

Translation Analysis of Cultural Terms in Film Series “Gadis Kretek”

Indriyani Eka Wahyuni Arifianto¹, Rahmanti Asmarani²

¹Dian Nuswantoro University

¹311202202449@mhs.dinus.ac.id

²Dian Nuswantoro University

²rahmanti.asmarani@dsn.dinus.ac.id

KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
cigarettes, cultural categories, Kretek, translation procedures	The relationship between language, culture, and translation is very close, forming a complex system of mutual influence. Translation, on the other hand, serves as a bridge to introduce culture and language to different audiences. Novels are now frequently adapted into films to introduce various cultures to various audiences. This study is aimed at finding an understanding of the procedures used in translating cultural words. The data of this research was taken from the series ‘ <i>Gadis Kretek</i> ’ released on Netflix in 2023. The film represents Indonesian culture, specifically about <i>the kretek</i> (clove cigarette) industry in Central Java. This research examines cultural terms within the series subtitles and the translation procedures by Peter Newmark’s theory. The result shows that there are four categories found in the film, and the translation procedure which is mostly applied are functional equivalents. This series mostly uses functional equivalents in order to ensure clarity and reliability for culturally specific items or concepts and also to maintain authenticity and specificity of flora and names of cultural items from the original language.

INTRODUCTION

There are several movies in Indonesia using Javanese culture as background and language. The Javanese culture captivated the interest of movie enthusiasts to learn more about cultural terms in Javanese even though they are foreigners. Language is the main tool for expressing culture, while culture shapes the worldview and mindset manifested in language. The words used in a language carry cultural terms that provide the context for language. So that translation exists to facilitate communication, ensuring that the meaning in the source text aligns with the meaning in the target text.

Since technology has improved, translating has been made easier by using machine translation from the internet. However, machine translation is not reliable because it produces inaccurate translations. Machine translation is often used by translators without looking at the context of the word. This is very risky for the field of translation. Therefore, translation must be accompanied by the exact theory such as translation procedure. In this series, widely used Javanese words. While Javanese and English are languages from the Eastern and the Western, so there are many differences in their structures of grammar, vocabulary, and culture. This greatly affects the quality of translation between languages.

In this series ‘The Cigarette Girl’, Javanese cultural words are used to describe values such as material culture, social culture, name of activities, gestures and habits, and organization. The component affected in this case is the cultural words used by the characters, such as “*mbak yu*” (big sis). The use of this term is influenced by the social culture of the character.

METHOD

The method used is quantitative and qualitative analysis. According to Madekhan (2018), qualitative is research that produces data that cannot be achieved using statistical procedures or quantitative methods. This research began with watching the series “*Gadis Kretek*” and then collecting data from the first episode. The selection of this series was mainly based on the availability of the English subtitles to the author of the study reported here. *Gadis Kretek* is available to watch on Netflix. It can be considered one of the series that highlights Javanese culture to a wider audience, although it may not be the first. This series brings out strong elements of Javanese culture through its storyline, characters, and background, which are closely related to the traditions and history of the kretek industry in Indonesia. The sample was watched in a parallel manner (each subtitle alongside the first episode) in order to collect the utterances that included cultural words. The data was also analyzed with quantitative analysis where the cultural categories and procedures of cultural words from Indonesia into English in this series are presented.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the findings of the quantitative and qualitative analysis. Table 1 shows frequencies and percentages of the cultural categories used in subtitles of cultural words to determine the categories that were used most frequently.

