

The Translation Strategies of Cultural Words in Ahmad Tohari's *Dancer*

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to find out the translation strategies by examining two novels, which are "Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk" by Ahmad Tohari and the English translation version "Dancer" by Rene T. A. Lysloff. The writer uses a descriptive qualitative as the research method because the result of the analysis are concerned with providing descriptions of phenomena that occur naturally, without the intervention of an experiment. After classifying the data based on its strategies, this research shows that there are eight strategies which are used by the translator to translate the cultural words. From eighty seven data (sentences that containing the cultural words) which are identified, there are 15 cultural words (17,24%) by using general words, 17 cultural words (19,54%) by using cultural substitution, 18 cultural words (20,69%) by loan word or loan word plus explanation, 27 cultural words (31,03%) by descriptive equivalent, 4 cultural words (4,60%) by functional equivalent, 2 cultural words (2,30%) by literal translation, 2 cultural words (2,30%) by naturalization, and 2 cultural words (2,30%) by omission.

Keywords: Translation Strategy. Cultural Words.

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BACKGROUND

English as an International language plays an important role in our daily lives. Consequently, lot of information and knowledge come from the books and magazines, written in this language. Therefore, those who do not quite understand about English or another modern language will encounter some difficulties in order to improve their knowledge and ability, especially in translation.

The diversity of cultures and language owned by people in the world has become a unique and an interesting description. Even though, some of them have differences, similarities and relationship to each other. Indonesian utterance is different from English utterance, because every language has a different characteristic, which is one of the reasons why translation is not as easy as people's assumption.

There are some words in Indonesian derived from other languages, for example: the word *demos* and *kratos* from Greek is translated into *democracy* in English. Then, the word *democracy* is translated into *demokrasi* in Indonesian. Another example: the word *effective* in English is translated into *efektif* in Indonesian, whereas in fact, Indonesian has its original word that is *sangkal*.

Borrowing word from other languages is important source of new word. It occurred when one language adds to its own lexicon a word or morpheme from other language, often altering its pronunciation to fit the phonological rules of the borrowing language (Fromkin, 1998:459). Borrowed words and loan words are often found in science and technology, social, economic and/or political topics and institutions, and literary and philosophical works. People often said that one is more familiar than others (*sangkal*). Based on this phenomenon, it will cause problems to translate the words, especially if those words do not have their equivalents.

Baker (1992), Newmark (1988) and Larson (1984) offer some translation

strategies to identify the words or terms which are not known in the receptor language, e.g., Translation by cultural substitution, "Andy liked pleased as the Rock Road finally engulfed the tip of his nose." "Andy kelihatan senang. Hidungnya sudah hampir tertutup es krim." "Arisan kini bukan hanya dilakukan oleh para istri tetapi juga suami mereka." "Playing card is not only done by house wives but also the husbands." In the first example, *Rocky Road* is translated into *Es krim* because there is no cultural equivalent in Indonesian but it still has the same meaning and nuance for the reader. Similarly, with the second example, *Arisan* is translated into *Playing card* because English as the Receptor Language does not have the equivalent but the activity between *playing card* and *arisan* is almost the same.

Based on some examples above, the strategies can be used whether in Indonesian as the Receptor Language or English as the Receptor Language. In this research, the writer would like to find out translation strategies, taken by the translator in translating words or terms, which do not have the equivalents in the receptor language, in this way, from Indonesian as the Source Language (SL) into English as the Receptor Language (RL).

RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive research involves a collection of technique used to specify, delineate, or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation. Qualitative methods originally developed from the methodologist of field anthropologists and socialists concerned with studying human behavior within the context in which that behavior would occur naturally and in which the role of the researcher would not affect the normal behavior of the subject. (Seliger, 1989:118). Based on the description above, both qualitative and descriptive research are concerned with providing descriptions of phenomena that occur naturally, without the intervention of an experiment. While

it is true that both types of research are concerned with description, they approach research from deferent perspectives. In this research, the writer uses a descriptive qualitative study on analyzing the translation technique of the novel *dancer* in cultural words in particularly.

