

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Translation is a significant phenomenon that has a huge effect on daily life (Hatim and Munday 2004, p. 3). Translation also serves as a vital means to establish contact between two distinct cultures (Chesterman, 2002, p. 137). As a bridge between languages and cultures, translation involves linguistic substitution and negotiates deep-seated cultural and structural disparities. One of the primary challenges in translation arises from cultural asymmetry. Cultural asymmetry between two language communities is inevitably reflected in the way their members construct discourse, which may lead to potential ambiguity or unacceptability within the target culture (Alvarez & Vidal, 1996). This asymmetry complicates the transfer of meaning, as each language operates within its own grammatical, lexical, and stylistic conventions.

Translation problems are primarily caused by differences in grammar, vocabulary, style, and pronunciation between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) (Ghazala, 2008, p. 1). When a text is translated, these differences can lead to shifts in nuance, tone, or even the overall message. In this situation, the translator is faced with the choice between maintaining the original meaning or adjusting it to the target language so that the target readers can understand it. Recognizing these overlaps can help translators find creative solutions while minimizing meaning distortion.

Beyond linguistic differences, there are also cultural gaps where the original concepts in the source language are not accessible or unfamiliar in the target language (Baker, 2018, p. 19). Because the majority of cultural words are tied to a specific language, they are easy to recognize, but typically resist literal translation (Newmark, 1988, p. 95). So, many cultural items are described in ordinary language. However, a literal translation would damage the meaning; instead, a translation may incorporate a suitable descriptive-functional equivalent (Newmark, 1988, p. 95).

This complexity is evident in Laksmi Pamuntjak's *Aruna dan Lidahnya*, which was initially published in 2014. This novel gained widespread recognition for its rich Indonesian cultural terms; translators face immense issues in transferring the local terms. On the other hand, the English translation, *The Birdwoman's Palate*, was translated by Tiffany Tsao, revised by the original author, and released in 2018. The novel allows for an exploration of how these cultural specifics are translated for a worldwide audience. Translators must maintain the equivalence true to the original text and adapt for a target audience unfamiliar with the cultural nuances, ensuring that the target audience understands the text's message.

This research offers a novel contribution by extending the scope of previous studies on *Aruna & Lidahnya* and its English translation, *The Birdwoman's Palate*. A prior study by Nastiti (2019) focused on the translation techniques for food-related vocabulary, emphasizing how culinary elements were transferred across languages and cultures. However, a significant gap remains in exploring other culturally loaded aspects within the novel, particularly those related to everyday activities.

To address this gap, the present study investigates the translation procedures applied to Indonesian local terms associated with daily activities. These aspects are deeply embedded in the cultural and narrative structure of the novel, yet have received little scholarly attention. By shifting the analytical focus beyond the culinary domain, this study aims to reveal how the translator negotiates broader cultural meanings in rendering everyday life across linguistic and cultural asymmetry.

1.2 Research Questions

There are three research problems raised in this study:

1. what category of Indonesian local cultural items are found in *Aruna dan Lidahnya*?
2. what translation procedures are used to translate Indonesian local cultural terms related to daily activities in *Aruna & Lidahnya* into English in *The Birdwoman's Palate*?
3. how does the application of translation procedures to transfer local cultural terms affect the preservation or loss of cultural nuances in English translations?

1.3 Purposes of The Study

The purposes of this research are:

1. to identify the category of Indonesian local cultural items found in *Aruna dan Lidahnya*
2. to describe the translation procedures used to translate Indonesian local cultural terms related to daily activities in *Aruna & Lidahnya* into English in *The Birdwoman's Palate*

3. to explain how the application of each translation procedure to transfer local cultural terms affects the preservation or loss of cultural nuances in English translations.

1.4 Significance of Study

This study contributes to the academic discussion of literary and cultural translation and provides insight into how translators negotiate cultural gaps, focusing on terms related to daily activities from the source language to the target language. The findings are expected to enrich discussions on the translation of culture-specific elements.

1.5 Scope of The Study

This research examines the translation procedures used to translate local cultural terms in Laksmi Pamuntjak's novel *Aruna dan Lidahnya* and its English translation, *The Birdwoman's Palate*. Although the novel contains many local terms related to food, this study will not examine terms related to food. The focus of this research is on selected items containing cultural elements that correlate with daily activities. The analysis of translation procedures is also classified based on Newmark's cultural categories.

1.6 Previous Studies

Several previous studies have examined the translation of culture-specific items, both in literary texts in general and in the specific novel of *Aruna dan Lidahnya*. These studies provide a foundation for the present research and highlight the research gap that this study aims to address.

One of the most relevant studies was conducted by Nastiti (2019) This study, which analysed the Indonesian novel of *Aruna dan Lidahnya* and its English translation. This study examined cultural items especially in the food terms that appear the most, considering the techniques used and the impact on the translation quality in terms of accuracy and acceptability. As a result, they found repetition, linguistic translation, limited universalization, absolute universalization, intertextual gloss, extratextual gloss, deletion, and naturalization as the main techniques in translating culinary terms. However, her analysis was limited to the material culture in the form of food, leaving out other cultural aspects such as social culture and habitual aspects.

