

## THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE TRANSLATION PROCESS THROUGH THINK-ALOUD PROTOCOLS

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### Abstract

*Cultural differences have been a major focus in translation. This study investigates two aspects; first, the translation process of culture-bound words and second, the strategies taken by two translators. These translators are English Department students and they have different cultural backgrounds, Moslem Javanese and Buddhist Chinese. Each of them has to translate the same four texts: one text whose cultural background both of them are familiar with, another text whose cultural background both of them are not familiar with and two other texts. Out of the two texts, only one text has a familiar cultural background to one of the translators. The method used to investigate what was happening in the translators' mind is think-aloud protocols. Two points can be concluded from this study. One, translators' cultures do play a role in their consideration of choosing the words they use. Two, translators generally use the strategy of cultural substitution if the culture is nearly the same, but they use the strategy of using a neutral word or paraphrasing by related words when the culture is different.*

Keywords: *culture-bound words, translation strategy, cultural differences*

### Abstrak

*Perbedaan budaya telah banyak mendapat sorotan dalam penerjemahan. Yang dikaji dalam penelitian ini ialah pertama, proses penerjemahan kata-kata yang disebabkan oleh perbedaan budaya dan kedua, strategi yang diambil oleh penerjemah. Kedua penerjemah ialah mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris, dan keduanya mempunyai latar belakang budaya yang berbeda. Yang satu berlatar budaya Jawa dan Islam dan yang lain Tionghoa dan Budha. Masing-masing menerjemahkan empat teks yang sama: satu teks mempunyai latar belakang budaya yang tidak dikenal keduanya, satu teks lainnya mempunyai latar belakang budaya yang hanya dikenal salah satunya oleh masing-masing penerjemah. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis protokol untuk meneliti apa yang terjadi dalam pikiran penerjemah ketika sedang menerjemahkan. Ada dua hal yang diperoleh dari penelitian ini. Pertama, latar belakang budaya penerjemah memegang peranan dalam memilih kata-kata yang mereka gunakan. Kedua, strategi yang berbeda digunakan kedua penerjemah dalam menerjemahkan kata-kata yang mengandung budaya. Jika budaya hampir sama, strategi yang digunakan ialah menggunakan kata yang mempunyai budaya yang mirip; namun, jika budaya berbeda, strategi yang digunakan adalah menggunakan kata yang netral atau memparafrasa dengan kata-kata yang masih ada hubungannya dengan kata tersebut.*

Kata kunci: *kata-kata budaya, strategi penerjemahan, perbedaan budaya*

### INTRODUCTION

The term 'translation' can refer to translation as a process and also as a product. The research focus on translation product (the translation text) is already common in Indonesia, but the focus to the translation process is not that popular. However, in other countries "there has been an increasing interest in studying the translation process since the mid-1980s" (Li 2004:301). With the shift of focus to the translation process, the translators also become more important in the focus of research. The important role of translators can be seen in what experts in translation say

about it. Wills (2004:3), for example, says, “A translator is supposed to be a bridge between linguistic and cultural communities, but at the same time is different from both the source-text author and the target-text reader(ship).” Two important aspects in Will’s statement about the important role of translators in translation are in the area of language and also culture. Since the role of translators cannot be ignored in translation process, this study tries to describe how the three aspects of translation process—language, culture, and translators—are related. This study tries to describe how translators of different cultures deal with language. Culture, as defined by Beamer and Varner (2001:3), is the coherent, learned, shared view of a group of people about life’s concerns that ranks what is important, furnishes attitudes about what things are appropriate, and dictates behaviour. This general definition underlies the concept of culture in this study, but a more specific definition from Appelbaum and Chambliss (1997) is used as a guideline to choose the words or culture-bound units in this research that are taken as data because it is more systematic and concrete. According to them, sociologists and anthropologists differentiate two aspects of culture that are different but interrelated aspects of human culture, material culture and non-material culture. “Material culture includes all the physical objects made by the members of a particular society to help shape their lives” (1997: 63). This includes tools and technologies to make goods, the goods consumed, the place of worship, the offices or stores and the cities or towns where people live. “Non-material culture consists of all the nonphysical products of human interaction, that is, the ideas shared by people in a particular society. This includes languages, values, beliefs, rules, institutions and organizations” (1997: 64). This study deals with difficult words, terms, or expressions concerning culture and they are referred to as culture-bound units.

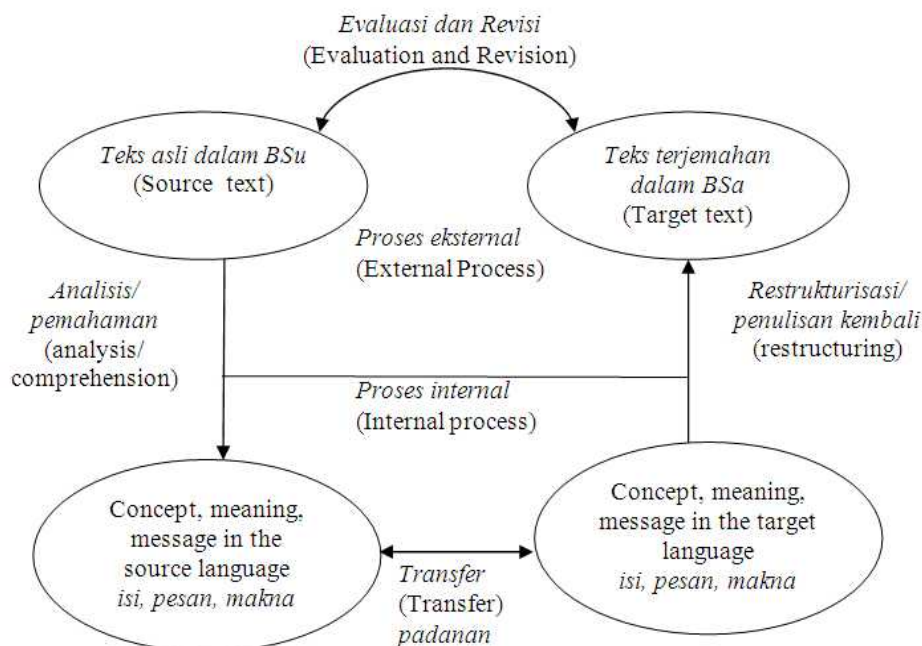
Concerning culture in translation, Baker (1992) lists a number of common problems, such as: 1) the source language concepts are not lexicalized in the target language, (2) the source-language is semantically complex, (3) the source and target languages make different distinctions in meaning, (4) the target language lacks a superordinate, (5) the target language lacks a specific term, (6) differences in physical or interpersonal perspective, (7) differences in expressive meaning, (8) differences in form, (9) differences in frequency and purpose of using specific forms, (10) the use of loan words in the source text, and (11) culture-specific concepts, that is, “the source language word may express a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture. The concept in question may be abstract or concrete; it may relate to a religious belief, a social custom, or even a type of food” (1992:21). Some common strategies to overcome the problems are (1) translation by a more general word (superordinate), (2) translation by a more neutral or less expressive word, (3) translation by cultural substitution, (4) translation using a loan word plus explanation, (5) translation by paraphrase using a related word, (6) translation by paraphrase using an unrelated word, (7) translation by omission, and (8) translation by illustration. Baker (1992:42) admits that the list is not limited to what she has described, and further studies of the strategies—how translators cope with the culture-bound units—are encouraged.

