



## THE ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION CHANGE STRATEGY IN FINDING CULTURAL EQUIVALENCE IN TRAVEL WRITING

### ANALISIS STRATEGI PERUBAHAN INFORMASI DALAM MENEMUKAN KESEPADANAN BUDAYA PADA CATATAN PERJALANAN

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#### Abstract

*Translation serves the purpose of transferring a message from written content in one language to written content in another language. However, translators encounter challenges, such as translating cultural words. Strictly speaking, finding an equivalent for cultural terms proves difficult due to the absence of a direct and precise match that conveys the message from the source language to the receptor language. This research investigates how cultural words in travel writing are translated. This study explores the translation of cultural words in a travel writing, employing a qualitative descriptive method. The data were sourced from Titik Nol novel written by Agustinus Wibowo and its translation Ground Zero into English by MT (Editor: John Michaelson). Chesterman's theory, particularly focusing on information change in pragmatic strategies, is used to analyze the research data. The findings reveal two categories of information change strategies. Among the 11 analyzed data, 10 employ the new addition strategy, while 1 datum uses the omission strategy.*

**Keywords:** Cultural words, translation, translation strategies, travel writing

#### Abstrak

*Fungsi penerjemahan adalah memindahkan makna dari teks bahasa sumber ke versi bahasa sasaran. Namun, dalam penerjemahan, penerjemah akan menghadapi beberapa masalah, salah satunya adalah penerjemahan kata-kata budaya. Penerjemah sering kali kesulitan menemukan padanan kata budaya, karena tidak ada padanan yang tepat dan langsung yang dapat digunakan untuk mengekspresikan pesan bahasa sumber dalam kata atau frasa bahasa sasaran. Penelitian ini membahas bagaimana istilah budaya dalam catatan perjalanan diterjemahkan. Penelitian ini dilakukan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data pada penelitian ini diambil dari novel Titik Nol yang ditulis oleh Agustinus Wibowo dan terjemahannya, Ground Zero ke bahasa Inggris oleh MT (Editor: John Michaelson). Dalam penelitian ini, analisis data didasarkan pada teori Chesterman, khususnya perubahan informasi pada strategi pragmatik. Dari hasil penelitian, peneliti menyimpulkan dua kategori strategi perubahan informasi. Dari 11 data yang dianalisis dalam penelitian ini, terdapat 10 data yang menggunakan strategi penambahan baru dan 1 data yang menggunakan strategi omisi.*

**Kata kunci:** Catatan perjalanan, kata-kata budaya, penerjemahan, strategi penerjemahan

#### Introduction

Language and culture are interconnected and inseparable to one

another. Each language has its own method of conveying an expression. Translation is not only about two languages, but also two cultures. The translation process is



inseparable from the specific culture. In other words, language is a product of the culture. Culture is a natural component of human life that rules out the behavior systematically. This is reflected in words, deed, or any particular event. A language reflects culture because it creates a way of thinking about its speaker.

According to Etnologue (2022), the premier source of linguistic data, there are 7168 spoken languages worldwide today. It is difficult to translate cultural words into another languages. As a result of differences in culture, tradition, and background. Moreover, in some cases, the source language text has no equivalence to target language. Cultural words such as *ondel-ondel* (a giant puppet originating from Betawi) are not found in English. There is a non-equivalence or directly exact meaning in translation.

Cultural differences lead to untranslatability, posing a challenge in conveying messages accurately between two languages such perspectives, customs, beliefs, and environments. According to House (2018) there is a close connection between globalization and translation, highlighting that the convergence of language and culture occurs through the process of translation.

The selection of this topic by the researcher was prompted by the observation of numerous cultural words in the source book and its translated version after a thorough reading. Cultural words from Indonesian and Tibetan countries. Hence, in this study the researcher sought to determine how cultural words are translated into English.

Sun (2018) specified that *cultural translation cannot maintain a strategic distance from deciphering cultural otherness*. Translation serves as a potent force for social change by creating new cultural and political dimensions, potentially challenging and dismantling hegemonic racial identities and structures. Baker (1992) mentioned that the source language word might convey a concept entirely unfamiliar in the recipient culture. This concept could be tangible, touching upon religious beliefs, social customs, or even specific types of food.

