

# LEARNERS' STRATEGY FOR TRANSLATING LITERARY TEXT: FIRST-DRAFTING WUTHERING HEIGHTS TRANSLATION ANALYSIS

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## Abstract

Literary texts contain complex literary information. Types of literary information are subjective information and objective information. In translating that aforesaid information, there are some obstacles both objective and objective obstacles. Therefore, translating literary works requires proper strategy. This paper examines certain strategies used by the students to render literary information in the process of first-drafting literary text translation. The data in this study are 27 prospective literary pieces of information expressing knowledge about culture, morality, and humanities carried out by the text of *Wuthering Heights* Chapter 1 by Emily Bronte that has been firstly translated from English to Indonesian by learners joining translation class. The method used in this study is a qualitative one. By adopting the literary translation strategy promoted by Kazakova (2015), the result of this study shows that most students tend to use helper-strategy to compensate for the peculiar information with more neutral equivalent terms in the target language although somehow, they are trapped in unbiased strategy for making the translation product more natural in general.

Keywords: literary translation, strategy, literary text

## INTRODUCTION

Translating literary text is a complex process as the translator must communicate and render the meaning naturally or near equivalent to the target texts. The process is complicated as literary texts contain sophisticated information related to culture, "cultural nuance", elements of literature such as theme and style, and cultural patterns (Alfarisy, 2020; Haque, 2012; Kazakova, 2015; Karjagdiu and Mrasori, 2021,

Mediouni, 2017). Due to the complexities, Alfarisy's study (2020) reveals the main difficulty faced by translators is a difficulty related to meaning such as textual and contextual meanings as well as sociocultural implications. Other studies highlight a similar idea as Alfarisy's that culture is a difficult item to translate (Chaal, 2019; Hussain, 2017). Dousti Zadeh (2006) and Nord (2011) in Kahrizsangi and Haddadi (2017) disclose that cultural information

and culture-specific challenges can be serious challenges. From the previous studies conducted by some scholars, it can be concluded that the major obstacle to translating literary texts is dealing with the cultural aspects or items.

Considering the difficulties and obstacles, some scholars propose different ways to cope with the obstacles. Husain (2017) proposes a way out of overcoming the difficulty of translating culture is by being “a bridge across different cultures”. Similarly, Larson in Chaal (2019) suggests that translators must be the “bridge of the cultural gap”. However, being a “bridge” is also difficult because it requires cultural and intercultural competencies, cultural knowledge as well as “knowledge of source and target culture” (Esfandiari, Sepora, & Mahadi, 2015; Olk, 2009; Kahrizsangi and Haddadi, 2017; Klimczak-Pawlak, 2018). From the previous researchers’ suggestions, it can be said that having cultural knowledge of both source and target texts is important to support the translation process. Notwithstanding, mastering such knowledge is not easy to achieve for learners from other countries whose languages and cultures are different from the source language. Accordingly, this study addresses the gap by investigating how learners use strategies for translating literary text, especially text containing complex and cultural information.

### **Literary Translation**

Literary translation refers to translating literary texts from the source language into a target language. This concept is supported by Bush in Mediouni (2017) who states that “literary translation is the translation of literary works”. Bush’s definition triggered Boase-Beier (1998) to critically challenge the meaning of literary texts. He demanded further definitions related to the

concept of literary texts. Thus, Boase-Beier (1998) provides an assumption related to the concept of the literary text. He thinks the literary text is a text which has style. Style is considered as equally important as the meaning contained in the literary text. Thus, it can be concluded that literary translation is a translation that involves “style as well as meaning”. The literary translation includes “historical or philosophical text”, “song text” or lyric, “text of jokes”, and “advertisement”. In contrast, the definition of literary translation excludes “scientific texts”, “reports”, and other similar texts (Boase-Beier, 1998).

Considering Boase-Beier’s idea that literary text has style, translating literary text must be done by creating a balance in expressing emotion that exists in “artistic contexts” (Kahrizsangi and Haddadi, 2017). Creating balance can be done creatively by translators. Because literary translation allows the translator to share creatively, some scholars postulate that literary translation is an art (Landers, 2001; Chaal, 2019). In other words, literary translation the translators to make “an art processing from the text level, semantic and cultural dimensions” (Chen, 2015; Kazakova, 2015).