The solutions of dealing with special words which are ‘culturally bound,’ according to Duff (1981:26), may differ greatly, although the problems of all translators of literary, general, or technical texts are the same. Therefore, the strategies taken by the translators are worth discussing. Some common solutions, according to Duff (1981), are (1) the word is retained in its original form and no explanation is given, (2) the word is retained in its original form, with either a literal translation in brackets, an official or accepted translation in brackets, or an explanatory footnote, (3) the word is never mentioned in its original form, (4) the same with the previous, but the translator expands the text in order to convey all associations, (5) different translations of the same word are used, because the target language differentiates more than the source language, (6) part of the source language is omitted, (7) a target language expression is given, although it is not derived from anything in the text. This study, then, tries to portray

more specifically, what is happening in the minds of translators of different cultures when dealing with culture-bound units in the process of translation.

What is happening in the minds of translators is worth paying attention to, since translation, according to Hatim and Munday (2004:36), happens not only linguistically, but also cognitively as the translator works on a translation. In translation theory that describes the translation process in stages, the stage that happens in the translators' minds is the stage of transfer; the meaning or message obtained from the analysis is transferred from the Source Text (ST) to the Target Text (TT). In the translation process there are four stages (Suryawinata 2003: 19), which can happen quickly or slowly, and either once or repeatedly, depending on the intensity of the difficulties encountered by the translators. The following is the complete diagram of translation process.

**Figure 1.**  
**Translation Process Adapted from Nida and Taber Modified by Suryawinata**



In the stage of analysis, before the stage of transfer, the translators analyze the text to get the textual or contextual meaning of the text. In the stage of restructuring, translators write the TT, maintaining the equivalent content, meaning, and message of the ST. The stage of evaluation and revision is where the translators evaluate the TT (the translation) to determine whether or not it is the same as the ST. If it is not the same, then the TT is revised and the process is repeated from analysis. During the translation process, translators can pay attention to one sentence, one clause, one group of words or even one word, referred to as translation units. The units discussed in this study can be words, phrases or sentences.

One of the few available means to know what happens in the translator's mind in the stage of transfer is verbal reports or verbal protocols or think-aloud. This method was first used in psychology and cognitive science in the early twentieth (Brown and Rogers 2001:54). To explain what is verbalization or think-aloud, it is useful to use what Brown and Rogers (2001:53-54) say about it; it is like doing mental (or even written) arithmetic of 45 times 52. They explain as follows: In a simple language, verbalizing or think-aloud is saying what one is thinking so that others can hear it.

Later, this method is also used in language research. Verbal protocols ask subjects to verbalize or tell their thought processes when they are involved in processing language. McKay (2006) cites from Brown and Rogers some principles that should be given attention while

conducting verbal reports: 1) verbal reports should occur either while the activity is occurring or as soon as possible afterward; 2) because verbalization needs additional demands, subjects should be allowed to use their first language (p. 61); 3) researchers should be as unobtrusive as possible; researchers should take notes on both nonverbal and verbal behaviour; and 4) verbal reports cannot be used to report automatic thought processes. Some procedures to follow in conducting verbal reports in language research are as follows:

- 1) provide students with a practice activity;
- 2) give simple directions;
- 3) be as unobtrusive as possible;
- 4) ask subjects to report their thought processes at particular points in the text after they have read the text;
- 5) do not ask leading questions;
- 6) record the session;
- 7) and pay attention to nonverbal behaviour.

Beginning in 1980's this method is also used in translation research. The name of this method is then recognized as Think-aloud protocols (TAPs) as the name of the transcriptions of verbalizations of thoughts that subjects are instructed to produce while carrying out a translation task (Bernardini 2000). Verbalization in translation means saying everything that is happening in one's mind while translating. For example, when a translator encounters a difficult word, in her/his verbalization, he might say, "What does this word mean? Dictionary. Let's see. First meaning. No. It's not that. Second, third. Ah this one, yes." What the translator is saying is recorded and later on, transcribed. The transcription is also called TAPs.

The two ways of doing verbal reports are introspective and retrospective. In translation research, the retrospective one is done **immediately after** translation. After a translator has finished translating a text, s/he is asked to describe what was going on during the translating of the text. What s/he says about the process of translating is recorded and later on, transcribed. This method is considered less appropriate for this research because the chance of forgetting what actually happens is bigger. The one chosen for this research is the introspective report or TAPs. In this way the recording is done **while** the translator is translating a text. Everything that the translator is saying that s/he is thinking is by being recorded; ideally, the thinking, saying and the recording happens simultaneously. The recording is later transcribed and the transcription is also called think-aloud protocols (TAPs).

