

Translation Strategies of Taboo Words in Christina Lauren's "Beautiful Bastard" Novel From English Into Indonesian

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Abstract This study is entitled Translation Strategies of Taboo Words in Christina Lauren's "Beautiful Bastard" from English into Indonesian. This study at to find the types of taboo words and the translation strategies applied in translating the taboo words. The data were collected through the documentation method of the novel entitled Beautiful Bastard by Christina Lauren and its Indonesian version translated by Ine Milasari Hidajat under the same title. Then the data were analysed in a descriptive qualitative approach. Finally, the analysis was conducted by applying Wardhaugh's (1986) theory of taboo words and translation strategies proposed by Davoodi (2009). The results showed that there were 140 data of taboo words were appeared in the novel. All kinds of taboo words, according to Wardhaugh (1986), appeared in the novel. Those are sex, death, excretion, bodily function, religiously matters, mother in law and animals. The most frequent type is linked to the sex term, while the least is mother in law. As for the translation strategies, each type of strategy proposed by Davoodi (2009) was found in the novel. They were censorship substitution, taboo for taboo and applying euphemism. Taboo for taboo was the most common strategy used by the translator, whereas the translation by applying euphemism was the least common strategy.

Keywords: *Translation, Taboo Words, Translation Strategies*

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, there are many novels translated to Indonesian from English available in bookstores. The translated novel that has been circulating in the community is a result presented by a translator. By only reading a final result, the readers certainly do not know what stages the translator must take and what strategies the translator uses to translate the novel from the source language to the target language.

The translation itself has a notion advanced by some experts. The translation itself has an understanding put forward by several experts. According to Catford (1978), translation substitutes the textual content in one language with equivalent textual content in another language. This concept highlights the importance of equivalence in translation since it is intended that the translated text in the target language would precisely transmit ideas and messages from the source text. Furthermore, Hatim and Munday (2004) argue that translation is transferring a written text from the source language to the target language. From the definitions mentioned above, it is concluded that translation is a process that is intended to find the equivalent meaning in the target text.

The process of translating novels is different from

translating another text. In translating novels, a translator should find the closest meaning to the source language and maintain the original taste from the source language to the target language (Wang, 2009). However, it is not as simple as imagined. There are several obstacles faced by translators when translating novels. One of these obstacles is when the translator faces taboo words in the novel. As Pratama (2016) stated, translating the taboo is challenging for the translator since it is difficult to provide the exact meaning of the taboo words.

According to Crystal (1995), taboo words are something people resist using in civil society, either because they assume it is harmful or because they consider it is humiliating or insulting or because society is vulnerable to it. Furthermore, Allan & Burridge (2006) add that taboo is seen as an act that causes a person or perhaps community harm, grief, and distress. Even though taboo words have always been considered prohibited, taboo words are still used in everyday conversation and literary works such as novels since society has a varying degree of tolerance to any taboos (Allan & Burridge, 2006). In addition, people use taboo words to express frustration, anger, and surprise (Jay, 2009).

Translating taboo words is a compelling task. According to Davoodi (2009), there are three factors that could make the translation of taboo words are challenging. The first is the

culture: Culture is the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression (Newmark, 1988). In translation, cultural differences can result in an inability to find equivalent words in the target language. The second is the religion: The taboo expressions among several religions may be different. In Jew, calling God is a taboo, while in Islam, people call their God every day, especially in their daily prayers. If the translators were not aware of these differences, they might unintentionally insult the readers and their religion. The last is belief: People in different countries may have different beliefs. The differences in belief may cause some things, events or habits that are acceptable in one nation could be prohibited to another nation. Thus, to overcome the translation issues and obtain a high-quality translation, the translator needs to apply the translation strategies (Mujiyanto, 2010).

From the statement above, research about the translation strategies of taboo words was conducted. Several previous studies relevant to this research have been reviewed to support this research. Some research about translation strategies has been done. Hanif (2017) conducted one of them investigating procedures in translating the dialogues in the *Kite Runner* novel. The research revealed that modulation is the most commonly used procedure to translate the novel dialogue and modulation, making the translation natural and clear. Wibawati (2018) conducted the other research focused on examining the translation techniques of idiomatic expression. The research found that the strategy frequently used by the translator was paraphrasing, and the least strategy is using an idiom of similar meaning but a different form. These two studies pertained to this study. However, there is a discrepancy in the subject of the study. Therefore, this study is critical in bridging the gap by applying the theory of taboo words.

