

# Analysis on the Translation Procedures of Culture-Specific Items in *Tilik* (2018) Short Movie

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**Abstract.** Translating culture-specific items is not easy because it requires knowledge and understanding of a particular culture related to the word. Despite many studies have been conducted related to translation procedures of culture-specific items (CSIs), there is still a lack in the literature, particularly the procedures in the Javanese to English translations of CSIs in films and short movies. This study used CSIs classification and translation procedures based on [7]. The object of this study was *Tilik* (2018), a Javanese short movie which was produced by Ravacana Films. This research attempts to find the types and the dominant used procedure that was used by the subtitler of *Tilik* (2018) short movie to translate the culture-specific items. This study employed a qualitative descriptive methodology. The result revealed that the most CSIs appeared in the short movie was “Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts” which includes politics and administration, religious and artistic terms, while the least CSIs appeared was “ecology”. The Most used procedure was “cultural equivalent” while the least used procedure was “transference” and “synonymy”.

**Keywords:** javanese, translation procedures, culture-specific items, short movie

## 1 Introduction

The evolution of the media industry, coupled with the influence of globalization, has led to the extensive dissemination of media content. Translation serves as a means to bridge the gap between different cultures in the context of globalization. Thanks to various factors such as trade, technology, and scientific advancements, globalization has turned the world into a more interconnected and interdependent place [6]. Among the indigenous languages in Indonesia, Javanese holds a prominent position. As of 2020, it boasted the highest number of speakers, totaling 68.2 million across the country's islands [6]. In today's media landscape, individuals outside of Java can also access Javanese short films, thanks to the growth of the media industry. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the appropriate procedures for translating content from one language to another to ensure effective communication.

However, translating Javanese into English can be challenging, as not all Javanese terms have direct English equivalents, given that some concepts are unique to the Javanese culture. The most difficult situation for translators arises when there is no comparable item in the target culture, and when such items are unfamiliar to most of the target audience [15]. Consequently,

when translating culture-specific elements, it becomes essential to consider the cultural context to prevent misinterpretation. In this study, culture-specific items (CSIs) were categorized and translated based on [7] framework [7], which includes five classifications of CSIs: ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts, gestures, and habits.

Within [7] framework, which offers 17 translation procedures, only nine were observed in the English subtitles of the 2018 short film "Tilik." These procedures include transference, naturalization, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, synonymy, shift or transpositions, recognized translation, reduction and expansion, and couplets.

There were several studies about the translation of culture-specific items, but most of them used print-based literary works like novels. The researcher used five previous studies related to strategies in translating culture-specific items [3], [5], [9], [10], [12]. Two of the previous studies found cultural equivalence as the most used procedure [5], [9]. Two others found absolute universalization [3], [12] as the most used procedure, and the last one used repetition or pure borrowing procedure [10]. Most of these previous studies used novel or literary text for the research object. Meanwhile, the development of globalization enables us to consume other nation's cultures through films, short movies, videos, and so forth. Therefore, a recent study aims to reveal the translation procedures of the culture-specific items used in "*Tilik (2018) short movie*". The researcher anticipates that the findings of this study will provide valuable insights for translators, particularly subtitlers and screenwriters, in effectively conveying cultural meaning. However, little is known whether those patterns will also be found in short movies that use indigenous language (Javanese) as the source and international language (English) as the target language.

The object of the study was a Javanese short movie which was produced by Ravacana Films. *Tilik (2018)* was chosen because this movie contains many unfamiliar words in the target language (English) [8]. Another factor is that, although numerous studies have examined translation procedures for culture-specific items (CSIs), there remains a gap in the literature specifically regarding the procedures used in translating CSIs from Javanese to English in films and short movies. This research attempts to find the procedures and the dominant procedures that are used by the subtitler of *Tilik (2018)* short movie to translate the culture-specific items. The result of the study is expected to give a contribution to the readers in increasing their knowledge, especially in comprehending culture-specific items expressions by understanding the theory and meaning and, also to be the reference for other researchers to do some related research in deeper, further, and better procedures.

