts (Lestari, 2019), opera script translation norms (Minying, 2022), influential figures in drama texts (Liu, 2019), affective generalisation in drama workshops (Xu et al., 2021), mimesis (Dinçel, 2020), and drama based on situational learning (Liyanawatta et al., 2021). The diversity of the focus of this study reflects the complexity of drama texts as a profound cultural and artistic entity. However, there is potential to integrate the findings from these studies into a more holistic narrative. Combining a performance perspective with metaphor or examining formal equivalence in the context of direct influence on character performance could be a logical extension of previous studies. Integration between these various approaches can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how certain aspects of a drama script relate to each other, enrich and influence each other in the integrity of the story and performance as a whole.

This research depicts a rich research landscape in examining drama texts from various points of view. There are similarities in the study of drama texts regarding the approach used. However, there are significant differences in focus, as this research focuses on intralingual translated drama scripts which focus on information for actors and uses multilingualism as research objects. This is where the uniqueness of this research lies: research on the use of multiple languages in translated drama scripts as references for actors is still a space that has not been explored in depth.

Previous research has not fully explored the implications of the use of multiple languages in translated drama scripts on actors' understanding and interpretation of characters. This is the main focus point of this research, which seeks to fill the existing knowledge gap. By considering how the use of various languages in translated drama scripts influences the way actors understand and portray characters more deeply, this research seeks to explore new dimensions that can enrich our understanding of the performance process.

The main objectives of this research are to (1) determine the extent to which language variations are used in translated drama scripts and (2) the extent to which language variations influence the way actors understand and portray characters. Thus, this research can provide deeper insight into how the use of multiple languages in translated drama scripts can influence the character interpretation process by actors and how this can contribute to the depth and authenticity of their performances in various cultural contexts.

Multilingualism

Multilingualism is a complex phenomenon involving the presence of more than one language in the life of an individual or community. Multilingual individuals can master and communicate in more than one language, allowing them to switch between languages according to context and situation (Zimmermann & Häfliger, 2019). The use of language in everyday life reflects multilingualism, with code-switching or switching between languages often occurring in conversation (Smith, 2018). The concepts of bilingualism and polyglotism are associated with multilingualism, which refers to the ability to use two or more languages (Helms-Park et al., 2022). Linguistic diversity in communities reflects different cultural backgrounds or variations in official and non-official languages. Bilingual education systems support the development of skills in more than one language (Toh, 2020), while globalization increases the importance of multilingualism in the context of global communication. Multilingualism also manifests in linguistic diversity at home and work, where individuals may adapt to different languages according to the situation. Sensitivity to culture, values, and communication norms is integral to multilingualism. Thus, this concept involves complex understanding and interactions between individuals, communities, and cultures through diverse language mediums.

Translated Drama Scripts

A translated drama script is a version of a drama script that has been translated from one language to another. This translation process involves converting the original text into dialogue, monologue, or stage directions into another language, aiming to make the work understandable and enjoyable for audiences who speak that language (Suwanaroa & Polerk, 2020). The process of translating a drama script is not only about transferring words from one language to another, but also taking out nuances, meanings and expressions that may be very typical in the original language. Translations must consider the cultural context, social norms, and values underlying the original text so that the message and essence of the work are maintained.

The Kuntulanak Sumur Tua drama script used in this research is an intralingual translation of the drama script. This translated drama script comes by translating the story synopsis into drama script form. It was confirmed to Matara Production, the theatre group that owns the script, that it was used to meet the demands of a competition held by the Sundanese community in the Jakarta area. So, the drama script has the demand to be enjoyed by the spoken word community but still maintains a touch of Sundanese culture. As a result, the drama script Kuntulanak Sumur Tua used to be acted out by actors in the theater group.

Methods

The research uses a content analysis method, using drama script texts and notes on differences, nuances, and cultural context as the primary data. The data source was taken from the Matara Production Archives, while the researcher was the instrument for collecting information. The data collection technique was carried out by collecting translated drama scripts. Meanwhile, analysis techniques involve reading the original drama script and its translation in different languages, noting differences in nuance, meaning, or cultural context reflected in each translated version. Apart from that, identifying essential parts that can influence the understanding of the character by the actors is also carried out. Validity testing was carried out through content validity, while instrument reliability was tested to ensure the reliability of the data used in the research.

Findings & Discussion

Findings

The script contains multilingual data in three languages: English, Indonesian and Sundanese. English is found in the acting and character instructions and then in the page instructions. This data consists of two parts: the character introduction and the prologue.

In the character introduction section, there is a list of character names along with their descriptions in both languages. The following is a table that summarises the data:

Character's Name	Indonesian	Sundanese
Eman	Suami Asih, pengangguran, suka berjudi	Suami Asih, teu boga pagawean, resep judi
Asih	Istri Eman, ibu rumah tangga, penyayang	Istri Eman, ibu rumah tangga, pikanyaah
Agus	Teman Eman, pekerja serabutan	Teman Eman, pekerja serabutan
Istri Agus	Istri Agus, ibu rumah tangga	Istri Agus, ibu rumah tangga
Otih	Tetangga Asih, ibu rumah tangga	Tetangga Asih, ibu rumah tangga
Tukang Kredit	Tukang kredit yang sering menagih kepada Eman	Tukang kredit anu sering nagih ka Eman
Ujang Bedog	Tetangga Asih, pembuat bedog	Tetangga Asih, pembuat bedog
Alex Botol	Tetangga Asih, penjual botol bekas	Tetangga Asih, penjual botol bekas
Jepri Soak	Tetangga Asih, penjual rokok eceran	Tetangga Asih, penjual rokok eceran
Hansip	Petugas keamanan lingkungan	Petugas keamanan lingkungan
Yabui	Anak kecil yang sering bermain dengan Dede	Budak leutik anu sering maen jeung Dede
Kuntilanak	Hantu yang sering muncul di kampung tersebut	Hantu anu sering mucul di kampung eta

