

The Resistance and Negotiation of Religious Culture-Specific Terms in Translating Novel *Cantik Itu Luka* from Indonesian to French

Noor Diana Arrasyid^a, Sajarwa^{b*}

^{ab}Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The cultural differences between source language and target language give rise to the resistance and negotiation in translation. This study aims to observe the resistance and negotiation patterns that arise in religious cultural terms translation. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the source text in Indonesian and the target text in French and identify the resistance and negotiation emergence in the translation outcome. The results show that the resistance emergence frequency is strongly relates to religious figures and religious groups' translation. The resistance also arises when the translator only provides a footnote on a term. On the other hand, negotiation often arises in translations that correspond to religious artifacts and moral aspects. We concluded that resistance emerges in various cultural terms translation which the references are general in religious culture-specific terms. Conversely, cultural terms translation that have specific and diverse references tend to be negotiable. The existence of specifications and diverse of meaning of a religious culture-specific terms will make their meaning fading, particularly for target text readers.

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1. Introduction

In translation studies, the cultural terms' translation process are the most frequent problems, including religious culture-specific terms translation (AlGhamadi, 2016). The religious culture-specific terms are seen as "sensitive terms" considered important for adherents of that belief and culture (Malmkjær, 1993; Simms, 2006, pp. 19–24). That way, translators who deal with religious culture-specific terms play a big role in understanding the SL culture and traditions in order to be able to translate it to gain the understanding of target text (TT) readers (Larson, 1998). However, the distance between linguistic factors, the religious aspect complexity itself, and the differences cultures between SL and target language (TL) cause this type of text translation to be more complex than translating others and becomes very strange to TT (Baker, 2018; Nababan, 2008; Nida, 1994, p. 191). Translators also have to face difficulties in transferring messages since religious culture-specific terms are considered "dictated by diety" which, if not translated correctly, will lead to misunderstandings, fatal misjudgments, and various risks (Mujazin et al., 2019).

For these reasons, some translators choose literal translation due to the assumption that there may be several hidden meanings that cannot be translated arbitrarily, and they are very susceptible to distortion (Mujazin et al., 2019; Newmark, 1998, p. 119). However, literal translation may result in errors or illegibility in TT due to the inability of meaning achievement because translation is strongly influenced by the culture of the language speakers (Delabastit, 2013, p. 34; Machali, 2013; Nida, 1997, p. 195; Sajarwa, 2021, p. 59). This complexity poses a significant obstacle in translation practice due to it relates to various intralingual and extralingual aspects that must and/or need to be translated, such as cultural identity (Nida & Taber, 1964). Thus, a translator who acts as a negotiator between the two languages needs to mediate these problems, one of which is by applying resistance and

* sajarwa.ugm.ac.id (Sajarwa)

negotiation aspects in translation. The resistance and negotiation concepts emerged as a middle ground for the problem of cultural transfer in translation (Eco, 2013; Venuti, 1995). Cultural resistance concept exists to build and strengthen cultural identity (Conway, 2010; Vilkiènè, 2021; Ying & Huandi, 2021; Yu & Liu, 2021). On the other hand, cultural negotiation is a bargaining process on the translation of cultural aspects when there is no cultural equivalent in the target language. Negotiation becomes a difficult process since translators have to make many decisions to produce a comprehensive translation (Redelinghuys, 2019).