## **2 Literature Review**

In this section, the overview of the classification of CSIs and translation procedures based on [7], is provided [7].

### **2.1 Translation Procedure**

Some experts in the field of translation have tried to form the translation procedure. Translation procedure is different from translation method. Translation procedures are used for sentences and smaller linguistics components, whereas translation methods are used to evaluate the entire text [7].

#### **2.1.1 Transference**

Based on (Newmark 1988, p. 81), transference refers the process of rendering a source language text to a target language text as part of the translation process. This process encompasses transliteration, which involves converting different alphabets and results in the use of loan words. It is frequently used to translate various types of names, such as those of individuals, whether they are alive or deceased, geographic and topographic names, titles of publications and newspapers, and the names of private companies and organizations. For instance, the words 'orang utan' and 'mal' are directly translated as 'orangutan' and 'mal' respectively, serving as examples of this translation approach[7]

### **2.1.2 Naturalization**

Following the process of transference, this procedure takes place, where the source language word is modified to match the standard pronunciation and morphology (word forms) of the target language. Examples of this can be observed in the words 'sarung' and 'bambu', which are translated as 'sarong' and 'bamboo', respectively.

### **2.1.3 Cultural Equivalent**

This is a procedure that translates cultural words from the source language to the target language's cultural words. For example is the word 'Jaksa Agung' which in English Culture was translated into Attorney General.

### **2.1.4 Functional Equivalent**

This procedure enables translators or subtitlers to make the source language word more neutral or general by occasionally incorporating a specific term. For instance, the word 'wisuda', which is translated into 'graduation day' in English.

### **2.1.5 Synonymy**

This process involves matching a close target language word to a source language word within a given context, even if a precise match does not necessarily exist. This method is employed when there is no direct one-to-one equivalent for a source language word, especially for descriptive adjectives or adverbs. For instance, the term 'cute' denoting small size, can be translated as 'lucu' in Bahasa Indonesia.

### **2.1.6 Shift or Transposition**

This translation procedure involves altering the grammatical structure when moving from the source language to the target language. One form of adjustment is made when switching from singular to plural. The second type of adaptation becomes necessary when a grammatical structure in the source language lacks a similar meaning in the target language. The third type of modification pertains to situations where a literal translation is grammatically feasible.

### **2.1.7 Recognized Translation**

This procedure involves employing the formal or recognized translation of organisational terms. For instance, translators are required to refer to the book titled 'Pedoman Pengindonesiaan Nama dan Kata Asing' published by Pusat Pengembangan Pembinaan Bahasa, Depdikbud RI when translating foreign languages into Bahasa Indonesia."

### **2.1.8 Reduction and Expansion**

Reduction refers to eliminating components in the process of translating into the target language. For instance, this can be seen when translating the word 'automobile' to 'mobil'. Conversely,

expansion represents the opposite of reduction, where the target language employs additional words to convey a notion from the source language more comprehensively. For example, when translating 'whale' to 'ikan paus', 'ikan' is added to ensure a precise meaning, as 'paus' also carries an alternative meaning of 'the pope' in Bahasa Indonesia.

### **2.1.9 Couplets**

Couplets, triplets, and quadruplets is the procedure that use two, three, or four of the previous mentioned procedures, to address a single issue. This procedure is used when dealing with cultural words, especially when transference is paired with a functional or cultural equivalent procedure.

## **2.2 Culture-Specific Items**

According to Aixela (1996, p.56), Culture-specific items are usually revealed in a text through the use of objects, classification systems, and measurements exclusive to the source culture or by describing opinions habits that are equally unfamiliar to the receiving culture [1].

The following is the classification of culture-specific items according to Newmark (1988, p.95) [7].

### **2.2.1 Ecology**

Flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills. This classification contains the names of plants, trees, animals, winds, and natural phenomena.

