

The Strategies in Translating Indonesian Cultural Terms in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Footsteps*

Gina Istiqomah, Wawan Gunawan*
English Language and Literature
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
gina.istiqomah@student.upi.edu

ABSTRACT

This study investigated some strategies applied by the translator in translating Indonesian cultural terms found in the novel *Footsteps*. The data were taken from the original version of the novel entitled *Jejak Langkah* and its English version entitled *Footsteps*. By using qualitative method, this study classified and analyzed the data based on Newmark's (1988) cultural categories and Venuti's (1995) domestication and foreignization strategies in translation. The result showed that domestication and foreignization strategies were applied by the translator to translate Indonesian cultural terms with the percentage of 26.92% (domesticated) and 73.08% (foreignized). The most frequently used strategy by the translator in translating the cultural terms make the translation result to be less fluent and less transparent. However, it could make the target language readers feel closer to the nuance of the original story of the novel *Footsteps* and recognize linguistic and cultural differences of other languages, in this case Indonesian.

Keywords: *Domestication, Foreignization, Translation Strategy, Cultural Terms.*

*Penulis Penanggung Jawab

INTRODUCTION

Translation is a process of transferring meaning of one language to another language in order that the meaning in the source language can be understood by the receptor in the target language. Newmark (1988) stated that “translation is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text” (p. 5). However, translation is not only about rendering the meaning or linguistic transference but also a cultural exchange between the source language and target language. Therefore, translation can be used as a bridge in communication across culture. Translation can be described as intercultural communication in which the social practice is constructed in a certain context by certain agents to comprehend social categories and boundaries with reference to the cultural context that envelope it (House, 2016, p. 37). In addition, through translation people can recognize language and cultural differences around them.

A translation problem would happen when there is a cultural gap or

distance between the source language and the target language except there is a cultural overlap and appropriate descriptive-functional equivalent in TL text (Newmark, 1988, p. 94). However, there would always be cultural differences between the source language and the target language. Then, it is possible that translator finds a cultural term of the source language during the translating process. Translating a text consisting cultural terms can be a dilemma and challenge for a translator. The equivalence of some cultural terms from the source language may not exist in the target language. The source language words may express a concept which is unknown by the target language readers. The concept may be abstract or concrete related to religious belief, a social customs, or even type of foods (Baker, 1992, p. 21). Thus, the translator needs to apply appropriate strategy in translating them into the target language without losing the meaning or value of the source language.

Language is embedded in culture in which the meaning of any linguistic item can only be understood

with reference to the cultural context that envelope it (House, 2016, p. 32). A cultural term that is found in the source language text can be translated by using domestication and foreignization strategies proposed by Venuti (1995). By the use of domestication and foreignization strategies, it can be described how a translator positions a translated text in the target language and in the textual environment of the target culture (as cited in Myskja, 2013, p. 3). Domestication is a strategy to make unfamiliar terms become intelligible by the target language reader and to reduce the foreignness of the source language text. Meanwhile, foreignization is a strategy to retain the foreign term as much as possible so that the target language readers can feel the original of the source language text. The translator can choose between the two of these strategies to be applied in translating cultural terms.

There are many Indonesian literary works which have been translated into many languages, especially in English in order to reach a wide range of reader and as a way to

introduce the authors and their literary works abroad. One of the examples is Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Jejak Langkah*. There has been the English version of the novel in the title of *Footsteps*. The novel is the third volume of the novel tetralogy or also known as the *Buru Quartet*. The researcher selects this novel for this research because none of previous studies used this novel as the data source of the research regarding domestication and foreignization strategies. Besides, it contains more cultural terms regarding Indonesian culture. Thus, this study contribute to the existing studies on translation strategies which especially focus on identifying cultural terms and the strategies to translate them, and also the effect of the translator's strategy on the translation result, in this case the novel *Footsteps*.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative method because the researcher classified the data into some categories and analyzed the data to answer the problems being questioned. The data of this study

were taken from Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Jejak Langkah* and its English version of the novel in the title *Footsteps* which was translated by Max Lane. Some of the phrases, clauses, and sentences which contain cultural terms were transcribed in the form of table due to the analysis of the data. There are 78 cultural terms found in the English version of the novel *Jejak Langkah*. The data were analyzed based on Newmark's (1988) categories of cultural terms by classifying the cultural terms found in the novel *Footsteps*, Venuti's (1995) theory of foreignization and domestication strategies in translation and also Judickaite's (2009) the continuum of domestication and foreignization strategies in measuring to what extent the cultural terms were domesticated or foreignized by the translator in the translation.

