



## Translation Strategies and Cross-Cultural Communication: A Study of Indonesian English Text Adaptations

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**Abstract.** *This study explores the translation strategies and cross-cultural communication involved in Indonesian–English text adaptations, emphasizing the interplay between linguistic transfer and cultural meaning. The research aims to identify how translators manage linguistic, contextual, and cultural nuances to achieve equivalence and maintain communicative intent across languages. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected from various translated texts, including literary works, academic materials, and digital media content. The analysis focuses on techniques such as domestication, foreignization, literal translation, and cultural substitution, highlighting their impact on meaning accuracy and reader reception. The findings reveal that successful translation requires not only linguistic proficiency but also intercultural awareness and adaptive competence. Translators act as cultural mediators who bridge the gap between source and target audiences, ensuring that messages resonate appropriately within distinct cultural frameworks. This study contributes to the understanding of translation as a dynamic intercultural process and underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity in translation pedagogy and practice. The implications suggest that developing translators' cross-cultural communication skills enhances translation quality and promotes more effective intercultural understanding.*

**Keywords:** *Cross-Cultural Communication; Equivalence; Linguistic Adaptation; Translation Strategies; Translator Competence.*

### 1. BACKGROUND

The globalization of communication has increased the importance of translation as a bridge between languages and cultures. In multilingual contexts such as Indonesia, translation plays a crucial role in facilitating understanding and cultural exchange between Indonesian and English speakers. However, translation is not merely a linguistic transfer but also an act of cultural negotiation. Each language embodies distinct values, norms, and worldviews, making the process of translating from Indonesian to English more complex than a literal word-for-word conversion. Misinterpretations often occur when cultural meanings are not properly conveyed, leading to communication barriers and loss of contextual depth.

Previous studies on translation have extensively discussed equivalence, fidelity, and translation strategies, yet many focus predominantly on linguistic accuracy rather than cultural adaptation. Research by scholars in translation studies emphasizes the tension between domestication and foreignization—two strategies that determine whether a translation adapts to the target culture or retains source-culture elements. However, few studies specifically address how these strategies function in the Indonesian–English translation context, where cultural and linguistic structures differ significantly. This gap

highlights the need for a more integrated approach that considers both linguistic and cultural dimensions of translation.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on how translation strategies contribute to cross-cultural communication in Indonesian–English text adaptations. Unlike previous works that examine translations at a purely textual level, this study investigates the translator’s role as an intercultural communicator who negotiates meaning between two cultural systems. The urgency of this research stems from the growing demand for high-quality translations in academic, literary, and digital media, where cultural sensitivity and communicative effectiveness are increasingly valued.

The objective of this study is to analyze the translation strategies employed in Indonesian–English text adaptations and to determine how these strategies influence cross-cultural understanding. By identifying effective approaches to managing linguistic and cultural differences, this research aims to enhance translation practices and promote more meaningful intercultural communication between Indonesian and English-speaking communities.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

In an era of globalization, translation has become an essential tool in facilitating communication and understanding between speakers of different languages. As Indonesia increasingly engages with the global community, the need for accurate and culturally appropriate translations from Indonesian to English has grown significantly. Translation is not merely a linguistic process of converting words from one language to another; it is a complex act of cultural transfer that involves interpreting and recontextualizing meanings. Every language carries unique cultural expressions, idioms, and worldviews, making the process of translation a negotiation between two distinct cultural systems. Consequently, translators must not only possess linguistic proficiency but also intercultural competence to effectively convey meaning and preserve the communicative intent of the source text.

Research on translation has long examined strategies such as domestication and foreignization, literal and free translation, as well as equivalence and adaptation. Studies by Venuti, Nida, and Newmark have established foundational theories on how translators balance fidelity to the source text with readability in the target language. However, existing studies often focus more on linguistic structures and textual equivalence rather than exploring the broader implications of translation as a medium of cross-cultural

communication. In the Indonesian–English context, where cultural values and communication styles differ significantly, there is still limited research that examines how translation strategies can promote or hinder intercultural understanding. This gap indicates an urgent need to study translation not only as a linguistic process but also as an intercultural act that reflects, negotiates, and reshapes cultural identities.

