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Translating Javanese *unggah-ungguh* into Japanese *keigo*: A Sociopragmatic study of address terms in *Bumi Manusia* and *Arashi no Naka no Manyaru*

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Abstract

This study investigated how Javanese *unggah-ungguh* address terms were translated into the Japanese *keigo* system and examined the sociopragmatic mechanisms underlying pragmatic transfer in literary translation. A qualitative descriptive design within a sociopragmatic framework was employed to analyze 70 address-term occurrences, purposively selected from the bilingual corpus of *Bumi Manusia* and its Japanese translation, *Arashi no Naka no Manyaru*. The data were analyzed by identifying translation strategies and interpreting the sociopragmatic shifts they generated in terms of politeness, social hierarchy, interpersonal relationships, and cultural identity. The findings revealed four principal translation strategies, namely Retention, Cultural Substitution, Functional Equivalence, and Generalization. Retention emerged as the dominant strategy, accounting for 64.3% of the data, indicating that the translator predominantly preserved culturally specific address forms while allowing their hierarchical meanings to be interpreted contextually within the Japanese honorific system. Cultural Substitution and Functional Equivalence reconstructed interpersonal relationships and institutional roles using culturally appropriate Japanese expressions, whereas Generalization was employed only for highly culture-specific aristocratic titles that lacked suitable equivalents. The study proposed an integrated sociopragmatic mechanism of pragmatic transfer that explained how different translation strategies systematically reconstructed social meaning across two distinct honorific systems. These findings contributed to translation studies and sociopragmatics by providing a comprehensive analytical framework for examining the translation of culturally embedded address terms across languages.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci:

istilah sapaan; *keigo*;
strategi
penerjemahan;
sociopragmatik;
transfer pragmatik;
unggah-ungguh

Transfer pragmatik *unggah-ungguh* Jawa ke dalam *Keigo* bahasa Jepang: Analisis sosiopragmatik terhadap penerjemahan istilah sapaan dalam novel *Bumi Manusia*

Penelitian ini menganalisis istilah sapaan dalam sistem *unggah-ungguh* Jawa yang diterjemahkan ke dalam sistem *keigo* bahasa Jepang serta mengkaji mekanisme sosiopragmatik yang mendasari terjadinya transfer pragmatik dalam penerjemahan karya sastra. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan perspektif sosiopragmatik terhadap 70 kemunculan istilah sapaan yang dipilih secara purposif dari korpus dwibahasa novel *Bumi Manusia* dan terjemahan Jepangnya, *Arashi no Naka no Manyaru*. Analisis dilakukan melalui identifikasi strategi penerjemahan serta interpretasi terhadap pergeseran sosiopragmatik yang terjadi, meliputi kesantunan, hierarki sosial, hubungan interpersonal, dan identitas budaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan empat strategi penerjemahan utama, yaitu *retention*, *cultural substitution*, *functional equivalence*, dan *generalization*. Strategi *retention* menjadi strategi yang paling dominan dengan persentase 64,3%, yang menunjukkan bahwa penerjemah cenderung mempertahankan bentuk sapaan yang berciri budaya dengan membiarkan makna hierarkisnya dipahami melalui konteks dalam sistem kehormatan bahasa Jepang. *Cultural substitution* dan *functional equivalence* digunakan untuk merekonstruksi hubungan interpersonal dan peran sosial melalui bentuk sapaan yang sesuai dengan konvensi budaya Jepang, sedangkan *generalization* hanya digunakan pada gelar aristokrat yang tidak memiliki padanan budaya yang

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memadai. Penelitian ini mengusulkan mekanisme sosiopragmatik transfer pragmatik yang menjelaskan bagaimana strategi penerjemahan secara sistematis merekonstruksi makna sosial pada dua sistem kehormatan yang berbeda. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap kajian penerjemahan dan sosiopragmatik dengan menawarkan kerangka analitis yang komprehensif untuk menganalisis penerjemahan istilah sapaan yang bermuatan budaya dalam berbagai pasangan bahasa.

1 Introduction

Language is not merely a means of communication but also a representation of the social and cultural values that shape ways of thinking, behaving, and interacting within a society. One of the most salient reflections of social and cultural dimensions in language is the system of politeness and the use of address terms, which serve not only to address interlocutors but also to index social hierarchy, relational distance, emotional closeness, and power structures (Brown & Levinson, 2004; Keshavarz, 2001; Leech, 2014). Such choices are always context-dependent, influenced by intimacy, distance, and social environment (Uyar & Kiziltan, 2023).