The steps taken in analyzing the data are: categorizing the identified cultural terms found in the novel *Footsteps* based on Newmark's (1995) theory of cultural categories, classifying the data based on domestication and foreignization strategies in translation proposed by

Venuti (1995) and Judickaite's (2009) the continuum of domestication and foreignization strategies, calculating the occurrence of the identified strategies in order to identify the most frequently used strategy by the translator to translate the cultural terms, and then interpreting the data analysis result.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

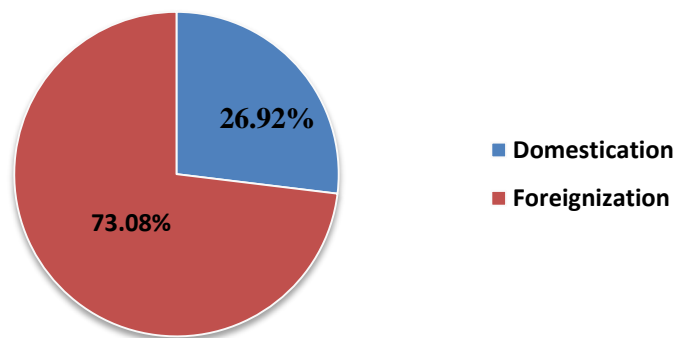
This research collected 78 cultural words from the novel *Footsteps*. The cultural terms were classified based on cultural category proposed by Newmark (1995): (1) ecology, (2) material culture, (3) social culture, (4) social organization and (5) gestures and habits.

Table 1 Cultural Term Categories

No	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	Ecology	8	10.26%
2	Material culture	23	29.49%
3	Social culture	30	38.46%

4	Social organization	12	15.38%
5	Gestures and habits	5	6.41%
Total		78	100%

Chart 1 Domestication and Foreignization Strategies in Translating Cultural Terms



Based on the table above, the categories that appeared the most in the data are social culture with the total percentage of 38.46% and material culture with the total percentage of 29.49%. The next categories which are mostly found are social organization with the percentage of 15.38% and ecology with the percentage of 10.26%. Then, the category that appears the least is gestures and habits with the percentage of 6.41%.

From the data, there are 78 cultural terms found in the novel *Footsteps*. There are 21 cultural terms translated by using domestication strategy and 57 cultural terms translated by using foreignization strategy. The percentage of the strategies applied by the translator in translating cultural terms presented in a pie chart below.

Based on the chart above, foreignization strategy is the most applied strategy with the percentage of 73.08%, while domestication strategy is the least with the percentage of 26.92%. The translator tended to apply foreignization strategy in order to keep the foreignness of the source language by representing linguistic and cultural differences from the source language toward the target language readers in English due to the importance of the foreign culture and its value, in this case Indonesian culture.

The most frequently used strategy by the translator to translate the cultural terms in the novel *Footsteps* is foreignization. The text showed that the translator retained

and introduced the concept of culture and its value of the source language, in this case Indonesian culture, as Venuti (1995) stated that “foreignization is an ethnodeviant pressure on those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of foreign text, sending the reader abroad” (p. 15). Then, the text also emphasized that the translator’s work tended to be the source language-oriented with the use of some strategies such as preservation, addition, naturalization, and literal translation proposed by Judickaite (2009). The examples of some cultural terms that were translated by using those strategies are as follow.