### **Literary information**

Literature is viewed as a source of information. Carter and Long in Rashid, et.al (2010) see literature on the basis of the cultural model claiming that literature is a “source of facts” in which, in the teaching context, it can be used as a medium to disseminate knowledge and information from teachers to their students. Kazakova (2015) defines literary information as literary text’s ability to relate to readers’ or translators’ senses through such informational levels, thoughts, and emotions situated in a specific environment and context. Information

contained in literature can be knowledge about philosophy, culture, morals, and humanities.

Regarding literary translation strategy, Kazakova (2015) formulates literary

translation strategies into two main categories. They are biased-strategy and unbiased-strategy. In summary, the theory of literary translation strategies is presented below:

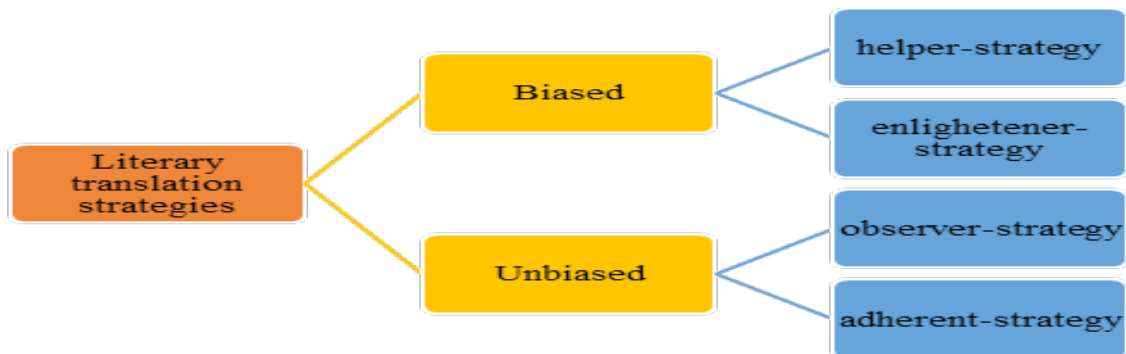


Figure 1. Literary translation strategies proposed by Kazakova (2015)

The figure above elucidates literary translation strategies formulated by Kazakova. Biased strategy consists of two strategies, that is helper-strategy and enlightener strategy. Helper-strategy is a strategy that tends to protect readers from the complexity of meaning either interlingual or intercultural meaning. Thus, the readers can experience a better understanding related to the text. Enlightener-strategy tries to educate readers by providing additional information for the text being translated.

In another respect, an unbiased strategy is a strategy that tries to keep verbal expression or characteristics of the texts. Unbiased-strategy consists of two strategies, that is observer-strategy and adherent-strategy. Observer-strategy is a strategy that tends to make “the stylistic peculiarities” more neutral. The meaning resulting from observer-strategy employment is like the meaning provided by the dictionary. Therefore, the equivalent of the meaning is typically the formal equivalent, and it somehow fails to achieve the functional equivalent of the linguistic units. Adherent-strategy, on another side, uses conservative

fundamentals and tends to translate verbal forms and expressions as they are. Words or phrases containing cultural items are only transliterated by the adherent strategy. This strategy only translates grammar and structure without any change and sometimes violates the grammatical rules of the target language.

## METHOD

### The context: Participants and course

There are 19 learners from one classroom involved in this study. The learners are classroom members of a class called Workshop on Academic/Educational Translations. All the learners are local students who do not have any experience of living abroad or living in English-speaking countries. Their mother tongue is mainly their local dialect and Indonesian language. The course aims at providing practical exercises for students to translate various texts, not to mention literary texts. The translation class is conducted offline. In the initial process, the students draft their translations and followed by revising the activity of their translations in the next step.

### Procedures and Data Analysis

The data used in this study were some words and phrases from the learners' translation products containing literary information. The literary text chosen was *Wuthering Heights* Chapter 1 written by Emily Bronte. The reason for choosing the text is to stimulate the learners to be aware of the literary information contained in the rich cultural items in the literary text.