Another research that also has relevance to this research is the research conducted by Nikmah (2020) which focused on the use of taboo words uttered by the character in *Straight Outta Compton* Movie. The results of Nikmah's study are that the insults associated with gender, ethnicity, appearance, and disability become the most used in the film since they were regarded as the best taboo words for attracting the audience's attention. However, what is not discussed in Nikmah's research are the translation strategies of those taboo words, which this research has done.

Several scholars have examined the translation of taboo words from English into other languages, such as Persian (Robati & Zand, 2018) and Arabic (Slamia, 2020). For example, Robati & Zand (2018) revealed that the most frequent taboo words in the *Absolute True Diary of a Part-time Indian* novel are related to the sexual reference. Therefore, the translator tends to maintain the strong effect of the taboo words rather than eliminating them. Moreover, Slamia's study applied the theory of subtitling strategies proposed by Gottlieb (1992) to find strategies to translate taboo words in five popular Arab TV channels. The article

revealed that the omission of the taboo words reduces the pragmatic content and changes the intended meaning since the intensity of the pragmatic message in taboos is not always the same across English and Arabic. It also eliminates the perlocutionary effect of taboo words on the viewers.

Although those studies have discussed the strategies to translate taboo words, this study is worthy of being conducted in different contexts. The study of the translation of taboo words could lead to different results since each language carries a different culture. Therefore, this study focused on translating the taboo words from English into Indonesian in the "*Beautiful Bastard*" novel by Christina Lauren. The theory of taboo word types proposed by Wardhaugh (1986) and the theory of translation strategies suggested by Davoodi (2009) was applied in this study.

II. METHOD AND THEORY

A. Method

The data of this study is qualitative data which, is non-numerical data (Brown & Rodgers, 2002). The data source is the novel entitled *Beautiful Bastard*, written by Christina Lauren and published by Gallery Books in 2013, and the Indonesian version was translated by Ine Milasari Hidajat under the same title released by Elex Media Komputindo in 2015. The genre of the novels is erotic romance. In addition, the data are the taboo words and their translation strategies. These novels were used as a research object since they received good ratings from foreign websites, such as Goodreads and New York Times bestselling authors. Another reason is that the book comprises sensitive issues such as body parts sexual acts in which taboo words commonly occur.

In this study, the data were collected by using the documentation method. Arikunto (2010) claimed that the documentation method is looking for data about things or variables in notes, transcripts, books, newspapers, magazines, ancient inscriptions, minutes of the meeting, agenda, etc. Three steps were used to collect the data. They were as follows: First, reading the "*Beautiful Bastard*" novel and its translated version in Indonesia thoroughly. Second, marking words or phrases implies taboo words in the source language and the target language using highlighters. Finally, recorded data of taboo words in the source language and their translation in the target language are written in the notebook.

This study applied a descriptive-qualitative approach. According to Nazir (2003), the descriptive method presented systematic, factual and accurate descriptions or paintings of facts, traits and relationships between the investigated phenomena. In addition, Moleong (2005) stated that qualitative research intends to understand what is experienced by the subject of studies, such as behaviour, perceptions, motivations, actions, and others. The data were analysed using several steps; the first step was classifying the taboo words that have been collected, referring to the theory of taboo word types proposed by Wardhaugh (1986). The

second step is checking the dictionary to determine whether the data collected from the source language is a taboo word; Data from the source language was checked using Merriam-webster dictionary (2004). Thirdly, the types of taboo words in the source and target languages that have been checked were analysed to find out the translation strategies used by the translator using Davoodi's (2009) theory about the strategies of translating taboo words. Finally, drawing conclusions based on the result.

