

Cultural Terms on Two Translated Versions of Soethama's Short Stories: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

Translating a literary work from different culture, some problems will emerge, especially related to culture-specific terms since two different languages are certainly have two different cultures. We have to understand that literary work is not just a common writing work, but also contains culture, tradition and people's daily life especially in ecology and material culture (artefacts). There are three problems in this study: 1) cultural terms related to ecology and material culture (artefacts) in the short story; 2) semantic features of the cultural terms; and 3) translation strategies applied by two translators when translating the cultural terms of the same short story by Gde Aryantha Soethama entitled *Seekor Ayam Panggang* which is translated by two different translators; Jeanette Lingard and Vern Cork.

The theories applied in this study were theories of cultural aspects (Newmark, 1988:95), theories of semantic features as proposed by Larson (1984) and Yule (1985/2010), and theory of translation strategies by Pedersen (2005) of Extralinguistic Culture-bound References. The collected data were analyzed comparatively. From the discussion of eight cultural terms related to ecology and material culture (artefacts) and their sixteen translations, it is discovered that some of the features were not carried out by the translations. Considering these two languages have different culture, it is inevitable to miss some components in the semantic features and the decision of using more target language-oriented strategies is part of the way to bridge the differences between culture.

Keywords: *comparative study, cultural terms, semantic features, short story.*

Abstrak

Beberapa masalah akan timbul saat penerjemahan sebuah karya sastra dilakukan. Hal ini terjadi karena adanya perbedaan mendasar dalam budaya bahasa sumber dan bahasa target. Fenomena ini dapat dipahami mengingat karya sastra tidaklah sama dengan karya tulis biasa, di dalamnya terdapat kebudayaan, adat, dan tradisi, serta keseharian dalam kehidupan masyarakat di bahasa sumber. Studi ini berangkat dari tiga masalah utama yaitu: 1) istilah budaya berkaitan dengan ekologi dan artefak dalam dua cerita pendek berlatar budaya Bali; 2) fitur semantik dalam tiap istilah budaya yang teridentifikasi; dan 3) strategi penerjemahan yang

digunakan dua penerjemah (Jeanette Lingard dan Vern Cork) dalam menerjemahkan cerita pendek karangan Gde Aryantha Soethama berjudul *Seekor Ayam Panggang*.

Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah teori aspek budaya oleh Newmark (1988:95), teori fitur semantik dari Larson (1984) dan Yule (1985/2010), serta strategi terjemahan dari Pedersen (2005) yaitu *Extralinguistic Culture-bound References*. Data yang telah diidentifikasi dianalisis dengan membandingkan kedua terjemahan. Dari telaah fitur semantik delapan istilah budaya dan enam belas terjemahannya, diketahui bahwa produk terjemahan tidak menjunjung fitur-fitur tiap istilah dengan tepat. Dalam teori strategi penerjemahan Pedersen, tendensi ini berkaitan dengan dua tipe penerjemahan yaitu strategi yang berorientasi pada bahasa sumber dan strategi yang berorientasi pada bahasa target. Memahami bahwa kedua bahasa ini memiliki budaya yang berbeda, tidak termanifestasinya beberapa komponen dalam fitur semantik dalam dua terjemahan istilah budaya tersebut memang tak dapat dihindari.

Kata Kunci: *kajian perbandingan, istilah budaya, fitur semantik, strategi penerjemahan, cerita pendek*

1. Introduction

Translation work is an important part of interactions between languages and cultures around the world. Since language is the most important component in any culture, it is inevitable for people to share their interest about anything through language in any different forms; news, literatures, films, stories, videos, and so forth. To broaden our knowledge about certain information, especially specific culture, translation work is the perfect bridge for this matter.

In 1990s, Indonesian literature developed in excess speed in many forms. One of those forms is short story. Short story was spreading massively in Indonesia since the early 1900's (Rosidi: 1980). Since then, it has been a famous reading choice for many people. In 1920's, Balinese short story had begun to bloom. Currently, Balinese short stories` author appeared in many collections of Indonesian short stories translated by foreigners either in English or in their own languages. Certainly, Balinese literature is more than just a story. It is linked to Balinese culture, religion and their daily life.