However, this method, according to Bernardini (2000), has limits because it is highly influenced by individual differences in terms of personality, personal history, capacity to verbalise thoughts, and attitude towards the task. Additionally, it is not yet proven whether long complex methods could be accessed and reported on in the same way as short problem-solving tasks. However, since this is the most probable way to know what is going on inside someone's mind, it is one good tool to use. In this research these points are already tackled in the methodology of this research. The following points were carefully considered in the methodology: the criteria for the subjects chosen for this research, the background of the subjects to determine their suitability for this research, the texts chosen to be translated by the subjects, and the training given to the subjects to make them accustomed to TAPs.

According to (Bernardini (1999), the major concerns of researchers using TAPs in translation research are translation strategies, attention units, automaticity of processing and affective factors. In her review of translation strategies, Bernardini (1999) quotes eleven 'problem indicators' of translation problems and translation strategies according to Krings (1986): (1) the subjects' explicit statement of problems; (2) the use of reference books; (3) the underlining of source-language text passages; (4) the semantic analysis of source –language text items; (5) hesitation phenomena in the search for potential equivalents; (6) competing potential

equivalents; (7) the monitoring of potential equivalents; (8) specific translation principles; (9) the modification of written target-language texts; (10) the assessment of the quality of the chosen translation; and (11) para-linguistic or non-linguistic features. Early TAP studies have been concerned with classification of translation strategies and differences between professional and non-professional strategies. Regarding translation units, she discusses ‘unmarked processing,’ which refers to unproblematic sections of the protocols in which a subject verbalizes fluently while reading or writing. Marked processing begins with a problem indicator and ends with a solution to the problem or an indication that the problem is temporarily abandoned. Those theories are used by the writer to conduct this research, in determining the data collection and data analysis.

## METHODS

Participants joining this research were students who joined the translation class of English Department of Petra Christian University. After considering the cultural backgrounds of several students, two students were chosen to be the subjects in this research based on the ethnicity and religion. One student is a Moslem and Javanese; the other one is a Buddhist and Chinese. The two students fulfilled the criteria of the subjects in this research. The first criteria was that they had taken three translation classes. Before joining the third class of translation, they had taken all structure, reading and writing classes. It was assumed that they had had enough practice in translation so that it could be assumed that their difficulties in translation were not caused by lack of practice or lack of ways of dealing with difficulties concerning language (English) or structure. Second, they were able to explain their reasons when they were asked to explain the assignments in front of the class in the previous classes of translation; this was important in choosing the subjects because if they were not good at explaining, then it would also be difficult to verbalize their thoughts while doing the translation.

Before doing the real think-aloud protocols, both students had been given a practice of translating a text with verbalization. The text used in the practice was different from the texts used in the research, but the level of difficulty was nearly the same. Before they translated the text, they were given some explanation how to do the verbalization and to record their verbalization. When each of them was doing the practice, they were also equipped with dictionaries. After they finished translating the texts and recording, the recording was checked to see whether they did it in the way they were expected, namely verbalizing what they were thinking. After the practices and the checking, the two students were asked whether they wanted to continue taking part in the research and they agreed.

The two students (henceforth referred to as translators) were asked to translate the same four texts. Two stories were taken from the same book—entitled *Who Is the Most Talkative of Them All? Stories for Language Teacher Education* (1996)—so that the language difficulty is more or less the same. One text was of familiar culture for both translators, entitled “The Farmer and the Rice Plants.” Both translators are Indonesians and therefore, farmers and rice plants are not strange for them. Another text was of unfamiliar culture for both translators, which was entitled “How Do You Shower a Bride.” Both translators were not familiar with the culture spoken in the text (bridal shower). The other two texts were familiar to one translator and not to the other. The Buddhist text was taken from a book entitled *A Still Forest Pool: The Insight Meditation of Achaan Chah*, (1985); the title of the text was “The Real Magic”. The Islamic text entitled “She Had True Faith” was taken from <http://www.batkhela.com/islam/story7.shtml>.

In doing the translation of the four texts, they were also equipped with dictionaries. The two translators determined their own schedules. Each did the translation and recording on different days, one text at a time. The verbalization was recorded in C-90 cassettes. Each translator pushed the recording button when they were ready to translate and pushed it again

when they finished translating. The C-90, not C-60, cassettes were used because one side of C-90 lasted 45 minutes; this minimized the risk of the unrecorded verbalization.

The following is an example of a transcript and how the analysis is done. The transcript below is an example taken from Translator A. The underlined parts are the ones he writes down; others are just what he says. The transcript below has been divided into six parts (indicated by number 1-6). Verbalization can be divided into might include utterances that are not related to the translation process of the text, but it is transcribed in the protocol (Part 1). Part 2 is the reading of the English text before the translation. The woman's voice might be his classmate greeting him. Part 4 is the process of translating the text with dictionary checking. The example written here is shortened because the complete one is very long. Part 5 is the utterances that are not related to the translation, except when he said that he has finished translating. The last part is reading the Indonesian translation.