Specifically, *unggah-ungguh* in Javanese is a highly stratified politeness system comprising speech levels such as *ngoko*, *madya*, and *krama inggil*, each of which marks varying degrees of formality, social hierarchy, and relational proximity (Arfianingrum, 2020; Errington, 1988; Hanum, 2021). Rooted in Javanese feudal structures and values, *unggah-ungguh* address terms function as social indices of power and patron–client relations, even being maintained in cultural performances like *kethoprak*. Similarly, the Japanese employ *keigo*, consisting of *sonkeigo* (respectful language), *kenjōgo* (humble language), and *teineigo* (polite language) to reflect norms of hierarchy and harmony (D & Mills, 2011; Obana, 2020; Yonezawa, 2021). Address terms such as *anata* or suffixes like *-san*, *-kun*, and *-chan* further illustrate how language mediates relational fluidity and identity (Oshima, 2023; Yonezawa, 2021). In both Javanese and Japanese, address terms may also function as pronoun substitutes, especially in family discourse, underscoring their socio-interactional significance (Miyake, 2022).

The complexity intensifies when culturally embedded address terms are translated across languages. Translation is never a mere lexical substitution but a negotiation of meaning that is inevitably shaped by sociocultural context (Baker, 2011; House, 2014; Newmark, 1988; Nida, n.d.). Prior research demonstrates that translating address terms entails risks of losing social indices, altering relational meanings, or shifting pragmatic functions (Ahmad I Alhojailan, 2024; Surono, 2018). For instance, Rozumko (2023) showed that the translation of address terms in *The Dogs of Riga* into English and Polish changed the interpersonal stance among characters. Yu and Qiu (2024) highlighted how ethical principles guide the translation of address terms in *Moment in Peking*, while Tauchid (2018) and Jakindo et al. (2018) observed that loan or literal translation strategies often obscure underlying social meanings. Similarly, Haristiani and Renariah (2017) compared Japanese, Indonesian, and Sundanese apology address forms, showing that pragmatic values may diverge even when similar lexical items are used.

Recent studies also emphasize that translation is never a neutral activity but a socio-cultural negotiation. Kasmawati (2021) examined the translation of address terms in *Burung-Burung Manyar* and its Japanese version *Arashi no Naka no Manyaru*, revealing how age, gender, and social status affect the pragmatic shifts in Japanese. Maturbongs (2024) demonstrated that even in translating *gitaigo* onomatopoeia, translators balance semantic fidelity with pragmatic appropriateness through amplification, reduction, and modulation. Simangunsong (2025) argued that the adoption of *gairaigo* in translation and digital contexts reflects adaptation to cultural norms and audience expectations.

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Kusumastuti (2018) further compared Chinese and Javanese address systems, proving that translation strategies often reshape hierarchical values.

Despite these valuable contributions, previous studies share several common characteristics despite addressing different language pairs and translation phenomena. Most have focused on identifying translation strategies (e.g., retention, literal translation, domestication, or borrowing) or describing pragmatic shifts after translation, while treating these phenomena as isolated outcomes rather than interconnected processes. Consequently, translation strategies, linguistic transformations, and changes in social meaning have generally been discussed separately, without explaining how one stage motivates the next. As a result, the mechanism through which specific translation decisions generate particular pragmatic effects remains theoretically underexplored.

This limitation is evident across studies. Kasmawati (2021), for example, demonstrated that age, gender, and social status influence the translation of address terms from Indonesian into Japanese, but did not examine how individual translation strategies systematically reshape interpersonal meaning during the translation process. Similarly, Rozumko (2023) highlighted changes in interpersonal stance resulting from translated address terms, whereas Yu and Qiu (2024) emphasized ethical principles underlying translation decisions. Studies by Maturbongs (2024) and Simangunsong (2025) likewise concentrated on strategy selection and cultural adaptation, yet stopped short of explaining the sociopragmatic mechanisms that connect linguistic choices with changes in social relations. Collectively, these studies demonstrate *what* changes occur, but provide only limited explanation of *how* and *why* those changes emerge through the translation process.

Building upon these previous findings, the present study moves beyond identifying translation strategies or describing pragmatic shifts individually. Instead, it proposes an integrated sociopragmatic framework that traces the relationship between address terms, translation strategies, linguistic transformations, pragmatic shifts, and their resulting social meanings in the target text. By examining these interrelated stages within the translation of Javanese *unggah-ungguh* into Japanese *keigo*, this study explains the mechanism of pragmatic transfer rather than merely documenting its outcomes. This constitutes the principal theoretical contribution of the present research.

This research seeks to fill that gap through a comprehensive sociopragmatic analysis of the translation of address terms in *Bumi Manusia* and its Japanese translation *Arashi no Naka no Manyaru*, focusing on shifts in social function, changes in politeness levels, and the negotiation of social meaning across languages. The novelty of this study lies in its integration of micro-level linguistic analysis with in-depth sociopragmatic interpretation. Rather than merely cataloging address terms and their equivalents, this research investigates the strategies employed, analyzes the pragmatic consequences of each choice, and demonstrates how social meanings are negotiated in cross-cultural translation. In doing so, it not only deepens our understanding of the relationship between *unggah-ungguh* and *keigo* but also offers an analytical framework applicable to culturally loaded translation phenomena more broadly.