### **2.2.2 Material culture**

Food, clothing, housing and urban centers, and transportation are the example of this category. This category contains food, beverages, clothes, houses, regions, and transportation.

### **2.2.3 Social culture**

Employment and recreational activities. This classification contains different forms of human work, entertainment, hobbies, and sports.

### **2.2.4 Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts**

Governmental and administrative, spiritual, and creative. This classification contains the names of political organizations, activities, procedures, ideas, religions, and so forth.

### **2.2.5 Gestures and Habits**

Non-linguistic features. This classification contains the name of routine or habitual actions.

## **3 Methodology**

The present study adopts a descriptive qualitative design, wherein the researcher utilizes verbal descriptions rather than numerical data and measurements. In applied linguistics, qualitative research is defined as "resources primarily associated with the simplification of information to words (codes, labeling systems, categorization, narratives, and so forth) or to interpretation arguments" [2]. The data consist of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences that include culture-specific items identified within the English subtitles and Javanese transcription. The data were obtained from Ravacana Films youtube channel. In data collecting process, there were some

steps that the researcher did. Firstly, watching the movie to comprehend the utterances. Secondly, transcribing the conversation used in the movie. Thirdly, reading the transcription. Fourthly, finding all culture-specific items based on the CSIs classification that was used. Finally, put the CSIs on a table. In this study, the selected short film is *Tilik* (2018), a Javanese production directed by Wahyu Agung Prasetyo. The film depicts the journey of a group of village women traveling to the city on a truck to visit their female village leader, who is hospitalized. The culture-specific items (CSIs) in Javanese transcription and English subtitles were classified and categorized based on [7] classification and translation procedure.

## 4 Findings

**Table 1.** List of CSIs Classification found in the short movie

No.	CSIs Classification	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Ecology	2	4,5%
2.	Material Culture	9	20,4%
3.	Social Culture	7	15,9%
4.	Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts	21	47,7%
5.	Gestures and habits	5	11,3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>100%</b>

After classifying the CSIs from the collected data, the researcher found 44 total numbers of CSIs out of 309 lines of conversation. 2 CSIs related to ecology, of which the percentage is 4,5%. 9 CSIs related to material culture the percentage is 20,4%. 7 CSIs related to social culture, of which the percentage is 15,9%. 21 CSIs related to Organization (customs, activities, procedures, political and administrative terms, religious and artistic terms) which the percentage is 47,7%, and 5 CSIs related to gestures and habits that the percentage is 11,3%. Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, and concepts became the most CSIs appeared because the story that was presented in the short movie contains many terms that are more related to this classification such as the term Mrs. Mayoress, qur'an recitation, and tie your thumb. The second most appeared CSIs is related to material culture classification which consists of terms such as food, clothes, houses and towns, and transportation. The example are motorcycles, mosques, buses, and trucks. The third most appeared CSIs is related to social culture classification which contains the names of human labor, entertainment, hobbies, and sports. The examples are police, doctor, and contractor. The fourth most appeared CSIs is related to gestures and habits classification which contains routine and habitual actions. For example, the term ran away, friendly, and handy. The least appeared CSIs are related to ecology classification which includes plant, tree, animal, wind, and natural phenomenon. For example, the term rice, field, and snake.

**Table 2.** List of Translation Procedures found in the short movie

No.	Types of Procedure	Total Number	Percentage
1.	Transference	2	3,7%
2.	Naturalization	3	5,6%
3.	Cultural Equivalent	16	30,1%
4.	Functional Equivalent	3	5,6%
5.	Synonymy	2	3,7%
6.	Shift or Transposition	3	5,6%
7.	Recognized Translation	9	16,9%
8.	Reduction and Expansion	12	22,6%
9.	Couplets	3	5,6%
<b>Total</b>		53	100%