- 1) {*ehmm sodok ngantuk/ tap: ndak papa/aku milih kelas 206/ b 206/ Ini aku duduk sebelaha jendela/ jadi nek bosen ngeliat ijo ijo seger/ apalagi sambil bau minyak angen/ ini aku lagi bau minyak angen/ jadi biasane nek aku nulis nek ndak pake minyak angen ya/ nek pake minyak angen ngantuke ilang/ini apa ya?/ The farmer and the rice plants/sek sek sana/ the farmer and the rice plants/ tak bacae ae sek/Mbacae sambil mba- bau minyak angin ya/}*
- 2) {*the farmer and the rice plants/there once a farmer who always wished that the rice in his field would grow more quickly/ the rice like any other crop/ takes time to grow and cannot be hurried/ the farmer lost patience with waiting/ and thought of a plan to make the rice grow more quickly/ he ran to the field and pulled every one of the rice plant /plant/ ee/just a little bit higher/he was tired out when he came home but very pleased with himself/ what of a day/ I've worked so hard he said to his family/ but at least I know that the rice plants are a little bit higher/ when his son heard that the rice plants had/ grown taller/he ran to the field to take a look/instead of finding taller/ healthy rice plants he found that}*
- 3) {*Woman: /halo/}*
- 4) {*bau... bau minyak angin enak/ iya, e/ the farmer and the rice plants. [clears throat] ee/seorang...petani dan...tanaman.. padi..nya. There was! Once a farmer who always wished that the rice in his fields would grow more quickly. Pada.. suatu.. ketika.. emm.. ini tangan kananku megang bolpen tangan kiriku megang minyak angin, jadi.. kadang kalo aku berhenti nulis.. aku bau minyak angin ini lagi. M enak baune. Pada suatu ketika/ ada seorang/ petani/ mm/ yang selalu berharap/ ee/that the rice in his fields/ agar tanaman padi/ field/ field itu apa ya?/ field itu kalo ga salah anu/ apa? lahan/ di lahannya/dapat tumbuh dengan/ lebih..cepat] ....*
- 5) {*[sighing] ya tanaman hijau menyegarkan mata/ enak kok memang duduk sebelaha jendela/ nek mata sepet /sediluk/ ke luar./ yah selesai}*
- 6) {*sek sek sek sek sek/ cek lagi/ ee seorang petani dan tanaman padinya/ pada suatu ketika ada seorang petani yang selalu berharap agar tanaman padi di lahannya dapat tumbuh dengan lebih cepat/ akan tetapi padi seperti halnya tanaman budidaya dan/ lainnya membutuhkan waktu untuk tumbuh dan tidak dapat dipercepat/ petani tersebut kehilangan kesabarannya karena menunggu/ dan ia berpikir sebuah ide untuk membuat tanaman padi tumbuh/ lebih cepat/ dan ia memikirkan sebuah ide untuk membuat tanaman padi agar dapat/ agar dapat/ ditambahi/tumbuh lebih cepat/ petani tersebut pergi ke lahannya dan menarik setiap tanaman padinya sedikit lebih tinggi/ petani ini ke lelahan ketika ia tiba di rumahnya/ tetapi puas dengan dirinya/ dia berkata pada keluarganya/ hari yang melelahkan/ aku telah bekerja dengan keras/ tetapi setidaknya aku tahu/ bahwa tanaman padi telah tumbuh sedikit lebih tinggi/ karena anak laki-lakinya mendengar/ bahwa tanaman padi telah tumbuh lebih tinggi/ dia pergi ke luar menuju lahan padi untuk melihat/ justru bukan menemukan/ padi tersebut lebih tinggi/ dia menemukan bahwa tanaman padi yang sehat telah mulai kehilangan kekuatannya layu dan mengering/ yah selesai/ emm mulet sek/ mulet/ mm...m/ wes mari}*

All the process of translation of the four texts done by the two translators were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were then analyzed to find the strategies taken by the two translators and whether the different cultures have an influence in translation.

The discussion of the findings below is organized according to the texts related to the cultures of the translators. To make it easy, the two translators are labeled as Translator A (Chinese Buddhist) and Translator B (Javanese Moslem).

### CULTURE KNOWN TO BOTH TRANSLATORS

The culture known to both translators was that there was a plant called rice that grew in a field. According to Baker, a type of food is culture-bound (1992:21); therefore, it could be assumed that a type of plant was also culture-bound. The text used for translation contained this type of plant and words related to it. The culture-bound words and the translations were as follows:

**Table 1. Culture Known to Both Translators**

words	translator A	translator B
rice	<i>padi</i>	<i>padi</i>
field	<i>lahan</i>	<i>ladang</i>
crop	<i>tanaman budidaya</i>	<i>tumbuhan</i>

There were apparently no difficulties of culture-bound words encountered by both translators. Both could directly translate *rice* into *padi*, and were not confused whether it should be *padi* or *beras*. The following is the example of the translation process of translator A in translating *rice*. A read first the English text and the example below is the one when he started writing his translation (underlined words are the translation that he wrote on his paper.)

the farmer and the rice plants [clears throat] e... seorang... petani dan tanaman... padi... nya/there was/once a farmer who always wished that the rice in his fields would grow more quickly/ pada... suatu... ketika... emm/ *ini tangan kananku megang bolpen tangan kiriku megang minyak angin/ jadi kadang kalo aku berhenti nulis/ aku bau minyak angin ini lagi/emm/enak baune/pada suatu ketika/ ada seorang... petani... emm yang selalu... berharap ee* that the rice in his fields... agar tanaman padi... field/field itu... apa ya? Field itu kalo ga salah anu... apa? Lahan/

After reading the title once again (the farmer and the rice plants), he directly wrote the translation of the Indonesian translation. After reading the first line of the story (there was once a farmer who always wished that the rice in his fields would grow more quickly), although he commented about the herbal oil that he held in his hand—this happens in TAP—he directly wrote the translation after repeating again the clause [that the rice in his fields]. Although A thought for a while about the right translation of the word *field* [*field itu... apa ya?* (field is ... what is it?) *Field itu kalo ga salah anu... apa?* (Field is if it is not mistaken er ... what?). *Lahan*] he could directly solve the problem. Therefore, it was not considered a difficulty.

Likewise, B also could directly translated *rice* as in the example below.

... the farmer and the rice plant/there was once a farmer who always wish that/the rice in his field would grow more quickly/ suatu saat/pada suatu saat/there was once/pada suatu ketika ada seorang petani yang selalu berharap bahwa... padi... di... di ladang/in his field/padi di ladangnya akan tumbuh lebih cepat

The word *padi* came directly and he did not think about it again.

Checking the dictionary is only done by A for the word *crop*. He checked the dictionary because he wanted to preserve its specific meaning. Translator B did not check the dictionary and could **directly** translate the words *field* and *crop*. The strategies taken by translator B were using the general term for *crop* and the specific term for *field*, while A used a more general term as the strategy to translate *field* into *lahan*.