According to Newmark (1988), culturally specific terms can indeed be categorized into five groups: ecology, material culture, social culture, social organization, and gestures and habits. Pym stated (2014) that from the perspective of natural equivalence, words should be the same whether they are translated from one language to another or vice versa, and it

should not be influenced by directionality. There are some previous reseaches that have examined about cultural terms. Some of these reseaches are *The Culture-Specific Item (CSI) in Henry Ford's The International Jew The World's Foremost Problem* conducted by Setyawan (2019) and *Translation Strategy of Cultural Terms in Olive Kitteridge: Translation Criticism based on a model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis* written by Barathayomi (2012).

Setyawan (2019) conducted a research to identify the cultural terms employed in the translation of the book *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem*. The research also involved categorizing these cultural terms using frameworks proposed by Newmark (1988) and Baker (1992). Additionally, the study sought to explore the translation procedures applied by the translator when rendering these cultural terms from English into Indonesian.

The findings indicated that the translator employed procedures outlined by Davies (2003), including preservation, addition, omission, globalization, localization, transformation, and creation. Notably, the preservation procedures were frequently utilized. A point of distinction between the researcher's study and Setyawan's lies in the

methodology: the researcher's study employed information change strategies introduced by Chesterman (2002), while Setyawan utilized translation procedures outlined by Davies (2003).

The second previous study written by Barathayomi (2012) entitled *Translation Strategy of Cultural Terms in Olive Kitteridge: Translation Criticism based on a model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis*. The objectives of this study are to describe the underlying communication situation of source language and target language, to explain the purpose of translating source language into target language, to show the translation strategy chosen by the translator in translating cultural terms, to show the success or failure of the translation strategy chosen by the translator in achieving the translation purpose.

The findings are 180 cultural terms found in Olive Kitteridge novel. Those cultural terms are translating by using 12 kinds of translation strategies namely transference, paraphrase, omission, modulation, addition, description, generalization, literal translation, amplification, naturalization, cultural substitution, loan word plus explanation. The similarity of this study is that both researchers cultural terms but

Barathayomi's research analyzed cultural terms from English into Indonesian, while this study analyzed cultural words from Indonesian and Tibetan into English. The other difference is that Barathayomi's source of the data is the short stories while this study source of data of is a travel-narrative memoir.

## Method

This study aims to elucidate the translation of cultural terms into English, therefore the most appropriate research methodology applied is qualitative descriptive analytical research. The data encompass cultural terms expressed through words and sentences. A qualitative approach was chosen as the data predominantly consisted of words. The study focused on cultural words in various languages, including Tibetan and Indonesian, translated into English. The primary data source for this research was Agustinus Wibowo's *Titik Nol* (552 pages) and its translation by MT (Editor: John Michaelson). *Titik Nol* was published by Gramedia in 2013 and its translation *Ground Zero* (555 pages) released in 2015.

As this study aims to delineate the translation of cultural words into English, the most appropriate research method employed is qualitative descriptive analytical research. The data consist of cultural words presented in the form of sentences. The research design is executed in a step-by-step manner. Step 1 involves reading the source text and its translation sentence by sentence or paragraph by paragraph sequentially to pinpoint cultural words. Step 2 entails classifying the data according to the types of cultural terms identified. Step 3 comprises creating a list for the collected data, and Step 4 involves analyzing the data based on specified procedures.

## Result and Discussion

This section delves into the outcomes concerning cultural terms that posed challenges during the translation process. Some categories of cultural terms were found in Agustinus Wibowo's *Titik Nol*. There are two categories of information change strategies: 1) Addition of new information, 2) omission. Table 1 shows the classification of cultural words according to Newmark (1988) and Baker (1992).

