

Lost in translation: Strategies for preserving cultural elements in the translation of Sundanese short stories to English

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in response to the declining use of ethnic languages, aiming to assess the effectiveness of a translator in introducing Indonesian ethnic languages to foreign language speakers and motivating ethnic language speakers to preserve their languages by evaluating translation quality. A qualitative case study approach was employed to examine the translation techniques proposed by Molina and Albir (2002) in rendering Sundanese stories, with a focus on cultural terminologies outlined by Newmark (1987). Data collection included: (1) content analysis of four translated texts from *Neng Maya* (2018) and their English translation by C.W. Watson (2018), (2) expert interviews with professional raters fluent in both English and Sundanese, (3) analysis steps proposed by Spradley (2016) to extract meaningful insights, and (4) translation quality assessment using Nababan et al.'s (2012) method, which classifies quality scores from 1 (lowest) to 3 (highest). The findings showed that the translation attempted to render cultural elements such as ecology, material culture, social customs, habits, and gestures. However, the techniques used were not fully successful in conveying cultural nuances, reflected in an average translation quality score of no more than 2.3. This suggests that the Sundanese-to-English translation failed to fully preserve the cultural nuances, risking the loss of cultural identity. Careful consideration of translation techniques is essential to avoid such failures.

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INTRODUCTION

The preservation of regional languages is increasingly hindered by globalization, as dominant global languages surpass them (Harris, 2006; Jones & Mooney, 2017). Ethnic languages like Sundanese are becoming less common, and face sustainability challenges (Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Robiah & Hernawan, 2021). Translating Sundanese short stories into English presents a potential breakthrough in preserving the language's cultural

and linguistic legacy while reaching a broader audience. Similarly, recent studies emphasize the role of translation in preserving ethnic languages, particularly Sundanese. Hue and Phuong (2022) and Kuo and Nakamura (2005) argue that translation is key to making regional languages accessible globally, ensuring their survival. Similarly, Sobarna (2007) highlights translation as a strategic measure to preserve Sundanese amid globalization and the dominance of national languages. These studies

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underscore the critical role of translation in bridging regional languages with global audiences.

This perspective forms the foundation of the current study, which seeks to examine the preservation of the Sundanese language through the translation of its literary works, which are short stories in this study. Sobarna (2007) underscores the urgent need for a strategic measure such as translation to preserve the Sundanese language, which faces a steady decline due to globalization and the dominance of national and foreign languages. His work emphasizes the cultural importance of Sundanese and the necessity of ensuring its survival for future generations. Both Kuo and Nakamura (2005) and Sobarna (2007) highlight the critical role of translation as a bridge between regional languages and wider global audiences, serving as a theoretical umbrella under which this study is conducted. Several studies on the translation of ethnic languages share commonalities in their research objects and methods, particularly in the context of translation for preserving cultural elements. A notable point of alignment lies in their exploration of translation techniques aimed at maintaining cultural integrity while making ethnic languages accessible to wider audiences. Translation techniques are procedures to analyze and classify how translation equivalence works (Molina & Albir, 2002). As a result of a comprehensive study, Molina and Albir classify 18 translation techniques that have been tested, distinguishing them from translation methods and strategies.

Research by Ma'shumah and Sajarwa (2022) and Riani (2020) both focus on translation strategies that resist cultural dominance in the target language. While Ma'shumah and Sajarwa (2022) focus specifically on the preservation of Javanese and Sundanese identities through translation, Riani (2020) explores techniques that include adaptation and amplification in the context of subtitled Sundanese religious texts. Despite the difference in genres—ethnic literature versus religious texts—both studies discuss the challenge of maintaining cultural and linguistic integrity, emphasizing the role of adaptation techniques and strategic choices to preserve cultural meanings.

In terms of methodology, Mahmud et al. (2024), Putri et al. (2023), and Sukaesih et al. (2021) employ similar analytical approaches in examining specific translation strategies for Sundanese literature. Mahmud et al. (2024) focus on explicitness change as a strategy for translating Sundanese folklore, making implicit cultural elements more understandable for English readers. In contrast, Sukaesih et al. (2021) focus on translating Sundanese terms of address, emphasizing culturally sensitive methods to retain the unique linguistic structures of the Sundanese language. Both studies focus on Sundanese as their object of research, providing insights into strategies that help

preserve its cultural richness in translation. On the other hand, Putri et al. (2023) have a different focus on research location, which is translation techniques used in translating webtoons, revealing that many cultural elements cannot be translated.