Concrete examples of religious culture-specific terms translation problems can be seen in various literary works such as novels. Compared with other types of texts, literary works, including novels, are the type of texts containing many cultural elements and are always positioned as a linguistics communication and is a reality fictional symbol in society (Barthes, 1966, p. 19; B. Hoed, 1992, pp. 6–7; Ma'shumah & Sajarwa, 2022; Teeuw, 1980; Zhu et al., 2022). Thus, it represents culture and real aspects of society life in every community. For example, Indonesia is one of countries that utilize literary works as a media for promoting culture through international literary community (Ma'shumah & Sajarwa, 2022). One of the most discussed Indonesian literary work is the novel entitled *Cantik Itu Luka* (2004) by Eka Kurniawan. The novel is a literary work full of religious cultural values that developed in Indonesia from the colonial period (Naveau, 2022; Nugroho, 2018). This novel tells the story of Indonesia from Dutch colonial period until independence, which placed in fictional setting created by the author, named Halimunda. The author intensely brings the nuance of Javanese and Sundanese cultures into the whole story so that the readers can assume that Halimunda is a region placed in the middle of Java and Sunda. Ayu Dewi, the main character, known as very-well-known prostitution who has three beautiful daughters. At the time she gives birth her fourth, she hopes that the baby will be ugly to avoid become a prostitute like herself. The novel was translated into various languages, one of which is French. The various cultural terms appeared in the novel drive the translator who tends to maintain cultural nuance becomes a dilemma due to the target text readers' understanding of those terms. Therefore, translating a literary work requires right strategies (Mardiana, 2015). Thus, in current research, these two novels will be analyzed to reveal how the translator maintain and negotiate cultural items appeared on the novel.

The topic of resistance, negotiation, and cultural terms translation are ongoing aspects that have been studied in various languages such as Indonesian, French, English, Arabic, and Japanese (Abdel-Hafix, 2020; Agung, 2016; AlGhamadi, 2016; Hapsari et al., 2020; Kurniawati, 2021; Yulianita, 2017). Abdel-Hafix (2020) examines religious culture-specific terms translation found in Arabic novels and their translations into English. On the other hand, AlGhamdi (2016), referring to Baker's theory and his analysis, revealed that translation strategies such as omissions and substitution will cause incompatibilities and make religious culture-specific terms is prone to mismatch in translation studies. That way, many terms related to social organization, including religion, are translated with a domestication orientation to make the reader understand better the terms (Kurniawati, 2021). Sajarwa (2021), Ma'shumah et al (2021) and Ma'shumah & Sajarwa (2022) examine resistance and negotiation that appear in literary works and conclude that the TT readers, the resistance provides new concepts, and negotiation makes it easier for them. Various previous studies have used different material objects, theories, and approaches.

From the various studies described, there has been no research that uses *Cantik itu Luka* and *Les Belles de Halimunda* to be analyzed relating to resistance and negotiation. Although there are similarities in the theory usage, this current research will provide new arguments due to difference of formal and material object analyzed. The translation process of the novel is complex due to the cultural differences between Indonesia and France. Therefore, this study will discuss various types of religious culture-specific terms in the novel, as well as resistance and negotiation that arise in its translation.

The analysis is lead on religious culture-specific terms taxonomic theory proposed by AlGhamdi (2016) which consists of eschatology, moral and ethical criteria, religious artifacts, religious constructions, religious events, religious groups, religious greetings, religious activities, supernatural beings, and religious sites. These taxonomic has chosen because it combines taxonomies that have been found in other theories and is suitable to discuss the data. However, if current analysis finds a new taxonomy, it will be analyzed more deeply. Subsequently, in order to look at the resistance and negotiation aspects, the analysis will look at various theories and previous studies. This study aims to identify the correspondence of each taxonomy and resistance and negotiations, to explore in depth

the resistance and negotiation patterns that arise in religious culture-specific terms translation, to show the adaptation to TT. This study offers an update in terms of material objects so that the analysis results will provide arguments that can be compared with previous studies. This comparative study will provide an in-depth argument regarding the comparison of two languages with very different language and cultural gaps.

2. Methods

In current study, the data are the terms in form of words and phrases referring to religious culture-specific terms in Indonesian and their translation into French. The data was retrieved from two novels namely *Cantik Itu Luka* (2004) as the ST and *Les Belles de Halimunda* (2017) as the TT. We also added English translations for each data. The novel was chosen due to it highlighted and elevated Indonesian cultures, mainly Javanese and Sundanese, such as religion, belief, and local mythology (Nugroho, 2018). It also reflects two currents cultures considered contradictory but always present together, namely Islamic and feminist literature and culture (Naveau, 2022). In its translation into French, it raises problems related to the gap in religious culture-specific terms in Indonesia and France. The terms chosen by the translator are greatly influence the TT readers. This makes the selected novel quite effective as a data source.

