Volume 5 No 2 ISSN 2775-8834(Online)

Tahun 2025

ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL WORDS IN THE ISLAMIC SELF-HELP BOOK BY YASMIN MOGAHED

Rizky Frihatmawati, Achmad Yasin, Leny Hikmah Rentiana, Ulfa Rahma Dhini
Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika[1234]
rizky.rzt@bsi.ac.id

Abstract
This study analyzes types of cultural words and translation procedures in the Islamic self-help book 'Reclaim Your Heart' by Yasmin Mogahed. The objectives of this study are to identify the cultural words in the book and the types of translation procedures applied in translating those words using a qualitative method. From the study's findings and discussion, it can be concluded that four basic categories of cultural words are present in the book: organization, material, gestures and habits, ecology, and social culture. The type of cultural word mostly found is organization related to the Islamic religion. From 57 samples of cultural words, 34 (59,6%) cultural words were categorized into organization, 7 (12,2%) cultural words were categorized into material culture, 6 (10,5%) cultural words were categorized into gesture and habit, 5 (8,7%) cultural words were categorized into ecology and the rest were five cultural words that belonged to social culture (8,7%). In translating cultural words, the study reveals that the translator employed transference, naturalization, literal translation, explanation, and adaptation procedures.

Keywords: *Cultural words, translation procedures, islamic self-help book*

submit date: 15-06-2025 accept date: 26-08-2025 publish date:13-0-2025
Correspondence author: Rizky Frihatmawati, Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika, Indonesia. E-Mail: rizky.rzt@bsi.ac.id
Journal SIGEH licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

INTRODUCTION

Translation is a process by which a translator provides public access and enjoyment of the text. A book translated into many languages is often influenced by the quality of its material, which is considered interesting and can enhance individuals' understanding of different countries. One of the interesting topics is self-improvement, which is described in a self-help book section.

Bergsma defines self-help books (2008, 343) as all books that aim to "cope with one's personal or emotional problems without professional help" are self-help books. The central theme of self-help books is pursuing happiness and success in life. One of the popular self-help books is Reclaim Your Heart. This book offers readers a fresh perspective on the purpose of life and how to navigate loss, happiness, and pain. These books are gaining popularity and are being read by

millions of individuals in their original language. Translation facilitates the spread of these books to hundreds of millions of individuals worldwide.

In general, the self-help genre employs the following writing approach, as noted by Effing (2009) Self-help writers have traditionally assumed the roles of a psychologist, priest, or counsellor from the genre's inception, and this trend was particularly pronounced in the latter half of the twentieth century. Therefore, the authors employ a tone that is both comprehensible and accessible, as if they were talking with a friend. In the self-help book, the writer crafts the story in a diary-like format to convey their message.

Translating this kind of literary text often challenges the translator to express aesthetic and emotional characteristics. The translator must preserve the aesthetic quality of the language, its rhythm, ambience, and the authors' expressions.

The expression presented in a particular language must be conveyed by the translator, who acts as a mediator between the author and the readers of the target language. Like other literary works, the challenges of translating self-help literature are highly complex. According to Sayogie (2008, 75), A translator must possess proficiency in the original literary work's source and target languages, with at least a receptive mastery of the source language. The translator should achieve proficiency in receptive and productive skills in the target language. The most effective translators are those whose native language reflects the target language. Another essential need is for the translator to possess 'background knowledge,' indicating that the translator must comprehensively master all aspects of the source substance. The translator's general knowledge and understanding of other cultures will significantly influence the translation outcomes.

Reclaim Your Heart is a self-help book written by Yasmin Mogahed (Yasmin, 2012). The author employs many cultural terms associated with the Islamic religion in this book, which is referred to as the Islamic Self-Help Book. Baker in House (2016) stated that a cultural term is an SL word that may articulate a concept unfamiliar to the TL culture. It may be abstract or concrete

and pertain to religious beliefs, social customs, social norms, or even the type of food consumed. In addition, Newmark(1988) linked a cultural term to a specific language, rendering it impossible to translate literally. In conclusion, a cultural term is a term that is exclusive to a particular language and cannot be translated literally, as it will change its meaning.