**Table.1 Classification of Cultural Words in *Titik Nol***

Newmark	Baker
Ecology: flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills	Religious belief
Material culture (artefact)	Social custom
Social culture - work leisure	Type of food
Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts: political and administrative, religious, artistic	
Gestures and habits	

### Information change

#### The Addition New Information

Chesterman (2001): Information change, as described by Shaffner (2001), involves either the addition of new, pertinent, and non-inferable information or the omission of irrelevant information. In the literature, addition and omission are frequently recognized as distinct translation strategies, often employed and specified in annotations. Molina and Albir (2002) define the translation strategy *Description* as the act of substituting a term or expression with a detailed account of its form and function.

Newmark (1988) asserted that the supplementary information might need to be carried out by the translator in his form which is ordinarily cultural (addressing disparities between source language (SL) and target language (TL) culture, specialized (pertaining to the subject matter) or linguistic (clarifying ambiguous word usage). These additions should be in line with the needs of

the intended readership, diverging from the original as necessary. Where conceivable, additional data ought to be embedded inside the content, since this does not interrupt the reader's stream of consideration.

Larson (1998) stated...*it will be expected that many times a single word will be translated by several words, that is a descriptive phrase, in the receptor language. The addition New Information*, the term ...*nasi tumpeng*...in table 2 provides a more detailed translation by offering additional information in the target language, namely *nasi tumpeng, the yellow cone-shaped rice dish resembling a volcano, surrounded by seven types of side dish next to seven types of porridge, each in a different color*. Therefore, readers who are unfamiliar with the source language will have a better understanding. In Indonesian culture, people make *tumpeng* celebrate important ceremony.

*Tumpeng* may be an image of appreciation, also as a symbol of gratitude in rituals such a *syukuran* or *slametan*, where

the top of *tumpeng* is cut and presented to the foremost significant individual. Each component of traditional *tumpeng* carries a philosophical significant. Agreeing to legends in Java and Bali, the cone-shaped *tumpeng* may be a spiritualist image of life and biological systems, portraying the divine radiance of God as the Creator of nature. Additionally, the various accompanying side dishes and vegetables symbolize the vitality and harmony inherent in nature.

The word *...berkoteka...* in table 3 is translated into *...no clothing, save for a penis sheath made from gourd extending all the*

*way to his chest. Berkoteka* is derived from the word *koteka* which is attached to a prefix *ber-* to construct the verb *berkoteka*. The word *koteka* is translated descriptively into the target language, because it has no direct equivalence in the TL. Leigh (2010) stated that a slim gourd, referred to as a *koteka*, is secured by a thin string fastened around the waist. The word *koteka* literally means cloth which is derived from the language of a tribe in the Panial District, Papua. Most people in Jayawijaya refer to this *hilom* or *horim*. Hence, it is classified as a cultural word that refers to clothes (material culture).

**Table 2. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
Meru ada di kerucut nasi tumpeng yang dikelilingi sayur tujuh rupa disanding dengan bubur tujuh warna, ... (p. 49)	She prepared nasi tumpeng, the yellow cone-shaped rice dish resembling a volcano, surrounded by seven types of side dish next to seven types of porridge, each in a different color, ... (p. 76)	Material culture: Food

**Table 3. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of cultural word
Tapi yang menjadi primadona adalah foto lelaki Papua <i>berkoteka</i> (hal. 24)	The Papuan in the brochure probably lived in a remote jungle of Papua. He had a dark complexion with curly hair and absolutely <i>no clothing, save for a penis sheath made from gourd extending all the way to his chest.</i> (p. 32)	Material culture: Clothes

According to A *Comprehensive Indonesian-English Dictionary* *koteka* means (in Irian Jaya) a penis sheath. There are different types of *koteka* sizes, depending on the activities. A long *koteka* is used when attending a traditional event, while a short *koteka* for daily activities in the fields. The target language culture does not have a term exactly the same as *koteka*. The translator translated the word ...*koteka*... into several words namely no clothing, save for a penis sheath made from gourd extending all the way to his chest, which is acceptable and understandable to the target language readers. Larson (1998) expressed that *...it will be expected that numerous times a single words will be translated by a few words, that's a descriptive phrase, in the receptor language.*

In table 4 the term...*kora*... is translated as *having made the pilgrimage*

*around Mount Kailash seven times.* *Kora* is the transliteration of a Tibetan word meaning *circumambulation* or *transformation*. *Kora* is both a sort of journey and a spiritual contemplation within Tibetan Buddhism.