Translation is not merely just about the language but also the culture where the language used. Translating culture, leads us to culture-specific terms as explained by Nida and Taber's (1969/1982) that cultural translation is "a translation in which the content of the message is changed to conform to the receptor culture in some way, and/or in which information is introduced which is not linguistically implicit in the original."

In a previous survey conducted for International Conference on Mother language in Bali in 2018, one translation of Balinese short story by Gde Aryantha Soethama - *Seekor Ayam Panggang* which was translated into *A Roast Chicken* by Jeanette Lingard, an American respondent said that the translation work feels too

Australian, because of the diction used by the translator (Wijaya, 2018). This case usually occurs in stories which have different culture where naturally some words related to culture could not be translated equally.

This particular phenomenon is the main concern of Puspani (2003) who tried to understand the cultural terms in Balinese stories using componential analysis to determine the semantic features of each term. Almost a decade later, Purnamadadi (2012) had done a research to understand two points of view of translating cultural terms, the first one, emic point of view to see the culture from the inside, and the second one etic point of view to see the culture from outside. The research on cultural terms continued in order to identify precisely the cultural terms in bilingual text *Mati Salah Pati* written by Soethama using componential analysis to represent the similarities and the differences among words with related meanings effectively (Arnita, dkk, 2016).

One study used to compare the similarities and the differences between a factor or situation usually using comparative study (Notoadmojo, 2012). Related to comparative study, Westling (2011) conducted a comparative paper comparing four translations of a realism novel entitled *The Red Room* written by August Strindberg in 1879. He analysed the translations of geographical names in the first chapter of the novel related to cultural references which may not be equivalent in the target language. His close comparison of these four translations of the novel highlights the significance choice and preference of linguistic feature made by the translators while translating culture-specific terms which in this study consist of geographical name.

Cultural terms are not easy to translate, but also not impossible to transfer to another language. To understand this phenomenon, this study focuses

on a short story by one author – Gde Aryantha Soethama entitled *Seekor Ayam Panggang* first published by Penerbit Buku Kompas in 2006 and had won Kusala Khatulistiwa award – a prestigious award for authors in Indonesia, in the same year. Before it is published exclusively by Penerbit Buku Kompas, those short stories were already published at Sunday edition of Kompas newspaper back in the 90’s.

The story happened in a Balinese family who is holding a ceremony. The story focuses in the problem of siblings who live outside Bali for so long, they do not really understand Balinese customs especially how to deal with offering during ceremony. Their lack of understanding leads them to a disaster happened in the family after the ceremony. This story shows us the strict rules of Balinese customs and how people deal with it in daily live.

The short story is translated into the same title *A Roast Chicken* by both translators - Vern Cork and Jeanette Lingard. The translations carried one purpose, as cultural short stories published in short stories compilation about Indonesia (Cork, 2008).

2. Research Method

This study applied the qualitative approach using text and data with brief explanation and reference to some related references. The data analysed in this study are in the form of words and sentences containing cultural terms collected from two short stories. The qualitative observation method was applied, and the results were presented using descriptive sentences, tables and images. This study considered as a descriptive-comparative analysis. The method implemented in this research is library research because it focused on the translation products as the primary data in the form of texts which were collected by the researcher (Saldanha and O’Brien, 2014). From the data

sources mentioned before, there are two main data, the translations of the short stories. Both data are comparable because those are translations of the same short stories from the same author.

After collecting the cultural terms in the short stories, the data were classified according to the cultural term category proposed by Newmark (1988) as qualitative substantiation. Then the data analysed based on translation approaches proposed by Pedersen (2005). Method of analysing the data were comparative model proposed by Chesterman and William (2002). This model is a product-oriented method, which focuses in one equivalence relation that can be described as $ST \approx TT$, or $TT \approx ST$. This model allowed us to compare the source text and target text which will select contextually close between target texts and source text. The analyses were presented in paraphrase and diagrammatic forms. The paraphrase was used to explain the analyses of translation strategies in sentence based on Pedersen’s ECR transfer strategy, and the diagrammatic forms were used to show the source text (ST) and its two translations : Target Text 1 (TT1) is the translation by Jeanette Lingard, and Target Text 2 (TT2) by Vern Cork, also to show the semantic feature showed in componential analysis by using table and mathematical symbols (+, -).