memasu regent,
 ki seated
 pelatara in
 n rocking
 kabupate chairs
 n, putri- under
 putri the
 bupati ***pendop***
 Jepara ***o,***
 telah awaite
 menanti d the
 di arrival
pendopo of
 duduk di Engine
 kursi- er H.
 goyang van
 (p. 88) Kollew
 ijn
 (p.68)

Table 2 The examples of preservation strategy identified in the novel *Footsteps*

Indonesian Version (SL)	English Version (TL)	Strategy
Sebelum Ir.H.Van Kollwij n	The daughters of the	Preservation

According to KBBI, the term “*pendopo*” means a wide open building (without borders or barriers) at the front of a house which is provided for reception area or meeting. The term is also used to refer to a traditional home building in Indonesia, especially in Central Java. The translated text showed that preservation strategy was used by retaining the term “*pendopo*”. By the

use of this strategy, the translation result could be less fluent for the target language readers because the term may be unfamiliar for them.

Table 3 The examples of addition strategy identified in the novel

<i>Footsteps</i>			
No	Indonesian Version (SL)	English Version (TL)	Strategy
2	<p><i>Adat pingitan</i> porak poranda kena terjang Sekolah Dokter (p. 72)</p>	<p><i>The tradition of keeping such a daughter out of sight until she had a partner had been destroyed by the medical school</i> (p. 58)</p>	Addition

From the table above, the text showed that the term “*adat pingitan*” was translated into the target language by using additional strategy. This could make the translation result less fluent for the target language readers because it gives the appearance of the source language culture.

Thus, the translated text indicated that it tended to be source language-oriented. This could affect the translation result to be less fluent and less transparent. The cultural terms which were retained in the novel *Footsteps* may be unfamiliar for the target language readers. According to Larson (1984), each society would interpret a message from the translated text in terms of its own culture and perspective. The receptor audience would decode the translation result in terms of his own culture and experience, not the culture and experience of the author of the original text (as cited in Behtazh). Thus, the translation result which presents linguistic and cultural differences may be less fluent and less transparent for the target language readers.

In contrast, according to Venuti (1995) a fluent translation is written with a language that is widely used instead of specialized (jargon) and that is standard instead of colloquial. Then, the translation result is considered to be transparent when there are no linguistic and stylistic peculiarities in the translated text. In addition, a transparent and fluent style is adopted to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for the target language readers by domesticating and limiting the exchange of cultural terms (pp. 1-13). However, each language contains elements which are derived from its culture such as greetings, or fixed expressions, that every text related to a specific culture (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997, p. 35). Thus, translating cultural term from the source language often involves more than a simple selection of what should be translated and what should not; the translator need to consider some aspects influencing it such as the equivalent, the context of the source language culture (Kafipour and Soori, 2016).

In the novel *Footsteps*, it indicated that the translator tended to foreignized the cultural terms in accordance with the concepts and cultural values existed in Indonesia. This is in line with Shirinzadeh and Mahadi (2014) who investigated foreignizing or domesticating tendencies in the English translation of Hafez's lyrics. They conducted the study by analyzing some selected lyrics contained Persian cultural items found in the English version of Hafez's lyrics. The result of their analysis showed that the translator's tendency in translating Persian cultural items was the application of foreignization strategy. The translator's aims were conveying the foreignness sense to the translation and moving the readers abroad. Thus, by the tendency of the translator's strategy which is foreignizing the cultural terms, the target language readers could feel closer to the nuance of the original from the source language and they could expand their knowledge about another language and culture.