However, both translators had difficulties in *wither* and *droop* that did not have anything to do with culture. The following is the example of translator A.

had all began to wither/ and droop/ yang sehat ...telah... mulai...wither itu apa? layu to... layu dan/ droop ini apa ya?Buka kamus/ini kok gatal kabeh se tanganku/ tangan kiriku gatal/ guaruk garuk terus ae ket tadi /wither/ droop eh droop seh kok wither/ droop/ abcdefghijklmno o kelewatan/opqrs/drug? jklmnoprstu/ uudoop/ 0/drop/lho?/klmnopqrs/d/op/op/droop/to sink down/hang or bent down/to lose vitality or strength/became weaken/languish/adjective/ to lose vitalityor strength/ to sink down/ hang bent down/to lose vitality or strength/ ya to lose vitalityor strength/sip emm/ berarti ketemu/ bukan layu she telah mulai layu dan coret sek. telah mulai kehilangan/kekuatannya ... dan layu/iya/wither tu/ layu ya? sek sek buka kamus lagi (open dictionary)/kamus kamus kamus/ w/ wither/ absdefghi/ ini sampe piro ya kesete ya?(how long does one side of this cassette last) Cukup? (Enough?) baru dua pertiga kok/ aduh kepalaku gatal lagi (my head itches) /aneh (strange)/ kok aku kok gatal gatal se ndak kelas ini (why does my head itch in this class? onok opo se? what's wrong with this class?)/klmn/ opqrst/ wither/ mm to dry up as/ for gravish/to lose/frigil/or freshness/layu/iya/hilang kesegaran/to wither lemah/ apa? kering/layu dan mengering/berarti/telah mulai kehilangan kekuatannya koma/ini dan ndak usah/layu dan mengering [sighing]

The two words are not that easy to translate. He opened both English-English dictionary. Like translator A, translator B also checked the dictionary. The following is the example of translator B when dealing with the two words.

semua tumbuhan... itu ... mulai wither and droop/ wither/ wither and droop/ wwwwww wither/ mana w ini/sebentar ya/ wither wither wither wither wither wither wither wither wither/to dry up/mengering/mana wither/wither gak pakai ed/to dry up/to weaken/languish/mengering/mm lemah atau mengering/bisa lemah atau/droop apa?/dra droop droop/droop/to sink down/hang or bent down/halah layu/terus/withering/down/ya layu/mulai mengering dan layu/wither and droop/mengering dan layu/OK/saatnya writing.

Both A and B needed the dictionary to translate the two words. Besides, both translators also asked themselves the meaning of the words using *apa* (what). Both the dictionary and the question word *apa* are signals of difficulty faced by both translators

Globally, the translation process is smooth in translating a text whose culture is known. Translator A translated the text without great difficulties concerning culture-bound units. He read the text first, translated every sentence and wrote it directly. After that he read it once again to check the translation as can be seen in the given example in the method above. Translator B stated explicitly in the protocol, “wah ini lebih gampang ini” (this is easier) compared to the first text he translated (*How Do You Shower a Bride*)

The results of A and B are more or less the same, except in translating *what a day*. The following is the translation of both A and B.

**Table 2. The Indonesian Translation *The Farmer and The Rice Plants***

English text	A's translation	B's translation
“What a day! I have worked so hard, “He said to his family, “but at least I know that the rice plants are a little bit higher.”	<i>Dia berkata kepada keluarganya, “Hari yang melelahkan! Aku telah bekerja keras, tetapi setidaknya aku tahu bahwa tanaman padi telah tumbuh sedikit lebih tinggi!”</i>	<i>“Hari yang menyenangkan! Aku telah bekerja keras,” ujar sang petani pada keluarganya. “Namun, paling tidak, aku tahu bahwa tumbuhan padiku sudah sedikit lebih tinggi!”</i>



All sentences were more or less translated in the same way, except “What a day!” as can be seen below in the process of Translator A; he associated it with the clause **after** it—I’ve worked very hard.

Mm *dia berkata kepada keluarganya/ tanda petik/ hari yang menye/ salah tulis/ menyenangkan/ koma/ loh tanda seru bukan koma/ aku telah bekerja dengan keras.* At least I know that rice plants are little bit high/ What a day/What a day *ini bukane maksude hari yang melelahkan/ I’ve worked very hard/ o iya/What a day ini berarti disini bukan hari yang menyenangkan tapi hari yang melelahkan/ ini menyenangkan salah/ coret/ jadi melelahkan/ hari yang melelahkan/*

On the other hand, B’s translation is different; it has the opposite meaning. In the process, first, he used the word *indah*, then replaced it with *menyenangkan*; he associated *what a day* with the clause **before** the interjection—but *very pleased with himself*. Different context used can result in different words chosen in the translation.

### CULTURE KNOWN TO ONE TRANSLATOR, BUT NOT TO THE OTHER

The culture known to Translator A is the religion of Buddhism and to Translator B is the religion of Islam. Each text used for the translation was about Islam and Buddhism. It can be seen below how culture plays a role in the translation process. In translating an Islamic text, *She Had True Faith*, the culture of the text (Islam) is known to Translator B, who is a Moslem, but not to Translator A, who is a Buddhist. The difficult culture-bound words they encountered were (1) true faith, (2) day of judgment, (3) games of chance, (4) idols, (5) intoxicants, (6) divining arrows.

B translated *faith* as *keyakinan* and did not use a specific word like *iman*. Below is how the subject thought about the word.

#### Figure 2. True faith

true faith → *keyakinan yang benar* → *kepercayaan* → *keyakinan yang benar* → *keyakinan yang teguh*

*True faith* was translated into *keyakinan yang benar* and later was changed into *keyakinan yang teguh* because of the context; this can be seen from the transcript [*judulnya di atas kayaknya salah ini...* (seen from the title, this seems wrong)]. Thus, he used a more neutral strategy. After he translated all the lines and checked them again, he decided that *teguh* was better than *benar*. Although *faith* can be considered as a culture-bound word (since it is about religion), it is a little bit general because nearly all religions talk about faith.