3. Discussion

ST	TT1	TT2
Lalu dipasang menempel berdiri dikelilingi rangkaian kembang, kue dan buah-buah <u>salak</u> , apel, manggis, pisang, jeruk, rambutan, dan mangga.	Then it had been arranged in a standing position and encircled by flowers, cakes, and fruits such as <u>salak</u> , apples, mangosteens, bananas, oranges, rambutans, and mangoes.	Then it had been placed in the midst of flowers standing upright, cakes and <u>salak fruit</u> , apples, mangosteens, bananas, oranges, rambutans, mangoes.
Page 50 – line 9	Page 86 – line 11	Page 129 – line 11

The cultural terms as categorized by Newmark’s were divided into five: 1) Ecology; 2) Material Culture (Artefact); 3) Social culture; 4) Organization, customs, activities, procedures, and concept; 5) Gesture or habit. In this study, only two categorisations discussed: 1) ecology, and 2) material culture (artefacts). There are eight cultural terms in the short stories entitled *Seekor Ayam Panggang*. The discussion in this research based on the cultural terms categorization which is presented in componential analysis (CA) contained: 1) form, 2) characteristics, and 3) functions. In each analysis, both TT translation strategies explained using Extralinguistic Culture-bound References (ECR) from Pedersen which is divided into two namely SL-oriented ECR strategies and TL-oriented ECR strategies. SL-oriented ECR consists of retention, specification, explicitation, addition, and direct translation. Meanwhile TL-oriented ECR consists of generalization, substitution, cultural substitution, paraphrase, and omission.

3.1 Cultural Terms Related to Ecology

Cultural terms related to ecology can be normally distinguished from other cultural terms in that they are usually value-free, politically and commercially. It’s also usually part of geographical feature.

a. Salak

Salak is a fruit from a plant, specifically unbranched palm tree, it has sour taste (Poerwadarminta, 1982). This fruit is native to Java and Sumatra in Indonesia. It is cultivated in other regions of Indonesia as a food crop, and reportedly naturalized in Bali, Lombok, Timor, Maluku, and Sulawesi. *Salak* in the story refers to *Salak Bali* which is roughly the size of a large fig, and has a crunchy and moist consistency. The fruit has a flavour reminiscent of dilute pineapple and lemon juice. In Bali, *Salak* is usually used as part of an offering for ceremony. Translation of *salak* in TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

The semantic features of *salak* in ST, TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

SEMANTIC FEATURES	ST	TT1	TT2
	Salak	Salak	Salak fruit
Has unique shape like ripe fig with distinct tip	+	+	+
Consists of three lobes with the two larger ones, or even all three, containing a large inedible seed	+	+	+
Has a crunchy and moist consistency	+	+	+
Has reddish-brown scaly skin	+	+	+
Has a flavor reminiscent of dilute pineapple and lemon juice	+	+	+
Edible to eat raw or pickled	+	+	+
Used as part of offering in Bali	+	+	+

From the semantic features, it is obvious that SL-oriented transfer strategy since both of the translators used SL-oriented translation strategy. Focusing on the ST, TT1 used **retention marked in italic** as the translation strategy to translate this particular term. On the second translation of TT2, *salak* is translated into *salak fruit* that is a **specification** strategy. This strategy leaving the ECR in its untranslated form, but adding information that is not present in the ST, making the TT ECR more specific than the ST ECR by adding fruit in the translation.

b. Anjing Belang

Up to the present time, Balinese used dog as an offering sacrifice for specific *Bhuta Yadnya* ceremonies. Balinese Hindu believe the importance of sacrificing in ceremony to maintain the balance of the world. Some references on old *lontars* mentioned the use of dog in this particular ceremony, depends on the type of offering. *Anjing Belang* is the type of dog used in that ceremony. This dog particularly should have reddish brown fur, with black fur on its mouth and tail (Dharmawan, 2009:26). Translation of *Anjing Belang* in TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