B. Taboo Words

Taboo is an omnipresent phenomenon that exists in almost all languages. According to Allan & Burridge (2006), the word taboo originates from the Polynesian language "Tabu," which means to forbid. It was introduced to English at the end of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, pronouncing or making taboo words is contrary to social values because it will embarrass and offend members of society. Wardhaugh (1986) stated that taboo is the ban or restriction of conduct in any culture that is thought to be detrimental to its members because it would cause fear, discomfort, or humiliation. Then Wardhaugh (1986) added that taboo words could be classified into seven types, they are sex, death, excretion, bodily function, religiously matter, mother in law, and animal.

TABLE I
 TABOO WORDS BY WARDHAUGH (1986)

Taboo Words	Explanation
Sex	The taboo words in the sex category are linked to sexual behaviour and marks for those who deliberately engaged in sexual intercourse. Sexual activity is frowned upon as a public exhibition and highly restricted as a topic of conversation. The concept of sex reflects a wide range of people's moral values. In other words, a person's strong personality is measured by the preservation of socially unauthorised sex. As a consequence, whether it is unavoidable, it has been sensitive in everyday conversations. An example of this taboo word in English is fuck, suck, blowjob, along with others.
Death	Death is regarded as taboo, and it has a meaning which leaves those who hear it uncomfortable. Fear was the principal reason that people

Excretion

avoid the word "death" and everything that comes inside its significance. This sentiment consumed humans for the thought of missing their loved ones, fear of the destruction of the body, fear of suffering the end by themselves and fear of the afterlife (Allan and Burridge, 2006). Examples of the taboo words in this category include going to hell, damn, dead, dying, and so on.

Taboo words classified as excretion category are related to human waste products or processes. Therefore, this term is regarded as sickening, and the utterance should be avoided, particularly during a formal dining event. Examples of taboo words in this category include shit, piss, fart, bullshit etc.

Bodily Function

Certain bodily functions are considered to be better performed or uttered privately. Pronouncing them or doing them in front of others may be regarded as taboo. For example, the part of the body related to sexual activity generally refers to the reproductive area. The word regarding sexuality is taboo; as such, the body part associated with sexuality is taboo. Examples of these words in the Beautiful Bastard are an ass, dick, vagina, penis, tits, etc.

Religiously Matters

Religious swearing is harsher than other kinds of swearing. It carries a magical thought (Jay, 2000). Examples of these taboo words including God, Jesus, Christ etc.

Mother in Law

The words in this category are usually used to describe a woman who has a relationship with many partners. This term is closely related to sex workers who like to change partners while they have sexual intercourse. Examples of this category are whore, motherfucker and slut.

Animal

Some people use animal names to insult others. For instance, calling someone a pig in order to insult their physical appearance and calling someone a chicken to imply that they are timid. Taboo words related to animals are taboo words that are very harshly spoken to humans because they equate animals with humans. In contrast, the names of animals always used to provoke others are considered the dirtiest and have nasty habits. The purpose of someone who uses an animal's name in the curse is to express anger towards someone or to mock someone. Examples of words that fall under this type are dog, cock, bitch, pig, chicken, etc. The example is illustrated below

Taboo for Taboo

translation results from this strategy would not be in the same arrangement, the audience still understands the message that wants to be conveyed. However, this technique has the potential to distort the meaning of the statement.

According to Davoodi (2009), some translators still prefer to translate the taboo words with other taboo words, although they understand that certain cultures do not tolerate these words. By implementing this strategy, the translator could achieve a precise translation. However, it can also be humiliating for readers and viewers.

Euphemism

Euphemism is the strategy that aims to substitute an offensive word or phrase into a more agreeable word, as explained by Davoodi (2009). This strategy is an alternative way to render inappropriate language to prevent the potential of disgracing others. Furthermore, to obtain the same meaning and emotion when translating taboo words using euphemisms, the translators should be familiar with the cultures in both the source and target language.

C. Translation Strategies of Taboo Words

The translators frequently find themselves trapped in a dilemma in finding the precise meaning to render the taboo words. The translators are bound to a number of factors in translating taboo words, such as culture, religion and belief. In this respect, Davoodi (2009) suggested some helpful strategies to translate the taboo words. The strategies are explained in the table below.