The urgency of this study stems from its relevance to translation studies, Japanese language pedagogy, and intercultural communication. In an era of increasing globalization and cultural exchange, the ability to translate culturally embedded address terms accurately is essential not only for preserving meaning but also for facilitating effective cross-cultural understanding. Against this backdrop, the central research question addressed in this study is: How are translation strategies employed in rendering Javanese *unggah-ungguh* address terms into Japanese *keigo*, and how do shifts in social function and politeness occur in the process? The study aims to (1) identify and classify the translation strategies used, (2) analyze the semantic and pragmatic shifts that occur, and (3) explain the sociopragmatic implications of these changes within a cross-cultural context.

With its strong theoretical foundation, up-to-date empirical relevance, and sharply focused analysis, this study aims to make a significant contribution to both translation theory and practice, particularly in the study of politeness and address terms across cultures.

2 Methods

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design within a sociopragmatic framework to examine how Javanese *unggah-ungguh* address terms are translated into Japanese *keigo* and how these translation choices reshape social meaning across languages. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the study seeks to explain the sociocultural meanings, interpersonal functions, and pragmatic consequences of translation choices rather than quantify their occurrence (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The sociopragmatic perspective provides an analytical framework for examining how address terms index social hierarchy, interpersonal relationships, and cultural norms, as well as how these meanings are negotiated through translation (Brown & Levinson, 2004; Leech, 2014). This approach enables the analysis to move beyond identifying translation strategies by explaining the mechanisms through which linguistic transformations produce shifts in politeness, relational meaning, and social function in the target text.

2.1 Research Context

This study is based on the Indonesian novel *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer and its official Japanese translation 嵐の中のマニャール (*Arashi no Naka no Manyaru*). The novel was selected as the research corpus because it presents a rich repertoire of address terms that represent various sociocultural domains, including aristocratic, familial, colonial, institutional, and cross-cultural interactions. These address terms are deeply embedded in the Javanese *unggah-ungguh* system, where forms of address function not only as linguistic expressions but also as markers of social hierarchy, interpersonal distance, respect, and cultural identity.

The Japanese translation provides an appropriate corpus for examining how these culturally specific meanings are negotiated through *keigo* and other honorific resources. Since the two politeness systems differ substantially in their linguistic forms and sociocultural organization, the translation process requires translators to make strategic decisions that may preserve, modify, or reconstruct the original social meanings. Consequently, the bilingual corpus offers a suitable context for investigating not only the translation strategies employed but also the sociopragmatic mechanisms through which pragmatic meanings are transferred across languages.

2.2 Data Collection

The primary data consist of Javanese address-term occurrences in the source text (ST) and their corresponding translations in the Japanese target text (TT). Data were collected through documentary analysis of the bilingual corpus comprising *Bumi Manusia* and its official Japanese translation *Arashi no Naka no Manyaru*.

An initial close reading of both texts identified 176 occurrences of address terms throughout the corpus. Since the study focuses on translation as a context-dependent communicative process, each occurrence was treated as a potential unit of analysis rather than merely as a repeated lexical item. From these 176 occurrences, 70 address-term occurrences were selected through purposive sampling for detailed analysis. The selection was based on three criteria: (1) the occurrence functioned explicitly as a form of address, (2) it had an identifiable translation equivalent in the Japanese text, and (3) it represented a meaningful interactional context relevant to the study's sociopragmatic objectives. Consequently, recurring address terms were retained whenever they occurred in different

discourse contexts because each occurrence represents a distinct translation event that may reveal consistent or varying translation strategies. Data collection was conducted through the following procedures:

1. Close Reading and Identification. The Indonesian source text and its Japanese translation were read repeatedly to identify every occurrence of address terms throughout the corpus.
2. Extraction and Cataloging. All identified occurrences were extracted and cataloged together with their Japanese translation equivalents. Information regarding speaker–hearer relationships, social status, interactional setting, and discourse context was recorded for each occurrence.
3. Data Selection. From the 176 identified occurrences, 70 occurrences were purposively selected based on the predetermined criteria described above. The selection aimed to represent diverse sociocultural contexts, interpersonal relationships, and translation phenomena observed throughout the corpus.
4. Data Verification. Each selected occurrence was rechecked by comparing the Indonesian source text with its Japanese translation to ensure the consistency of translation equivalents and contextual interpretation prior to analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

The selected 70 address-term occurrences were analyzed through a four-stage procedure designed to explain the sociopragmatic mechanisms underlying the translation of Javanese *unggah-ungguh* into Japanese *keigo*.