In the prologue, there is a dialogue between Asih and Eman. The dialogue is written in both languages. Following is the dialogue:

Indonesian

Asih (berbicara kepada bayi)
"Tuh kan abah dah pulang"
(berteriak dari teras rumah)
"Asih ti dieu Aa. Keur jemur si kasep"

Sundanese

Asih (nyarita ka orok)
"Tuh kan abah geus balik"
(ngajerit ti teras imah)
"Asih ti dieu Aa. Keur jemur si kasep"

The dialogue shows that Asih was drying her baby, Dede, when Eman came home drunk. Asih asked Eman to make coffee, but Eman did not have money to buy coffee. Asih then complained that she had not eaten since morning and that Dede was sick.

Discussion

Cultural Narrative Richness through Multilingualism

In an era of globalisation and interconnectedness, diverse cultural and linguistic representations are critical to fostering cultural understanding. Through multilingual integration, this research explores the depth of narratives presented in three languages—English, Indonesian, and Sundanese—examining their role in telling rich cultural stories (Zimmermann & Häfliger, 2019). The particular focus is on a data set consisting of character

introductions and a prologue, revealing glimpses into the lives of individuals in a small community.

At the center of this multilingual narrative is a diverse cast, each introduced with in-depth descriptions in Indonesian and Sundanese. The deliberate inclusion of multiple languages celebrates linguistic diversity and contributes greatly to the authenticity of the narrative. By weaving English into elements such as ordering instructions and page guides, the playwright has ensured wider accessibility, transcending linguistic barriers and inviting readers, i.e. actors, to become involved in the story.

The introduction of characters offers exciting insights into the reality depicted in the narrative. Take, for example, the character Eman. In Indonesian, he is described as "Husband of Asih, unemployed, likes gambling," In Sundanese, the description is "Husband of Asih, teu boga padawan, a recipe for gambling." This linguistic duality not only adds depth to Eman's character but also captures the nuances of her life in a way that no single language would allow.

Understanding the context in which each language is used is key to appreciating narrative authenticity. For example, the use of Sundanese in describing Kuntilanak, a local ghost, adds a cultural richness that might otherwise be lost in translation. This highlights the importance of retaining vernacular languages in narratives that are deeply connected to a particular cultural context.

The data set not only introduces the characters but also discusses the subtleties of the actors' relationships and roles in the show. Differences in linguistic expression when describing relationships, jobs, and even personal traits provide a unique lens through which audiences can explore the cultural nuances embedded in the narrative.

Multi-Language Actor Expression and Communication

In the world of performing arts, drama scripts have an important role in directing and bringing characters and storylines to life. Most drama scripts tend to create space for actors to communicate with the audience, and the presence of multiple languages in the script can be a key element to enrich the actors' expression and communication. In this essay, we will discuss how significant the use of multiple languages in drama scripts is for actors in expressing character and deepening the theatre experience.

First, using multiple languages in drama scripts allows actors to convey characters more deeply. For example, when a character speaks a specific language to express a particular emotion or situation, this creates a new layer in the character's understanding. "Asih ti dieu Aa. Go dry the case in the sun." The choice of words, accents, and nuances of language can describe the background, feelings, and complexity of the character more sharply and authentically.

Multi-languages in drama scripts can also increase interaction between actors and audiences. By including multiple languages, especially if the performance is aimed at a multilingual or multicultural audience, actors can create an immediate bond with the audience. Direct translation or subtitles may not be able to replace the richness of expression and nuance provided by the use of the original language in the appropriate context.

Language is the key holder of cultural identity. In the context of a drama script, the use of multiple languages can bring to life cultural aspects that are sometimes difficult to explain in words. This allows actors to immerse themselves in and express their characters according to a specific cultural context, creating a more authentic and immersive theatre experience.

Actors need to be directly involved in understanding and mastering the language used in the script. The linguistic skills mastered by actors are not just a means of communication but

also a means to understand more deeply the culture they want to present. This creates a close collaboration between actors and script, enriching interpretation and execution.

Conclusion

This research aims to explore the implications of the use of various languages in translated drama scripts on the understanding and interpretation of characters by actors. The main aim of the research is to determine the extent to which the use of language in translated drama scripts influences the way actors understand and portray characters in diverse cultural contexts. This research also tries to provide deeper insight into how the use of multiple languages in translated drama scripts can influence the character interpretation process by actors and contribute to the depth and authenticity of their performances in various cultural contexts.

The research results show that language diversity in drama scripts, especially in character introductions and prologues, provides significant narrative depth. The use of multiple languages not only celebrates linguistic diversity but also contributes greatly to the authenticity of the narrative. Introducing characters with descriptions in two languages creates nuance and complexity of characters that cannot be accessed through one language alone. Language is also used carefully to convey certain cultural contexts, such as the depiction of Kuntilanak in Sundanese.

In addition, research highlights the importance of using multiple languages in drama scripts for actors. Using diverse languages allows actors to convey their characters more deeply, express emotions, and create an immediate bond with a multilingual or multicultural audience. Language here is a means of communication and a key holder of cultural identity that creates an authentic theatrical experience.

A further recommendation is to involve more research exploring the use of multiple languages in translated drama scripts, including their impact on the directing and staging processes. Additionally, further research could consider audience responses to using multiple languages in theatrical contexts. These steps can help us better understand the potential and challenges of implementing multilingualism in the performing arts.

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