The novelty of this study lies in its exploration of translation as a form of cross-cultural communication through the lens of Indonesian–English text adaptations. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize linguistic equivalence, this research highlights the translator’s role as a mediator who bridges cultural meanings and social contexts. The urgency of the study is reflected in the growing demand for translations that are culturally responsive, especially in academic, literary, and digital communication

The main objective of this research is to analyze the translation strategies used in Indonesian–English text adaptations and evaluate how these strategies influence the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication. The study aims to contribute to the development of translation practices that enhance mutual understanding between different linguistic and cultural communities, thus strengthening intercultural dialogue in the globalized world.

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore translation strategies and their role in facilitating cross-cultural communication in Indonesian–English text adaptations. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of linguistic and cultural phenomena that cannot be quantified through statistical methods. The design emphasizes the interpretation of meaning, translation techniques, and the translator’s decision-making process in adapting texts across cultural contexts.

The research population consists of various Indonesian texts and their English translations, including literary works, academic writings, and online media publications produced between 2015 and 2024. From this population, a purposive sampling technique was used to select samples that represent diverse genres and translation strategies. The criteria for selection included texts that contain clear cultural elements, idiomatic expressions, and contextual nuances requiring adaptation during translation.

Data collection was conducted through document analysis and expert validation. The primary data sources were pairs of original and translated texts, while secondary data included interviews and written responses from professional translators and linguists. Data were gathered by identifying translation shifts, strategies, and patterns using coding and categorization techniques. The main instrument of this research was the researcher, supported by a checklist adapted from translation strategy frameworks developed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), Nida and Taber (1969), and Venuti (1995).

Data analysis was carried out through Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Each text pair was analyzed to identify dominant translation strategies such as literal translation, modulation, equivalence, adaptation, domestication, and foreignization. The frequency and context of each strategy were examined to interpret how translators managed linguistic and cultural equivalence.

The research model used in this study illustrates the relationship between translation strategies (X) and cross-cultural communication effectiveness (Y). In this model, translation strategies act as the independent variable influencing the dependent variable, which is the degree of cross-cultural understanding achieved through the translated text. The model assumes that translators' strategic choices mediate the effectiveness of intercultural meaning transfer between source and target audiences.

The validity of the research was ensured through triangulation of data sources, methods, and expert judgment, while reliability was confirmed by conducting consistency checks during data analysis. The results of these tests indicated that the research instruments were both valid and reliable, ensuring the accuracy and credibility of the findings.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Data Collection Process, Time Span, and Research Location**

The data collection process was conducted over a period of six months, from January to June 2024. The research took place in several translation and linguistic research centers located in Jakarta and Yogyakarta, Indonesia, involving collaboration with professional translators and academic experts in applied linguistics. Primary data were obtained from pairs of Indonesian–English texts across different genres, including literary works, academic articles, and online media publications. These texts were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that they contained sufficient cultural and linguistic diversity for

analysis. Additional data were collected through interviews and validation sessions with translators to confirm the contextual accuracy and relevance of the identified strategies.

### Analysis of Translation Strategies in Indonesian–English Texts

The analysis revealed that translators employed a combination of domestication, foreignization, literal translation, modulation, and adaptation strategies, depending on the cultural and communicative demands of the text. Table 1 summarizes the frequency and distribution of translation strategies identified across 30 text samples.

**Table 1.** Frequency of Translation Strategies in Indonesian–English Text

Adaptations		
Translation Strategy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Literal Translation	42	28.0
Modulation	31	20.7
Adaptation	37	24.7
Domestication	24	16.0
Foreignization	16	10.6

*Source: Research Data (2024)*

The data indicate that literal translation and adaptation were the most frequently used strategies. Literal translation was often applied to technical or academic texts to maintain accuracy, while adaptation was dominant in literary and cultural texts to ensure naturalness and readability in the target language. Domestication strategies were commonly used to make culturally specific concepts more familiar to English-speaking audiences, whereas foreignization was applied selectively to preserve cultural authenticity.

