

## **CULTURE SPECIFIC ITEMS TRANSLATION STRATEGY IN ONE PIECE: ROMANCE DAWN**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the translation strategy on culture specific items existed in *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. This study has two objectives. The first objective was to find out the CSIs in *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. The second objective was to find out translation strategies applied in translating the CSIs. This study was considered qualitative and a primary research. The CSIs were listed from the comic and analyzed. The result was nine CSIs found in *One Piece: Romance Dawn* that refers to Japanese culture. Five CSIs were written in its original Japanese word, one CSI was translated into Indonesian word, while three CSIs were shown in pictures.

**Keywords:** CSI, manga, translation strategy

### **INTRODUCTION**

Comic books are one of literary works widely known in every country. According to Geneidy (2016), comic books combine images and written words to illustrate the storyline as people encounter when reading another literature works. Comic books have various themes like romance, comedy, fantasy, etc. Japanese comic books are called manga. According to Brenner (2007) defines manga as "print comic in Japan".

Considering the fact that each country has its own language, comic books need to be translated from the source language to the target language used in the countries they are exported to. In translating comic books, the translator has to manage the translation by applying strategies to make the works understandable in the target language.

This study assumes that the strategies used by translators are important to define their way in translating the culture-specific items. These strategies need to be investigated to know how the translators translate the culture-specific items in *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. This study was conducted to investigate the strategies used in translating comic books with the theory on culture specific items translation proposed by Davies (2003) and the theory on

Domestication and Foreignization proposed by Venuti (as cited in Paloposki, 2011). Investigating the strategies was concluded as an important factor because strategies are one of helping tools to translators in translating process.

### **DISCUSSION**

This study was qualitative because the data was processed through critical analysis based on personal insights. The unit of analysis or the data of this study was word translation. The data of this study was considered primary as it was gathered directly from the researcher's personal insights.

The main object of this study is a Japanese manga titled *One Piece: Romance Dawn* by Eiichiro Oda. *Romance Dawn* is the title of the first volume of *One Piece* series. This study discusses common expressions group as the center of the analysis related to culture-specific items. The data of this study was the culture-specific items that exist in *One Piece: Romance Dawn*.

The data was collected in two major steps. The first major step was to list and note items or words that only belong to specific culture. The second major step was finding the category from the CSIs based on culture specific items in translation theory proposed by Aixela (1996). The CSIs was

categorized based on it's characteristic that suit the list of category existed in the theory.

### ***Culture Specific Items in One Piece: Romance Dawn***

Culture-specific items (CSI) are specific concepts of a certain culture (Persson, 2015). These concepts include flora, fauna, food, clothes, housing, work, leisure, politics, law, and religion among others. This study discusses culture-specific items as a part of culture that only belongs to one culture and not to others.

There are nine CSIs found related to Japanese culture. They are sake, samurai, samurai sword (katana), gomu-gomu, tenugui, haramaki, onigiri, shinai, and nami. They are classified as CSI based on Aixela's view (1996) on cultural words which represent certain things that belong to specific culture. These CSIs are found to be part of Japanese culture. In the Indonesian translation of One Piece: Romance Dawn, five CSIs are written in its original Japanese word. They are sake, gomu-gomu, tenugui, haramaki, onigiri. One CSI, katana, is translated into Indonesian word. Three CSIs, samurai, shinai, and nami are shown in pictures.

The first CSI found in One Piece: Romance Dawn is sake. Sake is a Japanese alcoholic drink made from fermented rice ("Sake", 2018). The second CSI is samurai, which means a member of a powerful military caste in feudal Japan ("Samurai", 2018). The third CSI is katana or the sword which is used by the samurai. The fourth CSI is gomu-gomu which is originally a single Japanese word gommu. Gommu in Japanese language means rubber ("Gomu", 2018). The fifth CSI is tenugui, which means a thin Japanese hand towel made of cotton used as dishcloth, washcloth, headband, souvenir, and decoration ("Tenugui", 2002). The sixth CSI is haramaki, which means bellyband or a type of chest armor worn by samurai ("Haramaki", 2002). The seventh CSI is onigiri which means rice ball made from white rice that is wrapped with dried seaweed and filled with a

slice of fish ("Onigiri", 2018). The eightieth CSI is shinai or a Japanese sword used in kendo competition ("Shinai", 2018). The ninth CSI is nami which is a Japanese name for girl meaning waves ("Nami", 2002).