1. Linguistic Categorization. Each occurrence was first classified according to the Javanese *unggah-ungguh* system (*ngoko*, *madya*, and *krama inggil*). The corresponding Japanese translation was subsequently categorized according to the *keigo* system (*sonkeigo*, *kenjōgo*, and *teineigo*). This stage established the sociolinguistic characteristics of both the source and target texts.
2. Identification of Translation Strategies. The translation strategy employed in each occurrence was identified using an analytical framework adapted from Newmark (1988) and Baker (2018). Strategies such as retention, generalization, functional substitution, cultural substitution, and domestication were coded to explain how each address term was rendered in the Japanese translation.
3. Analysis of Pragmatic Shifts. After identifying the translation strategy, each source–target pair was analyzed to examine changes in politeness level, social hierarchy, interpersonal distance, relational meaning, and cultural identity. This stage focused on identifying how particular translation strategies produced specific pragmatic consequences in the target text.
4. Sociopragmatic Interpretation. Finally, the identified pragmatic shifts were interpreted using the sociopragmatic framework of Brown and Levinson (2004) and Leech (2014) together with translation theories proposed by House (2014), Newmark (1988), and Nida and Taber (1982). This stage explains how translation strategies contribute to the preservation, modification, or reconstruction of social meanings across the Indonesian and Japanese linguistic and cultural systems.

This analytical procedure enabled the study to establish a systematic relationship between address-term occurrences, translation strategies, pragmatic shifts, and the resulting social meanings in the target text. By tracing this analytical sequence, the study explains not only which translation strategies were employed but also how specific translation decisions generated particular sociopragmatic outcomes across languages.

3 Results

Analysis of the 70 address term occurrences identified in the bilingual corpus of *Bumi Manusia* (ST) and its Japanese translation *Arashi no Naka no Manyaru* (TT) demonstrates that the transfer of Javanese *unggah-ungguh* into the Japanese *keigo* system rarely involves direct one-to-one correspondence. Instead, the findings reveal four principal translation strategies, namely Retention (Borrowing/Transliteration), Cultural Substitution, Functional Equivalence, and Generalization. These strategies illustrate the different mechanisms through which culturally embedded address terms are transferred, adapted, and interpreted within the Japanese honorific system. Table 1 summarizes the translation strategies identified in the corpus, together with representative address-term occurrences, their sociopragmatic effects, and the frequency and percentage distribution across the 70 analyzed occurrences. The quantitative distribution provides an overview of the translator's strategic preferences, while the qualitative descriptions illustrate how each strategy contributes to the transfer, preservation, or reconstruction of social meanings within the Japanese honorific system.

Overall, the distribution of translation strategies suggests that the translator consistently prioritized preserving culturally embedded interpersonal meanings rather than maintaining formal lexical correspondence. Rather than reproducing Javanese address terms literally, the translation adapts them in ways that conform to Japanese honorific conventions while seeking to preserve the intended social relationships and interactional functions. This distribution also demonstrates that pragmatic transfer is achieved through different translation strategies depending on the sociocultural characteristics of each address term rather than through direct lexical equivalence alone.

Table 1. Distribution of Translation Strategies and Their Sociopragmatic Effects in Translating Javanese *Unggah-ungguh* Address Terms into Japanese *Keigo*

Translation Strategy	Representative Address-Term Occurrences (ST → TT)	Sociopragmatic Effect	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Retention (Borrowing/Transliteration)	<i>Den Rara</i> → デン・ロロ; <i>Raden Ayu</i> → ラデン・アユ; <i>Papi</i> → パピー; <i>Mami</i> → マミー; <i>Mas Teto</i> → マス・テト; <i>Mas Jana</i> → マス・ジャナ; <i>Tuan</i> → トアン	Preserves culturally specific address forms and source-language identity. However, hierarchical and honorific meanings embedded in the Javanese <i>unggah-ungguh</i> system become more implicit in Japanese.	45	64.3
Cultural Substitution	<i>Pak</i> → おじさん; <i>Bapak</i> → おじさん; <i>Bu</i> → おばさん; <i>Pap</i> → パパ; <i>Ayah</i> → お父さま	Reconstructs culturally specific address terms using familiar Japanese kinship expressions, thereby enhancing naturalness while reducing distinctions in social hierarchy encoded in the source text.	17	24.3
Functional Equivalence	<i>Mbok Inem</i> → イネムばあや; <i>Mayoor</i> → 少佐; <i>Ibu</i> → 奥様	Replaces the source-language address term with a Japanese expression that preserves its communicative or institutional function rather than its lexical form.	6	8.6
Generalization	<i>Kanjeng Pangeran</i> → ご主人様	Replaces a highly culture-specific aristocratic title with	2	2.8

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	a broader Japanese honorific while maintaining the intended level of respect.		
Total		70	100.0

Note. ST = Source Text; TT = Target Text.

As shown in Table 1, Retention (Borrowing/Transliteration) emerged as the dominant translation strategy, accounting for 45 of the 70 address term occurrences (64.3%). This predominance indicates that the translator generally preferred to preserve culturally specific Javanese address forms, particularly aristocratic titles, colonial honorifics, and culturally marked kinship terms, even when their sociocultural meanings could not be fully represented within the Japanese honorific system. Rather than replacing these culturally bound expressions with Japanese equivalents, the translator retained their original forms to preserve their cultural identity and historical specificity. As a consequence, the lexical form was maintained, whereas part of the hierarchical and honorific meanings became dependent on contextual interpretation by Japanese readers.

