



Translation Strategies of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* in Bernard Arps' *Tembang in Two Traditions:* *Performances and Interpretation of Javanese Literature*

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Abstract

The article is based on research done with the descriptive-qualitative approach and is an embedded-case study meant the result could not be generalized. The primary data are Javanese cultural terms of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* and the English translation found in the book of Bernard Arps (a Dutch anthropologist) entitled *Tembang in Two Traditions: Performances and Interpretation of Javanese Literature*. *Lontar Yusup* is the only manuscript in Banyuwangi still read routinely in rituals conducted by Osing ethnic group considered as the natives of Banyuwangi. The research aims at unveiling the cultural terms used based on the category and the translation strategies applied. The technique used to collect the data is documentation and the collected data are, then, analyzed by applying content analysis technique. The research results that there are 141 cultural terms classified in 10 cultural categories: food (4), cultural materials (23), arts (2), buildings (5), socio-culture (48), religion (36), gesture (10), ecology (7), habit (7), and clothing (3). Those Javanese cultural terms are then translated into English by utilizing 8 translation strategies: synonym (62.07%), pure borrowing (16.55%), transposition (0.69%), structural addition (4.83%), descriptive equivalent (11.03%), subtraction (0.69%), componential analysis (1.38%), and cultural equivalent.

Keywords: translation strategies, Javanese cultural terms, *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi*

Introduction

Considering the *sui generis* nature of every language (Sun, 2011, p.160), then translation provides a complex problem for translators in seeking for equivalents. The challenge turns out to be in a higher level of difficulties when they have to render (deep-rooted) cultural terms. Peter Newmark in his book entitled *A Textbook of Translation* (1988 in Fernandez-Guerra, 2012) defines culture as a way of life and its unique manifestation of a community using certain language as 'expression' tool, that regarding every language group as having its features of a certain culture. Admittedly, it is not an easy task to translate cultural terms since there will always both "linguistic and cultural untranslatability" (Catford 1965 in Indarti, 2015).

The omnipresent complexity of translating cultural terms then becomes the main reason which bases the research on translation strategies applied in rewording cultural terms of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* from Javanese into English found in a book of Bernard Arps entitled *Tembang in Two Traditions: Performance and Interpretation of Javanese Literature*. A study of the ancient manuscripts is called philology. (Andriani, 2015). The book which provides an in-depth study on the reading traditions (*tembang*) of Javanese literature in Central Java (Yogyakarta) and East Java (Banyuwangi) contains some stanzas of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi*, the only one of old manuscripts in Banyuwangi still read today in rituals done by Osing community considered as the indigenous people of Banyuwangi. (Indarti, 2018).

So far, there is no research done to unveil the way Arps did the translation. Until now Arps' book is truly the only comprehensive book centered the focus on the-so-called *mocoan* as the reading tradition of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* that it is often cited by researchers doing ethnographic researches or cultural agents discussing *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi*. No one ever doubts Arps' translation quality or questioning the way he presented the English version of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* in the book. Therefore, the research which bases the article is the first focusing the attention on the translation aspect.

The fact that previous research on the translation aspects of the book cannot be found does not mean that it is not an important issue to discuss. The translation is a tool bridging difference across languages and cultures. Also, Harliani (2019) states that translation is a process of translating or copying different languages. However, "differences between cultures cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure" (Nida, 1964 in Guerra, 2005). Revealing the way, a translator helps the target readers to understand a book discussing different cultures becomes central in cross-cultural communication.

In short, the research which bases the article has the following objectives. Firstly, it identifies the Javanese cultural terms of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* found in Arps' book and classifies them. Secondly, it identifies the translation strategies applied in rendering the terms.

Method

This is an embedded case study in translation studies with descriptive qualitative approach. Javanese cultural terms of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* found in Arps' book will be the primary data collected by using documentation technique. The same way is used to identify the translation strategies applied to render the terms from Javanese into English. The collected data then are analyzed by using interactive analysis which comprises data reduction, data verification, and data presentation. In short, the analysis is conducted in the following procedure:

1. Determining data source;
2. Formulating research questions and objectives;
3. Identifying Javanese cultural terms found based on the category; and
4. Comparing cultural terms in source and target texts to identify the translation strategies applied.

Results

As it has been stated previously, Arps' book did not contain the full text of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi*. The original text consists of 12 cantos, 593 stanzas and 4.366 verses (Indiarti, 2018), but Arps only cited ten stanzas and gave the English translation.

Of those ten stanzas, there are 141 Javanese cultural terms found. Based on the concept of culture categories by Newmark (in Ahmad, 2011), it was identified that among those terms, 4 data belongs to food category, 23 data to cultural material category, 36 data to religion category, 48 data to socio-culture category, 5 data to building category, 10 data to gesture category, 7 data to ecology category, 3 data to habit category, 3 data to clothing category, and 2 data to art category.

