Techniques in Translating and Adapting Lyrics: Syllable Matching and Rhythm in Kristel Fulgar's English Cover of 'Dia Masa Lalumu, Aku Masa Depanmu"

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Abstract. Translation is a process of communicating from one language to another. But translating has certain techniques so that a word or sentence can be understood and accepted by the recipient such as the reader and listener. The data of this research is the song "Dia Masa Lalumu, Aku Masa Depanmu" originally from an Indonesian song and translated by Kristel Fulgar for the English version. In this study, researchers found 5 translation techniques in a song lyric in Indonesian that was translated into English. To find out the translation technique used, researchers used the theory of Molina and Abir. From 13 data there are 5 different techniques, 7 (56%) Modulation translation techniques, 3 (23%) Amplification translation techniques, 1 (7%) Equivalent translation technique, 1 (7%) Addition translation technique, and 1 (7%) Paraphrase translation technique.
Keywords: Translation, Technique, Molina and Abir's Theory, Indonesian Lyrics

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Translation has become a common approach in daily life, as languages vary from country to country. Translation plays a vital role in bridging these language differences and enabling smoother communication. It is needed across multiple fields, including entertainment, law, healthcare, and education. One specific type of translation is song translation, which helps listeners of various linguistic backgrounds not only enjoy the music but also understand the message within foreign song lyrics.

Translating songs is especially challenging because translators must do more than convey the original lyrics' meaning—they must also maintain the song's rhythm (Stephenson, 2014). Song translators must balance the meaning and rhythm of the lyrics, carefully selecting words that not only match the source message but also have a comparable number of syllables. This ensures the translated song remains singable and true to the original. The following is a more detailed explanation of the 18 translation techniques developed by Molina and Albir (2002): described 18 translation techniques that help translators deal with differences between languages and cultures. These include adaptation (replacing cultural elements), amplification (adding extra information), borrowing and calque (using or translating words directly), and compensation (moving meaning to another part). Other techniques like description and discursive creation are used when no direct translation exists, while established equivalent and generalization use common or broader words. Linguistic techniques such as amplification and compression help adjust the length and clarity of a sentence.

By understanding and choosing the right technique, translators can effectively convey the message, respect the cultural context, and maintain the integrity of the original meaning.

When translating lyrics from Indonesian to English, there are some important things to consider in order to maintain the meaning, emotion, and beauty of the lyrics:

When translating lyrics, especially from Indonesian to English, there are additional aspects to consider, including:
- *Meaning and Nuance*: Preserving the core meaning while reflecting subtle emotional undertones.
- *Rhythm and Syllable*: Ensuring the lyrics align with the original melody.
- *Fit to the Melody*: Maintaining the musicality of the song.
- *Rhyme and Alliteration*: Reproducing poetic elements where possible.
- *Culture and Idioms*: Adapting cultural references and idiomatic expressions.
- *Messages and Emotions*: Conveying the same emotional impact as the original song.

The song "Dia Masa Lalumu, Aku Masa Depanmu" is originally from an Indonesian singer named Vionita. Vionita is the winner of The Voice Indonesia 2019. This song was released on March 5, 2021. This song is about a girl who falls in love with her best friend. She is always there for him when he's at his lowest point, but unfortunately, he just wants to be friends. Kristel Fulgar made a cover for the English version on August 23, 2024. She is from the Philippines. She translated the song "Dia Masa Lalumu, Aku Masa Depanmu" from Indonesia to English and she made it as close as the original.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In a study by Elena Gritsenko and Evgeniya Aleshinskaya (2016), the researchers explored how translating song lyrics can enhance emotional expression, especially in multilingual performances. They introduced the concept of linguistic transposition, where switching between languages in a song adds artistic and emotional depth. This language switching often aligns with the song's structure—like verses or choruses—to create contrast or highlight the climax. The study also looked at audience and professional reactions, showing mixed views between preferring original lyrics and valuing understandable translations.

Meanwhile, the study by Ephraim Justin Iskandar and Fauzi Rifqi Putra (2024) focused on translating Indonesian lyrics into English using Molina and Albir's translation techniques. They identified five main techniques, such as modulation and amplification. A key focus of their research was matching syllables between the original and translated lyrics to maintain rhythm. While most translations matched the syllable count, a few differences showed the challenge of balancing meaning and musical flow in song translation.