In terms of translation procedures, the researcher obtained 9 procedures used by the English subtitler in rendering 44 totals of CSIs and found 53 total procedures occurred in translating the short movie indicating that more than one procedure occurred in translating some CSIs. First, transference was used twice with the percentage being 3,7%. Second, naturalization was used 3 times with the percentage being 5,6%. Third, the cultural equivalent was used 16 times with the percentage being 30,1%. Fourth, the functional equivalent was used 3 times with the percentage being 5,6%. Fifth, synonymy is used twice with the percentage being 3,7%. Sixth, shift or transposition is used 3 times with the percentage being 5,6%. Seventh, recognized translation is used 9 times with the percentage being 16,9%. Eighth, reduction and expansion were used 12 times with the percentage being 22,6% and the ninth, couplets was used 3 times with the percentage being 5,6%. Based on this finding, the most translation procedure used by the English subtitler was the cultural equivalent that occurred 16 times with the percentage being 30,1%. Meanwhile, the least used translation procedure were transference and synonymy which occurred only twice with the percentage being 3,7%. Out of 17 procedures by Newmark (1988), it is only 9 that were identified in the collected data.

## 5 Discussion

The discussion of the findings can be seen as follows. The definition of the procedures is based on [7].

### Transference

Transference refers to the translation procedure of rendering a word from the source language to the target language text. This process encompasses transliteration, which involves converting different alphabets and results in the use of loan words.

SL: “Dian mlaku-mlaku neng mal coba.”

TL: “Dian hang out with someone at the mall” (Tilik (2018) = 16:02)

Based on Khan (2020), Javanese is one of the indigenous languages in Indonesia that has the most speakers with the number of 68.2 million people spread across the islands in the country [6]. It results in the similarity of some words between Javanese as the indigenous/ traditional language and Indonesian/Bahasa Indonesia as the national language. The word “mal ” is an example of the similarity. The word itself derives from the English word “mall” and is adjusted with the grammatical rules of Indonesian and in this case, Javanese too. Thus, the subtitler used the word “mall” to translate “mal”. This word is classified in the material culture classification in the subcategory of houses and towns [7].

### **Naturalization**

Following transference, this procedure ensures that the source language word is initially adapted to the standard pronunciation and morphology (word forms) of the target language.

SL: “Yu Ning, adewe ngapa to ora nganggo bis wae ki. Malah reka-reka wae nganggo trek mbarang.”

TL: “Yu Ning, why didn't we take the bus instead of this truck.” (Tilik (2018) = 13:52)

The term “bis” was translated into “bus” by the subtitler using the naturalization procedure because there was an adjustment of the pronunciation from the SL to the TL’s normal morphology. This word is classified in the material culture classification based on [7] in the subcategory of transport [7].

### **Cultural Equivalent**

This translation is an approximation where a cultural term from the source language is transformed into a corresponding cultural term in the target language.

SL: “Kowe ra sisan po dik?”

TL: “Don't you want to take a pee too, baby?” (Tilik (2018) = 09:39)

The word “dik” in Javanese can be translated as someone who is younger than us or as a term for husbands to call their wives, romantically. The subtitler used the word “baby” to translate the source language since in English Culture, “baby” other than meaning newborn is also a term to call our loved ones, including wife. This term is categorized in the organizations, customs, activities, procedures, and concepts classification under the customs category based on (Newmark’s, 1988) [7].

### **Functional Equivalent**

This widely used method, employed for cultural words, necessitates the utilization of a culturally neutral word, occasionally accompanied by a newly introduced specific term. As a result, it makes the source language word more neutral or broad in its meaning.

SL: “Heh tenan. Pas kui, aku ki bali saka pengajian. Hooh to. Neng cedak omahe mbah dar kae lo. Kae kan lak petengan to. Hooh to? Nah ana wong muntah-muntah saka duwur motor. Bareng tak cedeki lhakok dian he. Bukane aroh-aroh weruh aku malah nginggati coba. Iah kuwi ki nek ra mergo muntah meteng ngapa kok ndadak nginggati aku coba. Hooh ora?”