Table 1. Number of Category-based Javanese Cultural Terms

Food	Cultural Material	Religion	Socio-Culture	Building	Gesture	Ecology	Habit	Clothing	Art
4	23	36	48	5	10	7	3	3	2

Concerning translation strategy used to render source text/ST (Javanese cultural terms) into target text (English-context cultural terms), it is found that there are single and double (couplet) strategies applied. Of 141 primary data, it can be identified that as many as 138 data are translated with a single translation

strategy and 3 data with couplet translation strategy. All in all, there are 8 translation strategies utilized individually or doubly.

Table 2. Frequency of Translation Strategy Application

No.	Translation Strategy	Variety of Strategy		Total Number
		Single	Couplet	
1.	pure borrowing	22	2	24
2.	Transposition	-	1	1
3.	synonym	90	-	90
4.	descriptive equivalent	7	-	7
5.	Subtraction	1	-	1
6.	structural addition	13	3	15
7.	componential analysis	2	-	2
8.	cultural equivalent	4	-	4

Table 2 reveals that there are eight translation strategies applied. They are pure borrowing (24), transposition (1), synonym (90), descriptive equivalent (7), subtraction (1), structural addition (15), componential analysis (2), and cultural equivalent (4).

Discussion

Javanese Cultural Terms

Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi tells about the life of Prophet Yoseph as one of the most famous Islamic Prophets since he was 12 years old when he dreamt of seeing 11 stars and moon bowed to him to his being King of Greek after translating the King's dream. The story is full of Javanese cultural terms in socio-culture category (48), religion category (38), and cultural material category (23) rather than in gesture category (10), ecology category (7), building category (5), food category (4), habit category (3), clothing category (3), and art category (2). The fact that socio-culture, religion, and cultural material categories become dominant to occur is not surprising when consider that *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* mostly retells Prophet Yoseph's life story concerning his attitude to God since childhood to adulthood just as similar with those in the Holy Quran (Katsir, 2018).

Translation Strategies

The most-frequently-used translation strategy focusing on the source culture and language is synonym (90 times or 62,07%) while the total number of translation strategies having orientation towards target culture and language are pure borrowing, transposition, synonym, descriptive equivalent, subtraction, structural addition, componential analysis, and cultural equivalent (54 times or 37,93%). In the field of translation, synonym is known as a strategy which never gives a precise translation; the choice of using this strategy usually is based on the fact that 1) s/he cannot found the same or similar cultural concept in the target language (unable to use cultural equivalent), 2) s/he is reluctant to use cultural

equivalent strategy, or 3). The use of componential analysis will bother the reading smoothness. Therefore, synonym considered as a short cut which is very useful in bridging differences across cultures (cultural untranslatability) or linguistic one while it resulted in producing a not too accurate translation. Examples of the strategy application can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Examples on the Use of Synonym Strategy

Number of Data	Term Category	Source Language	Target Language
1	Cultural Material	<i>Sesajen</i>	<i>Servings</i>
4	Religion	<i>Bagindhha Yusup</i>	<i>Lord Yusup</i>

The word *sesajen* in table 3 being translated into *servings*. The basic concept truly has been delivered through the translation, but there is additional information which does not exist. *Sesajen* is *best servings* proposed to God/gods that it is thick with spirituality tone. Then, the best equivalent for *sesajen* is not *servings*, but *offerings*. The phrase *Bagindhha Yusup* being translated into *Lord Yusup*. The term *bagindhha* is translated without using componential analysis which should render *baghinda* as *lord*. In fact, the best way is translating the term *Bagindhha* as *prophet*. This term is usually used in Javanese culture as praise or showing highest respect.

The second most dominant strategy used in the translation is pure borrowing; a strategy which borrows the original expression without any adjustment in pronunciation. The fact suggests that *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi* is colored much with deep-rooted cultural terms, e.g., traditional food, clothes, and building which make translation problem more complicated.

Conclusion

Of 141 Javanese cultural terms found in the data source, they can be classified into ten categories (food 4, buildings 5, cultural materials 23, transportation, religion 36, ecology 7, gesture 10, habits 3, clothing 3, and socio-culture 48). Those terms are translated using eight strategies: pure borrowing, transposition, synonymy, descriptive equivalents, subtraction, structural addition, componential analysis, and cultural equivalent. The most frequently used translation strategy is synonym known as a strategy that does not give the target readers the precise translation but produces a readable (easy-to-digest) translation. The strategy bases the fact that Arps' book is for international readers.

The analysis result of the translation strategies used by Arps in rewording Javanese cultural terms of *Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi from Javanese into English* can be a useful reference for the other researchers to conduct further researches on the translation qualities.

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