The theory most frequently employed in translating cultural words is Newmark's (1988). He classified the cultural terms into five categories. Which are:

- Ecology, which consists of geographical features that are usually value-free, politically and commercially, and can be generally distinguished from other cultural terms. For example, it could be *flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills, seasons*, and so on.
- Material culture involves food, clothes, houses, towns, and transport. Food, such as sake, is the most sensitive and vital expression of national culture for many people. In cultural terms, clothing can be national or traditional costumes, such as the sarong, *batik, and kimono*. Etc.
- Social culture. When considering social culture, one has to differentiate between denotative and connotative translation problems. There is rarely a translation problem since the words can be transferred, have an approximate one-to-one translation, or be defined functionally—for example, *rock, reggae*, *dangdut*, and so on.
- Organization, Customs, Activities, Procedures, Ideas. This cultural category refers to how something or someone is addressed and the level of formality that is appropriate in the target culture. Political, administrative, religious, and artistic terms are categorized in social organizations. In some countries, the hierarchy rank of nobility (empress or emperor, count or countess, etc.) is categorised in social organisations. Political and administrative, such as King, *Assemble Nationale*, President, etc., religious, such as *dharma, karma,* temple, etc.

- Gestures and habits. There is a distinction in this kind of cultural category. It is between description and function that ambiguities can arise, as a gesture or habit may occur in one culture but not in others, such as spitting, kissing fingertips to greet, or praising.

Venuti (1995) asserts that the translation book must provide readily comprehensible contexts to the intended audience without requiring additional research. Nevertheless, self-help books primarily feature real-life stories and may contain as many cultural references as literary works. Readers may find it challenging to read these books if the translators employ a literal approach to translating culturally bound words, as they contain foreign terms. This type of reader typically seeks immediate solutions to their issues to expedite their self-improvement process. Due to time constraints, they cannot verify any source-culture references in the target text. Translators employ a variety of procedures to ensure the precise translation of specific material when translating cultural terms, thereby facilitating a more flexible reading experience for readers.

The word that contains cultural words needs an appropriate translation procedure. The following is a summary of selected translation procedures that are commonly used in translating cultural words(Akalin, 2019), as provided by Newmark (1988).

- Transference: The process involves converting an SL word into a TL text. Wherein culture-specific things from the source language are directly conveyed into the target language without modification. When cultural-specific items (CSIs) that are absent in the target language or culture, such as geographical and historical locations, personal names and nicknames, institutional names, journals, and newspapers, are identified in the source text, they may be transferred into the target text. This translation approach is referred to as "loan word”
- Naturalization: This method is analogous to "transference." Nevertheless, with this method, culture-specific items adapt to the standard pronunciation and then to the standard morphology of the TL.

- Adaptation: Newmark characterizes this method as the substitution of cultural terms from the source culture with analogous terms in the target culture. However, the application of this translation approach may diminish the originality of cultural terms.
- Neutralization (Descriptive / Functional Equivalent): This translation method is employed for cultural elements by converting them into culture-neutral terms in the target language. When culture-specific items cannot be translated into the target language, they are neutralized and universalized for comprehension by the target reader.
- Cultural Equivalent: when culture-specific elements are absent in the target culture, they are substituted with a term from the target culture.
- Explanation: This method involves incorporating additional words for culture-specific topics, as they are comprehensible to the target readers.
- Deletion: Translators may occasionally omit culture-specific material from the target text. Nonetheless, it is inadvisable if omission is unnecessary.
- Paraphrase: This translation approach involves expanding or modifying the source material to improve comprehension of culture-specific topics for the target reader.
- Literal Translation: This is frequently used for collocations, company names, and compound components. It should be employed only when the terms are already well-known. Cultural elements are translated using this method when they are clear and comprehensible. This is predominantly utilized and constitutes one of the essential methods of translation employed in semantic and communicative texts.