Building on these methodological foundations, theoretical explorations of language, culture, and translation also provide a useful perspective. Tanusy et al. (2024) analyze Sundanese folk stories through the lens of gender representation, offering an alternative view of cultural transmission. However, their focus on gender roles sets them apart from this study, which emphasized the linguistic preservation of Sundanese short stories. Additionally, Mahmud et al. (2024) examine partial and summary translations of Sundanese folklore, reducing information to enhance readability. This stands in contrast to the current study's goal of preserving the full cultural richness in translation without simplification (reducing information). From these studies, it is clear that much of the existing research tends to center on exploring folklore rather than short stories in the Sundanese language, as seen in the work of Mahmud et al. (2024) and Sukaesih et al. (2021), where folklore serves as the primary object of translation study.

While essential research centers on translating folklore, this study focuses on the preservation of cultural elements in Sundanese short stories, offering a more nuanced portrayal of daily life, social structure, and individual experiences (Norton, 1987; Wang 2019). These stories provide authentic Sundanese expressions, reflecting real cultural practices. This study aims to explore how these elements are preserved in translation, highlighting the importance of translation in safeguarding both language and culture (Filladsen & Jordenzen, 2020). The study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the types of cultural elements in the selected Sundanese short stories in *Neng Maya*?
2. What translation techniques are used to translate the cultural elements of the Sundanese language?
3. How does the translation quality impact the preservation of the original cultural nuances in Sundanese literature?

By focusing on these aspects, this study contributes to the broader discourse on language preservation, particularly in ethnolinguistic contexts. Sundanese, spoken by over 30 million people in West Java, faces pressures from Bahasa Indonesia, leading to language shift and endangerment (Anderbeck, 2015). Translation plays a vital role in preserving traditional knowledge, literature, and oral histories, ensuring their survival across generations (Vishwakarma, 2023). This research contributes not only to the preservation of Sundanese but also offers

valuable insights into the global challenges of translating culturally rich texts.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative methodology, utilizing a case study to investigate the translation of Sundanese short stories into English, focusing on the role of translation quality in language preservation. A descriptive and exploratory approach was used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of translation on cultural sustainability. As noted by Yin (2014), case studies are well-suited for exploring real-world phenomena, making them ideal for analyzing complex challenges like ethnic literature translation. Baxter and Jack (2008) emphasize the method’s strength in investigating complex contexts, while Agazu et al. (2016) and Craswell and Poth (2018) highlight its effectiveness in addressing cultural and linguistic complexities.

Data Collection

The primary data for this study were collected from four short stories in the anthology *Neng Maya Jeung Carita-Carita Liana*, compiled and translated into English by C.W. Watson as *Miss Maya and Other Sundanese Stories*. The selected stories are “Aki Oleh” (AO; Sasmita, 2018), “Angin Puyuh” (AP; Malka, 2018), “Ramal” (RML; Fajar, 2018), and “Tempat Nyimpang Saheulaanan” (TNS; Romli, 2018). These stories were chosen for their depiction of Sundanese daily life, governance, and traditions, providing a rich basis for analyzing how cultural elements are translated and whether their nuances are preserved. This selection ensures a broad representation of cultural themes not as prominently featured in other stories, allowing for a focused examination of the challenges in translating culturally specific content.

To analyze the selected stories, data collection for this study was conducted through two primary activities: content analysis and expert rating sessions. Content analysis was applied due to the nature of the methods, which can identify patterns to reveal phenomena, relationships, and constructs (Krippendorff, 1989). Expert rating sessions are essential to evaluate the accuracy of the translation of the cultural terminologies from Sundanese to English. They can rate the faithfulness of the translation in the source text and rate how the cultural nuances are preserved.

The first stage of this methodological approach, content analysis, involved collecting linguistic data—specifically content words—from four selected Sundanese short stories. Content words, which include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs (Newmark, 1987), carry significant meaning and often convey cultural, contextual, and semantic elements crucial for translation. These words play a key role in understanding the cultural and linguistic

nuances that must be preserved in translation. After completing the content analysis, the data were categorized into types of cultural elements based on Newmark’s model (1987). These categories include ecology (e.g., flora, fauna, and geography), material culture (e.g., clothing, food, living space, and transportation), and socio-cultural elements (e.g., social status, law, religion, art). For example, the term *Lembur Kondang* (literally “famous village”) refers to a specific village name, illustrating how cultural terms can have different meanings depending on context. The study also examined gestures, such as pointing with a thumb or index finger, which can carry varying degrees of politeness across cultures. The primary researcher analyzed these cultural elements while simultaneously applying Molina and Albir’s (2002) translation techniques as an analytical framework. The techniques most commonly used by the translator were: (a) amplification, adding information for clarity; (b) established equivalent, using recognized terms in the target text; (c) pure borrowing, transferring words directly into the target text; and (d) discursive creation, establishing temporary equivalence.

