

# Translation Ideologies of The Culture Specific Items in Indonesian Translation “Of Mice and Men” Novel

Martinda Intan Permatahati\*, Abdurrachman Faridi, Mursid Saleh

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Master Program of English Language Education, Indonesia,  
\*Corresponding Author: [martindaintanp@students.unnes.ac.id](mailto:martindaintanp@students.unnes.ac.id)

**Abstract.** Translating a novel is an activity that requires making a great number of decisions and consequently carries many risks of making mistakes. All decisions made by translators in the translation process depend on the translator's ideology. The focus of this research is the ideology of the Indonesian translation of the novel "Of Mice and Men". Since the novel carries a lot of American Culture, the researcher wants to analyze the ideology used by the translator. The most difficult problem is how to find some unfamiliar words or sentences in the target text (TT). A translator must be able to find several possibilities covering the diversity of translation strategies that can solve CSI translation problems. In the translation study, the translation of Culture-Specific Items (CSI) becomes an obstacle for translators. This study aims to describe the types of CSI, CSI translation techniques, and the translator's ideological tendencies. This research is descriptive qualitative. Data was obtained using content analysis. The data is in the form of words and phrases. Data collection was done manually from the novel *Of Mice and Men* and an Indonesian translation entitled “Tikus dan Manusia”. Experts' judgment will provide comments to maintain the validity of the data. The data are categorized based on several theories. The first is the CSI theory proposed by Newmark (1998), the translation strategy proposed by Davies (2003), and Venuti (1995) about translation ideology.

**Key words:** culture-specific items; translation techniques; translation ideology.

**How to Cite:** Permatahati, M. I., Faridi, A., Saleh, M. (2021). Translation Ideologies of The Culture Specific Items in Indonesian Translation “Of Mice and Men” Novel. *ISET: International Conference on Science, Education and Technology*, 7(1), 329-333.

## INTRODUCTION

According to the American theorist Lawrence Venuti, translation is "a process by which the chain of signifiers that constitutes the source-language text is replaced by a chain of signifiers in the target language which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation" (Venuti 1995: 17). The act of translation is making the audiences of target language (TL) understand the meaning of the source language (SL). Cultural gaps between SL and TL have always turned to be a problem that is difficult to solve. Therefore, some translator adopts some translations, either planned or unintended, some translation techniques which tend to be either foreignization or domestication. Translating a novel is an activity that requires making a great number of decisions and consequently carries many risks of making mistakes. In this case, all decisions made by the translator in the process of translation depend on the ideology of the translator. Ideology in translation proposed by Venuti is called as the two opposite poles namely foreignization and domestication. Both, in fact, are not always to be the good choice for the translator since they have their advantages and disadvantages. The latter produces a fluent, natural, and transparent translation by minimizing

the foreignness of the source text. However, the originality of the cultural and stylistic messages of the source text are often changed or omitted due to the adjustment of the target culture and language to get the naturalness and smoothness of the target text. The former results in a non-fluent, unnatural, and clumsy translation due to the linguistic features and cultural aspects of the source text are retained in the target text. However, the existence of the foreign culture may be regarded as the extra knowledge for the target readers.

Either domestication or foreignization determines what techniques used by the translator as the realization of the translation strategy in the translation process. It is very important for translator to decide carefully what ideology preferred since there are some important factors should be considered by the translator. This research attempts to analyze the choice of the translator towards the translation ideologies in translating the culture-specific items found in the English novel *Of Mice and Men* into its Indonesian version *Tikus dan Manusia*. In a fiction novel, the CSI from cultures may confront, and then a certain misunderstanding of the meaning can occur due to the difference in cultures. This phenomenon emerges a clash between cultures because a reader with his or her

own cultural identity reads the book from a different perspective. It is important for the translators must consider not only the two languages but also the two cultures, since there are some concepts in the SL, which do not have lexical equivalents in the TL. Finding the best equivalents for the culture-specific items in the translation becomes one of the main concerns for the translators.

In this research, the researcher chooses a fiction novel *Of Mice and Men*. This novel *Of Mice and Men* is published in 1937. It is written by John Steinbeck. This novel is the highest recommendation and the most popular novel for the American people, and for the people of different ages in general. In this novel, he wrote with his American style. His writing is relating to the American culture. The language in “*Of Mice and Men*” is childlike in nature and shows education level of citizens during the great depression. There are lots of non-standard English found in the novel. This is the reason why the researcher is interested on doing a research related to translation technique used in translating *Of Mice and Men* and analyzing the ideologies strategy that the translator used in translating the novel.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Newmark stated that culture is "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" (Newmark 1998: 94). Culture such a history for each country and language as their identity. There is no culture without language, and there is no language without culture. The most impactful part of culture is language. Every language owns specific words and phrases for special kinds of culture-specific concepts or called as “culture-specific items”. Newmark (1988:94–103)., states different ideas, he classifies the culture-specific items into five types. They are ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations, gestures and habits.