TL: "That night I was on my way home from Qur'an recitation. Near Mbah Dar's house, in the dark junction, there was someone throwing up when I went closer, turns out it was Dian. Instead of saying hello, she just ran away. If it was not morning sickness, why would she ran away from me? True that." (Tilik (2018) = 06:08)

Since there was no cultural equivalent of the word "pengajian" in English, the subtitler used this procedure to translate the source language into English. This procedure enables the subtitler to show the functional equivalent between the word in the source and target language. In Javanese/ the source language "pengajian" means an activity of reciting the Qur'an and other religious activities. So, using this procedure, the subtitler showed the equivalent meaning of the two terms. This word is classified in the organizations, customs, activities, procedures, and concepts classification based on [7] in the sub-category of religious terms [7].

### Synonymy

In this procedure, a target language word that is nearly equivalent is assigned to a source language word based on the context, even if an exact equivalent is not available. This approach is used when a source language word does not have a direct one-to-one equivalent, especially when these words carry importance in the text, such as descriptive adjectives or quality adverbs.

SL: "Aku kok weroh fotone dian kok merinding kabeh awakku."

TL: "My body is shivering just by looking at her picture." (Tilik (2018) = 02:31)

The word "merinding" is a culture-specific item related to gestures which is classified into the gestures and habits classification based on (Newmark's, 1988) [7]. The word "merinding" was translated into "shivering" which closely means "menggigil" in Javanese and Indonesian. The term shiver usually is used for someone who is shaking as a result of being cold. However, it can also be used to express someone who is frightened, amazed, or excited about something. That is probably the reason for the subtitler using this term rather than "goosebumps" the correct English term for the word merinding because the word "shivering" have a similar meaning with "goosebumps" in this context.

### Shift or Transposition

This translation procedure encompasses modifying the grammar from the source language to the target language. One type of modification includes changing from singular to plural. The second type of modification is necessary when there is no equivalent grammatical structure in the target language for a structure in the source language. The third type of modification pertains to cases where a literal translation is grammatically feasible.

SL: "Iki ki wis adoh-adoh tekan kene piye nek dewe ki mampir pasar gedhe wae?"

TL: "we are already go this far, what if we stop by the central market while we are here?" (Tilik (2018) = 28:04)

The subtitler used this procedure because there is an alteration of word order from SL term to TL term. The word "pasar gedhe" in SL is formed by noun + adjective meanwhile the word "central market" in the TL is formed by adjective + noun. This word is classified in the material culture classification based on [7] in the subcategory of houses and towns term [7].



### Recognized Translation

This procedure includes utilizing the officially recognized or widely accepted translation of any institutional term.

SL: “Eh Yu Ning, nek mu ngomong ki ati-ati lo ya heh. Bapakne bocah-bocah kui nek golek duwik cetha nek halal. Aku ki bojone aku sing ngerti. Aku ki sengit yen ana uwong sing ngerasani bapakne bocah-bocah. Dumeh saiki ki dadi pemborong sukses kekancan karo para pejabat trus saiki senengane ngomongke sing ora-ora. Kaya njenengan sakniki.”

TL: “Yu Ning, watch your mouth. My husband is a good man. He is working properly. I am the wife. I am the one who knows all about him. I'm upset when someone talk lies about my husband. Just because now, he is a successful contractor, befriended with a lot of politicians, people talk lies and gossip about it. Like what you do right now.” (Tilik (2018) = 18:48)

The subtitler translated the word “pemborong” into “contractor” since it is the official or generally accepted translation. This word is classified in the social culture classification based on [7] in the subcategory of work term [7].

### Reduction and Expansion

Reduction refers to removing components from the translation module in the target language, as exemplified by the word 'automobile' being translated as 'mobil' in Bahasa Indonesia.