Beyond this specific novel, other scholars have contributed to the study of translating cultural terms in broader contexts. (Ulfyatuzzuhriyyah & Hilman, 2022) analysed the techniques of translation of cultural words and its quality in *The Midnight Library*. The result is that material culture is the most common found in data, followed by ecology, gestures and habits, social culture, and finally organization. Borrowing was also found to be the most widely used technique, followed by established equivalents and other techniques. The conclusion was that the translated cultural items were highly accurate, acceptable, and easy to understand in the target language due to the good quality of the translation.

In the same field of cultural translation, there is research on the translation of cultural words. For instance, Purwanti and Mujiyanto (2015) analysed the ideology in the Indonesian-to-English Translation of cultural terms in Toer's *Bumi Manusia*. The data showed five categories of cultural items, idioms, and sayings. It was found

that translators were mostly applying the domestication ideology, which showed that the orientation of cultural items was toward the TL. Then, followed by the foreignization ideology, the translator attempted to introduce Javanese cultural terms to the target readers using SL-oriented approaches. The last tendency was one of partial foreignization and partial domestication, where the orientation was partially towards the source language and partially towards the target language.

Similarly, Khristianto (2016) explored the English translation of “Javanese cultural pieces in the *Ronggeng Dhukuh Paruk*” novel. The analysis of the data revealed that the text encompasses a range of diverse cultural meanings, including ecological facts, social and cultural concepts, cultural products in various forms, religion, and, finally, linguistic features of the culture. Descriptive, calque, borrowing, and borrowing with description are some of the strategies used to translate cultural meaning.

Hilman (2015) explored and identified the manner used by the translator in translating the “Indonesian cultural lexicon in the novel *Saman* into English”. His findings from the data revealed that the most effective translation of the cultural lexicon occurs through the addition method, as it does not cause a shift in meaning and helps readers understand the Indonesian cultural context. In contrast, the Functional Equivalent method is most sensitive to meaning shifts, as it tends to simplify the source terms, thereby risking errors if the translator lacks adequate cultural knowledge.

Frihatmawati (2023) explored the translation procedure in the simple sentence in the novel *Negeri Lima Menara*. According to her analysis, the simple sentence in

the SL and TL remains the same pattern, so the dominant procedure used is literal translation. The other translation procedures, such as modulation, transposition, expansion, reduction, transference, descriptive equivalent, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, and couplet were used because there are differences in grammatical structure in order to harmonize perceptions.

Alfarisi (2017) analysed the *Amba* novel and the English translation, *The Question of Red*, particularly on non-equivalences of cultural terms. The results showed that the translation strategies employed in the novel involve using a loan word, a neutral/less expressive word, and an unrelated word as the most frequently used strategies. Thus, the application of translation strategies is based by the need of preserving the cultural values contained within non-equivalent terms.

According to the research done by Royani (2011) that analysed the procedures of translation in the short story *Karena Tidak Mengakui Orang Tua*. It was found that the translation text used the semantic translation method to preserve the value of the source text. Furthermore, the translator also employed procedures such as transference, modulation, reduction, and addition. Despite using the semantic translation method, the translator still made an effort to find equivalents for the terms to ensure they were easy to understand.

(Ubaidillah, 2024) states in his research about the analysis of translation procedure from English into Indonesian Language in *Luca* movie subtitle. Among several procedures, transposition is the most widely used procedure because it changes the grammatical structure, which differs between SL and TL. The other

translation procedures used are reduction, couplet, modulation, and another procedure used in balanced numbers.

A study by (Meidy, 2024) entitled "Procedures for Translating Indonesian Cultural Terms into English in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Work, *Bumi Manusia*," this study analyzes cultural words that focus on material culture in the form of food, clothing, and transportation. In the findings of this study, there are 20 data and used the procedures of transference, functional equivalent, descriptive equivalent, synonymy, through translation, shifts, and couplets. This study also shows that the functional equivalent procedure is the most effective method for producing accurate, clear, and natural translations.

From the previous studies above, it is evident that although there is a growing interest in translating cultural elements in literary of the works, they were analysed using various translation techniques and strategies, resulting in a conclusion that translator has their own tendencies in translating, whether it more inclined towards the source language or the target language. The same research using the same object, particularly in *Aruna dan Lidahnya*, has a significant research gap. Existing studies have focused predominantly on food-related vocabulary. No study has specifically examined the translation of local terms and expressions related to daily activities, which are equally embedded with cultural meaning in the novel.

1.7 Writing Organization

This study is written in four chapters through the following organization:

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the study's background, research questions, purposes of the study, scope or limitations of the study, significance of the study, previous studies, and writing organizations.

CHAPTER II : THEORY AND METHODS

This chapter presents a theoretical framework for translation approaches, including Newmark's cultural categories and translation procedures theories. It also outlines the research methodology employed in the study, comprising the research design, data sources, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures.

CHAPTER III : RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides the results and analysis. It articulates the translation procedures applied to local terms in daily routines and explains how these affect the preservation or modification of cultural nuances in the target text.

CHAPTER IV : CONCLUSION

This final chapter summarizes the research findings from the analysis.