A more specific culture-bound word is *the day of judgment* and it can be seen below that culture influenced the translators’ decisions of which term to use.

#### Figure 3. Day of Judgment

the day of judgment → judgment day → *hari pembalasan* → *hari penilaian pengadilan* → *hari pengadilan* → *hari penentuan* → *hari pembalasan*

In the course of thinking, culture played a role when he said, “...*opo yo?* (what is it) ***Kalau di Islam itu hari pembalasan...***” (In Islam the term is *hari pembalasan*).

Another culture-bound word is “divining arrows.” This word was not attended by B (this is the strategy of translation by omission) because probably it is not from Javanese culture or Islam; it is probably from another culture, Middle East, with which the translator was not familiar of. Other words are culture-bound, but they are not deeply embedded in the culture and religion because all culture and religions have them, for example: *intoxicating drink*, *games of chance*, and *worship idols*. The word *intoxicant* was translated as *minuman racun*, while actually it should be *minuman yang memabukkan*. The word *idols* was translated as *pertanda*. The translator used a less expressive strategy.

Some other words are culture-bound, but they did not cause difficulties. B could directly translate them. If the Moslem's translation of those words are compared to those of the Buddhist, it can be clearly seen in the table below that culture plays a role in choosing the term.

**Table 3. The Non Difficult Culture-bound Words of *She Had True Faith***

culture-bound words	Moslem	Buddhist
prayer	<i>sholat</i>	<i>doa</i>
chapter	<i>surat</i>	<i>bab</i>
believers	<i>umat Islam</i>	<i>orang percaya</i>

When translating an Islamic text, the Buddhist used general words, while the Moslem used words related to Islam.

**Culture known to the Buddhist, but not to the Moslem, in translating the Buddhist text, "The Real Magic"**

The difficult words are (1) magic, (2) disciples, (3) power, (4) clairvoyance, (5) samadhi, (6) dharma, (7) suffering, (8) freedom, (9) psychic power, (10) blessing, (11) charm, (12) spell, (13) path, (14) the way Buddha passed, (15) vipassana, (16) contemplation, (17) mental object, and (18) liberation. In the following table, the differences of word choice between the two subjects can be seen.

**Table 4. Difficult words of "The Real Magic"**

culture-bound words	Moslem	Buddhist
magic	<i>kekuatan</i>	<i>sihir</i>
disciples	<i>pengikut</i>	<i>murid</i>
power	<i>kemampuan</i>	<i>kekuatan</i>
clairvoyance	<i>kemampuan untuk melihat yang tidak kasat mata</i>	<i>kemampuan untuk melihat hal-hal yang tidak dapat dilihat oleh mata</i>
samadhi	<i>semedi</i>	<i>meditasi</i>
dharma	<i>dharma</i>	<i>dharma</i>
suffering	<i>penderitaan</i>	<i>kesengsaraan</i>
freedom	<i>kebebasan</i>	<i>kebebasan</i>
psychic power	<i>kekuatan fisik</i>	<i>kekuatan tubuh</i>
blessing	<i>pemberkatan</i>	<i>pemberkatan</i>
charm	<i>mantera</i>	<i>jimat-jimat</i>
spell	<i>aji-ajian</i>	<i>mantera-mantera</i>
vipassana	<i>vipassana</i>	<i>vipassana</i>
contemplation	<i>meditasi</i>	<i>meditasi</i>
mental objects	<i>pikiran</i>	<i>objek-objek dalam pikiran</i>
liberation	<i>kebebasan</i>	<i>pembebasan</i>

In translating the text of a culture which was not familiar to him, he referred to *his great healing power* as *kekuatannya untuk pulih kembali*, but before he decided to use this translation, he referred to *untuk kekebalan sesuatu*. This was clearly from Javanese culture, where people who are good at martial arts have power to be *immune* from sharp weapons. [*Ini cerita tentang kemampuannya untuk pulih kembali*. (This story is about the ability to recover)]

Also, for the phrase of *his clairvoyance*, before he decided to translate it as *untuk melihat sesuatu yang tidak kasat mata*, he used the term *goib*. [*Of his clairvoyance..what is clairvoyance? I don't know! clair.. clairvoyance hemm. Ini (this) clair clair clair clair clair clairvoyance ah kok dak ada? (it is not here) oh ini?! that are not in sight or that cannot be seen that cannot oh.. kemampuannya untuk membaca pikiran orang... (the ability to read people's mind) kemampuannya indra mosok indra ke enam (the ability of sixth sense) kemampuannya untuk melihat sesuatu yang goib (the ability to see something goib)* This is paraphrasing by using related word strategy.

Also, with the phrase *samadhi*, Translator B used *semedi* because his culture has it and directly related it with *bertapa* (meditation and fasting) [*penetrating semedi..penetrating itu memasukkan.. dan memasukkan dan melakukan semedi melakukan semedi semedi itu opo yo (what is it)? dan bertapa dan bertapa dan melakukan- dan bertapa*]. In translating *charm* and *spell*, he used the word *aji-ajian*, which is common in Javanese culture. He used the strategy of translation by cultural substitution.

*Magic* should be translated as *keajaiban* not *sihir*, because *real magic* here refers to the teachings of the Dharma that can liberate the mind and put an end to suffering (English text, sentence 5). Thus, *real magic* should be translated *keajaiban sejati*, not *kekuatan nyata* (as B translated it) or *sihir yang sesungguhnya* (A).

Translator A referred to *Samadhi* as *meditasi* and translated *contemplation* as *meditasi keagamaan* because *meditasi* is a common practice in Buddhism. Translation B, however, referred to it as *semedi*, which is a common practice in Javanese culture. He also used *meditasi* for *contemplation*.