SL: “Lho laiya, ning saiki coba do mikir. Aku ki bukane nyilikke bandane keluargane dian lho ya. Cetha ket cilik dian ki ditinggal minggat karo bapakne, yo. Ibune wi nduwe sawah yo ra sepiroo. Mulakno rampung SMA dheweke ora kuliah. Nembe nyambut gawe, handphone anyar, motor anyar. Hoooh ra?”

TL: “Just think about it. I'm not saying anything about their family. Her father left her when she was a child, her mother just has a little plot of rice field. That's why she didn't go to college. She just started working, suddenly her phone is new, so does her motorcycle.” (Tilik (2018) = 03:50).

SL: “mas, kok ketoke aku wis ra betah yo mas urip delikan kaya ngene ki. Kapan yo mas fikri iso nampa yen bapakne arep rabi meneh?”

TL: “Hon, I think I can't handle it anymore. Living under the radar like this. When would it be the time Fikri accept that his father is going to remarried?” (Tilik (2018) = (29:29).

There are two examples for this procedure. The first one is the word “sawah” which is translated into “rice field” by the subtitler and is categorized as using an expansion procedure because the TL uses more words to re-express the term in the SL. Meanwhile, the second example is the word “rabi meneh” which is translated into “remarried” and is categorized as using a reduction procedure because the TL uses fewer word to re-express the term in the SL. This word is classified in the ecology for the term “sawah” and organization classification for the term “rabi meneh” based on [7] in the sub-category of plains and customs term [7].

### **Couplets**

This procedure combines two individual translation procedures to address a specific issue. In this case, the translator/subtitled has to be creative in combining two different procedures to achieve natural translation [14]. It is commonly used when dealing with cultural terms, especially when a combination of transference and a functional or cultural equivalent is employed

SL: “mangkane do duwe hp kui mung ra dinggo nggaya tok ning nggo nggolek informasi ngono lo. Yo?”

TL: “You need to learn to use your phone not only to show off, but to find some information, okay?” (*Tilik (2018)* = 02:22).

It is common to have two or more procedures in translating any culture-specific items. In this case, the subtitler used this procedure which combines the cultural equivalent and reduction & expansion procedure to translate the term “nggaya” into “show off” in the TL. This word is classified in the organizations, customs, activities, procedures, and concepts classification in the activities category based on [7].

## 5 Conclusion

The analysis of the findings revealed that within the context of the short film, a significant concentration of culture-specific items (CSIs) could be categorized under "Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts." This encompassed various facets, including politics, administration, religion, and art. In contrast, the "ecology" category contained the fewest CSIs. During the translation process, the majority of terms were skillfully adapted into a "cultural equivalent." Notably, three CSIs underwent translation through combined procedures, while others were rendered using single procedures.

The data underscores the subtitler's deliberate efforts to provide a translation that harmonized closely with the cultural context of the target language, thereby enhancing the short film's appeal to its intended audience in the target culture. The translation procedure most frequently employed was "reduction and expansion," whereas "transference" and "synonymy" saw limited use in the translation of CSIs. Additional procedures such as transference, naturalization, synonymy, shift or transposition, recognized translation, and couplets were only sparingly utilized.

In essence, culture-specific items often defy literal translation into the target language, demanding a nuanced understanding of the source culture. The translator's skill in selecting the most suitable procedures becomes paramount, especially when the source language is indigenous, such as Javanese, which boasts numerous variations for a single term. For instance, the term "sego" is generally translated as "rice" in English, but Javanese offers several alternatives like "pari, gabah, beras," all translated as "rice" in English, despite their distinct meanings.

Furthermore, for the advancement of research, particularly in the field of translation, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study. Given that the subject of examination was a short film, the quantity of available data was somewhat restricted compared to a feature-length film or series. Additionally, the use of a single theory for CSI classification resulted in a narrower pool of identified CSIs. Thus, future research should consider longer video-based entertainment formats and explore the integration of multiple theories for CSI classification, aiming to generate more precise and dependable data for analysis.

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