Table 1. list of CSIs in English and Indonesian version of One Piece: Romance Dawn

CSI in ENG version	CSI in IND version
Sake	Sake
Rice ball	Onigiri
Rubber	Gomu-gomu
Katana	Pedang
Bandana	Tenugui
Cloth around waist	Haramaki
Samurai	Samurai
Shinai	Shinai
Nami	Nami

### ***Category of Culture Specific Items***

Aixela (as cited in Blažytė and Liubinienė, 2016) mentioned 6 categories of culture specific items, which are: rituals, traditions, religion and spiritual life; concepts, slogans, and items of popular culture; fictional characters; food and drink; nationalities; measurements. There are 3 categories found in One Piece: Romance Dawn, which are: tradition, food and drink, fictional characters.

### ***Categorized as Tradition***

There are 3 CSIs that categorized as tradition. They are katana, tenugui and haramaki.

#### **1. Katana**



Figure 1. Adapted from *One Piece: Romance Dawn* (Oda, 1997, p. 133)

Katana is considered a CSI because it is a part of Japanese military traditions. It is a sword used by samurai. In the Indonesian version, katana is translated into pedang sungguhan or real sword. This study argues that the Indonesian translator translates katana into pedang sungguhan because the two characters above play with a bamboo sword (shinai) in their previous fight. It is also argued that the Indonesian translator translates it into pedang sungguhan or real sword because katana is made of iron, not bamboo, so it is in a higher or more serious level than the bamboo sword (shinai). The bamboo sword, known as shinai in Japanese, is used in kendo competition. Kendo is a Japanese sport. Katana is used by samurai to fight, so it is riskier than a sport.

## 2. Tenugui and Haramaki

Tenugui and haramaki are two CSIs mentioned at the same time by one character. Tenugui is a common cloth to Japanese people and is also a part of their cultural tradition as well; therefore, tenugui is a CSI. Haramaki is traditional type of chest armor used by samurai which makes it a historical part of Japan, so it is a CSI as well. These two CSIs only exist in the Indonesian version of *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. Tenugui and haramaki are not translated into Indonesian words, different with the English version.



Figure 2. Adapted from *One Piece: Romance Dawn* (Oda, 1997, p. 87)

## Categorized as Food and Drink

There are CSIs that categorized as food and drink. They are sake, and onigiri.

### 1. Sake

Sake is a Japanese alcoholic drink which is also considered as Japanese culture-specific item. Sake is a part of Japanese culture which belongs to food and drink category. From the evidences above, it is found that sake is not translated to both English and Indonesian version of *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. The fact that it is not translated shows that both English and Indonesian translators apply preservation of form strategy. Preservation of form is a strategy applied when there is no equivalent CSI in TL (Blažytė & Liubinienė, 2016).

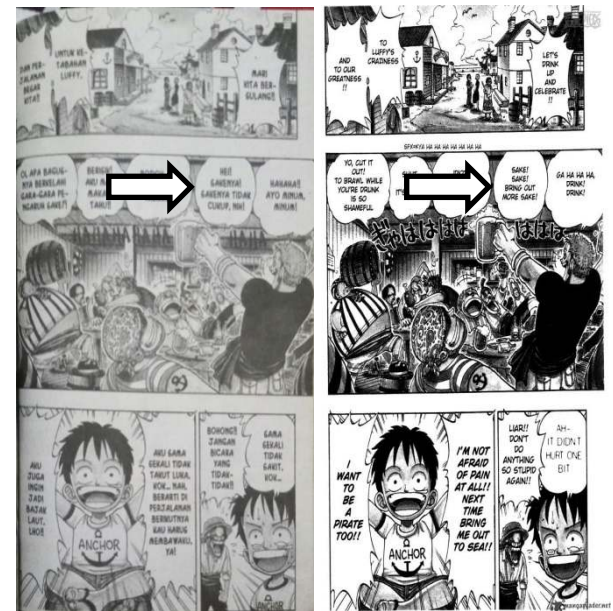


Figure 3. Adapted from *One Piece: Romance Dawn* (Oda, 1997, p. 8)

### 2. Onigiri

Onigiri is considered a CSI because it is a Japanese traditional food. It is categorized to food and drink. Onigiri is mentioned in the Indonesian version of *One Piece: Romance Dawn*, while the English version uses 'rice



balls' instead. As there is no translation notes provided by the Indonesian version, this study has to look into its meaning in Japanese. Previously mentioned in the CSI part, onigiri is a rice ball.



Figure 4. Adapted from *One Piece: Romance Dawn* (Oda, 1997, p. 91)

### Categorized as Fictional Characters

There is CSI that categorized as fictional characters. That is the words gomu-gomu.