Culture-bound words related closely to religion were absorbed, such as *dharm*a and *vipassana* by both translators. Both translators made mistakes in translating psychic power as *kekuatan fisik* or *kekuatan tubuh* (physical power) because psychic is connected more with mind than with body.

Translator A said, “*Aku rasa bacaan yang kedua ini...lebih gampang dingerti ya, soale mungkin memang kepercayaan yang saya pegang dengan bacaan mungkin sama jadi mungkin saja lebih mudah untuk...belajar untuk memahami.*” (I think this second text is easier, because the text is the same with my belief; therefore, it is easier to comprehend). This also proves that texts containing a familiar culture are easier than those containing one that is unfamiliar.

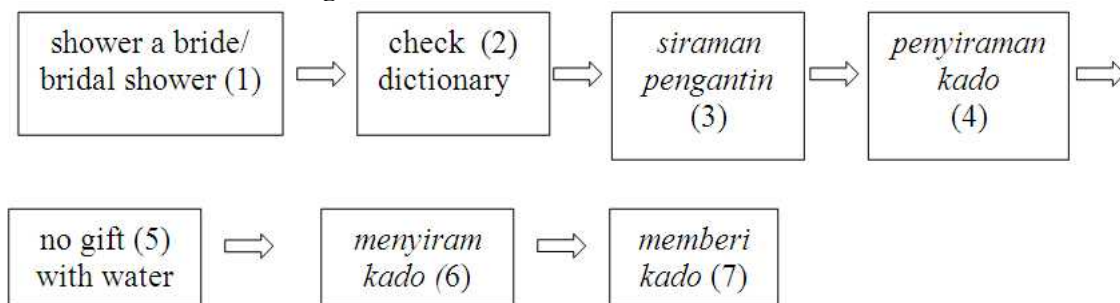
### **CULTURE UNKNOWN TO BOTH TRANSLATORS (*How Do You Shower a Bride?*)**

The text used for translation was a funny story in which the culture was unknown to both translator A and translator B. The story is about the bridal shower, which is very culture-specific because both in Chinese and Javanese custom, the party for a bride-to-be is without gifts. However, in Javanese custom, water is used, but it is not used in Chinese custom.

The difficulties related to culture encountered by the translators in translating the English text were the word *shower* and groups of words containing this particular word, for example, *shower a bride* in the title, *bridal shower* in the first sentence, *to the shower* in the second sentence, *shower the bride-to-be with gifts* in the fifth sentence, and *shower* in the last sentence. This word or group of words is difficult to translate because the word *shower* is usually associated with water, such as *to take a shower*, which is translated in Indonesian as *mandi*. In the context of the story, the word *shower* in the phrase *bridal shower* is culture-bound and has the meaning of giving gifts to the bride-to-be. It has nothing to do with the association of water. This double meaning makes the story funny because the character thought that it was a swimming pool party (the character associated the program with water because of the word *shower*, but actually it does not have anything to do with water, but with gifts). So, the translators faced two difficult tasks. One, they needed to keep the story funny; they needed to reveal the funny point bit by bit, not all at once, and certainly by not breaking the point of humor from the very beginning. Second, they needed to find a word or group of words which contain the double meaning. Although both translators checked the dictionary and knew from the dictionary that *bridal shower* means giving gifts to the bride-to-be, which resulted in the same translation, the association and considerations they took were different in the process, as it can be seen in the following discussion.

Translator B's (the Javanese) difficulties were translating the title *How Do You Shower a Bride* and later also *bridal shower* (1) as can be seen below.

Figure 4. The Javanese Moslem Translator



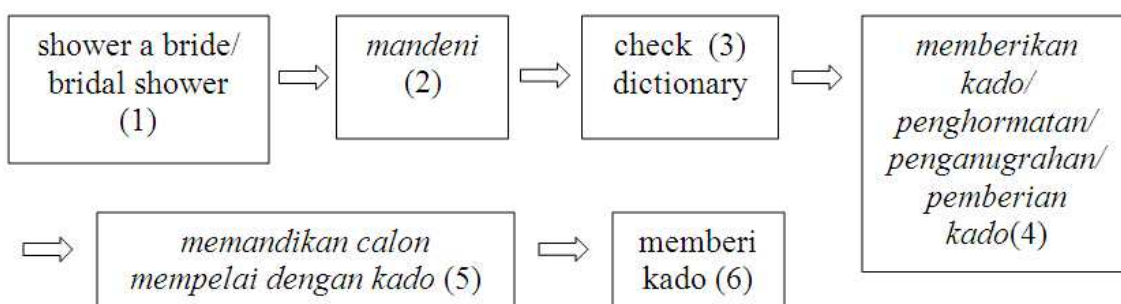
For (1) in the diagram, the TAPs say [*Opo iki a bridal shower.(What is bridal shower) Gak ngerti istilah Indonesiae ini (I don't understand the Indonesian term)... How do you shower a bride. Shower ini apa.. apa ya (what is it) shower. For (2), Liat di kamus dulu (see the dictionary first). After finding the meaning about 'shower a bride' in the dictionary, the TAPs say*

*Ooo ini nomer empat ini (ooo this one number four)/ A party of- at which a number of gifts are presented to the guest of honor... hmm, a apaan ya?(hmm what is it?) Siraman pengantèn/ perasaan pengantèn itu ndak pake hadiah (I think of the bride, gift is not used) a party at which a number of gifts, adalah...].*

At this point the Javanese translator still directly associated 'shower' with *siraman pengantin* (3); he still associates it with the Javanese tradition. In Javanese culture, brides are indeed showered with water mixed with flowers. And he said that in such kind of ritual, no gift is given (*perasaan penganten ndak pakai hadiah*)(5). Although the translation he wrote later on was *Bagaimana cara mau memberikan kado pengantin* (give a gift) (7), he had been thinking of *siraman pengantin* and also *menyiram calon pengantin dengan kado* a number of times. This was cultural substitution strategy. *Bridal shower* was translated as *Penyiraman kado*, also *acara siraman pengantin*, again, taking reference from the culture (4). Later, in the evaluation step, he was aware that the translation of the title is not suitable and thought again of *siraman* (*Shower itu istilah yang paling... harus bisa diartikan /di sini?!*) and compared the customs in Indonesia (with water) and in the US (with gifts) (*tapi kalo dikasi siraman.. orang Indonesia siraman ya karo air, siraman pengantin, bukan.. pake kado biasanya. Lek barat, kalo di Amerika pake kado.*). In the last sentence, ... whenever I hear the word, **shower**, the Javanese translator translated the sentence into *setiap kali mendengar kata siraman*, referring to the customs.