The data were analysed using the qualitative method. The qualitative method focuses on the meaning and allows the researcher to interpret phenomena that happened in certain situations (Borg, 2013; Gil-Garcia, 2006). The step for analysing the data is as follows:

Identifying specific literary information which contains cultural information, morals, humanities, and specific verbal expressions contained in the source text (ST) and the translated text or target text (TT). The source text is *Wuthering Heights* Chapter 1 written in English, while the TT is in the Indonesian language.

Identifying the literary translation strategy employed by the students by comparing the ST and TT.

Interpreting the data using a qualitative approach to discuss the results.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Literary translation strategies in learners' translation products

Table 1 summarises the literary text translation strategies that were used by the learners.

Table 1. Literary translation strategies used by learners (Kazakova, 2015)

Translation Strategy	Total	Percentage
Bi-ased helper-strategy	228	47%
enlightener-strategy	0	0%

Un-observer- bi-strategy	103	21%
ased adherent- strategy	155	31%

Table 2 presents the specific literary information that the learners translated using literary translation strategies promoted by Kazakova.

Table 2. List of specific literary information translated by learners.

Literary information (cultural information) contained in the ST	Knowledge carried out by literary information
misanthropist's heaven	philosophy and culture
a jealous resolution	morality
Thrushcross Grange	Culture
walk in	culture
Go to the Deuce	Culture and morality
establishment of domestic	Culture
compound order	Culture
grass grows up between the flags and cattle are the only hedge-cutters	Culture
pious ejaculation	philosophy and culture
Station	Culture
crumbling griffins	Philosophical and culture
penetralium	Culture
introductory lobby	Culture
parlour	Culture
liver-coloured bitch	Humanity
pointer gypsy	Culture
underbred pride	Morality and humanity
dear mother	Humanity
took a seat	Morality
My caress	Morality and humanity
vis-à-vis	Morality
physiognomy	Facial features
poker	Culture and morality
What the devil is the matter?	Culture
'What the devil, indeed!'	Culture
worse spirits	Culture
The pledge	Morality and humanity

Table 1 above shows that most literary text is translated using a biased strategy mainly helper-strategy (47%), followed by

unbiased strategy that is adherent-strategy (31%) and observer-strategy (21%). As shown in table 1, enlightener-strategy is never utilized by the learners for their first-draft translation. Table 2 lists the literary information having implications for knowledge about philosophy, culture, morality, and humanities.

Helper-strategy is acknowledged

as the most strategy employed by learners. The learners use this strategy to translate the text containing cultural knowledge implied in the short story. Cultural knowledge is expressed through certain words and phrases in the short story. The following are some examples of the first-draft translation result using helper-strategy.

Table 3.1 First-draft translation result using helper strategy.

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation (BT)
<b>‘What the devil is the matter?’</b> he asked, eyeing me in a manner that I could ill endure, after this inhospitable	<b>‘Apa yang terjadi?’</b> dia bertanya, menatapku dengan tata krama yang tidak bisa aku tahan setelah perlakuan yang amat tak pantas ini.	<b>‘What happened?’</b> he asked, staring at me with manners which I could not endure after this inappropriate treatment.

The datum presented in Table 3 above shows an expression containing cultural knowledge. Some learners translated the phrase “What the devil is the matter?” into “*apa yang terjadi?*”. Considering the context of the narration, the phrase “What the devil is matter?” indicates an expression of annoyance or surprise. The excerpt is part of the conversation between the main character, Heathcliff, and Lockwood. Heathcliff is the owner of the mansion called Wuthering Heights, while Lockwood, the narrator of the story, is the owner of the neighbouring mansion called Thrushcross Grange who gave a visit to Wuthering Heights and met Heathcliff. In chapter 1, Heathcliff’s displeasure toward Lockwood is expressed through his verbal communication and gestures. Heathcliff dislikes Lockwood because he vows revenge on Lockwood and Thrushcross Grange. The phrase “What the devil is the matter” indicates Heathcliff’s surprise as he notices turmoil as the impact of his pointer’s attack on Lockwood. In this case, the learners are culturally aware that the phrase is for emphasizing annoyance or surprise.