This study applies a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to explain a phenomenon and its characteristics (Nassaji, 2015). Qualitative descriptive approach in this study is used to identify and explore religious culture-specific terms and expression in each Indonesian and French novels. Afterwards, a comparative method was used to determine resistance and negotiation in the translation of the Indonesian novel *Cantik Itu Luka* into its French translation. A quantitative approach is also used to determine the distribution and trend of the data as seen from data percentage. At the data collection stage, all parts of the novel were read in detail. The terms regarding religious culture-specific terms in ST and their equivalents in TT are collected by recording. The data are later grouped based on the types of religious culture-specific terms taxonomy (AlGhamadi, 2016). Furthermore, the data is reviewed by looking at resistance concept to find the resistance and its translation. Data that are not related to resistance are later reviewed with negotiation concept. That way, data groups will be found that contain negotiations in the translation.

The next stage is data analysis which is carried out by reviewing resistance and negotiation patterns comprehensively that arise in Indonesian religious culture-specific terms translation into French. From the existing data, it will explain the relationship between resistance and negotiation patterns that appear with each religious culture-specific terms taxonomy found. The findings obtained will also be compared with previous findings to strengthen the argument and see the novelty in this research. The analysis is presented in a descriptive way and ends with a conclusion.

3. Results and Discussion

In this study, 54 religious culture-specific terms in the form of words and phrases are observed. This research observed the meaning of these terms and their equivalent meanings in the target text. However, semantic analysis is also used if it is to explain lexical variations in a meaning. From the total data, 21 of them are culture-specific terms which their translation apply resistance, while the other 33 of the data apply negotiation in their translation into French. These data are also divided into various religious culture-specific terms taxonomies.

Table 1. Resistance in Translating Religious culture-specific terms

Types of Religious culture-specific terms	Percentage	ST Examples	English Translation	TT Examples
Religious Figures	52%	1. ...untuk datang melihat apa yang mereka sebut menyerupai kelahiran seorang nabi ...(CIL: 7)	1. ...to come and see what they call resembling the birth of a prophet ...	1. ...qui venaient voir ce dont on parlait comme s'il s'était agi de la naissance d'un prophète ... (LBH : 20)

Ectology	27%	2.	Ia bahkan tak mampu mendeskripsikannya, hanya membayangkannya sebagai monster kutukan neraka . (CIL: 3)	2. <i>She couldn't even describe it, only imagining it as a curse monster of hell.</i>	2. <i>Elle n'était même pas capable de le décrire. Elle se l'imaginait seulement comme un monstre damné de l'enfer. (LBH : 15)</i>
Supernatural Beings	12%	3.	Ia bahkan lebih percaya mereka sebagai anak-anak setan . (CIL: 9)	3. <i>She even more believe them as the children of satan'</i>	3. <i>Elle allait même jusqu'à croire que ses enfants étaient les filles de démons. (LBH : 22)</i>
Religious Groups	6%	4.	...di mana mereka memperbandingkan lolongan ajak sebagai bintang yang dilihat orang Majusi ketika Yesus lahir dan si ibu yang berselimut kain kafan sebagai Maria yang letih. (CIL: 7)	4. <i>...where they compare the howling of invitation as the star that the Magi saw when Jesus born and the mother who wrapped in the shroud as the exhausted Mary.</i>	4. <i>...comparant les hurlements des chiens aux étoiles qu'avaient vue Mages à la naissance de Jésus, et la mère enveloppée d'un linceul à une Marie épuisée. (LBH : 20)</i>
Religious Activities	3%	5.	Maka ia membiarkan perutnya semakin besar, menjalankan ritual selamatan pada umur tujuh bulan, membiarkannya lahir, meskipun ia menolak untuk melihat bayinya. (CIL: 6)	5. <i>So she let her belly getting bigger, performing the ritual of selamatan at the age of seven months, allowing it to be born, even though she refuse to see her baby.</i>	5. <i>Elle laissa alors son ventre s'arrondir, suivit le rituel du selamatan* des sept mois, consentit à accoucher, même si elle refusa de voir le bébé. (LBH : 18)</i>