In a study by Jean Severy (2017), the researcher examined how translating French song lyrics into English often results in changes to the song's mood, structure, and message. Rather than directly preserving the original meaning, English versions are often reformulated to suit the cultural and stylistic expectations of the target audience. Severy found that these translations sometimes create songs with a different emotional tone and identity, focusing less on fidelity and more on artistic reinterpretation.

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main techniques, such as modulation and amplification. A key focus of their research was matching syllables between the original and translated lyrics to maintain rhythm. While most translations matched the syllable count, a few differences showed the challenge of balancing meaning and musical flow in song translation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study applied a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the translation techniques used in the English adaptation of the Indonesian song "Dia Masa Lalumu, Aku Masa Depanmu" by Vionita, as covered and translated by Kristel Fulgar. The objective was to examine how the translator adapted the original lyrics into English while preserving meaning, emotion, and rhythm.

To analyze the data, the researchers employed Molina and Albir's (2002) translation technique framework, which includes 18 strategies commonly used to overcome linguistic and cultural differences. In this research, only the techniques that appeared in the dataset were classified and discussed: modulation, amplification, established equivalence, addition, and paraphrase.

The steps of analysis included:

1. Data collection: The original Indonesian lyrics and their English counterparts were compiled and segmented line by line.
2. Technique identification: Each lyric line was analyzed to determine the translation technique based on its structural and semantic changes using Molina and Albir's classification.
3. Syllable count comparison: The number of syllables in both the ST and TT lines were counted and compared to assess the translator's success in maintaining rhythmic alignment.
4. Interpretation: Each technique was examined in relation to its impact on meaning preservation, emotional nuance, and musicality.
5. Result categorization: The findings were tabulated to identify the frequency of each translation technique and how often syllable matching was achieved.

By using this approach, the study not only explored the types of techniques used but also evaluated how well the translated lyrics adhered to the original song's musical and emotional integrity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, the data consiss of 13 lyric pairs from the source text (ST) in Indonesian and the corresponding target text (TT) in English. These pairs were selected based on their significance in conveying the overall message and emotion of the song. To comprehend the categorical percentages,
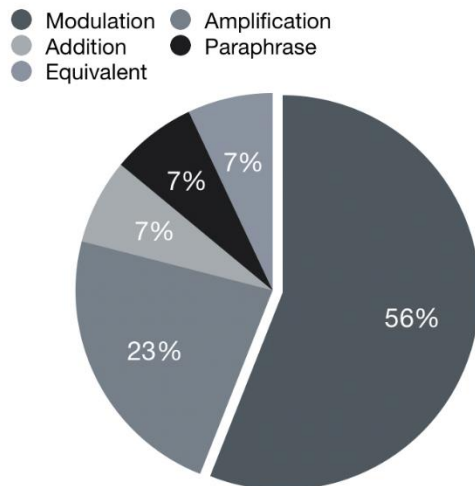
The chart shows the results of the techniques applied in translating the lyric of the song. The technique of modulation has the highest percentage, 56 %. it is mostly applied in translating the lyric. The addition techniques have made up **23%**. And the Equivalent, paraphrase and amplification has similar number 7%. In summary, the chart clearly shows that modulation is the dominant technique among the others.

Discussion:

1. ST   : Aku tak tahu harus gimana lagi (11 syllables)
TT   : <u>Tell me what</u> I can do to make <u>you feel better</u> (11 syllables)
Technique: Modulation

Modulation involves changing the perspective or viewpoint of a phrase in the source text (ST) to make it more natural or culturally appropriate in the target text (TT). Rather than translating words literally, the translator adapts the expression by altering how the idea is presented, while still preserving the overall meaning. The translator shifts the way an idea is expressed. The goal is to create a translation that sounds flows naturally in the target language.

In this case, the phrase "Aku tak tahu harus gimana lagi" directly means "I don't know what else to do." However, in the target text, this sentiment is rephrased to "Tell me what I can do to make you feel better," shifting the expression to a more proactive, caring tone that fits the context naturally in English. Both sentencescontain 11 syllables, indicating no difference in syllable count.