As it can be seen in the diagram below, different from the Javanese translator, the Chinese one, before consulting the dictionary took the meaning of *bathing (mandeni)* the bride (1), and after consulting the dictionary (3), he directly took the meaning of giving gifts to the bride-to-be (4).

Figure 5. The Chinese Buddhist



He just took the dictionary meaning because it does not exist in his culture. However, the Chinese translator thought of words like *penghormatan*, *penganugerahan*, *pemberian* which have the meaning of to give a gift. This is using less expressive word strategy.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, for the phrase ‘... what she had to bring to the **shower**, the Javanese translator used a generic word *acara*, but the Chinese used *acara pemberian kado* and in 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence added *pada saat acara memandikan mempelai wanita (bathing the bride-to-be)* and in the evaluation he was aware of the funniness that he had to transfer (5).

*Cuma ndak jadi joke malahan (no joke then). Jadi semacam kayak (it's like)/ apa namae..eee...apa ya (what is it called?)/ bukan joke lagi ya (no joke then)/ ya dob- ya (it's ...)/ artikel biasa kalo mau jadi joke ya harus jadi memandikan (if the joke should be there, it should be bathing)/ tapi nek memandikan pikire (but if it's bathing, people will think that...)/ ganti ya (it's better to change it)/ bagaimana anda memberikan kado kepada seorang mempelai wanita... how do you shower a bride shower bride/ ya emm/ dirubah ae (change it). Bagaimana anda memandikan seorang mempelai wanita ya gitu... ee how do you shower a bride... emm.. bagaimana! anda/ ini bingung ini aku (I'm confused)*

In the 5<sup>th</sup> sentence, ‘... she was supposed to “**shower**” the bride-to-be with gifts’ was translated by the Javanese as ‘*menyiram calon pengantin dengan kado*’ while the Chinese translator still used ‘bathing.’ The Chinese translator used ‘shower’ and did not translate it.

In comparing the translation of the Javanese and the Chinese, some important items could be noted. Right from the first sentence, the Javanese translator used the word *siraman* which had something to do with water. Therefore, the context was still useful when in the third sentence, it was said that bringing a swimming suit, the character in the story was wondering about the swimming pool. It was different from the Chinese translator’s translation. Right from the very beginning, he used ‘giving gifts,’ (which does not have anything to do with water) and so suddenly at the third sentence, the character was wondering about swimming pool (which is associated with water). Although he compensated it by adding ‘the bathing program’ in the Indonesian translation, it made the translation strange. It was even more strange when the word ‘shower’ was not translated, because the readers of the translation did not find that word in the beginning and suddenly it came up at the end. The Javanese was more consistent, translating *shower* into *siraman*, although the translation of the title using ‘giving gifts’ also makes the TT not funny.

Although the Chinese translator’s translation was not as consistent or funny as the Javanese’s translation, it did not mean—after knowing the process happening in the translator’s mind—that he did not know what to do with the difficulties he encountered. He was very well aware of it and did the steps of analyzing, transferring, restructuring and also evaluating many times. He was not only thinking about finding the right word, but also trying hard to maintain the joke. This tells us that a mistake is not produced without thinking and effort to find the right translation.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

From the process of translation of the two translators, two points can be concluded. One, it is clear that translators’ culture does play a role in their consideration in picking up the right words. Translators will derive something from their experience of his own cultures, e.g. the Javanese translator derived something from the Javanese prewedding ceremony although he had consulted the dictionary beforehand. If the culture in the ST is not like their own culture, like the Chinese, translators rely on information taken from the dictionary or any other written text. Two, culture-bound words creates some difficulties for the translators, but some words which do not become the difficulties for the translators are translated differently by the translators, which

is influenced by culture. However, text for culture known to both translators used in this research is not that difficult because the text is not too deeply embedded in the culture. Concerning the translation strategies applied by the translators, cultural substitution strategy is generally used by the translation if the culture is nearly the same. When the culture is different, translators generally use the strategy of using a more neutral word or paraphrase by related words.

What people see in the product (the translation printed on paper) might not convey all the things that happened in the process (in the translator's mind). The crucial point is what makes the translator decide to choose one word and not the other. The problem of culture is indeed difficult to cope with if the translator's culture is really different from the text, moreover, if this difficulty occurs in a humorous text.

Another important factor is time. When the translator does not have enough time to evaluate his own work, he reads his work as a translator, not as a reader. As a translator, it is difficult to see whether he can preserve the joke or not, while as a reader, he will be more sensitive to this. The ideal position to evaluate his own work is when the translator can position himself as a reader when evaluating his own work.

Suggestions for further research are as follows. Concerning the problems of the research, some problems can be added for the next research, for example, translation unit in the process of translation. Concerning the materials to be translated, texts used should be short and contain only one or two difficulties. The difficulties should be center or global understanding. because the translation process of dealing with the difficulties could be seen in a better way. If there are too many difficulties and only about local understanding, the process is not striking because the strategies taken are general and translators tend to abandon difficulties. Concerning methodology, people doing the transcript should read the English text first before transcribing so that they do not have difficulties in doing the transcription. Mentioning the time for the cassettes should be emphasized so that translators understand that it is not the time for the translation, because if it is not emphasized, translators will think that it is the limit for the translation. Combination of introspective and retrospective methods can also be used. This might bring clearer explanation of what is happening in translators' minds while translating.

#### NOTE

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