The second phase of the study involved in expert rating sessions. The experts were chosen under the following criteria: (a) having much experience in translating a variety of texts in different genres; (b) Sundanese native speakers who are actively speaking and writing in Sundanese and English languages, and (c) being involved in teaching cultural studies. After obtaining the data through content analysis, the authors conducted discussions with two raters. The raters were asked to rate the data based on the translation quality rubric of Nababan et al. (2012), which consists of three aspects, i.e. accuracy, which deals with how faithfully the translation reflects the meaning of the source text; acceptability, which focuses on whether the translation sounds natural and appropriate in the target language; and readability, which concerns how well the translated text flows in the target language. In the course of their work, the raters were provided with a detailed rubric completed with indicators, which was based on the Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) framework developed by Nababan et al. (2012), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
TQA Analysis by Nababan et al. (2012)

TQA	3	2	1
Accuracy	High	Medium	Low
Acceptability	High	Medium	Low
Readability	High	Medium	Low

The goal of this phase was to obtain scores and feedback from the raters, which would provide a comprehensive evaluation of how well the cultural

and linguistic elements of the Sundanese short stories were preserved in the English translations.

Data analysis

The data analysis in this study followed the standardized procedures proposed by Spradley (1979; 2016), including domain, taxonomic, and componential analysis, along with cultural theme analysis (Santosa, 2021). Domain analysis identified and classified concepts within the study, helping to understand their structure and relationships. Taxonomic analysis grouped these concepts into categories, enabling systematic comparisons of content words, translation strategies, techniques, and quality. The componential analysis explored the elements of these concepts and their interrelationships, while cultural theme analysis focused on the values, norms, and meanings that influenced translation quality, which includes accuracy, acceptability, and readability. The final phase involved interpreting the results and connecting them to the theoretical framework, that translating short stories is an effective strategy for preserving regional languages and cultures, with a focus on Sundanese literature.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In line with the objectives, here are the results of the study based on the textual analysis of the four short stories, namely "Aki Oleh" (AO; Sasmita, 2018), "Angin Puyuh" (AP; Malka, 2018), "Ramal" (RML; Fajar, 2018), and "Tempat Nyimpang Saheulaanan" (TNS; Romli, 2018). They covered three aspects, i.e. the types of cultural elements, the application of translation techniques, and the impact of translation qualities on the preservation of the original cultural nuances in Sundanese short stories.

The Types of Cultural Elements in the Sundanese Short Stories in *Neng Maya*

The analysis of the four Sundanese short stories revealed the presence of various cultural elements as defined by Newmark's theory of cultural translation (Table 2).

Table 2
Distribution of cultural elements in Sundanese short stories based on Newmark's cultural categories

Cultural Terms	AP	TNS	RML	AO	Total
Ecology	3	24	7	15	49
Material	1	28	10	47	86
Social Culture	1	20	6	20	47
Organization	6	55	24	23	108
Habits and Gesture	8	0	43	0	57
Total	19	127	90	105	290

Out of the four short stories, TNS stands out with 127 data, followed by AO with 105 data, RML

with 90 data, and AP coming in last with 19 data. The dominance of TNS is attributed to the rich use of honorific markers and terms denoting social and official hierarchies. For instance, the story frequently employs honorifics such as *Aki* (grandfather), *Nini* (grandmother), *Juragan* (master or employer), and titles related to official positions like *Lurah* (village head) and *Hansip* (village security officer). Additionally, the story contains religious terminologies, particularly about the daily prayers in Islam religion (*salat*), with mentions of specific prayer times such as *Isya* (night prayer), *Subuh* (dawn prayer), *Lohor* (noon prayer), *Asar* (afternoon prayer), and *Magrib* (sunset prayer). These elements highlight the cultural depth and significance embedded in TNS, making it a rich source of cultural data within the context of Sundanese literature. Meanwhile, AP stands out for its emphasis on material culture, such as the word *teko*, which is translated into *kettle*, and RML is significant for its portrayal of habits and gestures. For instance, the phrase *silih reret* is translated into "exchange glance". AO features the least amount of overall cultural data but still contributes meaningfully to the broader understanding of Sundanese cultural expressions through its ecological elements, such as the word *cangkudu*, which is translated into *cangkudu*, and organizational elements, such as *aden*, which is translated into "sir".