Cultural Substitution was the second most frequently employed strategy, representing 17 occurrences (24.3%). This strategy was predominantly applied to kinship terms and everyday respectful forms of address, such as *Pak*, *Bu*, *Pap*, and *Ayah*, which were rendered as culturally familiar Japanese expressions including *ojisan*, *obasan*, *papa*, and *otō sama*. These translations demonstrate that pragmatic transfer was achieved not through lexical similarity but through the reconstruction of equivalent interpersonal relationships within the target culture. Although the original lexical forms were replaced, their communicative functions as markers of familiarity, respect, or family relationships were largely maintained in accordance with Japanese sociocultural conventions.

Functional Equivalence accounted for six occurrences (8.6%) and was primarily employed when the communicative or institutional function of an address term was considered more important than preserving its lexical form. This strategy is evident in translations such as *Mbok Inem* into *Inemu baaya* and *Mayoor* into *Shōsa*, where the translator selected culturally appropriate Japanese expressions that conveyed comparable social roles and institutional relationships. These cases illustrate that successful pragmatic transfer may require the reconstruction of social functions rather than the preservation of linguistic forms when direct cultural correspondence is unavailable.

Generalization occurred least frequently, representing only two occurrences (2.8%). This limited use suggests that the translator resorted to semantic broadening only when highly culture specific aristocratic titles lacked appropriate Japanese counterparts. For example, *Kanjeng Pangeran* was translated as *Goshujin sama*, thereby maintaining the general sense of respect while reducing the specificity of the original Javanese hierarchical system. The relatively low frequency of this strategy indicates that semantic simplification was considered a last resort after other translation options had been evaluated.

Overall, the distribution of translation strategies demonstrates that pragmatic transfer in the translation of Javanese *unggah-ungguh* into Japanese *keigo* is achieved through the selective negotiation of cultural identity, social hierarchy, and interpersonal relationships rather than through direct lexical correspondence. The predominance of Retention, together with the complementary use of Cultural Substitution, Functional Equivalence, and Generalization, suggests that the translator adopted a flexible sociopragmatic approach in which different translation strategies were selected according to the cultural characteristics and communicative functions of individual address terms. These findings provide empirical evidence that the transfer of honorific meaning is a dynamic process

involving the preservation, adaptation, and reconstruction of social meaning across two distinct politeness systems.

4 Discussion

4.1 Retention (Borrowing/Transliteration) as the Dominant Strategy in Pragmatic Transfer

The findings demonstrate that Retention (Borrowing/Transliteration) is the predominant strategy, accounting for 45 of the 70 address term occurrences (64.3%). This result indicates that the translator consistently preferred to preserve culturally specific forms of address rather than replacing them with Japanese honorific expressions. The strategy is particularly evident in the translation of aristocratic titles such as *Den Rara* and *Raden Ayu*, colonial honorifics such as *Tuan*, family terms such as *Papi* and *Mami*, and the Javanese respectful title *Mas*. By retaining these address forms through transliteration, the translation preserves their cultural identity and historical specificity even though the social meanings embedded in the Javanese *unggah-ungguh* system cannot always be fully represented within the Japanese *keigo* system.

From the perspective of translation theory, this finding is consistent with Newmark (1988), who argues that borrowing is an appropriate procedure when culture specific lexical items have no satisfactory equivalents in the target language. Likewise, Baker (2018) suggests that retaining source language expressions allows translators to preserve cultural distinctiveness when semantic substitution would result in substantial cultural loss. In the present study, Retention functions not merely as a lexical procedure but as a sociopragmatic strategy that maintains the cultural identity attached to address terms while allowing readers to recognize their foreign origin.

The findings also reveal that preserving lexical forms does not necessarily preserve their complete sociopragmatic meanings. Although titles such as *Den Rara* or *Mas* remain visible in the Japanese translation, Japanese readers may interpret them primarily as foreign personal titles because the hierarchical distinctions encoded in the Javanese *unggah-ungguh* system have no direct counterparts within the Japanese honorific system. Consequently, pragmatic transfer occurs through the preservation of cultural identity rather than through the complete transfer of social hierarchy. This observation demonstrates that pragmatic equivalence should not be understood as identical reproduction of meaning but as the negotiation of culturally appropriate interpretations across different politeness systems.

This finding extends previous studies on the translation of honorific expressions. Earlier research, including Kasmawati (2021), primarily described the equivalence between Javanese and Japanese address terms without explaining how translation strategies influence the transfer of sociopragmatic meaning. Similarly, studies by Rozumko (2023), Yu and Qiu (2024), Maturbongs (2024), and Simangunsong (2025) mainly focused on lexical choices or politeness shifts but paid limited attention to the mechanisms linking translation procedures to changes in interpersonal meaning. By demonstrating that Retention simultaneously preserves cultural identity while modifying the accessibility of hierarchical meaning, the present study explains one of the mechanisms through which pragmatic transfer operates in literary translation.