TABLE II
 TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF TABOO WORDS

Translation Strategies	Explanation
Censorship	According to Davoodi (2009), the easiest alternative in the translation of taboos is censorship. Thus, the translator avoids and censors the phrase as an extra term. However, it is not always a successful idea since, on certain occasions, the word taboo is a crucial term in the source text, and failure to do so will change the context of the text.
Substitution	Another option to translate the taboo words is by replacing them with other words or phrases in the target language that have the same connotative meaning as the source language (Davoodi, 2009). Although the

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Taboo Words Types found in Christina Lauren's Beautiful Bastard

According to Wardhaugh (1986), taboo words can be classified into seven types, they are sex, death, excretion, bodily function, religiously matter, mother in law, and animal.

TABLE III
 TRANSLATION STRATEGIES BY GOTTLIEB (1992) USED IN PATERSON MOVIE

Number	Translation Strategy	Data
1.	Sex	60
2.	Religiously Matters	23
3.	Bodily Function	21
4.	Death	17
5.	Animal	9
6.	Excretion	8
7.	Mother in Law	2
	Total	140

Table 1 above shows that there are 140 utterances contain taboo words in the Beautiful Bastard novel. All types of

taboo words theory proposed by Wardhaugh (1986) were found in the novel. Those are sex, death, excretion, bodily function, religiously matters, mother in law and animal. Furthermore, it was revealed that taboo word linked to sexual reference is the most frequent taboo word with 60 data. The second type that is most commonly found is religiously matters, with a total of 23 data. The third is bodily function with the amount of 21 data. The next is death with the frequency of 17 data. Moreover, followed by animal term with a total 8 data. Eventually, the least frequent taboo words type is mother in law with 2 data. Each finding of taboo words in the Beautiful Bastard novel is analysed below.

a. *Sex*

Data [3-1]

"Say it. You want to come, Miss Mills? Answer me, or I will stop and **suck** me off instead" (Chap. 1, p. 29) The above statement was given by Bennet Ryan when he was having sexual intercourse with Chloe Mills in his office. While he was having intercourse with Chloe, Bennet said, "Say it. You want to come, Miss Mills? Answer me, or I'll stop and make you suck me off instead." The denotative meaning of the word suck in the utterance above is to draw something into the mouth based on the Merriam-webster dictionary (2004). However, in this case, the word 'suck' signifies a sexual activity of drawing off the male genitalia into the mouth. As a result, this word includes a taboo word which is a sexual reference.

b. *Religiously Matters*

Data [3-2]

"**God**, you should see him, Julia. It's the most perfect nickname I have ever heard." (chap. 3, p. 57)

The utterance above occurred in the restaurant. At that moment, Chloe and her friends Julia and Sara were having brunch at their favourite restaurant. As they were eating their meals, they talked about Chloe's boss, who was very handsome but very rude and none other than Bennet Ryan. Julia seemed very curious about Bennet's figure, and Sara made her even more curious by saying, "God, you should see him, Julia. It's the most perfect nickname I have ever heard." Julia was puzzled to hear that. The word God belongs to the religious matter type because it has a religious tendency. According to Merriam-webster dictionary (2004), God is the creator and ruler of the universe. This word is considered taboo because there is a prohibition to pronounce God's name in vain for religious people. It is marked as the denigration to God. However, in this case, the word God was uttered by Sara to express her enthusiasm when telling Julia about Bennet.

c. *Bodily Function*

Data [3-3]

"You are an **asshole**, Mr.Ryan." (Chap. 1, p. 27)

The statement above happened in the Ryan Media office. At that moment, Chloe ran into the conference room to deliver the files to Bennet. Because she was 20 minutes late, Chloe was afraid of facing her boss since Bennet hates tardiness. However, what happened was unexpected, Bennet seduced Chloe and asked her to have sexual intercourse with him. Chloe cursed Bennet because she was annoyed, yet at the same time, she was unable to refuse him. *Asshole* refers to the private part of the body. Based on the Merriam-webster dictionary (2004), the literal meaning of this word is the anus. As a result, the word *asshole* is considered taboo because it is considered disgusting to discuss a private part of the body in daily discourse. However, in this case, the connotative meaning of this word is an expression of anger.

d. *Death*

Data [3-4]