#### 1. Gomu-gomu

Gomu-gomu is a term that only exists in *One Piece* comic series ("Gomu", 2018). It is considered a culture-specific item because it is a special term in *One Piece* which is based on Japanese word. Gomu itself is a Japanese word which means rubber. Gomu-gomu exists in the Indonesian version of *One Piece: Romance Dawn* as pistol gomu-gomu. It does not exist in English version as the translator uses rubber pistol instead of gomu-gomu pistol.

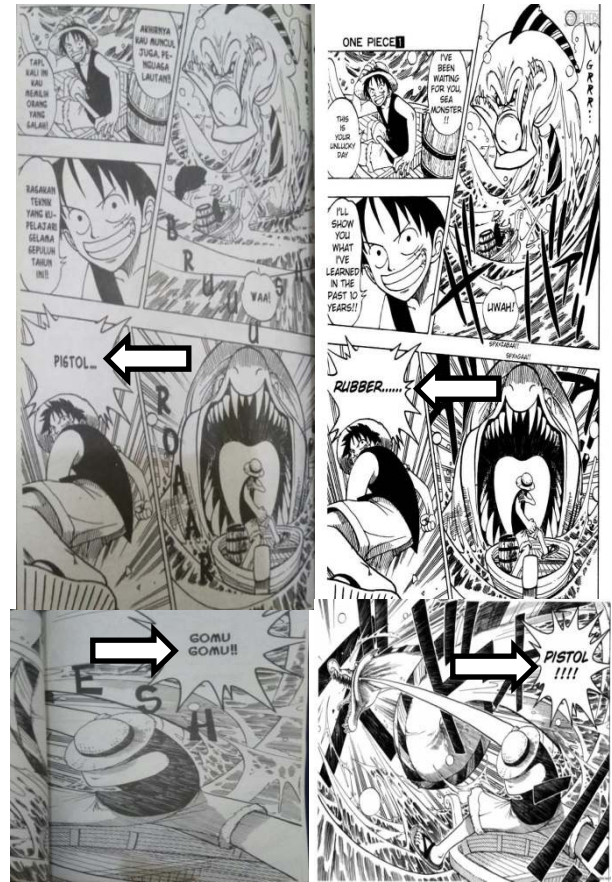


Figure 5. Adapted from *One Piece: Romance Dawn* (Oda, 1997, p. 51-52)

### CSIs Category Based on Translation Strategy

This part explains about the strategy applied in translating culture-specific items found in *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. The theory applied in this part was the theory on translation strategy of culture specific items proposed by Davies (2003).

#### Preservation of Form Strategy

Preservation of form strategy is a strategy which literally translates the CSIs if the CSIs do not have equivalent meaning in target language. The CSIs applied this strategy are sake, gomu-gomu, and onigiri.

#### 1. Sake

Based on Davies (2003) theory this CSI use preservation of form strategy because sake is not translated in *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. Sake is a Japanese traditional

alcoholic which does not exist in other countries than Japan.

This study argues that the translator does not translate sake because it is a Japanese traditional alcoholic which does not exist in other countries than Japan ("The Story of Sake", 2014). It is considered as an integral part of Japanese culture. Considering the fact of sake, this study argues that the translator cannot translate sake as there is no proper word in English or Indonesian that could represent sake. It is also argued that the translator wants to remain faithful to this integral part of Japanese culture. This study argues that by keeping sake in its original form, the translator suggests foreignization concept. Venuti (as cited in Paloposki, 2011) states that translators who suggest foreignization concept want to remain faithful to the culture involved in the work.

## 2. Gomu-gomu

Based on Davies (2003) theory this CSI use preservation of form strategy because gomu-gomu is not translated in One Piece: Romance Dawn. gomu itself is a Japanese word which means rubber but in the comic it is argued as a term used in One Piece comic.

As the Indonesian version shows the existence of the term gomu-gomu, this study looks into its meaning in Japanese first. Previously mentioned, gomu means rubber in Japanese and it is seen that the Indonesian translator uses the original term which is gomu-gomu. The English translator uses rubber pistol, where rubber is the translation of gomu. The fact that the Indonesian translator keeps the original term in the Indonesian version, it is therefore argued that the translator applies preservation of form strategy. This study concludes that gomu-gomu has no exact meaning and equivalent CSI in the TL, so the preservation of form strategy is applied.

The Indonesian translator provides no translation notes to explain what gomu-gomu means. Considering the fact that this term only exists in One Piece comic series, this

study concludes that gomu-gomu is an iconic term in One Piece which has no meaning. The meaning can only be understood in its single word; gomu. Gomu is a Japanese word but gomu-gomu is argued as a term used in One Piece comic series only. It is therefore argued that the concept of domestication is shown if gomu-gomu is translated from English version, however, the concept of foreignization is shown if gomu-gomu is directly taken from the Japanese version.