The predominance of Retention therefore suggests that the translator intentionally prioritized cultural authenticity over complete pragmatic transparency. Rather than domesticating culturally specific address terms, the translation invites Japanese readers to encounter the social world of *Bumi Manusia* through its original forms while relying on contextual interpretation to reconstruct their interpersonal meanings. This finding supports the argument that pragmatic transfer in literary translation is a dynamic process in which lexical preservation and sociocultural adaptation coexist, rather than mutually exclusive alternatives.

4.2 Cultural Substitution as the Reconstruction of Interpersonal Meaning

Cultural Substitution emerged as the second most frequently employed translation strategy, representing 17 of the 70 address term occurrences (24.3%). Unlike Retention, which preserves the original lexical form, Cultural Substitution replaces Javanese address terms with culturally familiar Japanese expressions that perform comparable interpersonal functions. This strategy was primarily applied to kinship terms and everyday respectful forms of address, including *Pak*, *Bapak*, *Bu*, *Pap*, and *Ayah*, which were translated into expressions such as *ojisan*, *obasan*, *papa*, and *otō sama*. These translations demonstrate that the translator prioritized communicative acceptability within Japanese sociocultural norms rather than preserving the lexical forms of the source language.

From a translation perspective, Cultural Substitution reflects Baker's (2018) notion that culture specific expressions may be replaced with target language items that are more readily understood by the intended readership while preserving their communicative purpose. Rather than seeking formal lexical equivalence, the translator selected address terms that perform similar interpersonal functions within the Japanese honorific system. This finding also aligns with Newmark (1988), who argues that cultural substitution is appropriate when literal translation would obscure the intended meaning or create unnecessary processing difficulties for target readers.

The present findings indicate that Cultural Substitution operates as a mechanism for reconstructing interpersonal meaning rather than reproducing linguistic form. For example, translating *Pak* as *ojisan* or *Bu* as *obasan* shifts the interpretation from public respect toward kinship based interaction. Although these Japanese expressions do not reproduce the hierarchical distinctions encoded in the Javanese *unggah-ungguh* system, they successfully establish comparable levels of familiarity, solidarity, and politeness within Japanese sociocultural conventions. Similarly, translating *Pap* as *papa* and *Ayah* as *otō sama* illustrates how family relationships are reconstructed through culturally conventional Japanese forms that remain natural to target readers while preserving the intended interpersonal relationship.

These findings support sociopragmatic theories proposed by Brown and Levinson (2004) and Leech (2014), which emphasize that politeness is realized through culturally specific linguistic choices rather than universally fixed expressions. The translator therefore adapts address terms to conform to Japanese norms of interpersonal interaction, allowing equivalent relational meanings to be communicated despite differences between the Javanese and Japanese politeness systems. Pragmatic transfer, in this context, is achieved through the adaptation of social relationships rather than through lexical similarity.

Compared with previous studies, the present findings extend existing discussions of honorific translation by demonstrating how Cultural Substitution functions as a systematic strategy for negotiating interpersonal meaning across cultures. Previous studies generally identified changes in politeness or equivalence without explaining how culturally specific address terms are reconstructed within the target language. In contrast, the present study shows that Cultural Substitution involves a deliberate sociopragmatic negotiation in which culturally bound forms are replaced by functionally appropriate Japanese expressions to maintain interpersonal coherence. This mechanism illustrates that successful translation depends not only on linguistic correspondence but also on the translator's ability to reconstruct culturally meaningful social relationships.

4.3 Functional Equivalence as the Reconstruction of Social Roles

Functional Equivalence accounted for six of the 70 address term occurrences (8.6%), making it the third most frequently employed translation strategy. Although less frequent than Retention and Cultural Substitution, this strategy demonstrates a fundamentally different mechanism of pragmatic

transfer. Rather than preserving the lexical form or replacing it with a culturally familiar expression, Functional Equivalence reconstructs the communicative function of the source language address term within the target language. This strategy is illustrated by translations such as *Mbok Inem* into *Inemu baaya*, *Mayoor* into *Shōsa*, and *Ibu* into *Okusama*, where the translator prioritizes the social role represented by the address term over its lexical realization.

This finding is consistent with the concept of functional equivalence proposed by Nida and Taber (1982), who argue that successful translation should reproduce the communicative effect of the source text rather than its linguistic form. Similarly, House (2015) emphasizes that equivalence should be evaluated according to the function performed by linguistic expressions within their respective sociocultural contexts. In the present study, the translator selected Japanese expressions that occupy comparable institutional or interpersonal functions, thereby enabling target readers to interpret social relationships in ways that are culturally meaningful within the Japanese context.