### Relationship Between Translation Strategies and Cross-Cultural Communication

The findings demonstrate that translation strategies significantly influence the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication. Texts that employed adaptive and domestication strategies tended to enhance audience comprehension by aligning cultural expressions with target audience expectations. In contrast, excessive use of literal translation sometimes resulted in awkward phrasing or loss of cultural nuance. This supports Venuti's (1995) theory that domestication facilitates target-language fluency, while foreignization maintains source-culture visibility. The results also align with Nida's (1964) concept of dynamic equivalence, emphasizing the importance of achieving equivalent communicative impact rather than structural similarity.

## Comparison with Previous Research

The findings are consistent with earlier studies conducted by Baker (2018) and Hatim & Munday (2019), which highlight the translator's dual role as both linguistic mediator and cultural negotiator. However, this study extends prior research by applying these frameworks specifically to Indonesian–English adaptations, a context often underrepresented in global translation studies. Unlike previous works focusing solely on structural equivalence, this research reveals how strategic translation choices can either bridge or widen intercultural gaps, depending on how cultural symbols and idioms are rendered.

## Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study reinforces the view that translation is a multidimensional process involving linguistic, cultural, and communicative elements. It contributes to translation theory by illustrating how the balance between domestication and foreignization can be optimized to achieve intercultural understanding. Practically, the findings have implications for translation pedagogy and professional training, suggesting that translator education should emphasize not only linguistic accuracy but also intercultural competence. Translators must develop sensitivity to context, audience, and cultural resonance to produce translations that are both accurate and meaningful.

Furthermore, the results provide insights for translation agencies and educators seeking to improve quality assurance in bilingual communications. In a broader context, this study underscores the importance of translation as a medium for fostering global dialogue, where linguistic precision and cultural empathy work hand in hand to build mutual understanding between Indonesian and English-speaking societies.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results of this study conclude that translation strategies play a significant role in shaping the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication between Indonesian and English texts. The findings indicate that translators strategically combine literal translation, modulation, adaptation, domestication, and foreignization techniques to achieve both linguistic accuracy and cultural relevance. Among these strategies, adaptation and domestication proved to be the most effective in ensuring that messages are understood and culturally appropriate for target audiences, while literal translation was more suitable for maintaining technical precision. This shows that successful translation depends not only on

the mastery of language structure but also on the translator's intercultural competence and sensitivity to contextual meaning.

The study confirms that translation is not merely a linguistic process but a dynamic act of cultural mediation. Translators act as cultural negotiators who interpret and reconstruct meaning to bridge differences between the source and target cultures. The analysis further supports theoretical perspectives from Nida and Venuti, demonstrating that achieving communicative equivalence requires balancing fidelity to the source text with readability and cultural resonance in the target text. These findings highlight that translation quality improves when translators consciously manage the interplay between linguistic form and cultural meaning.

Based on these conclusions, it is suggested that translators and translation educators emphasize the importance of intercultural communication competence in translation training programs. Professional translators should be encouraged to develop awareness of cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and contextual meanings to produce translations that are both accurate and culturally engaging. For institutions and agencies, establishing clear translation quality standards that integrate cultural adaptation criteria would help enhance the overall effectiveness of translation output.

This research, however, has certain limitations related to the scope of data and the qualitative nature of analysis. The study focused primarily on textual and contextual aspects within a limited range of Indonesian–English translations, without incorporating quantitative measures of audience reception or comprehension. Future research should therefore explore broader datasets, including translations from additional genres and media platforms, and may apply mixed-methods approaches to evaluate reader interpretation and intercultural understanding. Expanding the study in this direction would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how translation strategies contribute to effective global communication in diverse cultural contexts.

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