Culture in ‘TT’ usually uses the phrase “*apa yang terjadi?*” to ask surprisingly to someone. However, this phrase might be justified as not culturally the closest equivalent to the ST culture as in English “devil” represents the informal way to ask someone, while the “*apa yang terjadi?*” is a bit formal expression used by Indonesian which does not emphasizes mixed feeling that is shock and annoy. The back translation (BT) also indicates an unequal sense of surprise. The translation result points out the helper-strategy applied to translate the phrase as the learners, according to Kazakova (2015), would like to protect the readers from less polite expressions. The word “devil” is considered a less polite expression in the culture of the target language. The learners in this case try to help readers understand the context and story without imposing rude expressions on them. In short, the learners consider the morality carried out by the culture.

Another example of helper-strategy application is found in the following translation draft:



Table 3.2 First-draft translation result using helper strategy.

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation (BT)
The 'walk in' was uttered with closed teeth, and expressed the sentiment, <b>'Go to the Deuce:</b> even the gate over which he leant manifested no sympathising movement to the words;	Kata 'masuklah' diucapkan dengan gigi tertutup dan diekspresikan dengan sentimen, <b>'Persetan:'</b> bahkan mulutnya tidak menunjukkan Gerakan simpati pada kata – katanya;	The word 'come in' was spoken through gritted teeth and expressed with the sentiment, <b>'Damn it:'</b> even his mouth showed no gesture of sympathy at his words;

Table 3.2 elucidates another helper-strategy used by the learners for their first-draft translation. It was found 10% of the classroom members translated "the phrase **"Go to the Deuce"** into "Persetan", while another 10% of learners translate it into "bicara pada si Iblis" (BT: "Talk to the Devil)", and the rest 80% of learners translated the phrase into "Pergi ke Deuce" (BT: "Go to the Deuce"). From this finding, it can be said that only small numbers of learners are aware of the cultural information implied in the literary text. The phrase "Go to the Deuce" in English is equivalent to the expression "Go to the Hell" or "Go to the Devil". The word "Deuce" means "Devil" which the word "Devil" is considered rude. Thus, the expression is softened by substituting the word "Devil" with the word "Deuce" to make it less rude although the expression is still indicating

someone's anger. The learners, however, translated it into "*Persetan*" which is considered a rude, callous, and unsympathetic expression in Indonesian culture. In this case, the learners used helper-strategy to help readers feel the sense of Heathcliff's anger and dislike toward Lockwood.

Although there are classroom members aware of cultural information contained in the phrase "Go to the Deuce", the majority of students failed to render the cultural information in the source text into near equivalent expression in TT. More than 80% of students employed adherent-strategy which they did not change any word equal to the word "Devil" in the TT. The failure is also shown when the learners translate the phrase **"What the devil is the matter?"** as shown in the following table 4.

Table 4. First-draft translation result using adherent-strategy.

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation (BT)
<b>"What the devil is the matter?"</b> he asked, eyeing me in a manner that I could ill endure, after this inhospitable treatment.	<b>'Apa yang iblis lakukan?'</b> dia bertanya, menatapku dengan cara yang tidak bisa aku tanggung, setelah perlakuan yang tidak ramah ini.	"What is the devil doing?" he asked, looking at me in a way I couldn't bear, after this unfriendly treatment.

Table 4 above discloses different versions of other learners' translation drafts. Some learners translate the phrase **'What the devil is the matter?'** as it is, 'Apa yang iblis lakukan?'. In this case, the learners do not consider the cultural information implied in the text and translate it adherently

using the adherent-strategy. The result of back translation (BT) implies the same expression literally as the source text. The strategy applied by the learners distorts the cultural meaning of "devil" which is supposed to be the sign or symbol of a surprised and annoyed expression. By translating the

word “devil” as it is, the focus and tone of the text are shifted. Heathcliff would like to emphasize that he experienced shock about what was happening in his mansion as he disliked the turmoil and Lockwood. However, the learners shift the subject to the devil which is not meant to be the main

subject matter in the conversation.