The translation of *Mbok Inem* into *Inemu baaya* provides a clear example of this mechanism. The Javanese term *Mbok* carries multiple layers of meaning associated with age, gender, social status, and domestic service. Instead of reproducing these lexical and cultural characteristics directly, the translator employed *baaya*, a Japanese term referring to a nanny or caregiver. Although the lexical form changes substantially, the interpersonal role performed by the character remains largely intact. Likewise, translating *Mayoor* as *Shōsa* preserves the institutional hierarchy of military rank even though the specific historical and cultural associations of the Indonesian colonial context cannot be transferred directly. In these cases, pragmatic transfer is achieved through the preservation of social function rather than lexical correspondence.

From a sociopragmatic perspective, these examples demonstrate that interpersonal meaning is closely tied to social roles rather than linguistic forms alone. Brown and Levinson (2004) and Leech (2014) argue that politeness reflects culturally appropriate interpretations of power, distance, and social obligations. The present findings support this perspective by showing that translators may reconstruct institutional authority or social identity through culturally equivalent expressions without reproducing the original lexical forms. Consequently, Functional Equivalence operates as a strategy for maintaining interactional coherence when direct linguistic equivalence is unavailable.

Compared with previous studies, the present findings extend existing discussions of translation equivalence by explaining the sociopragmatic processes through which social roles are reconstructed across languages. Earlier studies generally described equivalence in terms of lexical replacement or semantic similarity, whereas the present study demonstrates that equivalent interpersonal effects can be achieved despite substantial lexical differences. This finding suggests that pragmatic transfer depends not only on preserving linguistic forms but also on identifying the communicative functions that address terms perform within particular sociocultural contexts. Functional Equivalence, therefore, represents an important mechanism through which translators negotiate institutional relationships, social identities, and interpersonal meanings across different honorific systems.

4.4 Generalization as a Strategy of Semantic Simplification

Generalization was the least frequently employed translation strategy, accounting for only two of the 70 address term occurrences (2.8%). This limited use indicates that the translator rarely relied on semantic broadening when translating Javanese address terms into Japanese. Instead, Generalization was employed only when a highly culture-specific address term lacked an appropriate equivalent capable of conveying its original sociocultural meaning within the Japanese honorific system. The translation of *Kanjeng Pangeran* into *Goshujin sama* illustrates this strategy. Although both expressions communicate respect toward a socially superior individual, the Japanese expression

represents a broader honorific category that does not encode the aristocratic hierarchy inherent in the original Javanese title.

From the perspective of translation theory, Generalization is regarded as an appropriate strategy when the source language contains concepts that have no direct lexical or cultural equivalents in the target language (Baker, 2018). Rather than preserving culture-specific distinctions that may be unfamiliar to target readers, the translator selects a semantically broader expression that maintains the core communicative intention. In the present study, this strategy reduces the specificity of aristocratic status while preserving the interpersonal orientation of respect. Consequently, the translation remains comprehensible to Japanese readers despite the inevitable loss of sociocultural detail.

The limited occurrence of Generalization also demonstrates the translator's overall preference for preserving cultural specificity whenever possible. Unlike Retention, which maintains the original lexical form, or Cultural Substitution and Functional Equivalence, which reconstruct interpersonal relationships through culturally meaningful alternatives, Generalization reduces semantic specificity to ensure communicative accessibility. This strategy therefore represents the final option when neither lexical preservation nor functional adaptation can adequately represent the original sociocultural meaning.

Compared with previous studies, the present findings suggest that Generalization plays only a marginal role in the translation of Javanese address terms into Japanese. Earlier research often treated semantic simplification as one of several equivalent translation options without examining the conditions under which it is selected. The present study demonstrates that Generalization is employed selectively and systematically, primarily in situations where the hierarchical distinctions embedded in the Javanese *unggah-ungguh* system cannot be represented through either Japanese honorific forms or culturally equivalent expressions. This finding further supports the argument that translation strategies are chosen according to the sociocultural characteristics of individual address terms rather than through uniform translation procedures.

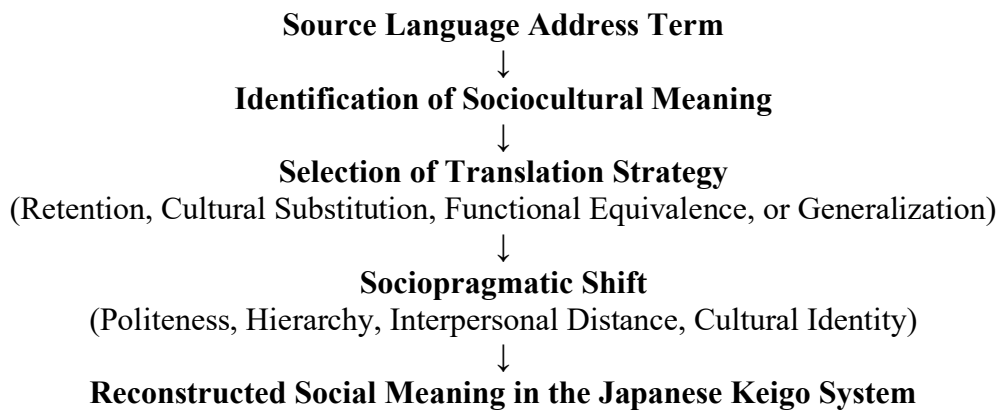
4.5 A Pragmatic Transfer Mechanism in Translating Javanese Unggah-ungguh into Japanese Keigo