RESULT OF STUDY AND DISCUSSION

This chapter describes the result concerning the study of the translation techniques used by the translator in translating the cultural word by examining two novels, Indonesian *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* by Ahmad Tohari and its translation *Dancer* by Rene T. A Lysloff. The writer classified the data into eight techniques, there are: using general word, using cultural substitution, translation by loan word or loan word plus explanation, using descriptive equivalent, using functional equivalent, literal translation, naturalization, and translation by omission.

1. Translation by using general word

a) Ecology

animal
gangsir : cricket
Gangsir is a kind of insects. It likes to dig a tunnel in order to build the hills. While the word cricket means a small brown jumping, insect that makes a shrill noise. Therefore, we can see that the target text does not give the message of the original.

b) Material Culture

Food
pecel : food
Pecel is a kind of Indonesian traditional food that is contained of vegetables, such as long beans, spinach and bean sprouts served with peanut sauce. In translating the word, **pecel** is translated into **food** that has more general idea than the SL text.

Housing
cungkup : grave
Cungkup means a building made to

cover and protect the grave. In translating the word, **cungkup** is translated into **grave** that has more general idea than the SL text.

c) Equipment

belati : knife

Belati means a sharp, broad knife, more used to stab than to slice (usually brought as soldier equipment). The word **knife** means an instrument for cutting, having one or more sharp edged blades, often set in a handle. In translating the word, the concept **belati** is translated into '**knife**' that has more general idea from the SL text **belati**.

d) Transport

motor ubluk : motorcycle

Motor ubluk is an old kind of motorcycle. In translating the word, the concept **motor ubluk** is translated into **motorcycle** that has more general idea than the SL text **motor ubluk**

e) Clothes

petelesan : a sheet

Patelesan is a cloth worn when bathing. In translating the word, the concept **patelesan** is translated into **sheet** that has more general idea than the SL text **patelesan**.

f) Social Culture

Work

pedagang lontong : the proprietor
Pedagang lontong is a person who sells food in small shop. The proprietor is an owner of a business. The translator uses the word **the proprietor** as the equivalent because the word has more general idea than the SL text **pedagang lontong**.

2. Translation by using cultural substitution

a) Organization, ideas

Concept

kang : my dear

Kang used to address the elder brother, the husband and the older man. The translator uses **my dear** as the equivalent of the word **kang** because the word still has the same meaning in English culture.

nyai : mama

Nyai used to address the married or the unmarried woman, and the older woman. The translator uses **mama** as the equivalent of the word **nyai** because the word still has the same meaning in English culture.

b) Social (castes)

priyayi : gentlemen

Priyayi is a man who has a high position in community, a respected citizen. English has the same term that is '**gentlemen**', a man who is polite and behaves honorably that has the same nuance as the SL.

c) Social Culture

work

penggawa : an official

Penggawa is a leader of army; a

village headman. The translator uses the word 'an official' as the equivalent because the word has the same nuance in English culture.

d) Material Culture

housing

balai-balai : porch

Balai-balai is wooden or bamboo couch or sleeping platform. English has the same term that is **porch**, a covered entrance to a building, which has the same nuance as the SL.

equipment

tempayan : jar

Tempayan is a large water container, made of clay, with a narrow top. It used for keeping the rice supplies. English has the same term that is **jar**, a container, usually made of glass, with a wide top, which has the same nuance as the SL.

e) Gestures/ habits

habits

punten : scuse us

Punten is a polite Sudanese greeting. The translator uses the word **scuse us** as the equivalent because the word has the same nuance in English culture.

3. Translation by loan word or loan word plus explanation

a) Ecology

plants

pohon dadap : dadap tree

Dadap is a name of one of Indonesian local tree. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word.

pisang raja : the large variety known as pisang raja

Pisang raja is a name of one of Indonesian local fruit. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word plus explanation.

animal

burung sikatan : sikatan bird

Sikatan is a kind of Indonesian local bird. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word.

b) Material Culture

Equipment

keris : keris

Keris is a wavy double-bladed dagger that is original from Indonesia. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word.