The ideas of domestication and foreignization proposed by Venuti (1995: 20) mainly discussed English as SL and Anglo-American as TL, it is still useful to develop an understanding to investigate culture-specific collocations within these frameworks. Venuti (1995) stated that domestication is defined as “—an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target language cultural values, bringing the author back home”. It is the target text-oriented and tends to close to

the target language as well as facilitates the readers to read easily. Venuti (1995: 20) defines foreignization as an ethno deviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad. It is a source language-oriented and tends to close to SL by preserving source language pattern or culture in order to make foreign text to the target reader. Researcher finds the translation ideology by identifying the translation technique used by the translator. The aim of this study is to find out the translation technique applied by the translator in translating the culture specific items in *Of Mice and Men* which is translated into *Tikus dan Manusia* using Davies’ theory. Davies’s techniques (2003) in translating techniques on cultural items divide into seven items, they are preservation, addition, omission, globalization, localization, transformation, and creation. In foreignization ideology shared two translation techniques, namely preservation and addition techniques while domestication ideology shares five translation techniques, namely omission, globalization, localization, transformation, and creation.

## METHOD

### Research Goal

This study was designed as qualitative research. The researcher described the data and analyzed it based on the existing theory. The purpose of the study was categorizing the culture – specific items found in *Of Mice and Men* novel into CSI classes by Peter Newmark. First, the researcher read *Of Mice and Men* and *Tikus dan Manusia*. After that, the researcher found the culture specific items in both novels based on Peter Newmark categorization. Then, the researcher analyzes the translation technique of the data and found the ideological tendency that the translator used in translating the novel into Indonesian Language in *Tikus dan Manusia* novel. The researcher used expert judgement to keep the validity of the data. The expert is Dr. Hendi Pratama, M.A. He is one of the lecturers in UNNES. The findings of this research will be given to experts to be assessed and commented to get the data validity. Another expert is Bety Mawarni, S.S. MtransInterp. She is graduated from RMIT University Australia as a Master of Translating and Interpreting. She is an expert in translation and also interpreting.

### Sample and Data Collection

In order to get the data, the researcher used the

English novel and the translated novel of *Of Mice and Men* to collect the data for four objectives in this research. The researcher identified every word, phrase, and sentence in both English and Indonesian novel. After reading the novels, the researcher marked the culture specific – items based on Peter Newmark’s culture specific-items categorization and fill them into the data sheet. After classifying the CSI, the researcher also

classified the translation techniques that were used in translating the novel. The researcher used Davies’s translation techniques categorization as standard criteria in classifying the culture – specific items. The next stage was tabulating the CSI and translation technique that had been categorized. By knowing the translation techniques of the CSI, the researcher identified the ideologies tendency of the translated novel.

Sample Table of Data Collection

No	English Novel	Translation Novel	CSI item		Translation Technique	Revision of comment	Comments
			Category	Item in Category			
1	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Tikus dan Manusia	Ecology	Animals	localization low degree	preservation	The strategy used here is literal translation or in case of Davies's strategy, the closest one is preservation of content as there is no problem with cultural reference and the equivalent word is readily available, thus localization is unnecessary.

### Analyzing of Data

There were some stages that should be done by the researcher in analyzing the data, those were: identifies the data, classifies the data, tabulates the data, interprets the data, and last makes conclusion from the data that has been interpreted. After collecting the data, the researcher organized it. The data encompassed the culture-specific items categorization, translation technique categorization and the ideology tendency sheet. Then, the researcher classified the data into some parts. Those were: the data from culture-specific items, the data from translation technique, and the data from ideological tendency. After identifying and classifying the data, the researcher tabulated the data in the form of table. The next stage was interpreting the data. The data was interpreted based on the previous data that had been tabulated. In this stage, the researcher described what translation technique were used in translating the culture-specific items in *Of Mice and Men* and *Tikus dan Manusia*. The researcher not only described about what the translation techniques were applied, but also described the ideological tendency of the translation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Culture Specific Items in *Of Mice and Men*

The researcher presented the culture specific

items in *Of Mice and Men*. After identifying and analysing the data, the researcher found 423 Culture specific items in *Of Mice and men*. Those culture specific – items were divided into 5 categories based on Newmark’s categorization. Those are: ecology, material culture, social culture, organization, gesture and habits. Based on the research results, the highest frequency was from material culture with 178 out of 423 (42.1%). In comparison, the lowest frequency was from gestures and habits with 29 out of 423 (6.9%).