These cultural nuances are further reflected in the translation techniques applied to each category of cultural terminology found in the translations of the four short stories applied various translation techniques. The first category, ecology, is dominated by the application of established equivalent technique. Similarly, the domination of this technique is also found in the categories of material and social culture elements, which positively contribute to high-quality translations. On the other hand, the organization category is dominated by pure borrowing technique, which results in medium-quality translations. Lastly, the technique of discursive creation dominates the translation in the habits and gesture category, which leads to lower-quality translations.

These findings highlight the importance of culturally sensitive translation practices that preserve the richness and diversity of Sundanese culture. Each story offers a unique perspective on the Sundanese way of life, and translating these elements accurately is crucial for maintaining the cultural integrity of the texts in English translation.

Translation Techniques used to translate the cultural elements of the Sundanese language

A textual analysis was further conducted by the researches to identify the translation techniques employed by the translator, highlighting the most dominant and least dominant techniques in each

story. After analyzing the data, the researchers conducted expert rating sessions with selected raters who assessed the translation quality in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. The results are as follows.

Aki Oleh (AO)

Set in a rural area, the short story "AO" utilizes the amplification translation technique, with an average score of 2.7. This technique has a positive impact on the overall quality of the translation. The success of this approach is mainly due to the content of the work, which is rich in cultural terminology, ranging from traditional musical instruments to kitchen utensils. By adding detailed explanations or additional information through amplification, the translator preserves the cultural essence and authenticity of the original text. This ensures that readers of the target language can still understand these cultural elements while maintaining their vividness and significance as they appear in the source language. Achieving this level of linguistic accuracy is crucial for preserving the cultural richness of the Sundanese language in translation, allowing a broader audience to appreciate it. For instance, *kawat kacapi* was translated into "the string of the kacapi", portraying a clearer meaning and nuance of a Sundanese traditional musical instrument.

However, some of the translated versions failed to capture the nuances presented in the source language. For instance, the words *Kayaning boboko*, *aseupan*, *ayakan*, *jeung tingkem* in the source language were translated into the target language as "Storage baskets" (*boboko*), "baskets for steaming rice" (*aseupan*), "sieves" (*ayakan*), and "larger baskets with flaps" (*tingkem*).

In this case, *boboko* is a special type of basket specifically used to store rice, but the translation "storage baskets" is too general, failing to capture the specificity of *boboko* as used in Sundanese culture. Such a case indicates how well the translated text flows in the target language. The additional explanations for other terms (*aseupan*, *ayakan*, and *tingkem*) aim to clarify the functions of these items, but the generalization technique of *boboko* reduces its cultural significance, diluting its meaning in the translation. Despite this, the amplification technique overall aids in helping readers from different cultures understand the text better.

The next technique found in AO is generalization technique, scoring an average of 2.9 and also contributing to the higher quality of the translation. This technique involves using more general terms to translate cultural items that do not have a direct equivalent in the target language. By doing so, the translator makes the text more accessible, ensuring that the cultural content is communicated effectively without confusing the

target audience. For instance, *tali pangrod* was translated into "the string around the cloth", which is easily grasped by readers and successfully translates the cultural nuance.

Nevertheless, some of the translated versions failed to capture the nuances in the source language. For instance, in the source language, *Cenah mah boboko keur ngawadahan sangu hasil panen ti sawah lega* was translated into the target language as "The *boboko* baskets, one knew, were used to bring back the rice from harvesting the broad paddy fields". In this case, the word *sangu* in Sundanese means *nasi yang sudah matang* ("cooked rice, ready to eat"), while the word "rice" in English could refer to *beras* ("uncooked rice"), *padi* ("rice in the field"), or other forms of rice. The generalization of "*sangu*" as "rice" in the translation reduces the specificity and cultural nuance of the original meaning, potentially altering the reader's understanding of what was truly conveyed in the source text.