Focusing on the TT, in TT1, *Anjing Belang* is translated into *a special striped dog*. In ST, *Anjing Belang* points out a very specific fauna, while in TT1, it is translated into *a special striped dog* which is very generic of striped dog, with no detail explanation about the type, nor the color of its fur, so the translation strategy is **generalization**. In TT2, the translator translated ST into *a spotted dog*. The translation strategy of TT2 is **substitution** where the translator removed the ST ECR and replaced by another explanation which depends on

ST	TT1	TT2
Akan disembelih puluhan ekor itik dan ayam, kerbau, sapi, dan seekor <u>anjing belang</u> .	Dozens of chickens and ducks would be slaughtered and some buffaloes, cattle, and <u>a special striped dog</u> .	Dozens of ducks, chickens, a buffalo, a cow, and <u>a spotted dog</u> .
Page 52 – line 26	Page 58 – line 7	Page 131 – line 23

The semantic features of *Anjing Belang* in ST, TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

SEMANTIC FEATURES	ST Anjing Belang	TT1 A special striped dog	TT2 A spotted dog
Animal with four legs	+	+	+
A type of dog	+	+	+
Has reddish-brown fur and black fur on the mouth and tail	+	+/-	+/-
Male dog	+	+/-	+/-
Used as part of <i>Bhuta Yadnya (Caru Panca Sanak/ Caru Rsi Gana)</i> ceremony in Bali	+	-	-
Special dog to sacrifice in an offering	+	-	-

ST	TT1	TT2
Mereka mengintipnya terus, takut keduluan diserobot oleh saudara sepupu yang sejak pagi ramai mengikuti upacara odalan di <u>rumah induk</u>	They hadn't taken their eyes off it, frightened their cousins who'd all been taking part in the holy day ceremony at the <u>family home</u> since morning would beat them to it	They were afraid that it would be grabbed by their relatives who were participating in the ceremony in the <u>main house</u> .
Page 51 – line 4	Page 87 – line 2	Page 129 – line 17

the translators' understanding of the ECR.

3.2 Cultural Terms Related to Material Culture (artefacts)

Material Culture or artefacts category according to Newmark (1988) commonly consists of several types; food, clothes, houses, towns, and transports. However, in the short stories only houses and food are found.

a. Rumah Induk

Rumah is a place or house where a family live together (Poewardaminta, 1982:836). Translation of *rumah induk* in TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

The semantic features of *rumah induk* in ST, TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

From the semantic features, both translators used TL-oriented transfer strategies, focusing on TL. *Rumah induk* or a Balinese home consists of a family or a

number of related families living within one enclosure, praying at a common family temple, with one gate, and one kitchen (Covarrubias, 1973:74). This house built based on *Asta Kosala-kosali* or Balinese philosophy to build a house. *Rumah induk* in Balinese culture is very specific as presented in semantic features above. However, *rumah induk* is translated to *family home* in TT1 and *main house* in TT2, both translations indicated **generalization** as the ECR transfer strategy. The specific *rumah induk* in Bali translated into generic terms of *family home* and *main house*. Both refer to house, but those translations are not necessarily mean Balinese house where ceremony and customs held continuously. House itself refers to a building where the majority people live, which normally has bedrooms, kitchen, living room, a bathroom and a dining room. While home is a place where someone lives, normally it is a house but it can be other things too like narrowboat, caravan, apartment, etc, home is often associated with a family and/or the place you feel attached to (woodwardenglish).

b. Pekarangan

In Balinese architecture, traditional house was built with Balinese philosophy. *Pekarangan* is defined as a public space when family held a ceremony or ritual. *Pekarangan* is the center of the house, also acts as the orientation point of every important activity of the family (Suardana, 2015:59). Philosophically, *pekarangan* is the catalyst of *akasa* (sky) which represents male element, and *pretiwi* (earth) which represents female element, the whole unity represented family life (Suardana, 2015:60). Translation of *pekarangan* in TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