The researcher is interested in understanding the cultural terms and their translations in the book "Reclaim Your Heart," as indicated by the previously mentioned explanation. This study aims to identify the categories of cultural terms in the book Reclaim Your Heart that have been translated into Indonesian and to

examine the translation procedures employed by the translator in the process of translating these terms.

METHOD

The analysis conducted for the current study employed a qualitative methodology. The qualitative method is a process that utilizes descriptive sentences to clarify the characteristics and nature of the data (Djajasudarma, 2010).Using this method, the researcher developed a concept and collected data without testing any hypotheses. The researcher was selected to conduct a descriptive analysis of English-language data sources and their Indonesian translation. The study identifies the Indonesian equivalents of cultural terminology. This investigation later offered a comprehensive account of how cultural terms are translated in the book "Reclaim Your Heart" by Yasmin Mogahed to its Indonesian translation, "Rebut Kembali Hatimu."

The technique used in this research is content analysis, a method for studying an observed document. The researcher aims to analyze data to address the research questions. The researcher implemented the data analysis techniques suggested by Sudaryanto (2015). They are collecting, analyzing, and presenting the results of their analysis. The researcher began the data analysis by collecting cultural words from the self-help book "Reclaim Your Heart," both in English and its Indonesian translation. After that, the researcher analyzed the type of cultural words and translation procedures used by the translator when translating cultural words from English into Indonesian. Lastly, the data are presented in the tables, showing the results of the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzed cultural terms and the translation procedures employed in the self-help book "Reclaim Your Heart." The 57 cultural elements from the first four subchapters of Chapter 1 in the book compose the data.

Table 1. Type of Cultural Words

No	Type of Cultural Words	Number of cultural words	Persentage
1	Organization	34	59.6%
2	Material	7	12.2%
3	Gestures and Habit	6	10.5%
4	Ecology	5	8.77%
5	Social Culture	5	8.77%
Total		57	100%

Table 1 reveals that five types of cultural words were found in the Reclaim Your Heart book. They are organization, Material culture, gestures and habit, ecology and social culture. The type of cultural word mostly found is organization related to the Islamic religion. From 57 samples of cultural words, 34 (59,6%) cultural words were categorized into organization, 7 (12,2%) cultural words were classified into material culture, 6 (10,5%) cultural words were categorized into gesture and habit, 5 (8,77%) cultural words were categorized into ecology and the rest were five cultural words that belonged to social culture (8,77%).

Discussion

The Analysis of Cultural Words

Organization

The first category of cultural words is organization. There are thirty-four words found in the book that refer to the organization. These items belonged to Islamic religion. The examples are as follows:

Organization Cultural words	Source Language (SL)	Target Language (TL)	Procedures
Data 1	masjid	masjid	Transference
Data 2	ayah	ayat	Naturalization

In data 1, the Islamic cultural word “masjid” is translated into “masjid”. The cultural word in the source language is sent into the target language unchanged. The translator used transference procedure in translating the cultural word.

In data 2, the cultural word "Ayah," an Islamic cultural word, is translated into Indonesian "Ayat" by naturalization translation procedure. By this strategy, the cultural word is adapted to standard pronunciation and then to the morphology of the TL.

Material

The second category of cultural words is material. There are 7 items of material. These items belong to clothes and towns.

Material	**SL**	**TL**	**Procedures**
Data 3	Tent in mena	Tenda di Mina	Naturalization
Data 4	Tommy Hilfiger Ihram	Ihram merk Tommy Hilfiger	Explanation

In data 3, the translator used naturalization procedure in translating the word “Mena” into “Mina”. Mena is a city where pilgrims stay annually as part of the Hajj pilgrimage. This cultural word is adapted to standard pronunciation and then to the morphology of the TL.

In data 4, the translator modified the cultural word by describing the source language term. Tommy Hilfiger is a clothing brand. By adding the word ‘merk’, the translator explained the cultural word in SL to the target readers. The translator used explanation procedure in translating the term.