## 3. Onigiri

Based on Davies (2003) theory this CSI use preservation of form strategy because onigiri is not translated in One Piece: Romance Dawn. Onigiri is a Japanese traditional food which known as rice ball.

Rice ball is a term used by the English translator as onigiri is translated into English word. The Indonesian translator keeps the original Japanese word which is onigiri. It is therefore argued that the Indonesian translator applies preservation of form strategy. The strategy is applied because, this study assumes, onigiri has no equivalent CSI in the TL. Considering that there is no translation notes to inform readers about onigiri, this study argues that the Indonesian translator assumes that the readers have known about it. It is therefore argued that the Indonesian translator suggests foreignization concept.

## Addition Outside the Text Strategy

Addition outside text strategy is a strategy which includes additional information when preservation leads to vagueness. The CSIs applied this strategy are tenugui and haramaki.

### 1. Tenugui and Haramaki

Based on Davies (2003) theory this CSI use addition outside the text strategy because tenugui and haramaki are not translated in One Piece: Romance Dawn but the translator adds additional information in the comic. Tenugui is a common cloth to

Japanese people and haramaki is traditional type of chest armor used by samurai.

The Indonesian translator provides translation notes which inform the readers of what *tenugui* and *haramaki* mean. It is therefore argued that the Indonesian translator applies addition outside the text strategy because the translator keeps these two CSIs in their original language but provides translation notes to give information of what do the CSIs mean in TL. This study also considers the reason on why the Indonesian translation provides notes about *tenugui* and *haramaki* but does not provide any about *sake*. This study argues that the translator might assume that the Indonesian readers have already known *sake*, but few have known *tenugui* and *haramaki*. It is therefore argued that the translation of these two CSIs suggests the concept of foreignization as they are not translated into the TL for not having equivalent CSIs in the TL.

### **Globalization Strategy**

Globalization is a strategy which replacing CSIs with more neutral or general CSIs. The CSIs applied this strategy is *katana*.

#### **1. Katana**

Based on Davies (2003) theory this CSI use globalization strategy because *katana* is translated into *pedangsungguhan* in *One Piece: Romance Dawn*. *Katana* itself is a sword used by samurai in Japan.

This study finds that the Indonesian translator applies globalization strategy. This study argues that *katana* is translated into *pedangsungguhan* or real sword to relate to the characters' previous fight. It is therefore argued that the globalization strategy is applied to highlight the context of the CSI using more general references. This study also considers the fact that the characters are children, so *katana* here is not used by samurai. Since *katana* is closely related to samurai from its definition, this study argues that the Indonesian translator adjusts the translation to a playful situation. By

translating it into *pedangsungguhan* or real sword, the translator might imply that the characters' fight is not a serious one because they are still children. It is also argued that the translator emphasizes their fights, which start from bamboo sword fight to iron sword fight.

The globalization strategy is applied to replace the CSI *katana* into *pedangsungguhan* as more general references. This study argues that the replacement occurs to support the context of the story as explained in previous paragraph. It is therefore argued that the concept of domestication is shown through the utilization of globalization strategy. The concept of domestication presents the change of CSI in TL from SL to adjust in the story.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study finds that there are nine culture-specific items (CSIs) in *One Piece: Romance Dawn* refer to Japanese culture. They are *sake*, *samurai*, *samurai sword* (*katana*), *gomu-gomu*, *tenugui*, *haramaki*, *onigiri*, *shinai*, and *nami*. In the Indonesian translation of *One Piece: Romance Dawn*, five CSIs are written in its original Japanese word which is *sake*, *gomu-gomu*, *tenugui*, *haramaki*, and *onigiri*. One CSI is translated into Indonesian word which is *samurai sword* (*katana*), while three CSIs are shown in pictures which are *samurai*, *shinai*, and *nami*. Through the translation of the written CSIs, this study finds that the Indonesian translator shows both foreignization and domestication concept through different strategies.

The domestication concept through globalization strategy is found in one translation; *katana* → *pedangsungguhan*. The foreignization concept found in two form of strategy, through preservation of form strategy is found in three cases; *sake*, *gomu-gomu*, *onigiri* and through addition outside the text in two case: *tenugui*, *haramaki*. This study argues that the Indonesian translator shows foreignization concept through the utilization of preservation of form strategy to preserve the CSIs and promote knowledge of

Japanese culture to the readers. The Indonesian translator is also found to provide translation notes to two CSIs; *tenugui* and *haramaki*. As for the domestication concept through globalization strategy, this study argues that it is suggested by the Indonesian translator to emphasize the situation, connect sequence of actions, and create a playful situation.

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