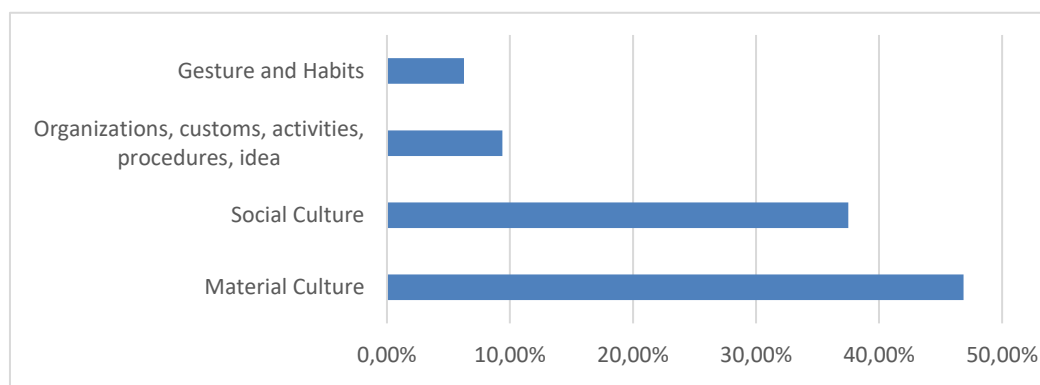


Figure 1. Chart of cultural words found in “Gadis Kretek” movie

There are four categories of Newmark cultural categorization: material culture, social culture, gesture and habits, organizations, customs, activities, procedures, ideas. The total percentage is 100% of 32 cultural words. The most categories found is material culture with total number of frequency 15 (46,88%), the social culture with total frequency 12 (37,5%), and organizations, customs, activities, procedures, ideas with total frequency 3 (9,38%), and the last gesture and habits with total number of frequency 2 (6,25%). The series is set in the museum *kretek* and in Magelang city, so the result shows that the most cultural category found is material culture. The next table is the list of translation procedures which are applied in the cultural words found in the series “Gadis Kretek”.