The next technique found is discursive creation, which had a lower average score of 2 and proved to be detrimental to the translation quality. This technique, where the translator introduces creative new words or phrases that do not directly correspond to the source language, often results in a significant loss of meaning when poorly applied. For instance, in the source language, *Tungtungna Aki Oleh ngagalantang nyarita* was translated into the target language as "And finally Grandfather Oleh completed his recitation of the story". The word *ngagalantang* in Sundanese means "to speak out loud," but the translated version uses the word "completed," which has a completely different meaning. This choice in discursive creation alters the original meaning, causing a loss in the intensity and cultural significance of the term and distorting the reader's understanding of the character's actions. Such discrepancies weaken the overall translation and reduce the quality of cultural transmission from the source language to the target language.

Tracing the findings of Guerra (2012) and Braçaj (2015), the use of borrowings, adaptation, and compensation seemed to improve the translation quality of cultural terminologies. This study reveals significant differences in how translation techniques impact the quality of cultural nuances. This analysis highlights a clear distinction between effective and ineffective translation techniques in the preservation of Sundanese through translation.

Angin Puyuh (AP)

AP is a fantasy story that contains cultural references, and the translator's use of compensation and established equivalent techniques has resulted in a successful translation. The use of compensation, in particular, has provided greater flexibility in the translated sentences, making them easier for readers to understand. Compensation allows for adjustments in phrasing to account for differences between

languages and cultures, enabling the text to flow smoothly in the target language and be more comprehensible to its audience. This technique ensures that the original meaning is retained while accommodating cultural and linguistic differences between Sundanese and English. For instance, *renghap ranjug* was translated into "panting heavily", which completely transfers the nuance presented. The established equivalent technique, with a score of 2.8, provided an accurate and appropriate translation of terms that had clear counterparts in the target language, contributing positively to the overall translation quality. For instance, *congo awi* was translated into "bamboo clumps", which directly rendered the nuance of the word.

In contrast, the use of discursive creation, which scored 1.5, did not yield favorable results. This technique, which involves creating new expressions or reworking sentences in a way that does not closely reflect the source text, often results in significant deviations from the original meaning. These deviations lead to a loss of the intended content and reduce overall clarity in the translation. For instance, *Kuring nyekel pageuh kana dapuran jukut jampang* was translated into "I held fast to a clump of long grass." Here, *jukut jampang* does not mean "a clump of long grass", and the translated version distorts the meaning, making the translation inaccurate. This kind of misinterpretation through discursive creation can cause readers to misinterpret the cultural and linguistic context of the original work, leading to less effective transmission of meaning.

On the other hand, linguistic compression, which received a score of 3.0, is generally known for potentially compromising translation quality by reducing or omitting certain nuances. However, in this case, its use has surprisingly resulted in a good translation. For instance, the sentence "...ceuk Si Nyai bari ngarenghap jero pisan." in the source language was translated into the target language as "...she said with a long sigh". In this instance, linguistic compression effectively conveys the original meaning with a more concise expression. Despite typically leading to reduced clarity, this translation managed to preserve the emotion and intent of the original text, making it an anomaly where linguistic compression did not harm the overall quality.

Finally, the use of generalization, which scored 2.3, failed to portray a clear nuance in this translation. For instance, the phrase "*Sadun, angin puyuh, Jang!*" in the source language was translated as "Sadun, lad, a whirlwind". In Sundanese, *jang* refers to a boy of lower status, while "*ncep*" refers to a boy of higher status. However, in English, "lad" is a more generalized term, which could imply a servant or lower-class status, and thus, it does not fully capture the nuance of *jang*. This generalization

changes the meaning significantly, as it diminishes the social hierarchy embedded in the original text.

Ramal (RML)

In the short story RML, which centers on social themes, the use of compensation, established equivalent, and literal translation techniques have had a notably positive impact. These translation strategies have contributed to greater flexibility in rendering the source text, allowing for more natural and contextually appropriate word choices and phrases in the target language. This adaptability has, in turn, enhanced the readability and comprehension of the translated work for the audience.

By employing compensation, which scored 2.7 on average, the translator was able to adjust expressions and idiomatic phrases that might not have a direct equivalent in the target language, ensuring that the translated text retains its original meaning while being more accessible to the readers. For instance, *ngabengbeos* was translated "into went off in a huff", resulting in a clear-meaning translation.