The findings of this study show speciality especially in

understanding the effect of the translator's strategy on the translation result. As it has been explained before, the translator's work tended to be source language-oriented by retaining the foreignness of the source language. Thus, the foreignness of the source language could make the translation result to be less fluent and less transparent for the target language readers regarding unfamiliar terms and cultural differences presented by the translator. According to Larson (1984), each society would interpret a message from the translated text in terms of its own culture and perspective. The receptor audience would decode the translation result in terms of his own culture and experience, not the culture and experience of the author of the original text (as cited in Behtazh). However, the translated text indicated that the foreignness of the source language was retained in order to make the target language readers feel closer to the nuance of the original story of the novel *Footsteps* and also make them recognize linguistic and cultural differences of other languages, in this case Indonesian.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of this research, there are some points that can be concluded. First, there are 78 cultural terms found in the novel *Footsteps*. The categories of the cultural terms consist of: (1) ecology: 8 cultural terms, (2) material culture: 23 cultural terms (3) social culture: 29 cultural terms (4) social organization: 7 cultural terms (5) gestures and habits: 8 cultural terms. The most appeared categories found in the novel are social culture and material culture. There are 30 terms of social culture with the percentage of 29.49% and 23 terms of material culture with the percentage of 38.46%. It can be said that the terms include in social culture and material culture are mostly appeared because the novel told about the story of indigenous people of Indonesia during the colonial period, so that there must be many cultural terms represented in the story.

Then, there are 58 cultural terms are translated using foreignization strategy with the percentage of 75.33% and 17 cultural

terms are translated using domestication strategy with the percentage of 22.67%. Thus, foreignization is the most frequently used strategy by the translator in translating the cultural terms. The translator applied foreignization strategy by preserving some cultural terms from the source language to be presented in the target language. Besides, the cultural terms were also analyzed by Judickaite's (2009) specific translation strategies in the process of domestication and foreignization which consist of: preservation (65.38%), addition (1.28%), naturalization (7.69%), literal translation (1.28%), cultural equivalent (1.28%), globalization

REFERENCES

- Baawaidhan, G. A. (2016). Applying foreignization and domestication in translating Arabic dialectal expressions into English. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 8, 4. doi: 10.5296/ijl.v8i4.9665
- Baker, M. (1992). *In other words: A coursebook on translation*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bassnett, S. (2000). *Translation studies*. London and New York: Routledge.
- (11.53%), translation by more specific words (1.28%), equivalent translation (1.28%). The most used strategy is preservation.
- Thus, translated text indicated that it tended to be source language-oriented and affects the translation result to be less fluent and less transparent for the target language readers due to linguistic and cultural differences that were preserved by the translator in the novel *Footsteps*. However, the tendency of foreignization strategy could make the target language readers feel closer to the nuance of the original story of the novel *Footsteps*. They can also expand their knowledge about cultural differences of Indonesian.
- Catford, J. C. (1965). *A linguistic theory of translation*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research method in education*. New York: Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. United States of America: Sage Publication.
- Elmenfi, F. (2013). Venuti's foreignization: Resistance against the Arabic culture. *International Journal of Comparative Literature & Translation Studies*, 2. doi: 10.7575/aiac.ijclts.v.2n.1p.10

- House, J. (2016). *Translation as communication across languages and cultures*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Judickaite, L. (2009). The notion of foreignization and domestication applied in film translation. *Kaunas: Vyautas Magnus University Press*.
- Kafipouri, R., & Soori, A. (2016). Domestication and foreignization strategies in restaurant menu translation. *Pertanika Journals*, 24(4), 1417-1429.
- Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia. (2008). Jakarta: University of Indonesia.
- Lane, M. (1990). *Footsteps*. Australia: Penguin Books.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. China: Prentice Hall.
- Oxford Learner's Dictionary. (2000). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pederson, J. (2005). How is culture rendered in subtitles? *Challenges of Multidimensional translation: Conference Proceedings, 1-1*.
- Pym, A. (2007). Natural and directional equivalence in theories of translation. *International Journal of Translation studies*, 19(2), 271-294.
- Pym, A. (2004). *The moving text: Localization, translation, and distribution*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Shuttleworth, M., & Cowie, M. (1997). *Dictionary of translation studies*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Toer, P. A. (2015). *Jejak langkah*. Jakarta Timur: Lentera Dipantara.
- Venuti, L. (1995). *The translator's invisibility: A history of translation*. London: Routledge.
- Venuti, L. (2000). *The translation studies reader*. London: Routledge.
- Zare, E., & Firoozkoobi, S. (2010). Cultural specific items in literary translation. *Translation Journal*, 14(1).