2. ST: Aku tahu dia hancurkan hatimu (11 syllables)
TT: I'm aware that she caused you your <u>biggest heartbreak</u> (11 syllables)
Technique: Amplification

Amplification involves adding more information or details in the target text (TT) than are present in the source text (ST) to clarify the meaning or provide context that might not be explicitly stated in the source language. The source text only states "hancurkan hatimu" (broke your heart). The target text expands this idea to "caused you your biggest heartbreak," adding an intensifying detail ("biggest heartbreak") that isn't explicitly mentioned in the source text. Purpose of amplification is to make the message more impactful or emotionally expressive, enhance clarity and adapt the meaning for the target audience, especially when cultural or linguistic nuances require elaboration.

In the source text, "Aku tahu dia hancurkan hatimu" directly translates to "I know she broke your heart." However, in the target text, "I'm aware that she caused you your biggest heartbreak," extra details are included ("biggest heartbreak") to intensify the sentiment and clarify the depth of the emotional impact. This added information provides a more profound expression of the heartbreak than the original text explicitly states. Both sentences contain 11 syllables, indicating no difference in syllable count.

3. ST: Dan membuatmu tak bisa utuh lagi (11 syllables)
TT: And then left you all alone and <u>empty hearted</u> (11 syllables)
Technique: Amplification

The source text focuses on the phrase "tak bisa utuh lagi" (unable to be whole again). The target text elaborates this idea with "left you all alone and empty-hearted," introducing two additional emotional dimensions:
- "All alone" suggests isolation.
- "Empty-hearted" amplifies the sense of emotional void.

Amplification in the source text, "Dan membuatmu tak bisa utuh lagi" translates more directly to "And made you unable to be whole again." However, the target text expands this idea to "And then left you all alone and empty hearted," adding emotional details ("all alone" and "empty hearted") that amplify the impact and make the sentiment more relatable in English. Both sentences contain 11 syllables, indicating no difference in syllable count.

4. ST: Tapi aku berbeda (6 syllables)
TT: <u>Can't you see I'm not like her</u> (6 syllables)
Technique: Modulation

The source text, "Tapi aku berbeda," directly translates to "But I am different." The target text reinterprets this idea as "Can't you see I'm not like her," which includes: Aquestion ("Can't you see") that adds emphasis and engages the listener. A comparison ("I'm not like her") that is implied but not explicitly stated in the ST. However, the target text, "Can't you see I'm not like her," shifts the statement to a more specific, contrastive expression that directly implies a comparison with "her." This conveys the intended sentiment in a way that feels natural and expressive in English. In English, directly saying "I am different" may sound too abstract. By reinterpreting it as "I'm not like her," <u>the</u>

TT provides a clearer contrast and emotional context, making it more impactful and relevant to the audience. Both sentences have 6 syllables, indicating no difference in syllable count.

5. ST: Dia masa lalumu (7 syllables)
TT: She's <u>no longer part of you</u> (7 syllables)
Technique: Established Equivalence

Established equivalent involves substituting a phrase or expression in the source text (ST) with a widely recognized or conventional equivalent in the target text (TT). The translation uses an expression that carries the same meaning or function in the target language, without altering the original intent. The target text substitutes this with "no longer part of you," which is a commonly understood equivalent expression in English to signify someone who belongs to the past and is no longer relevant in the present.
In this case, To adapt the phrase in a way that resonates more naturally in English. "Dia masa lalumu" translates more directly to "She is your past" may sound overly literal or abstract, while "She's no longer part of you" conveys the same idea in a more emotionally nuanced and relatable manner. Which carries a similar sentiment but expresses it in a way that feels more natural and emotionally resonant in English. This use of an equivalent phrase captures the intended meaning without directly translating the words, making Equivalence the appropriate technique here.

Comparison of Syllables:
   - Both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) have 7 syllables.
   - This is significant because in song translation, it's important to maintain the syllabic structure of the original lyrics.