Based on the research there were 124 (29.3%) out of 423 CSIs found from *Of Mice and Men* categorized as ecology. The next category used in this study was material culture. Based on the research results, there were 178 (42.1%) culture-specific items categorized as material culture. The third culture-specific items category used in this study was the social culture category. Based on the research results, there were 56 (13.2%) out of 423 culture-specific items listed as social culture. The fourth category in Newmark’s culture specific items categorization was the organization. There were 36 (8.5%) out of 423 CSIs categorized as organization in the novel. The last category was gestures and habits. Newmark points out that gestures and habits are often described in non-cultural language (Newmark, 1988). There were 29 (6,9%) out of 423 culture specific items found in *Of Mice and Men*.

### The Techniques and Ideologies in Translating the Culture – Specific Items

In foreignization ideology shared two translation strategies, namely preservation and addition techniques. There were 70 or (15.98%) of CSI which was used foreignization ideology. Preservation technique was quite like the process of lexical borrowing. It was divided into two types, namely preservation of form and preservation of content. There were 45 (10.30%) culture specific items translated using preservation strategy. Example and elaborations of the strategies as well as its sub-categories were elaborated below.

ST : A FEW MILES south of Soledad,  
TT : Beberapa kilometer arah selatan dari Soledad

In *Tikus dan Manusia* novel, the translator used preservation of form to translate the word, Soledad. Of mice and men novel was mostly takes place in Soledad, California. In 1930s, the ranches in Soledad were major destination for agriculture workers turned homeless by economic and ecological turmoil across the United States. Steinbeck as the writer of the novel, he lived near Soledad, and he knew about the hardship faced by migrant worker.

Addition strategy was divided into two types, namely addition inside the text and addition outside the text. There were 25 (5.72%) CSIs translated using addition. Mixed strategy was a strategy that combines two different strategies. In the research findings, the researcher found 2 CSIs were translated using preservation and addition. Mixed strategy was a strategy that combines two different strategies. In the research findings, the researcher found 2 CSIs were translated using preservation and addition. For example, datum number 191;

ST : George cut the cards again and put out a solitaire lay,  
TT : George membagikan tumpukan kartu lagi dan menatanya dalam urutan permainan soliter

The term solitaire lay was translated using preservation and addition strategy. The translator translated into urutan permainan soliter. The translator chose this technique to give more assistance for the readers in understanding CSI of source culture. He preserved the term solitaire and gave addition that solitaire was a kind of

cards game.

Domestication ideology shared five translation techniques, namely omission, globalization, localization, transformation, and creation. The translator used those 5 strategies to translate CSIs in the novel. The domestication ideology was the most widely used by the translator. There were 368 CSI item or (84.02%) using this ideology. They were, 33 or (7.55%) CSIs translated using globalization, 308 or 70.48% CSIs translated using localization, 1 or (0.23%) CSIs translated using omission, 15 or (3.42%) CSIs translated using transformation. 11 or (2.51%) CSIs translated by the translator using creation strategy. The elaborations of some examples were as follow;

Datum number 12;

ST : sycamores  
TT : *pohon ara*

The sycamores were kind of *Pohon ara* in Indonesia. In the bible, sycamore tree translated into *sukamore*. For Indonesian people, this word was unfamiliar in the target language and culture. In KBI (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*), *pohon ara* means ficus type trees that have a lot of sap, while in Cambridge dictionary online 4<sup>th</sup> edition a tree with leaves divided into five parts and seeds that turn around slowly to the ground when they fall. Based on Wikipedia, *Pohon ara* and sycamores almost the same species. The translator used localization to make it easier for readers to understand according to their cultural reference.

### CONCLUSION

Translator is always faced by cultural problems. Consequently, beside having the language competent, the translator should have knowledge of the source text culture. The choices of using foreignization and domestication ideology are based on many reasons. Translation strategy used reflects the social and cultural trend in the society. From the data we can say that English speaking readers are still not welcome to many culture-specific items from other culture. That is why, domestication prevails. Domestication is preferred as it helps target text readers to understand the text easily. Usually the culture-specific items which are replaced are not the focus of the story. However, there is a tendency for the target text reader, the English speakers, to welcome unfamiliar culture-specific items as globalization leads people to interact one

another. In the novel, foreignization is applied to culture-specific words which are crucial and be the central attention. Foreignization applied in the target text will make it possible for target text readers to feel the traditional or local nuances of the source text culture.

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