"What the **hell** are you doing here?" (Chap. 4, p. 92)

The utterance above was stated by Chloe Mills. At that moment, Chloe was visiting her favourite lingerie store named La Perla. Nevertheless, she was surprised to find out that her boss, Bennet Ryan, was there. Thus, Chloe asked Bennet why he was there. The word hell literally stands for a place of suffering after death. As a result, this word belongs to the death category. Therefore, hell is used as an expression of surprise in this context as Chloe was shocked by Bennet's presence in a place where he should not be. Therefore, using the word hell in everyday conversation is considered taboo because it has a bad meaning.

e. *Animal*

Data [3-5]

"Yeah, well, she is also a raving **bitch**." (Chap. 6, p. 144)

The utterance above took place in a gym. At that moment, Bennet Ryan and his brother, Henry, were working out together while talking about Chloe. The conversation continued until Henry compared Chloe and Bennet by saying they were both loyal, intelligent and hardworking. Bennet, who did not agree to his brother's statement, said, "Yeah, well, she is also a raving bitch." The word bitch literally means the female of the dog based on Merriam-webster dictionary (2004). However, in this context, the word bitch is used by Bennet to label Chloe as a malicious woman. The word bitch in the utterance is offensive and generally used for verbal attacks on other people. For this reason, the word bitch is categorised as taboo.

f. *Excretion*

Data [3-6]

"Do not give a **shit**." (Chap. 14, p. 278)

The utterance above was given by Bennet Ryan. Bennet was having sexual intercourse with Chloe in a hotel room. Amid their intercourse, Chloe asked

about the time, and Bennet told her to ignore it. The word shit belongs to the excretion type since the literal meaning of it is waste from the intestine. The word shit is taboo, and it's frequently avoided in a formal setting, especially during gourmet events, because it is considered disgusting. In that case, Bennet said the word shit as an expression of not to care about anything but himself and Chloe. Nevertheless, the meaning of the text still understandable.

g. *Mother in Law*

Data [3-7]

"Do you think I am some kind of **whore**?" (Chap. 5, p. 129)

The above statement occurred in the car as Bennet Ryan and Chloé Mills visited the client. Back then, they were arguing in the car, and because Chloe did not want to listen to Bennet, Bennet yelled, "God, can you take it out of bitch mode for two seconds and listen to me?" And then Chloe responded with annoyance, "Do you think I am some kind of whore?" then silence fell between them. The word whore in this sentence falls into the category of mother in law as it refers to a female prostitute. Whore is regarded as taboo because labelling a woman as a whore means that she falls for an outline with the norm of sexual experience.

B. *Translation Strategies of Taboo Words in the Beautiful Bastard Novel*

There are four strategies suggested by Davoodi (2009). They are censorship, substitution, taboo for taboo and applying euphemism. All of these strategies were found in this novel. The description of the translation strategies which were used by the translator in this novel is presented in the table below.

TABLE IV

TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF TABOO WORDS IN THE BEAUTIFUL BASTARD NOVEL

No.	Translation Strategies	Data
1	Taboo for Taboo	67
2	Censorship	26
3	Substitution	25
4	Applying Euphemism	22
	Total	140

Table 2 demonstrates that there are four strategies applied by the translator to translate the taboo words in the Beautiful Bastard novel. They are censorship, substitution, taboo for taboo and applying euphemism. The table above also revealed the frequency of each translation strategy in the novel. Taboo for taboo was the most common strategy, which the translator used with the amount of 67 data. The second frequent strategy was censorship with 26 data. The

following strategy was substitution with a total of 25 data. Lastly, the least prevalent strategy which the translator used is a euphemism. These strategies were categorised under the theory of translation strategies proposed by Davoodi (2009). The analysis of each category of translation strategies is presented below.

a. *Taboo for Taboo*

Data [3-8]

SL: "**Damn** you, Bennett. I worked my ass off for you, and I worked my ass off for Julian.

TL: "**Sialan** kau, Bennett. Aku bekerja keras untukmu, dan aku bekerja keras untuk Julian.