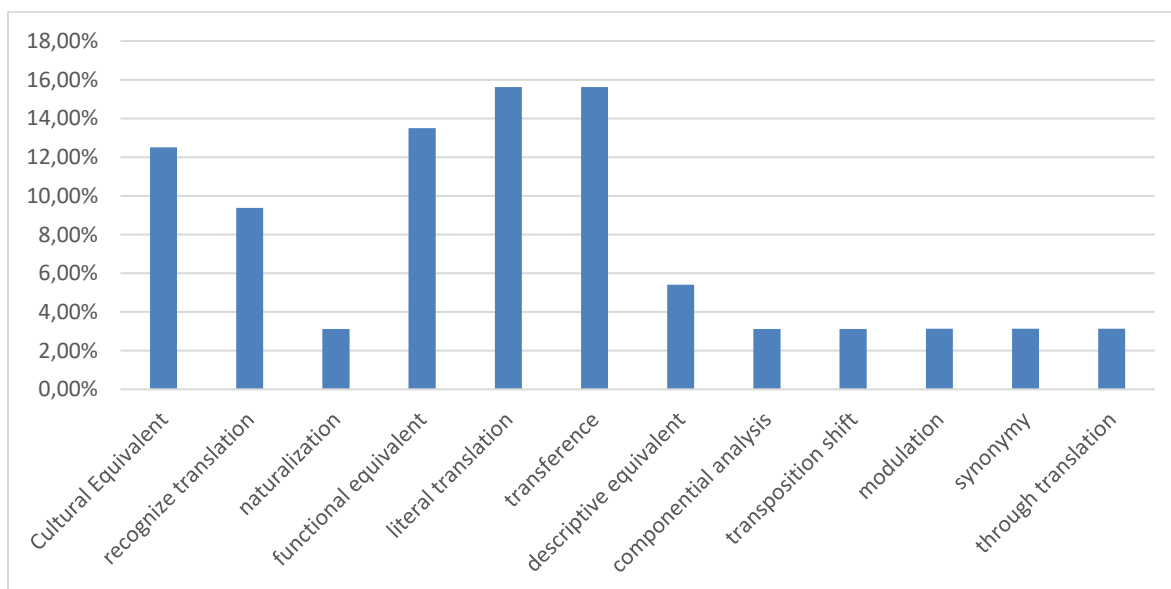


Figure 2. Chart of Translation Procedures applied in the cultural words

There are twelve translation procedures applied in the cultural words from the data: cultural equivalent, recognize translation, naturalization, functional equivalent, cultural equivalent, literal equivalent, transference, descriptive equivalent, componential analysis, transposition shift, modulation, synonymy, and through-translation. The most translation procedure applied is functional equivalent with (13,5%), beside that the least translation procedures applied are componential analysis with (3,13%), transposition shift with (3,13%), modulation with (3,13%), naturalization with (3,13%), synonymy with (3,13%), and through-translation with (3,13%). The other translation procedures are literal translation 5 (15,63%), cultural equivalent 4 (12,5%), recognize translation 3 (9,38%), transference 5 (15,63%), and descriptive equivalent 2 (5,405%). Functional equivalent as the most translation procedure applied in the series “Gadis Kretek” has a purpose to ensure clarity and relatability for culturally specific items or concepts and also to maintain authenticity and specificity of flora and names of cultural items from the original language.

DISCUSSION

This section provides a qualitative analysis of how cultural terms in the source language are translated into English using specific translation procedures. Through this analysis, Javanese cultural terms are briefly explained. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the translation procedures applied to cultural terms in the film series *Gadis Kretek*. The data result indicates that the functional equivalent and literal translation procedures are the most frequently used in the first episode, here is the explanation of the translation procedure used in the excerpt.

1. Functional Equivalent

The most frequently used was the functional equivalent. The translators try to make the audience understand phrases or words in this series and make the translation more natural with the daily customs of the audience. According to (Newmark, 1988b:83) this procedure applied to cultural words of the SL required when the TL required a cultural free word or a new specific term in TL. So it neutralizes or generalizes the SL word. When a culturally equivalent term in TL is not possible to find a cultural word of SL, this procedure is the most accurate way of translating.

1. Excerpt 1

Duration	SL	TL	Category
52:28	Enggak apa-apa, <u>Rama</u> . Tenanglah.	It’s okay, <u>Dad</u> . I got you. Calm Down	Social Culture

The Functional Equivalent procedure has been applied in this utterance. The purpose is to make phrases or words in the utterances easier for the audience to understand, ensuring the translation feels more natural and aligns with the cultural terms of the audience. In this scene, Lebas is accompanying his father, who is lying weakly on the bed because of lung cancer. In this scene Raja is mumbling in his sleep about Jeng Yah and suddenly wakes up in a panic, dreaming about chasing after Jeng Yah. Lebas quickly supports his “rama” (a cultural term meaning “father” in Javanese) and calms him down. This term falls under the category of cultural words, specifically “social culture,” as it refers to the way children address their fathers.

2. Excerpt 2

Duration	SL	TL	Category
31:11	Kamu tau kan ini adalah cara paling bagus untuk bikin <u>tingwe</u>	That’s because it’s the best way to <u>roll homemade</u> <u>cigarettes</u> .	Social Culture

The functional equivalent procedure is applied in this context to help the target audience understand the cultural term by providing an equivalent expression aligned with their cultural framework. In this scene, Purwanti and Dasiyah are engaged in the activity of *tingwe*, a Javanese abbreviation of *linting dewe*, which means rolling or wrapping a cigarette by hand. According to Kompas, *tingwe* refers to a traditional activity in Javanese communities where individuals manually roll their own cigarettes, often using clove leaves and tobacco. The term originates from the Javanese phrase *nglinting dewe*, meaning “rolling by oneself.” Gradually, *tingwe* has evolved into a cultural tradition, even gaining popularity among the elite. This demonstrates how the functional equivalent translation bridges the cultural gap by providing a clear yet culturally meaningful term in the target language.

2. Literal Translation

The literal translation was one of the most frequently used in the first episode of this series. The translator has a goal to maintain the linguistic and structural equivalent between the SL and TL. According to (Newmark, 1988b:76) the SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context. It is also to help the audience understand the direct correspondences between the source and target languages.

3. Excerpt 3

Duration	SL	TL	Category
52:01	<u>Kota M</u> , 1964	<u>M City</u> , 1964	Material Culture

Literal translation involves a direct, word-for-word transfer from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). In this case, the Indonesian cultural term “Kota M” is translated into English as “M City”, maintaining the exact meaning. The word “kota” is directly translated as “city”, as both share the same meaning. The letter “M” remains unchanged because it is an abbreviation. According to *Berita Jateng*, the letter “M” stands for *Muntilan*, a small town in Magelang Regency, Central Java. Such abbreviations are considered universal and are retained to ensure clarity and preserve the original identity of the term. This

demonstrates that “Kota M” refers to a place classified as material culture, as it corresponds to a specific real-world location.