Gestures and habits

The third category of cultural words is gesture and habit. There are 6 items found in the book that belong to gestures and habits. A gesture or habit may occur in one culture but not in others. They adhere to Islamic practices, including worship, believe in God, fasting, pilgrimage, charity, and the *5 daily prayers.*

Gesture and Habit	**SL**	**TL**	**Procedures**
Data 5	Believe in God	Beriman kepada Allah	Adaptation
Data 6	5 daily prayers	shalat 5 waktu	Adaptation

In data 5, the phrase 'believe in God' is translated into ' beriman kepada Allah'. The cultural word in the source language 'God' is translated into the cultural word of the Islamic religion, "Allah". The translator used adaptation procedure in translating the phrase.

In data 6, the phrase ' 5 daily prayers' is translated into 'shalat 5 waktu', the word 'shalat' is a habit in the Islamic religion. SL cultural words are translated into TL cultural words. This procedure is called adaptation.

Ecology

The third category of cultural words is Ecology. There are 5 items found in the book that belong to ecology. Every country possesses local words that give information about its geographical features that are original and valued by themselves (AKALIN, 2019). Some examples of cultural word that belongs to ecology category are:

Ecology	SL	TL	Procedures
Data 7	Red sea	Laut merah	Literal translation
Data 8	Californian waves	Ombak California	Literal translation

In the data 7 and 8, the ecological culture-specific terms " Red sea" and 'California waves' are clear and comprehensible terms. They are translated into Indonesian through literal translation procedure.

Social Culture

Some cultural words are related to the social culture. There are 5 items of material. The examples are elaborated below.

Social Culture	SL	TL	Procedures
Data 9	Roller coaster	Roller coaster	Transference
Data 10	Video game	Video game	Transference

In data 9 and 10, the translator used the transference procedure in translating the cultural words "Roller coaster" and "Video Game". This translation

procedure, known as "loan words," involves maintaining the source culture in the target language.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that the five types of cultural words found according to Newmark's theory, namely organization, material culture, gesture and habit, social culture, and ecology are present in the first four subchapters of Chapter 1 in the book Reclaim Your Heart. In translating the cultural words into Indonesian, the translator used five procedures from Newmark. The translation procedures are Transference, Naturalization, literal translation, explanation, and adaptation.

The suggestion that can be conveyed to the translator after reviewing the results of this research is that the translator, when translating cultural words, should be able to determine which translation procedure is most appropriate for translating those terms.

Some factors that translators can consider include the readers of the translation, the importance of cultural features in the words, and whether these features will affect the readers' understanding of the translation. The translator employed procedures to preserve cultural elements in the source language and provide clear answers in the target language, as the purpose of the self-help book is to give the readers what they need in easily understandable contexts that do not require further research. The procedures play an essential role in facilitating readers' comprehension of texts that contain concepts from other cultures. The translation results indicate that a translator must have a thorough knowledge of the source and target languages, the cultures of both SL and TL, and the theories of translation procedure.

REFERENCE

AKALIN, A. (2019). a Descriptive Study Upon the Culture Specific Items Within the Perspective of Newmark'S Translation Procedures. *Diyalektolog - Ulusal Hakemlin Sosyal Arastirmalar Dergisi*, *22*(22), 109–139. https://doi.org/10.29228/diyalektolog.39632

Bergsma, A. (2008). Do self-help books help? *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *9*(3), 341–360. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9041-2

Djajasudarma, F. (2010). *Metode Linguistik: Ancangan Metode Penelitian dan Kajian. Bandung: PT Refika Aditama.* PT Refika Aditama.

Effing, M. M. (2009). The origin and development of self-help literature in the United States: The concept of success and happiness, an overview. *Atlantis*, *31*(2), 125–141.

House, J. (2016). Translation as communication across languages and cultures. In *Translation as Communication Across Languages and Cultures*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315668956

Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall International.

Sayogie, F. (1990). *Teori dan praktik penerjemahan : Inggris - Indonesia*. Dahara Prize, Transpustaka.

Sudaryanto. (2015). *Metode dan aneka teknik analisis bahasa*. Sanata Dharma University Press.

Venuti, L. (1995). *The Translator's Invisibility. A History of Translation.* routledge publishing.

Yasmin, M. (2012). *Reclaim Your Heart*. FB Publishing.