From total of 21 data related to resistance, 52% are included in religious figures taxonomy, giving example in data (1), namely the word *nabi* 'prophet' which is translated into '*prophete*', 27% of the data related to ectology or a believe of future events regarding a religion, as in data (2), namely the word *neraka* 'hell' that was translated to '*enfer*', and 12% is related to supernatural beings, which can be seen on the data (3) namely the translation of the word *setan* 'satan' into '*demons*'. Based on the analysis, the large percentage of these categories is influenced by the fact that some term related to religious figures, ectology, and supernatural beings are classified as general even though it is related to certain religious cultures. In general, people are familiar with various terms related to religious culture that do not belong to them (AlGhamadi, 2016). Moreover, regarding the data context, the lexical meaning used to describe the religious figures, ectology, and supernatural beings in Indonesian and in French is quite similar. Conversely, only 6% of the total data relates to religious group, giving example in data (4), namely the word *Majusi* 'Magi' that is translated to '*Mages*', and 3% that relates to religious activities, as an example of the term *ritual selamatan* 'ritual of *selamatan*' which is not translated. because it is so specific to Javanese culture that there is no equivalent in French.

The little amount of the percentage relates in both taxonomies show that resistance is quite challenging for terms that are very specific to a culture (Baker, 2018; Nababan, 2008; Nida, 1994, p. 191). However, to face this problem, translators is still able to resist the SL meaning, for example by giving a footnote containing a description of meaning on an untranslated term, such as the word *selamatan* in data (5). In this case, the footnote prepared by the translator will help TT readers understanding. In this novel, untranslated terms are consistent. This means that when a term is footnoted, the same term that appears afterwards is also not translated and the reader can refer to the footnote. This resistance is also carried out by translators to introduce religious concepts from the culture of TT to the target text community who have different cultures (AlGhamadi, 2016). Thus, those results strengthen the characteristic of TT culture by maintaining their identity (Sajarwa, 2021).

The resistance raised in the data is also divided into two types, namely resistance of form and also of meaning. Translators apply form related resistance to translate common terms and terms that do not have multiple references

(Sajarwa, 2021). These various terms only have differences in the language aspect, but have the same meaning and semantic elements. Subsequently, resistance related to meaning is raised in terms that are grammatically different between the source language and the target language. The data above shows that resistance aspect of the novel analysed are the resistance of form.

Based on the examples above, this study found that resistance appears in various cultural terms translation which are still classified as general terms and are not very specific to certain religious cultures. However, translators can find other ways, namely by providing a footnote, to maintain the meaning of very specific terms. Apart from culture, resistance is also related to social aspects involving various ideologies. Various studies have shown that resistance is a barrier to intercultural understanding in translated texts (Conway, 2010; Yuan, 2020). Furthermore, target text readers' knowledge has a role in the existence of resistance to religious culture-specific terms in the novel analysed. Looking at the culture in the TT country, it is known that France is a European country with a big population of Muslim, and most of them are Maghreb peoples, Africans, Turkish, and peoples from another country. Moreover, it is said that Islam has become a popular religion in France (*Le nombre de musulmans en France et en Europe*, n.d.). In 2017 when the TT was published in France, the number of Muslim in France are 5.7, or 8.8% of the population (Banet & Fauchet, 2018). This indicates that some of French population has the same religious cultural background as the culture shown in the source text. Thus, several terms can be understood without lots of explanation.

The study also founded that negotiation emerged more than resistance, with example data below:

Table 2. Negotiation of Translating Religious culture-specific terms

Types of Religious culture-specific terms	Percentage	ST Examples	English Translation	TT Examples
Religious Artifacts	64%	6. “Telah kuberikan empat anak perempuan bagi dunia yang tekutuk ini. Saatnya telah tiba keranda kematianku lewat.” (CIL: 7)	6. <i>I have given four daughters to this cursed world. Now it is time for my death coffin to pass.</i>	6. « ... <i>J’ai offert quatre filles à ce maudit monde. L’heure de mon convoi funèbre est venue.</i> » (LBH : 19)
Moral Aspects	21%	7. Namun dengan cepat kegaduhan itu harus segera berakhir, secepat polisi-polisi datang bersama seorang kyai yang melihat semua itu sebagai bidah . (CIL: 8)	7. <i>But quickly the commotion had to end, as soon as the police arrived with a kyai who saw all this as heresy.’</i>	7. <i>Mais cette agitation dut rapidement cesser, dès l’irruption de policiers accompagnés d’un kyai qui considérait tout cela comme une hérésie.</i> (LBH : 21)
Supernatural Beings	7%	8. Dewi Ayu berbaring tenang di atas tempat tidurnya berselimut kain kafan, menanti dengan kesabaran ganjil malaikat pencabut nyawa datang menjemputnya. (CIL: 7)	8. <i>Dewi Ayu lay quietly on her bed covered in a shroud, waiting with odd patience the angel of death to come and take her.</i>	8. <i>...Dewi Ayu était calmement allongée sur son lit, enveloppée d’un linceul, attendant avec une patience extraordinaire que l’ange de la mort vienne prendre son âme.</i> (LBH : 19)
Ectology	6%	9. Bahkan mereka berharap sedikit keajaiban daripada sekedar kegaduhan kuburan tua, sebab perempuan di dalam 3tanah itu pernah jadi pelacur bagi orang Jepang sejak masa perang dan para kyai selalu bilang	9. <i>They even hoped for a little miracle instead of just the noise in the old graveyard, because the women in those three lands had been prostituted for the Japanese since the wartime</i>	9. <i>Ils avaient même quelque peu espéré un miracle plutôt que le simple tumulte provenant de la vieille tombe, du fait que la femme qui y était enterrée avait été une prostituée au service des</i>

		bahwa orang-orang berlepotan dosa pasti memperoleh siksa kubur. (CIL: 1)	and the kyai always said that people with sins will get torment of the grave .	Japonais durant la guerre et que les kyai* répétaient que les personnes souillées de péchés seraient tourmentées dans leur tombeau (LBH : 12)
Religious Figures	2%	10. "Yah," kata Dewi Ayu. "Namanya Cantik". "Oh," orang-orang itu menjerit pendek, mencoba menolak dengan cara yang memalukan. "Atau Luka?" " Demi Tuhan , jangan nama itu." (CIL: 5)	10. "Well," said Dewi Ayu. "The name is Beauty". "Oh," those people are <i>shorthly screaming, trying to refuse in an embarassing way</i> . "Or Pain?" " For God's sake , not that name."	10. Ouais, répondit Dewi Ayu. Son nom est Belle. Oh, s'écrièrent certaines, tentant de s'y opposer d'une manière à lui faire honte. Ou Blessée ? Mon Dieu , pas ce nom. (LBH : 17)

From the 33 data analyzed, the translation related to negotiation aspects appears in various taxonomies such as religious artifacts, moral aspects, supernatural beings, ectology, and religious figures. However, the emergence of the most negotiating aspects can be seen in terms regarding religious artifacts, which percentage is 64%, as in data (6) which shows the word *keranda* ‘coffin’ to be ‘*convoi funèbre*’. Moral aspect taxonomy is also occurred numerously, with the percentage of 21%, which the example can be seen on the data (7) namely the word *bidah* ‘heresy’ that is translated into ‘*une hérésie*’. The large percentage of these taxonomies is due to the specific terms to a culture that becomes very strange to TT culture (Baker, 2018; Nababan, 2008; Nida, 1994, p. 191). Looking at the data (6) and (7), at first glance, the various terms in Indonesian and their translations look similar. However, both have different religious cultural backgrounds. Various religious culture-specific terms in Indonesian have an Islamic cultural background, while the translation has a Catholic cultural background. This is due to the different cultures that develop in the two countries and have the majority of people with different religious cultures. The internalization of the term Indonesian religious culture, which is predominantly Muslim, to the French community, which is predominantly Catholic, will lead to misconceptions. In this case, the translator acts as a cultural negotiator so that TT can be well understood by the target language community. However, the negotiations existence increases the possibility of blurring the religious culture concept given by the author even though it attempts to prevent conflict by taking a middle ground (Sajarwa, 2021).