Food

terasi: terasi, a pungent spice made from shrimp, crabs and other seafood.

Terasi is a name of cooking spices. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word plus explanation.

Drink

ciu : ciu, a brandy made from fermented cassava

Ciu is an intoxicating distilled beverage from Chinese. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word plus explanation.

c) Activity

Ceremony

bukak-klambu : bukak kelambu-
"opening of the mosquito net"

Bukak-kelambu is a type of competition, open to all men. What they compete for is the virginity of the candidate wishing to become a ronggeng dancer. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word plus explanation.

d) Gestures/ habits

Habits

kula nuwun : kula nuwun

Kula nuwun is a polite Javanese greeting. It is used when visits somebody's house. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word.

e) Organization, Ideas

Religion

Bathara Kala : Bathara Kala

Bathara Kala is a male deity, who divine ogre said to cause eclipses by swallowing the sun. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word.

Artistic

keroncong : keroncong

Keroncong is a popular Indonesian music originating from Portuguese songs. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word.

Work

tobang : tobang

Tobang is someone whose duties are same like a servant. In translating the word, the translator uses the SL text as a loan word.

4. Descriptive Equivalent

a) Ecology

Plants

buah randu : The boll of the kapok plant

Buah randu is a fruit that is produced by a cotton tree. **Buah randu** is translated into **the boll of the kapok plant**. The translator used this strategy to communicate the meaning accurately.

Plains

tanah kapur : the hardened and gravelly earth.

Tanah kapur is a dry, un irrigated field. **Tanah kapur** is translated into **the hardened and gravelly earth**. The translator used this strategy to communicate the meaning accurately.

b) Material Culture

Food

gaplek : tapioca made from dried cassava.

Gaplek is a kind of Indonesian traditional food made of dried cassava. The word is translated into **tapioca made from dried cassava** to communicate the meaning accurately.

Clothes

blangkon : a traditional headdress

Blangkon is a male batik headdress originating from Javanese. The translator used this strategy to

communicate the meaning accurately.
Equipment
 susuk : body piercing with talis-mans
Susuk is small piece of gold or diamond inserted in the face as a magical charm to improve oneself beauty. The translated the word **susuk** into **body piercing with talismans** to communicate the meaning accurately.

c) Social Culture

Work

tukang jamu : a traditional herbal medicine specialist

The translator translated the word **tukang jamu** into **a traditional herbal medicine specialist**. The translator might think that it was necessary to give a more detailed description of an entity in target language.

Leisure

bertayub : to dance socially
Bertayub means dance with a professional dancer in kind of traditional dance. In this strategy, the word **bertayub** is translated into **to dance socially** to communicate the meaning accurately.

d) Organization, ideas

Religious

kamitua : a respected elder

Kamitua is a deputy village chief in Central Java. In this strategy, the word **kamitua** is translated into **a respected elder** to communicate the meaning accurately.

Political & Administrative

siten wedana: a regional administrator
Siten wedana is an assistant to a district head. The translator translated the word **siten wedana** into **a regional administrator** to communicate the meaning accurately.

Customs, Activities

bersimpuh : legs tucked under
Bersimpuh means sitting with the knees bent and folded back to one side. The translator translated the word **bersimpuh** into **legs tucked under** to communicate the meaning accurately

ngasrep : avoid eating salt

The word **ngasrep** is translated into **avoid eating salt**. The translator might think that it was necessary to give a more detailed description of an entity in target language.

Artistic

gandrung: a love song

Gandrung is a kind of traditional song. The translator translated the word **gandrung** into **a love song** to give a more detailed description of an entity in target language.

4e) Gestures / Habits

Gestures

pacak gulu : moves head in dance
 The translator translated the word **pacak gulu** into **moves head in dance** to communicate the meaning accurately.