Mount Kailash holds significance as a pilgrimage destination for various faiths, such as Buddhism and Hinduism. The majority of pilgrims undertake a sacred circuit, known as a *kora*, around the mountain, covering a distance of 56 km and reaching elevations exceeding 5700 meters above sea level (Dudley et al., 2005). A *Kora* is performed by the practitioner making a circumambulation a in a clockwise fashion around a sacred location or object, regularly as a constituent portion of a journey, ceremony, celebration or custom. In any case, in broader terms, it could be a term that is often used to refer to the complete journey encounter within Tibetan locales.

**Table 4. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
Dia orang Tibet asli, religius, sudah melakukan <i>kora</i> keliling Kailash sampai tujuh kali. (p. 42)	...a native Tibetan, and she was religious, <i>having made the pilgrimage around Mount Kailash seven times.</i> (p. 53)	Social organization Religious Activities

**Table 5. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
Meru ada di kerucut nasi tumpeng yang dikelilingi sayur tujuh rupa disanding dengan bubur tujuh warna yang disiapkan mama ketika kami menggelar <i>upacara selamatan</i> di hari aku disunat. (p. 49)	When I ten years old, I asked to be circumcised. This removal of the skin that covered the tip of penis, <i>a traditional practice among Muslims and customary in Java</i> , wasn't traditional of my ancestors. (p. 76)	Gestures and Habits

**Table 6. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
Dengan <i>rickshaw</i> (di negeri kita disebut bajaj) yang diparkir di sebelah losmen,.... (p. 230)	All I remembered <i>was it had three wheels, the lower section was painted black, the top was painted yellow, and it had a black roof.</i>	Material Culture: Transport

The two-word Indonesian phrase *...upacara selamatan..* in table 5 is translated into a nine-word Indonesian phrase *a traditional practice among Muslims and customary in Java*. This is called an expansion. Hence, they are classified into cultural word that refers to Gestures and Habits.

*Slametan* is Java's general festival, symbolizing the social solidarity of the participants. Clifford Geertz considers this the central ritual of the Javanese religion. This holiday is popular among the Javanese, Sundanese and closely related Madurese people. *A slametan* can be accustomed to celebrating almost any event, including birth, marriage, death, moving to a new home, etc.

Depending on the purpose, mood and emphasis may vary slightly, but the main structure is the same.

The word *...rickshaw...* in table 6 is translated descriptively as *it had three wheels, the lower section was painted black, the top was painted yellow, and it had a black roof*. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* *rickshaw* means a vehicle similar to a three-wheeled bicycle, with a seat for passengers behind the driver. This cultural word type belongs to Material Culture: Sport. The term *rickshaw* is derived from the Japanese word *jinrikisha*, where *jin* means human and *rikisha* refers to powered transport, translating to human-powered transport in English.



*Rickshaw* were originally called two- or three-wheeled passenger vehicles and recreational vehicle, and were usually pulled by a person carrying passengers. The first known use of this term dates back to year 1879. Over time, rickshaws (also called trishaws or pedicabs) have developed.

In table 7 the term ...*dukun*... is translated into several words namely *a pharmacist with remedies better than any other medicine available*, which is acceptable and understandable to the target language readers. There is additional information in the target language which is called an

information change. The word *dukun* belong to Social Culture: Occupation based on the type of cultural word.

The word *sinshe* in table 8 has been translated into *a traditional Chinese healer specializing in acupuncture and potion-making*. According to *A Comprehensive Indonesian-English Dictionary* *sinshe* refers to Chinese physician/healer. The potions are made of herb from plant roots, leaves, or skin. The potion does not contain any chemicals because it is made from natural ingredients. According to KBBI *sinshe* means *tabib (dukun) Cina*.