In line with compensation, established equivalent, which scored 2.8 on average, allowed for the use of recognized and conventional translations for specific terms, further reinforcing the clarity and accuracy of the translation. For instance, *humarurung* was translated into "groaned", which managed to transfer the equal meaning of the Sundanese word.

Meanwhile, literal translation, with an average score of 2.7, was utilized effectively where direct word-for-word translation is possible, maintaining the authenticity and cultural richness of the original text. For instance, *sora saheng sora nyiruan* was translated into "the sound of people buzzing like bees", which clarified the nuance of the Sundanese phrase. Overall, these techniques have helped to preserve the social nuances and cultural context of the original story, making it easier for readers to understand and appreciate the underlying social messages conveyed in RML. The combination of these techniques has ensured that the translation not only communicates the nuance of the Sundanese accurately but also resonates well with the target audience, thereby enhancing their overall reading experience.

In contrast to those techniques, discursive creation received an average score of 1.9, reducing the flow of Sundanese nuance in the translation. For instance, *Lain keur Si Dadap Si Waru* was translated as "It's not for any old person" However, the phrase *Si Dadap Si Waru* in the source text refers specifically to "any ordinary people," not "old person." This discrepancy indicates a distortion of meaning, as the translation fails to convey the original cultural reference accurately.

Tempat Nyimpang Saheulaanan (TNS)

The short story TNS, which highlights the destructive consequences of greed on human relationships and the environment, demonstrates a consistent pattern in its use of translation techniques. The translator employed various techniques, each leaving a different impact on the quality of the translated version.

The established equivalent technique, with an average score of 2.7, is used multiple times throughout the text, consistently enhancing the translation. This technique involved using well-known and appropriate substitutes in the target language, ensuring that the original sense and nuance of the writing were preserved. As a result, the story successfully maintained clarity and precision, making the underlying social message much easier for readers to grasp. For instance, *curug* was translated into “waterfall”, which is the equivalent of its Sundanese counterpart.

Additionally, the translator employed pure borrowing, which scored 2.6 on average, to retain traditional terms, such as the names of animals and kitchen utensils, in their original form. This approach preserved culturally specific language elements and provided readers with an authentic glimpse into the world of Sundanese culture. By maintaining these terms in their original form, the translation enriched the cultural texture of the story, allowing the target audience to gain a genuine understanding of the Sundanese customs. For instance, *sultan* is not translated and is directly borrowed from the source text instead. Another example, *Cur magrib, raat subuh* was translated as “It started at magrib and then petered out around subuh.” Although the terms *magrib* and *subuh* were borrowed directly from the source language (Sundanese), this approach reduces readability for native English-speaking readers who may not be familiar with these terms. The distinction between “*subuh*” (referring to a specific time of early morning prayer in Islamic context) and “*dawn*” in English is not apparent through pure borrowing, which can lead to confusion or a lack of clarity. This results in a lower score due to the diminished comprehensibility of the target audience.

Conversely, the discursive creation strategy received a score of 1.8, reflecting a lower level of translation accuracy. For instance, *Ngeueum sawatara sawah jeung kebon nu deukeut ka dinya*, was translated into “Swallowing up the rice fields and nearby vegetable gardens.” The term *kebon* in Sundanese does not necessarily refer to a vegetable garden, as it could denote any type of garden. Without a specific modifier such as *kebon cau*, the translation introduces a distortion of meaning by narrowing the interpretation to “vegetable garden,” which was not explicitly indicated in the original text. This misrepresentation reduces the overall fidelity of the translation. Another application of