6. ST: Aku masa depanmu (6 syllables)
TT: I am here to be with you (6 syllables)
Technique: Modulation

The translation shifts to a more concrete and natural expression, "I am here to be with you," which conveys the intended meaning of support and closeness in a way that resonates better with English-speaking audiences. The source text, "Aku masa depanmu," translates more directly to "I am your future." However, the target text shifts this to "I am here to be with you," which still conveys a commitment to being part of the future but does so in a way that feels natural and warm in English. In the source text, "Aku masa depanmu" would translate literally to "I am your future." However, this phrasing might sound too abstract and potentially awkward in English. To capture the intended meaning in a culturally and emotionally relatable way, the translator has rephrased it as "I am here to be with you." Both the ST and TT have 6syllables, indicating a perfect match in syllable count.

7. Source Text: Dia hancurkan kamu (7 syllables)
Target Text: She might have shattered you (6 syllables)
Technique: Modulation

The translation shifts to a more nuanced and speculative expression, "She might have shattered you," which softens the directness of the source text. The source text, "Diahancurkan kamu," translates more directly to "She broke you" or "She destroyed you," which conveys a clear and definitive action.

However, the target text introduces the modal verb "might have," adding a layer of uncertainty and subtlety that aligns with English-speaking audiences' conversational norms.

In the source text, "Dia hancurkan kamu" expresses a strong and unambiguous statement of harm or destruction. Translating this directly into English as "She broke you" might sound overly harsh or abrupt in tone. To preserve the intended meaning while making it more culturally and emotionally appropriate, the translator rephrased it as "She might have shattered you." This phrasing conveys the same idea of harm but in a way that feels softer and more introspective in English.

The ST has 7 syllables, while the TT has 6, resulting in a discrepancy of 1 syllable. This difference can affect how the lyrics fit the song's melody, potentially disruptingthe natural flow and timing. To address this, translators often adapt the phrasing to match the original syllable count more closel y, ensuring the translated lyrics alignseamlessly with the music.

8. Source Text: Kususun kembali hatimu (9 syllables)
Target Text: I'm picking up the pieces of your heart (10 syllables)
Technique: Modulation

The translation shifts to a more expressive and idiomatic phrase, "I'm picking up the pieces of your heart," which conveys the same underlying meaning of restoration but in a way that feels natural and evocative in English. The source text, "Kususunkembali hatimu," translates more literally to "I'm putting your heart back together." While this literal translation is accurate, it lacks the emotional resonance and poetic quality that "picking up the pieces" carries in English.

The source text, "Kususun kembali hatimu," emphasizes the act of reassembling something broken, which is a direct and clear expression in Indonesian. However, translating this literally into English as "I'm putting your heart back together" might sound mechanical or lack the depth of emotion the phrase intends to convey. The target text uses the idiomatic expression "picking up the pieces," which not only conveys the act of repair but also evokes a sense of empathy and care, aligning well with the emotional tone often preferred in English.

The ST has 9 syllables, while the TT has 10, resulting in a discrepancy of 1 syllable. This difference can affect how the lyrics fit the song's melody, potentially disruptingthe natural flow and timing. To address this , the translator often adapt the phrasing to match the original syllable count more closely, ensuring the translated lyrics alignseamlessly with the music.

9. Source Text: Tapi mengapa kamu (7 syllables)
Target Text: Wondering why you're still (6 syllables)
Technique: Modulation
The translation shifts from a straightforward question, "But why you…," to a more reflective and fluid phrase, "Wondering why you're still…," which feels smoother and more natural in English. The source text, "Tapi mengapa kamu," is a simple interrogative statement that directly translates to "But why you…," maintaining a tone of questioning.

However, the target text modifies this by adopting a reflective and implied tone through the phrase "Wondering why you're still…." This choice aligns better with English stylistic norms, where indirect expressions often feel more introspective and poetic. The ellipsis at the end further enhances the reflective tone, inviting the audience to ponder without explicitly completing the thought.

The ST has 7 syllables, while the TT has 6, resulting in a discrepancy of 1 syllable. This difference can affect how the lyrics fit the song's melody, potentially disrupting the natural flow and timing.
To address this, translators often adapt the phrasing to match the original syllable count more closely, ensuring the translated lyrics align seamlessly with the music.