5. Functional Equivalent

a) Material Culture

Equipment

tikar pandan : sleeping mat

Tikar is a plaite mat. The word **tikar** is translated into **sleeping mat** based on the function.

Clothes

iket wulung : a turban around his head in traditional fashion

The translator translated the word **Iket wulung** into **a turban around the head** in traditional fashion based on the function.

6. Literal Translation

a) Organization, Ideas

Concept

bocah ayu : beautiful child

Bocah ayu is translated word for word according to English structure in target language. Therefore, the word **bocah ayu** is translated into **beautiful child**.

b) Material Culture

Equipment

lampu minyak : oil lamp

Lampu minyak is translated word for word according to English structure in target language. Therefore, the word **lampu minyak** is translated into **oil lamp**.

7. Naturalization

a) Material Culture

Clothes

sarung : sarong

In this strategy, the word is naturalized with adaptation of English pronunciation. Therefore, the word **sarung** is translated into **sarong**.

Food

tempe bongkrek : tempeh bongkrel

In this strategy, the word is naturalized with adaptation of English pronunciation. Therefore, the word **tempe bongkrek** is translated into **tempeh bongkrek**.

8. Translation by Omission

a) Organization, Ideas

Concept

Kang

In this strategy, the word **kang** is not translated because the word is not too important but does not change the meaning of the sentence if the word **kang** omitted or not translated.

Activities

olah-olah, ngumbah-ngumbah, and melumah.

In this strategy, the word **olah-olah, ngumbah-ngumbah and melumah** is not translated, but does not change the meaning of the sentence if the word omitted or not translated.

Result of the Analysis

1. Translation by using general words

After classifying the data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using general word as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (15 words = 17.24%) to show the equivalent into English.

No.	Source Language	Target Language
1	Beranjangan	Birds
2	Gangsir	Cricket
3	Kodok Longan	Frog
4	Soto	Food
5	Nasi Lontong	Rice
6	Cungkup	Grave
7	Warung Cendol	Food stall
8	Pisau belati	Knife
9	Caping wol	Hat
10	Konde	Hair
11	Parang	weapon
12	Petelesan	Sheet
13	Sarung	A length of cloth
14	Motor ubluk	Motorcycle
15	Pedagang lontong	The Proprietor

2. Translation by using Cultural Substitution

After classifying data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using Cultural Substitution as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (17 words = 19.54%) to show the equivalent into English

No	Source Language	Target Language
1	Kang	My dear
2	Nyai	Mama
3	Jenganten	Young lady
4	Yu	Ma'am
5	Mas	Sir
6	Mas	Young man
7	Kiriman	Spell
8	Rani	Queen
9	Priyayi	Gentlement
10	Penggawa kantor	An official
11	Kawula	Servant
12	Balai-balai	Porch
13	Tempayan	Jar
14	Punten	Scuse us
15	Sampur	Scarf
16	Kerupuk	Shrimp-cracker
17	Pedagang lontong	Shopkeeper

3. Translation by Loan Word or Loan Word Plus explanation

After classifying data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using Loan Word and Loan Word Plus explanation as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (18 words = 20.69%) to show the equivalent into English.

Descriptive Equivalent

After classifying data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using

No.	Source Language	Target Language
1	Pohon dadap	Dadap tree
2	Pisang raja	The large variety known as pisang raja
3	Rambutan	Rambutan
4	Bunga kenanga	Kenanga flower
5	Burung sikatan	Sikatan bird
6	Burung prit putih	Prit putih bird
7	Keris	Keris
8	Kecapi	Kecapi
9	Badongan	Badongan
10	Terasi	Terasi, a pungent spice made from shrimp, crabs and other seafood.
11	Pecel	Pecel, the spicy dish of vegetables and peanut sauce.
12	Ciu	Ciu, a brandy made from fermented cassava.
13	Bukak-klambu	Bukak kelambu –“Opening of the mosquito net”.
14	Kula nuwun	Kula nuwun
15	Bathara Kala	Bathara Kala
16	Keroncong	Keroncong
17	Tobang	Tobang
18	Gowok	Gowok

Descriptive Equivalent as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (27 words = 31.03%) to show the equivalent into English.