Another strategy employed by the learners is observer-strategy. The following table illustrates how the learners used observer-strategy for their first translation draft.

Table 5. first-draft translation result using observer strategy.

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation (BT)
‘Here we have the whole establishment of domestics, I suppose,’ was the reflection suggested by this <b>compound order</b> .	‘Di sini kita memiliki seluruh pelayan-pelayan rumah, saya kira,’ adalah refleksi yang disarankan oleh <b>perintah kompleks</b> ini.	‘Here we have a whole house of servants, I think,’ is the reflection suggested by this <b>complex commandment</b> .

As shown, the learners tried to “neutralize peculiarity” (Kzakova, 2015) implied in the metaphoric expression “**compound order**” into a near equivalent expression in Indonesian to be “perintah kompleks”. The phrase *perintah kompleks* in TT indicates the sophisticated instruction with a difficult level of complexity given to someone. The learners tried to translate the context into near-equivalent terms in TT. Observer-strategy allows the learners to observe the context of the text and translate the term into a closer equivalent to the target text. Although the learners successfully neutralise the phrase, the phrase fails to emphasize the sense of being forced to do a lot of

jobs. The phrase “*perintah kompleks*” can be interpreted also as a complex command for one task, but compound order is supposed to reflect masters’ order to their workers for doing many tasks. In short, compound order can reflect overloaded different tasks burdened to the workers.

### Untranslated information

Most of the information contained in the literary text is translated into the TT by the learners. However, there is some information that was not translated by the learners. The following are some examples of the information that was skipped by the learners.

Table 6.1 Untranslated information

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation (BT)
He little imagined how my heart warmed towards him when I beheld his black eyes withdraw so suspiciously under their brows, as I rode up, and when his fingers sheltered themselves, with a <b>jealous resolution</b> , still further in his waistcoat, as I announced my name. ‘Mr. Heathcliff?’ I said.	Dia sedikit membayangkan bagaimana aku luluh ketika melihat mata hitam di bawah alisnya mengerut dengan curiga, saat aku melihat ke atas, <b>dan ketika jarinya bersembunyi di balik rompinya</b> , aku menyebutkan namaku.	He barely imagined how I would melt when I saw the black eyes under his brows furrow with suspicion, when I looked up, and <b>when his fingers hid under his waistcoat</b> I said my name.

Table 6 informs us of untranslated information in the literary text. The phrase “with a **jealous resolution**” signifies information about morality. The information deals with morality which the text would like to tell the readers about jealousy of Heathcliff toward Lockwood. Some learners did not translate the information about jealousy might because they notice much information attached to Heathcliff. The translated text “*dan ketika jari-jarinya bersembunyi di balik rompinya,*” reestablished the soft image of Heathcliff. The learners tried to use observer-strategy. The learners observed the most significant expression described the characteristics of Heathcliff, then they decided to skip minor expressions.

Table 6.2 Untranslated information

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation (BT)
He is a dark-skinned gypsy in aspect, manners and gentleman:	Dia adalah seorang <b>berkulit gelap</b> , dengan pakaian yang rapi dan sopan santun seorang gentlemen:	<b>He was a dark man,</b> with neat clothes and the manners of a gentleman:

Another untranslated literary information is cultural information. The word “**gypsy**” hints the cultural information. Gypsy refers to nomadic ethnicities. However, the learner did not completely translate the text and skipped translating Gypsy. By skipping the “gypsy”, the learner makes the text have a more general typical gentleman who has dark skin. Dark skin, however, is not only owned by the gypsy, but other ethnic and societies can also have the dark skin

complexion. In this case, the learner tried to use helper strategy intending to protect the readers from the concept of gypsy. Thus, the learner makes it more general to be “*seorang berkulit gelap*”.