ST	TT1	TT2
Tapi ketika Toma menggigit bagian dada yang renyah dan empuk, terdengar jeritan Tante Nyoman di tengah <u>pekarangan</u> .	But just as Toma took a bite of the crisp tender breast, he heard Aunt Nyoman screaming in the middle of <u>the yard</u> .	But as Toma was biting into the crispy breast with its soft flesh, they heard the screams of Aunt Nyoman coming from the middle of <u>the compound</u> .
Page 50 – line 10	Page 87 – line 15	Page 130 – line 12

The semantic features of *pekarangan* in ST, TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

SEMANTIC FEATURES	ST Pekara ngan	TT1 Yard	TT2 Compo und
A house complex which consist of building and space surrounded by wall	+	-	+/-
Consist of building and space Surrounded by wall and <i>telajakan</i>	+	+/-	+/-
Made based on <i>Asta Kosala-kosali</i>	+	-	-
Place to live with family	+	-	+/-
Place to perform ceremonies related to Balinese tradition	+	-	+/-

In TT1, *pekarangan* is translated into *yard* which is the exact indication of **generalization** strategy of translation. *Pekarangan* is a place to perform ceremonies as a one of the functions. *Yard* on the other hand, is just part of the house if any. Not necessarily bear another function as *pekarangan* in Balinese. In TT2, *pekarangan* is translated into *compound* which contains some definition of *pekarangan* located in the centre of house complex. This translation indicates **cultural substitution** as the transfer strategy, where the ST ECR changed into TT ECR that is more familiar in TT.

c. Ayam Panggang

Ayam is a kind of a poultry. *Panggang* means cooked up on heat (Poerwadarminta, 1982:705). Translation of

ST	TT1	TT2
Ditatapnya <u>ayam panggang</u> itu sekali lagi.	He looked at the <u>roast chicken</u> again.	He looked at the <u>roast chicken</u> again.
Page 50 – line 7	Page 86 – line 8	Page 129 – line 8

ayam panggang in TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

The semantic features of *ayam panggang* in ST, TT1 and TT2 are as follows:

SEMANTIC FEATURES	ST Ayam panggang	TT1 The roast chicken	TT2 The roast chicken
Edible object as food	+	+	+
Made from chicken	+	+	+
Cut in the middle so that it has flat form	+	+/-	+/-
Grilled/traditionally cooked on heat	+	+	+
Cooked with traditional spice using herbs	+	+/-	+/-
Used as part of offering related to Balinese tradition	+	+/-	+/-
Related to Balinese symbolization for pride and prosperity	+	+/-	+/-

From the semantic features as presented on the table, both translators used TL-oriented transfer strategies, focusing on TL. *Ayam panggang* is food used as part of offering. It is also related closely to offering in Balinese tradition as a symbol of wealth and prosperity. However, in TT1 and TT2, *ayam panggang* is translated into *the roasted chicken* - the ST is translated into different ECR which indicates **cultural substitution** as strategy of translation that could or could not carry several points of the semantic features.

4. Conclusion

There are several points that can be summarized based on the discussion and explanation from the previous chapter particularly regarding the analysis of cultural terms related to Balinese culture and the two version of its translation in English. The conclusion obviously arose to understand the types of cultural terms in two short stories, the semantic features of each term and its translations, and the transfer strategies of two version of translations.

From two types of cultural terms in *Seekor Ayam Panggang*, the first type is related to ecology that consists of flora and fauna; the next type related to material culture consists of houses, and food.

The next discussions concerning the semantic features of each cultural terms and its transfer strategies. It is discovered that some of the features were not carried out by the translations. These tendencies related to translators' transfer strategy which according to Pedersen divided into two namely SL-oriented strategies and TL-oriented strategies.

From the discussion of five cultural terms and its ten translations, it is found the strategies used by both translators are mostly TL-oriented strategies which consist of generalization (4), substitution (1), cultural substitution (3), where the first translator (TT1) used mostly generalization (2), and cultural substitution (1) meanwhile the second translator (TT2) used generalization (1), substitution (1), and cultural substitution (2).

On the other hand, the use of SL-oriented consists of retention (1), and specification (1) where the first translator (TT1) used retention (1) and the second translator (TT2) used specification (1).

Considering these two languages have different culture, it is inevitable to miss some components in the semantic features and the decision of using more TL-oriented strategies is part of the way to bridge the differences between culture.

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