No.	Source Language	Target Language
1	Buah randu	The boll of the kapok plant
2	Tanah kapur	The hardened and gravelly earth
3	Gaplek	Tapioca made from dried cassava
4	Blangkon	A traditional headdress
5	Baju lurik	A jacket of traditional lurik fabric
6	Kain batik	A neatly folded wrap-around skirt
7	Kain kebaya	Wrap-around kain
8	Lancingan	Javanese style trousers
9	Susuk	Body piercing with talismans
10	Tukang jamu	A traditional herbal medicine specialist
11	Mantri	A district health official
12	bertayub	Dance socially
13	Kamitua	A respected elder
14	Indang	Ronggeng spirit
15	Wangsit	A command from the dead
16	Orang pandai	Man so well versed in esoteric knowledge
17	Lurah	Adulterous headman
18	Siten wedana	A regional administrator
19	Bersimpuh	Legs tucked under
20	Bersila	Legs crossed
21	Dipingit	Keeping the young girl in seclusion
22	Ngasrep	Avoid eating salt
23	Hari kelahiran	Javanese birthday
24	Gandrung	A love song
25	Asmara dahana	A traditional love song
26	Tembang pucung	A verse from a traditional song
27	Pacak gulu	Moves a head in dance

5. Functional Equivalent

After classifying data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using Functional Equivalent as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (4 = 4.60%) to show the equivalent into English.

No.	Source Language	Target Language
1	Tikar pandan	Sleeping mat
2	Angkruk	A bamboo shelter
3	Lincak	A bamboo couch on the verandah
4	Iket wulung	A turban around the head in traditional fashion

6. Literal Translation

After classifying data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using Literal Translation as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (2 = 2.30%) to show the equivalent into English.

No.	Source Language	Target Language
1	Bocah ayu	Beautiful child
2	Lampu minyak	Oil lamp

7. Naturalization

After classifying data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using Naturalization as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (2 = 2.30%) to show the equivalent into English.

No.	Source Language	Target Language
1	Sarung	Sarong
2	Tempe bongkreng	Tempeh bongkreng

8. Translation by Omission

After classifying data based on its strategies, the writer found that there are some cultural words in the novel using Translation by Omission as the strategy to translate the word. From 87 words, which are identified, the translator uses this strategy to translate the word below (2 = 2.30%) to show the equivalent into English.

No.	Source Language	Target Language
1	Kang	-
2	Olah-olah, ngumbah- ngumbah dan melumah	-

CONCLUSION

From eighty-seven words, which are identified, the writer finds that:

- There are eight translation techniques used by the translator in translating the cultural words in the novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk.
- Descriptive equivalent is one of the commonest techniques of translation, which is used by the translator in translating the cultural words.
- Literal translation, naturalization and translation by omission are the rarest techniques of translation, which is used by the translator in translating the cultural words.
- The translator is not consistent in translating the words. For example:
 - The translator translated the word **mas** into **sir** and **young man** in the same strategy.
 - The translator translated the word **sarung** into **a length of cloth** and **sarong** in the different strategy.
 - In translating the animal categories especially the name of bird, the translator is not only using the general word but also loan word as the strategies. Such as, **burung Sikatan : Sikatan bird, Beranjangan : bird**

SUGGESTION

- Pointing out the result of the analysis and the conclusion above, the writer suggests that the translator should aware that in doing the task of translation, they might encounter cultural words born by the text are working on.

- For students who are interested in studying more about cultural words, it will be better to ask from the native whether they understand the word. Then, the analysis will not subjective and can be more developed.
- The writer hopes that the result of this analysis is expected to be a good reference for whoever interested with the topic and provides valuable information and knowledge about translation.

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