Contrarily, the taxonomy of supernatural beings, ectology, and religious figures only appears in little amount. The analysis found that of the total data, there is only 7% data on the supernatural beings taxonomy related to negotiation, 6% for the ectology, and 2% for the religious figures. This small percentage shows that the terms that appear in the three taxonomies are not much negotiated, and this finding is strengthen previous one that cultural translation in these types of taxonomy is more resistant than negotiating its meaning. This phenomenon can be seen from data (8) that shows the phrase *malaikat pencabut nyawa* ‘the angel of death’ which is translated into ‘*l’ange de la mort*’, data (9), which the term *siksa kubur* ‘torment of the grave’ is translated into ‘*tourmentées dans leur tombeau*’, and data (10) that shows a term *demi Tuhan* ‘for God’s sake’ which is translated into ‘*Mon Dieu*’. In terms of meaning, the translation in French has similarities with Indonesian, but the translator still negotiates it by changing Indonesian terms with terms that are more familiar in TT. Like the resistance aspect explained, the negotiation aspect also appears in two forms, namely negotiation of form and negotiation of meaning. Negotiation occurs when the terms in the source text have the same meaning, but are present in different forms. Conversely, negotiation of meaning occurs when the terms in the source text have different meanings from the target text. For example, data 8 shows the term *malaikat pencabut nyawa* ‘angel of death’ which translated to *ange de la mort*. These two terms have the same meaning, but presented in different linguistics form. The ST shows the act, but the

TT shows the subject or the agent. In addition, the analysis also shows a tendency that translation is negotiated even when translators translate a text literally.

The arguments above shows that various cultural terms in Indonesian apply the negotiation aspect in their translation into French. The analysis found that meaning adaptation of the ST into the TT appear to provide understanding to TT readers. However, appropriate translation in cultural terms context will not be fulfilled perfectly due to the gap between the culture of source language and the culture of target language (Baker, 2018; Ma'shumah et al., 2021; Newmark, 1988). Later on, if a term is very closely related to a certain religious culture, the negotiation possibility will be greater than the lexicon with a general meaning. These ways facilitate the TT readers because the target language culture does not have terms with the same form, context, and meaning. In addition, negotiation is also widely applied to a term that have various meanings (Sajarwa, 2021). This case is due to the meanings diversity will make the meaning fading, particularly when viewed by the target text readers. It is known that resistance and negotiation are no longer limited to cultural transfer issue from ST into TT.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that a translator becomes a facilitator in maintaining the source culture and concept to the target culture through resistance and negotiation. Based on the data, religious culture-specific terms resistance in translation is most often seen in terms related to religious figures, religious groups, and some ectology aspects that have general references. Resistance is also raised when the translator does not translate a term, but is given a footnote, that will be able to introduce the religious concepts from ST culture to TT readers. Based on the context, French community will understand most of the terms due to the large population of Muslim there. On the other hand, negotiations often arise in various terms translation related to religious artifacts and moral aspects. This is due to every religious group in society has specifications in naming terms related to specific concepts such as artifacts and moral aspects. The existence of negotiations will make the specific meaningful term understood by readers with different cultural backgrounds from the culture in ST. However, the negotiation in translation studies will diminish the original meaning of a term.

The research found that resistance appeared in various cultural terms translation which references were general in religious culture. On the other hand, cultural words translation that have specific references tend to be negotiable. This is due to every religious culture has a specification of form, context, and meaning. This finding complements the previous finding that negotiation in the realm of translating religious culture is applied to translate various terms that have various meanings (Sajarwa, 2021). The specifications existence and the meanings diversity of a religious culture term will make their meaning fading, particularly for TT readers.

This research is limited to the resistance and negotiation aspects that appear in the novel with the Indonesian context and its translation into French. This study also uses only one novel to see the emerging of resistance and negotiation patterns. The deep implications of resistance and negotiation existence have not been studied in depth, such as the emergence of strategies as a result of resistance and negotiation in the translation related to the term religious culture. The existence of this research will complement the argument that resistance and negotiation in cultural terms is one source of the various strategies, techniques, methods used by translators to transfer a source language cultural context into the target language.

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