discursive creation that leads to misinterpretation was found in the translated phrase “street-selling”—a term in English that refers to small-scale retail activity conducted outdoors, usually involving selling goods in public places, such as streets or markets. It mistranslates the term *dadagangan*. In Sundanese, *dadagangan* (other ways of earning a living) specifically refers to an entrepreneurial effort. This translation narrows the meaning of *dadagangan* and misses the broader entrepreneurial nuance intended in the source text. This inaccuracy, along with the over-expansion of other elements, impacts both the precision and effectiveness of the translation. Of all four selected short stories, compensation technique is the one most likely to allow the translator to adjust for differences between languages while still conveying the intended message, making the text more accessible and natural to the target audience. Established equivalent ensures that well-known and culturally appropriate terms are used in the translation, thereby preserving the original context and meaning. Putri et al. (2023) introduced the same findings emphasizing the positive impact of established equivalent translation techniques on preserving the cultural nuances of the source text. Generalization helps simplify complex or culturally specific concepts, making them easier for the target audience to understand. This is supported by the findings of Putri et al. (2023) that simplified phrases have led to easier understanding. Literal translation, when applied judiciously, maintains the accuracy of the original text while ensuring that the translation remains true to the source material. This case also emphasizes the translation of cultural terms in the first episode of *Gadis Kretek*, highlighting that the literal translation technique is frequently used and effectively conveys the original meaning of the terms, while simultaneously enhancing readers' comprehension (Virtianti et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the use of discursive creation tends to harm the translation quality. This technique, which involves creating new expressions or reworking sentences that do not closely resemble the source text, often leads to significant deviations from the original meaning. As a result, the translated text may become less faithful to the source material, potentially causing confusion or misinterpretation among readers. The inconsistencies introduced by discursive creation can undermine the clarity and coherence of the translation, making it more difficult for the target audience to fully grasp the intended message. These findings are also proven by Putri et al. (2023) in different texts with similar nuances written by Indonesian authors, that discursive creation technique did not successfully transfer the source text message and that the target text is different from the source text. This only means that the translation cannot deliver the cultural nuances embedded in the phrase. Overall, while most of the

translation techniques employed contribute positively to the quality of the translated texts, discursive creation appears to be the less reliable method, as it can cause distortions and diminish the effectiveness of the translation in conveying the original content.

Additionally, the analysis of the four short stories reveals that the translation techniques of compensation, established equivalent, generalization, and literal translation consistently contribute positively to the overall quality of the translations. The positive impact of established equivalent was also mentioned by Ulfyatuzzuhriyyah et al. (2022), stating that the technique contributed to high-accuracy translation. These methods have proven effective in preserving the original meaning, cultural nuances, and readability of the texts, ensuring that the translated versions maintain the integrity and essence of the source material.

Translation Quality in Preserving Original Cultural Nuances

As mentioned in the methods, the designated raters assessed the translation quality of the four short stories in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. In brief, the average results of the assessment from the raters are shown in the following table followed by a thorough explanation of each aspect.

Table 3
Translation quality of the four short stories

Quality	AO	AP	RML	TNS
Accuracy	2.09	2.23	2.02	2.47
Acceptability	2.18	2.85	2.19	2.42
Readability	2.16	2.04	2.22	2.39
Average Quality	2.14	2.41	2.11	2.44

Table 3 shows the translation quality of four Sundanese short stories—AO, AP, RML, and TNS—based on the aspects of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. The data suggests that the overall quality of the translations can be considered average, as reflected in the scores ranging from 2.0 to 2.44. According to the translation quality theory proposed by Nababan et al. (2012), a score of 2.0 signifies that "most of the meaning has been conveyed," but there are still moderate distortions in the message. A closer examination of the quantitative breakdown reveals further insights of the aspects The of translation quality assessment by Nababan et al. (2012).

Firstly, the accuracy scores range from 2.02 to 2.47. These scores indicate that while much of the original meaning has been preserved in the translations, there are still some inaccuracies or minor misinterpretations. For instance, the score of 2.47 for TNS suggests that it has conveyed the original meaning more effectively than RML, which had the lowest score at 2.02, indicating more

significant distortions. These issues might stem from the translator's tendency to add unnecessary words, such as translating *tepas hareup* as 'small front veranda,' and incorrect word choices, such as translating *Koneng Saheab* as 'dark yellow,' when *saheab* means 'light.' Such inaccuracies highlight the need for more precise translations. According to the translator, in the introduction of the short stories collection book, he aimed to stay faithful to the source text, trying to reproduce the meaning and tone, such as the emotions conveyed by the author in each character. However, this was particularly challenging because translating these nuances accurately into English using descriptive metaphors and analogies often results in a very different impact in the target language. The translator also admitted that the strategy preferred, i.e. describing the cultural elements, was inevitable in introducing the culture.

Secondly, the acceptability scores range from 2.18 to 2.85. The scores in this category indicate that while the translations are generally acceptable, there is still room for improvement in making the text sound more natural and culturally appropriate in the target language. The short story AP stands out with a significantly higher acceptability score of 2.8, creating a notable gap compared to the scores of the other stories. This higher score is likely due to the effective use of equivalent words, phrases, or expressions in the target language, which enhances its acceptability. In contrast, RML, with a score of 2.19, may still feel somewhat unnatural to the target audience. Overall, the variation in the acceptability scores suggests that while some translations are more aligned with the norms of the target language, others require further refinement to better resonate with the target audience.