4. Excerpt 4

Duration	SL	TL	Category
35:16	Sebelum <u>anak wedok</u> sampean lahir saya kan sudah jual beli mbako to	We’ve been business partners in the tobacco industry before your <u>daughter</u> was even born	Social Culture

Literal translation directly conveys the meaning of the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) while maintaining grammatical structure and lexical equivalence. In this case, the phrase “*anak wedok*” is directly translated as “*daughter*.” Here, the word “*anak*” has a direct meaning in the TL commonly used in everyday language, which is “*child*.” Meanwhile, “*wedok*” (Javanese for “female”) corresponds to “*daughter*” in English when used in this context.

In the scene, Pak Idris discusses a mixed tobacco shipment with Dasiyah and her father, expressing dissatisfaction with the accusation. His speech conveys implicit meanings, hinting at his seniority and experience in the tobacco trade. This context highlights the cultural significance of the phrase “*anak wedok*,” which reflects social culture, particularly familial relationships and gender roles. The use of literal translation preserves the term’s cultural meaning while keeping it clear for the target audience.

3. Transference

Transference is also used in this translation. The use of transference refers to the adoption of a term from SL into TL without modification, or with only minimal adaptation. Newmark describes that transference is used for “the names of all living (except the Pope and Fee royals) and dead people, geographical and topographical names, etc. as seen in the following example

5. Excerpt 5

Duration	SL	TL	Category
49:32	Pak Djagad akan nada peluncuran <u>Kretek Proklamasi</u> pak pakai bungkus baru	Sir Djagad will launch <u>Kretek Proklamasi</u> , with new packaging.	Material Culture
49:07	Yang Namanya Kretek Proklamasi gak bisa ngalahin Kretek Merdeka	Kretek Proklamasi will never beat <u>Kretek Merdeka</u>	Material Culture

In the data provided, the terms “Kretek Proklamasi” and “Kretek Merdeka” serve as examples of transference, a translation method where the original term is retained due to the absence of a direct equivalent in the target language. Specifically, “Kretek” refers to clove cigarettes, a product deeply rooted in Indonesian culture, which lacks an exact cultural counterpart in other languages. In one scene, Purwanti and her father discuss the launch of “Kretek Proklamasi” with its new packaging, further emphasizing its cultural significance. This highlights that both “Kretek Proklamasi” and “Kretek Merdeka” fall under the category of material culture and are translated using transference to preserve their original meaning and cultural context.

4. Cultural Equivalent

This procedure as introduced by Newmark is the process of replacing a cultural word in the SL with a TL one however, "they are not accurate" (Newmark, 1988b:83). The uses of cultural equivalents are limited since they are not accurate, but this procedure can be used in general texts. This procedure can have a greater pragmatic impact than culturally neutral words.

6. Excerpt 6

Duration	SL	TL	Category
51:34	Saya ingin menjadi <u>peracik saus</u> , inti sari dari sebuah kretek	I aspired to be a <u>flavor creator</u> . The essence of a kretek cigarette	Social culture

The cultural equivalent procedure has been applied in this utterance. The aim is to replace a cultural term from the Source Language (SL) with a similar cultural term or concept in the target language. This approach focuses on providing a translation that resonates with the target audience by using a familiar context from their culture, even if it is not identical to the original. In the utterance above, the term “*peracik saus*” in the SL was translated as “*flavor creator*.” This refers to the person responsible for blending ingredients to create clove cigarettes, particularly in the process of making clove flavoring. The “*peracik*” plays an important role in creating the unique taste of the desired kretek. This term falls under the category of “social culture” and utilizes the cultural equivalent translation procedure.