**Table 7. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
Menyusuri gang-gang Paharganj yang ruwet seperti benang kusut untuk mencari seorang <i>dukun</i> penyembuh hepatitis kedengarannya bukan pekerjaan yang mudah (p. 299.)	The hotel owner advised me to find <i>a pharmacist with remedies better than any other medicine available</i> . (p. 284)	Social Culture: Occupation

**Table 8. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural
Ayahku cuma <i>sinshe</i> otodidak merangkap pedagang telur,..(p. 66)	Without the aid of a teacher, he had managed to become <i>a traditional Chinese healer specializing in acupuncture and potion-making</i> . (p. 73)	Social Culture: Occupation

**Table 9. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
Setelah memberi uang dua yuan, aku menerima kalung <i>azimat</i> , katanya peninggalan guru suci. (p. 104)	I gave them a two yuan note, and they thank me and bowed once more. One of them reached inside the <i>fold producing a black, smooth stone the size of a marble</i> and pressing it into my hand. (p. 123)	Social Organization: Religious Thing

**Table 10. The Addition New Information**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
<i>Kamu enak, dari Negara Muslim yang bagus. Kami sudah banyak dengar tentang Indonesia</i> , kata lelaki tua <i>berpeci</i> putih. (hal. 24)	<i>You're lucky. You live in a good Muslim country. You are a free man</i> , said an old man sitting across from me. He was wearing <i>a traditional cap usually worn by Muslim men</i> . (p. 33)	Material culture: Clothes

The term ...*azimat*... in table 9 are translated into *fold producing a black, smooth stone the size of a marble*. According to *A Comprehensive Indonesian-English Dictionary* *azimat* refers to amulet, talisman, charm, and mascot. An amulet is a tangible item intended to safeguard an individual or their belongings from malevolent forces (Campo et al., eds.2009).

*Azimat* is an object that is ordinarily worn on one's individual, and is affirmed to have enchanted power to protect its holder. The word *azimat* is too general, and the translator also descriptively renders renders the term *azimat* into *fold producing a black,*

*smooth stone the size of a marble* to provide a more specific explanation to target language readers.

The word ...*berpeci*... in table 10 is translated into *a traditional cap usually worn by Muslim men*. This word is classified as cultural word that includes clothes (material culture). *Peci* is a cap widely worn in Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, the southern Philippines and southern Thailand. It is shaped from a truncated cone crafted from dark or embroidered felt, cotton or velvet. Men often wear this headgear on formal occasions such as wedding parties, funerals, and Islamic celebrations such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

**Table 11. Omission**

Indonesian	English	Type of Cultural Word
Kala itu aku masih balita, bersama Mama, aku menumpang <i>becak</i> entah ke mana (p. 48)	Ever since I was a little, Mama took me some place,.... (p. 60)	Material Culture: Transport

Peci may be related to nationalist secular development. The word *cap* as the generic word of *peci* is described by the addition phrase *a traditional cap usually worn by Muslim men* in order to make readers understand the word easily.

#### Information change

#### Omission

Nida and Taber (1982) asserted that various types of reduction often occur in the process of transferring content from one language to another. Additionally, Fawcett (1997) defined reduction as the deliberate omission of information deemed unnecessary, of little importance, or unlikely to be comprehensible to the reader in the target language.

In the target text, the term *becak* is intentionally left out by the translator, as indicated in table 11. This practice, known as omission, involves excluding certain words during translation. The omission strategy in translation can be applicable as a solution to overcome the non-equivalence between

languages as long as it does not change the idea or meaning.

#### Conclusion and Suggestion

Translating cultural words poses challenges due to the absence of exact equivalents in English. This study reveals that the translator predominantly employed the new addition strategy. The analysis indicates that the messages in the source language were effectively conveyed in the target language. While some translations exhibited grammatical variations, the essence of the source language message remained intact in the target language. The conclusion aims to summarize the study's findings discussed in preceding chapters, and suggestions are put forth to inspire new ideas for future research. The primary objective of this research is to scrutinize the translation of cultural terms into English.

While the researchers have sought to analyze the translation of cultural words into English, further studies on this topic are still needed. Readers should be aware that the

data for this study were relatively limited, focusing solely on translations of cultural words from Agustinus Wibowo's *Titik Nol*. It would be beneficial to replicate these findings with a more extensive range of novels or literary works, such as short stories, poems, or plays, and to employ diverse strategies and theories for the analysis.

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