10. Source Text: Masih terpenjara bayangnya (9 syllables)
Target Text: Still imprisoned in her past memories (10 syllables)
Technique: Amplification

The translation adds detail to clarify and expand on the meaning of the source text. The source text, "Masih terpenjara bayangnya," translates more directly to "Still imprisoned by her shadow" or "Still imprisoned by her." This phrasing is metaphorical, leaving the "shadow" open to interpretation.

In the target text, this is expanded to "Still imprisoned in her past memories," specifying what the "shadow" symbolizes. The addition of "past memories" helps English readers understand the emotional and psychological nuance of being metaphorically "imprisoned," aligning with cultural preferences for clarity and emotional depth in English. Both the ST and TT have 10 syllables, indicating a perfect match in syllable count.

The ST has 9 syllables, while the TT has 10, resulting in a discrepancy of 1 syllable. This difference can affect how the lyrics fit the song's melody, potentially disrupting the natural flow and timing. To address this, translators often adapt the phrasing to match the original syllable count more closely, ensuring the translated lyrics align seamlessly with the music.

11. Source Text: Aku sungguh cinta (6 syllables)
Target Text: You are the one I love (6 syllables)
Technique: Modulation

The translation rephrases "Aku sungguh cinta," which more directly translates to "I really love (you)," into "You are the one I love." This shift makes the target text more expressive and emotionally impactful in English.
The source text emphasizes the speaker's feeling of deep love, presented in a straightforward way. While "I really love (you)" would be an accurate literal translation, it may feel less poetic or emphatic in English. By rephrasing it as "You are the one I love," the target text intensifies the sentiment, placing greater emphasis on the unique and personal nature of the love being expressed. Both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) have 6 syllables.

12. Source Text: Tapi mungkin kamu yang bodoh (8 syllables)
Target Text: But perhaps you're still a fool for her (8 syllables)
Technique: Addition

The translation introduces the phrase "for her," which is not explicitly stated in the source text but provides additional context to clarify the emotional or relational nuance. The source text, "Tapi mungkin kamu yang bodoh," translates more literally to "But maybe you're the fool," a general statement.

By adding "for her," the target text specifies the cause or focus of the foolishness, suggesting that it relates to someone significant. This addition aligns with the need for clarity in English, helping readers better understand the implied context and emotional undertones of the original message. Both the ST and TT have 8 syllables, indicating a perfect match in syllable count.

13. Source Text: Untuk mencoba buatmu senyum lagi (12 syllables)
Target text: Try to make you smile and bring back your old laughter (12 syllables)
Technique: Paraphrase

The translation rephrases and expands the source text to enhance emotional depth and resonance. The source text, "Untuk mencoba buatmu senyum lagi," translates more directly to "To try to make you smile again." While accurate, this literal phrasing is straightforward and lacks the added nuance that the target text introduces.

The target text, "Try to make you smile and bring back your old laughter," not only preserves the core intent of the original but enriches it with the addition of "and bring back your old laughter." This phrase adds a layer of warmth and nostalgia, deepening the emotional impact and making the translation more evocative and engaging for English-speaking audiences. Both the ST and TT have 12 syllables, indicating a perfect match in syllable count.

Based on the analysis of 13 data points, it was found that there are 4 differences in syllable counts between the Source Text (ST) and the Target Text (TT). These differences could affect the rhythm and melody of the song, especially if the translation is used for musical purposes.

CONCLUSION
The translator applied Molina and Albir's translation techniques, with the most common being Modulation (7 instances, 56%), followed by Amplification (3 instances, 23%), and single instances of EstablishedEquivalent, Addition, and Paraphrase (7% each). These techniques helpedadapt the lyrics while maintaining meaning, emotional tone, and culturalcontext. Most of the translations successfully matched the syllable countbetween ST and TT, ensuring that the translated lyrics fit the original melody. This is critical in song translation because even a single extra syllable can disrupt the rhythm and make the lyrics feel rushed or awkward when sung.While most translations inthis study successfully matched the syllable count,the 4 instances of mismatched syllables demonstrate the challenges of maintaining both rhythm and meaning. Translators must be creative and flexible, carefully adapting the lyrics to fit the melody without losing the emotional essence of the original

song.This balance is critical for creating translations that resonate with the audience and maintain the integrity of the music.

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