Table 6.3 Untranslated information

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Text	Back Translation (BT)
Joseph mumbled indistinctly in the depths of the cellar, but gave no intimation of his master dived down to him, leaving me <b>vis-à-vis</b> the ruffianly bitch and a pair of grim shaggy sheep-dogs, who with her a jealous guard-ianship over all my move-	Joseph gumam tak jelas di dalam ruang bawah tanah, tapi tidak memberikan tanda akan naik; sehingga majikannya turun mencarinya, <b>meninggal-kanku den-gan anjing betina galak</b> dan sepasang anjing berbulu panjang yang sama tidak ramahnya dengan anjing betina mengawasi pada setiap pergerakanku.	bermumbled tak jelas di dalam ruang bawah tanah, tapi tidak memberikan tanda akan naik; sehingga majikannya turun mencarinya, <b>meninggal-kanku den-gan anjing betina galak</b> dan sepasang anjing berbulu panjang yang sama tidak ramahnya dengan anjing betina mengawasi pada setiap pergerakanku.	Joseph muttered incoherently in the cellar, but gave no sign of rising; so his master went down stairs looking for him, leaving me with a fierce bitch and a pair of long haired dogs who were just as unfriendly as female dogs watching my every move.

“Vis-à-vis” means a person or thing that has the same characteristics as others.



“Vis-à-vis” is derived from the French which means “face-to-face”. This phrase signifies the cultural information from the root which is suggested to be avoided in the conversation unless the speakers and the interlocutors would like to create a sense of humour or comic expression. This phrase is not translated into the TT because the learners might not have a cultural background related to the term.

Table 6.4 Untranslated information

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation (BT)
<p><b>B e f o r e</b> passing the threshold, I paused to admire a quantity of grotesque carving lavished over the front, and especially about the principal door; above which, among a wilderness of <b>crumbling griffins</b> and shameless little boys, I detected the date ‘1500,’ and the name ‘Hareton Earnshaw.’</p>	<p><b>S e b e l u m</b> melewati ambang pintu, aku berhenti sejenak untuk mengagumi sejumlah ukiran aneh yang terdapat di depan, <b>dan terutama di sekitar pintu utama; di atas aku melihat tanggal ‘1500,’</b> dan nama ‘Hareton Earnshaw.’</p>	<p>Before crossing the threshold, I paused to admire some of the strange carvings in front of, and especially around, <b>the main door; above I see the date ‘1500,’</b> and the name ‘Hareton Earnshaw.’</p>

The phrase “crumbling griffin” in the above datum has cultural information. Griffin can be culturally categorised as a mythological creature in the form of a lion that has wings or can be wingless with the head of an eagle. The Wilderness of Griffin is not translated might because the learners do not have any references related to the culture of Greek where the Griffin

originally comes from. In TT’s culture, it is difficult to find the near equivalent term of Griffin unless the learners use the adherent and observer strategies by translating the Griffin as it is. However, one of the learners decided to omit this phrase from his draft of the translation.

### Pedagogical Implications

This study suggests an implication for teaching literary text translation. Based on the findings, I suggest encouraging the facilitators to facilitate discussion with the learners and encouraging learners to do revisions for the first-draft translation product. In the revision process, the learners can collaborate with the facilitators to deeply brainstorm about literary information contained in the literary texts being translated. By conducting brainstorming and discussion, facilitators can transfer knowledge about culture, morality, or humanities that might be carried out by the literary text.

### CONCLUSION

This study examined the strategies used to translate the literary text entitled *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte as a regular exercise for the learners of the translation workshop class. The strategy used is helper-strategy meaning that the learners tried to help readers to understand the text better by providing near equivalent meaning in TT.

From all analyses presented in the discussion, the learners have an awareness related to literary information contained in the literary texts reflecting information about culture, morality, etc. by using some strategies such as helper-strategy, adherent-strategy, and observer-strategy. Although, the cultural information is successfully translated into the TT, some other cultural information failed to be rendered into near

equivalent meaning in TT. Consequently, there is a slight distortion in the first draft of the translation product. By considering this fact, it can be said that translating cultural information is difficult and can be a serious challenge (Chaal, 2019; Dousti Zadeh 2006; Hussain, 2017; Nord in Kahrizsangi and Haddadi, 2017).

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