Lastly, the readability scores range from 2.04 to 2.39. The readability scores suggest that while the translated texts are generally understandable, they could have been made easier to read. The attempt to increase the level of readability may imitate the work of Mahmud et al. (2024), although cultural richness may have a low level of absorption. TNS, with a score of 2.39, appears to be the most readable, whereas AP, with a score of 2.04, might pose some challenges to readers in terms of comprehension. For example, religious terms related to Islamic prayers, such as *shalat lohor*, *isya*, *magrib*, and *subuh*, were not translated into the target language, which could leave readers unfamiliar with these terms and struggling to grasp their meanings. This lack of translation contributes to the lower readability scores and suggests a need for more reader-friendly translations. Table 2 reveals the quality of the translations of Sundanese short stories, indicating that although most meanings are preserved, there are still many shortcomings. The average scores, just above 2.0, suggest that while these translations generally function well, issues

with conveying intent remain. Additionally, several problems, such as meaning distortion, lack of naturalness, and poor readability, contribute to average scores being below 3. This aligns with the theory of Nababan et al. (2012), which suggests that while the overall message often gets across, even small inaccuracies or traces of unnaturalness can affect the overall quality of the translation. Thus, the translation quality assessment of these four Sundanese short stories, according to Nababan et al. (2012), reveals moderate scores in accuracy, acceptability, and readability, highlighting issues like meaning distortion, unnatural expressions, and challenging readability due to cultural differences and untranslated terms.

This overall analysis highlights how the choice of translation techniques affects the quality of translation and the preservation of the original cultural elements' nuances. Some considerations for a specific range of bridging techniques utilized in the translation of the texts for, among others, cultural references, idioms, and traditions, will enhance readers's understanding of the translation. Moreover, in the educational setting, the translation of Sundanese short stories can be utilized, for instance, to show a variety of cultural references as the teaching medium in the translation classes and to introduce the impacts of translation techniques in translation cultural differences. In general, the study will enhance students' insights and knowledge on literacy skills where they can gain a deeper understanding of translation studies and cultures, including, at the very least, the source language and target language cultures. Eventually, translation can be used to help students develop their own language and literacy skills.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study concluded that all cultural elements represented by ecology, material, social, organization, and habits and gestures are contained within the four Sundanese short stories, forming an integral part of the rich culture depicted in these narratives.

The study found that various translation techniques proposed by Molina and Albir (2002) were employed in translating these cultural terms. Compensation, established equivalent, generalization, and amplification techniques had a positive impact on the quality of the translations. These techniques proved effective in faithfully reproducing the original meaning while also conveying its cultural subtleties, thereby enhancing the readability and accessibility of the translations. This, in turn, has a significant impact on preserving the Sundanese identity and linguistic richness in a globalized world. On the contrary, discursive creation often resulted in a distortion of meaning, which detracted from the overall quality of the

translation. This highlights the importance of carefully selecting translation techniques that not only ensure accuracy but also maintain the cultural integrity of the source material. The overall translation quality scores 2.3 out of 3 on cultural terms. The score leans more toward a medium-quality translation rather than a high-quality one, indicating that there is still considerable room for improvement, particularly in retaining the rich cultural nuances and authenticity of the original Sundanese text. The study enhances the theoretical understanding of translation techniques aimed at cultural preservation by underscoring the need for thoughtful technique selection. It recommends techniques such as established equivalent, compensation, pure borrowing, and amplification to preserve cultural identity. These techniques enable translators to retain cultural nuances while maintaining the original text's essence.

However, since this study implemented qualitative descriptive methods focusing on case study, the methodology is only eligible for the research of the translation of cultural terminologies found in Sundanese short stories. It may not be suitable for the research of cultural terminologies in other Sundanese texts, such as Sundanese *tembang* (traditional Sundanese songs) and Sundanese *pantun* (abab rhyme scheme containing moral advice). This implies that the challenges of translating cultural terminologies found in those different texts will be different from the challenges faced when translating those Sundanese short stories. Consequently, different ratings by raters will result from different types of translated texts.

The result of the study only reveals the significance of cultural terminology translation in Sundanese short stories. This limitation brings opportunities for further research on the translation of texts in other ethnic languages, which are rich in cultural references, implementing different methods and assessment frameworks.

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