7. Excerpt 7

Duration	SL	TL	Category
49:52	namanya pasar yo rame <u>nduk</u> , yang sepi itu kuburan	the market is always crowded with people, <u>dear</u>	Social Culture

The Recognize Translation procedure has been applied in this utterance. The goal is to make the phrase or word in the utterance more widely accepted and to assure the audience that the translation is accurate and meets standards. In this scene, Lebas is reading a handwritten note from Jeng Yah. In the note, Jeng Yah mentions that she has four things that are always etched in her memory. One of these is the texture of clove (clove is a common ingredient used in cigarette filling) in her grip. This falls under the category of "material culture" vocabulary, referring to the name of a component in cigarettes.

5. Descriptive Equivalent

8. Excerpt 8

Duration	SL	TL	Category
51:26	Tapi di dunia kretek Perempuan hanya boleh menjadi <u>pelinting</u> saja	But in the realm of Kretek Cigarettes, women are only permitted to work as <u>hand-rollers</u>	Activities

Descriptive equivalent is used in this utterance to address cultural gaps and maintain accuracy of meaning. This is usually the case when there is no cultural equivalent in the target language, to avoid ambiguity. In the utterance above, the term “*pelinting*” in the source language (SL) is clarified with the term “*hand-rollers*.” *Pelinting* refers to a person who manually rolls tobacco or clove cigarettes (usually using leaves or tobacco).

The word "linting" comes from the meaning of folding or rolling something in a special way. This falls under the category of "activities" in cultural vocabulary, referring to the term for workers who engage in the rolling process.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study found that the translator predominantly used the functional equivalent procedure to translate cultural words in the series *Gadis Kretek*, released in 2023 on Netflix. The analysis, based on data collected from episode 1, revealed that material culture was the most frequently identified category, accounting for 15 occurrences (46.88%) out of a total of 32 cultural categories. For instance, the term "*peracik saus*," categorized as material culture, was translated as "flavor creator" using the cultural equivalent procedure, demonstrating the translator's effort to maintain cultural relevance. Among the translation procedures, functional equivalent was the most commonly used, appearing 6 times (13.5%) in the dataset. This study, however, has some limitations, as it only examines cultural categories and the translation procedures used, leaving other aspects of the series unexplored. Future research could expand on these findings by analyzing additional episodes or investigating other dimensions of the series.

REFERENCES

- Hong, W. (2024). Cultural transitions in literary translation: Challenges and innovations. *Academic Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.25236/AJHSS.2024.070528>
- Anindito, M. F., & Asmarani, R. (n.d.). The translation techniques of cultural words in the movie *The Lion King*. In *Undergraduate Conference on Language, Literature, and Culture*.
- Pham, T. A., Nguyen, L. T. D., & Pham, V. T. T. (2022). English language students' perspectives on the difficulties in translation courses: Implications for language education. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 18(1), 180–189. <https://doi.org/10.52462/jlls.174>
- W., O. V. V., & Asmarani, R. (2016). The translation procedures of cultural expressions applied in *A Game of Thrones*. *LITE*, 12(2), September.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. Prentice Hall International.
- Madekhan. (2018). Posisi dan fungsi teori dalam penelitian kualitatif. *Reforma: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 7(2), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1234/rjpp.v7i2.1234>
- Virtianti, R., Yuliasari, R., & Prihatna Sari, F. (2024). Translation procedure of cultural words of the first episode of *Gadis Kretek* series. *Jurnal Pujangga*, 10(1), 43. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jp.v10i1.1234>
- Al-Yasin, N. (2022). Translation procedures of cultural-bound expressions in the Egyptian vernacular dubbed versions of three Disney animated movies. *Culture*, 2022, Article 0162. <https://doi.org/10.1515/culture-2022-0162>
- Arlinta, D. (2024, February 1). Konsumsi kian meningkat, rokok "Tingwe" juga perlu dikendalikan: Regulasi pengendalian produk tembakau perlu diperketat, termasuk pada tembakau iris atau "tingwe". <https://www.kompas.id/baca/humaniora/2024/02/01/konsumsi-kian-meningkat-rokok-tingwe-juga-perlu-dikendalikan>