The four translation strategies identified in this study reveal that pragmatic transfer is not achieved through a single translation procedure but through the dynamic interaction between linguistic form, sociocultural meaning, and communicative function. Rather than establishing direct lexical equivalence between Javanese and Japanese address terms, the translator continually negotiates cultural identity, interpersonal relationships, and social hierarchy according to the communicative demands of each interaction. Consequently, the findings suggest that pragmatic transfer should be understood as a process of sociocultural negotiation rather than simple linguistic replacement.

The distribution of strategies demonstrates that different categories of address terms require different translation solutions. Culture-specific titles such as *Den Rara*, *Raden Ayu*, and *Mas* are predominantly translated through Retention because preserving their lexical forms simultaneously preserves their cultural identity. In contrast, everyday respectful forms such as *Pak*, *Bu*, and *Pap* are more effectively translated through Cultural Substitution because equivalent interpersonal relationships can be reconstructed using culturally familiar Japanese expressions. Functional Equivalence becomes necessary when address terms primarily express institutional or social roles, whereas Generalization is reserved for exceptional cases in which neither lexical preservation nor functional adaptation can adequately represent the original meaning.

These findings indicate that pragmatic transfer operates through a sequential decision-making process. The translator first evaluates whether the cultural identity encoded in an address term should be preserved. If direct preservation is unlikely to facilitate communication, the translator reconstructs interpersonal meaning through culturally appropriate expressions or functionally equivalent forms. Only when these alternatives fail to convey the intended sociocultural meaning does broader semantic adaptation become necessary. The translation process, therefore, involves a continuous negotiation between preserving source culture identity and ensuring pragmatic accessibility for target language readers.

Based on these findings, this study proposes a sociopragmatic mechanism of address term translation consisting of four interconnected stages. First, the translator identifies the sociocultural meaning embedded in the source language address term. Second, an appropriate translation strategy is selected according to the cultural specificity and communicative function of the expression. Third, the selected strategy generates a particular sociopragmatic shift affecting politeness, social hierarchy, interpersonal distance, or cultural identity. Finally, the translated expression produces a reconstructed social meaning that remains acceptable within the Japanese honorific system while preserving the communicative intention of the original text. This mechanism is illustrated conceptually as follows:



This proposed mechanism represents the principal contribution of the present study. Previous studies have primarily classified translation strategies or described shifts in politeness without explicitly explaining how translation decisions generate changes in interpersonal meaning. By integrating translation strategies with sociopragmatic interpretation, the present study demonstrates that pragmatic transfer is a systematic process linking linguistic choices to the reconstruction of social meaning across two distinct honorific systems. This model, therefore, extends previous research by providing an explanatory framework that connects translation procedures, pragmatic shifts, and sociocultural interpretation within a single analytical model.

5 Conclusion

This study investigated how Javanese *unggah-ungguh* address terms are translated into the Japanese *keigo* system by examining the translation strategies employed and the sociopragmatic shifts they generate. Analysis of 70 address term occurrences identified four principal translation strategies, namely Retention (Borrowing or Transliteration), Cultural Substitution, Functional Equivalence, and Generalization. Among these, Retention emerged as the dominant strategy, demonstrating the translator's preference for preserving culturally specific address forms and their associated cultural identity. Cultural Substitution and Functional Equivalence were employed when culturally appropriate Japanese expressions were required to reconstruct interpersonal relationships or institutional roles, whereas Generalization was used only in limited cases where highly culture-

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specific aristocratic titles lacked suitable equivalents. These findings demonstrate that the translation of address terms extends beyond lexical replacement and involves the negotiation of politeness, social hierarchy, interpersonal relationships, and cultural identity across two distinct honorific systems.

The principal contribution of this study lies in proposing a sociopragmatic mechanism of pragmatic transfer that explains the relationship between address terms, translation strategies, sociopragmatic shifts, and the reconstruction of social meaning in the target language. Unlike previous studies that primarily described translation equivalence or politeness shifts, the present study demonstrates how different translation strategies systematically produce different sociopragmatic outcomes depending on the cultural characteristics and communicative functions of individual address terms. This integrated analytical framework contributes to both translation studies and sociopragmatics by providing a more comprehensive explanation of how culturally embedded honorific expressions are negotiated across languages. Nevertheless, the study is limited to a single literary work and one language pair. Future research may extend this framework by examining other literary genres, additional language pairs, or spoken interactional data to explore whether similar mechanisms of pragmatic transfer operate in different sociocultural contexts. The proposed model offers a transferable analytical framework for investigating the translation of culturally embedded address terms and honorific expressions in other languages and intercultural contexts.

Disclosure Statement

The author(s) claim there is no conflict of interest.

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