The above statement is said by Chloe and occurred in the boardroom of the JT Millers Scholarship recipients. Before the meeting started, Bennet walked over to Chloe. Bennet looked down on Chloe's marketing campaign for dog food and provided her with a marketing plan slide for the multi-billionaire to present. Chloe, who felt humiliated, cursed at Bennet, "*Damn you, Bennett. I worked my ass off for you, and I worked my ass off for Julian.*" Based on the above data, taboo for taboo strategy was applied to translate the taboo word. This strategy consists of translating the word taboo into other words that are equally offensive and have the closest equivalent of the source language. The reference of *damn* is quite different to *sialan*. The word *damn* means to condemn someone to hell. It is considered taboo because it is a rather offensive thing to say in public. On the other hand, the word *sialan* means unlucky things or person and is a derogatory word that is inappropriate to say in everyday life. However, in this case, *sialan* was used to express anger and *damn* was used to express the same idea.

b. *Censorship*

Data [3-9]

SL: What the **fuck** do you think you are doing?"

TL: Kaupikir apa yang sedang kau lakukan?"

The main character, which was Bennet Ryan, uttered the data above. Bennet and a hardworking intern, Chloe Mills, were having sexual intercourse in his office. Then suddenly Chloe Mills left Bennet Ryan. Thus, Bennet Ryan uttered "What the fuck do you think you are doing?" The data above belonged to censorship since the translator had eliminated the word fuck. Moreover, the word fuck based on the Merriam-webster dictionary (2004) means an act of sexual activity. The deletion of the word fuck in this sentence did not change the meaning of the utterance. In this utterance, the word fuck was used to emphasise the question and show the speaker's strong emotion.

c. *Substitution*

Data [3-10]

SL: "**Holy Shit**"

TL: "**Ya ampun**"

The above statement occurred in the hotel room when Bennet and Chloe were sleeping together.

Chloe was fascinated by the fact that her relationship with Bennet was different from what it was, that she had the impression that Bennet was very sincere with her. In response to her sentiment, Chloe said, "holy shit". The word holy shit refers to taboo words. Since holy is associated with religious activity while shit refers to excretion, one of the lowest things in existence. In this way, these words come together to express disbelief. Based on the above data, the translator had replaced holy shit with words that are not considered taboo in the target language but may also transmit a similar sense. Because in Indonesia, anything to do with religion is a sensitive matter.

d. Euphemism

Data [3-11]

SL: "I guess a small **penis** is not his problem, after all . . ."

TL: "Kurasa masalahnya bukan **kejantanan** yang kecil..."

The statement above happened when Chloe and her friend Julia were chatting at their favourite restaurant. Chloe told Julia that she had slept with Bennet. Chloe enjoyed it and added that Bennet's annoying behaviour was not because of his small private organ. Based on the statement presented above, the word penis is translated into kejantanan. The penis is a taboo word that is vulgar to utter in public. It refers to the male private organ. Thus, the penis is translated into kejantanan which is a more agreeable word. The reference of kejantanan is also male genitalia. Here, both SL and TL have the same meanings.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to discover the translation strategies of the taboo words from English into Indonesian in the Beautiful Bastard novel. The theories applied in this research are the theory of taboo words proposed by Wardhaugh (1986) and the theory of translation strategies proposed by Davoodi (2009). The characters in the novel uttered many taboo words. The findings showed that 140 utterances contain taboo words. Therefore, two conclusions can be drawn in this study.

First, all types of taboo words based on the theory proposed by Wardhaugh (1986) were found in the Beautiful Bastard novel. Those are sex (60 data), religiously matters (23 data), bodily function (21 data), death (17 data), animal (9 data), excretion (8 data) and mother in law (2 data). Since the novel genre is an erotic romance, the findings of the taboo words are mostly about sex terms, while the least is mother in law.

Secondly, four strategies of translating the taboo words proposed by Davoodi (2009) were found in the novel. They are taboo for taboo (67 data), censorship (26 data), substitution (25 data) and applying euphemism (22 data).

The most common strategy used by the translator is taboo for taboo with the occurrences, whereas the least is a euphemism. The result revealed that the translator prefers to maintain the taboo expression in the translated novel rather than changing it into a more agreeable or inoffensive word.

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