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Analysis of Translation Methods of English Metaphors into Indonesian in the Novel "As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow"

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ABSTRACT

This study explains the strategies used to translate metaphors in Zoulfa Katouh's novel "As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow". The main problem is that cultural differences make metaphor translation difficult. Translators need the right strategies so that the meaning of metaphors can be understood by target readers. If the strategy is not chosen carefully, the translation may lose its meaning or sound strange. The researcher found 51 metaphors in Chapter I of the novel, which has 14 pages. The analysis shows four types of metaphors: 11 dead metaphors, 1 cliché metaphor, and 20 original metaphors. Three translation approaches were used: semantic translation (33 metaphors), communicative translation (17 metaphors), and free translation (1 metaphor). The most common method was semantic translation. This strategy helps keep the metaphorical meaning and style of the source language while still making sense in the target language. The results show that semantic translation is effective for keeping the cultural and figurative meaning of the text. Communicative translation is also useful when the metaphor must be adapted for clarity. Free translation was rarely used. Overall, the study shows that choosing the right translation strategy is important to balance accuracy and readability.

Keywords: metaphor, novel, translation

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INTRODUCTION

According to Karl Buehler, a German psychologist and language expert, language has a basic function as a communication tool (Budiman et al., 2022). Essentially, humans as social beings establish interactions with other humans to convey messages and meanings through language. Sirait (2024) stated that human thought depends on language. Although various languages exist in the world, this does not prevent other people from different countries from obtaining information; one way is through translation. Translation is an important activity in the communication process that we unknowingly perform in everyday life. Even historical records show that an archaeologist from Europe found a bilingual inscription stone in Egypt, estimated to exist since 3000 BC, which marks the beginning of translation activities (Putra, 2021). Translation is inherently cultural, requiring translators to navigate between differing worldviews embedded in source and target texts (Safitri et al, 2025). In the current era, a commonly performed translation activity that correlates to culture is the translation of literary works, such as poetry, prose, and novels.

Literary translation does not only change the source language to the target language but is also an art in preserving the voice, style, and intent of the source author. For that reason, a literary translator must convey the emotions and cultural nuances expected by the author (Pudjiati et al., 2023). Sari et al. (2024) state that the translator's role is very important so that literary works from various languages can reach readers around the world, although translators often encounter problems in translation, namely translating idiomatic expressions and figurative language. In addition, according

to Ichsani et al. (2024), literary translation contains many linguistic styles that pose problems due to underlying cultural differences. Good equivalence ensures that the target text is well received so that readers can understand the meaning of metaphors, which are figurative language because the intended meaning differs from the actual meaning (Buditama et al., 2021).

A metaphor, according to the online KBBI, is "a group of words not in their actual meaning, but as a picture based on similarity or comparison." Metaphor is generally known as a literary device that allows humans to make comparisons between two objects, two ideas, or two different situations. (Aliurridha & Efendi, 2021). The narrow meaning of a metaphor, based on Soelistiyowati et al. (2023), consists of three parts: topic, image, and point of similarity. Prayogi et al. (2020) state that "in literature, metaphor is one device to evoke certain aesthetics, mainly in poetry and prose." Based on Newmark's theory (1988), metaphors are divided into six types, namely:

1. Dead metaphor, a type of metaphor commonly used so that its original meaning as a metaphor is no longer felt. Example: *foot of the mountain*
2. Cliché metaphor, a type of metaphor initially striking but that has lost its rhetorical element due to overuse. Example: *time is money*
3. Stock or standard metaphor, a type of metaphor already common and still possessing imaginative power but not original. Example: *break the ice*
4. Recent metaphor, a type of metaphor newly created, usually found in modern literary works or certain media. Example: *digital detox*
5. Original metaphor, a type of metaphor truly created by the creativity of the author or speaker. Example: *his heart was like struck by lightning when hearing the news from him*.
6. Adapted metaphor, a type of metaphor that gives new meaning because it has been modified from an existing metaphor. Example: he has a gold heart adjusted to "*he has a noble heart.*"

In literary works, a translator certainly encounters and directly faces metaphors and their own challenges in translating them into the target language. Cultural differences and language structures are the main factors of difficulty translators face in interpreting the author's intent. Even Newmark (1988) states that "the most important particular problem is the translation of metaphor. By metaphor, any figurative expression describes one thing in terms of another." To capture the meaning of metaphors in literary works and transfer them accurately to a different language, expertise in various aspects, language guidelines, and appropriate techniques are certainly needed (Na'imah, 2021). The differences between two cultures reflect in metaphor translation because metaphors are universal, where their use and interpretation can vary based on the culture in which the metaphor formed (Perkasa et al., 2023). It parallels with what Putri (2025) said that sometimes, a translation needs to be modified to achieve its intended purpose.

In this research, metaphors appear frequently in the translation of literary works, such as in the novel "As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow" by Zoulfa Katouh. This novel tells of Salama, who lost her father, mother, and older brother due to the Syrian war. Due to her despair, Salama meets a mysterious figure named Khawf, who encourages her to leave Syria and stop struggling to help other Syrians. In this Zoulfa Katouh's novel, quite many metaphors appear to give a poetic and beautiful impression so readers can enjoy it; that the novel received the title "Amazon Best Young Adult Books of the Year 2022."

The novel "As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow" by Zoulfa Katouh was chosen for analysis to determine whether the translation results of metaphors from the source language preserve only their meaning or also their aesthetic value. This novel is relatively new as it was published in 2022 and first translated into Indonesian in 2023, so no research on the translation of this novel has been found yet. For that reason, the author is driven to conduct an analysis of its translation strategies. The research data come from a sample of Chapter I to analyze its sentences containing metaphors from the source language novel, then compare them with its Indonesian translated novel.

Next, the author analyzed the translation methods of metaphorical sentences used by the translator based on Peter Newmark's theory. According to Newmark (1988), eight translation methods can be used for translating, namely: 1) word-for-word translation, 2) literal translation, 3)

faithful translation, 4) semantic translation, 5) communicative translation, 6) free translation, 7) adaptation translation, and 8) idiomatic translation.

Many studies exist on metaphor translation from a novel because figurative language styles, like metaphors, closely tie to literary works like novels. According to Irwanti et al. (2024), authors' use of figurative language is more effective than direct statements. This occurs because ordinary sentences make the author's imagination hard to explain, so that language style allows readers to understand easily and become immersed in the world the author created. In addition, research on conceptual meaning in one short story concludes that metaphors are fragments of human thought realized in the form of figurative words (Afiya et al., 2021). Previously, this novel has been researched, but the discussion concerned formulas, namely repeated patterns or structures in the story. Specifically, that research analyzed romance formulas in the ideal narrative structure of romance stories based on Janice A. Radway's theory (Machmuri et al., 2025).

Although many studies have examined metaphors in literary novels, the author is driven to analyze metaphor translation strategies in the novel "As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow" by classifying metaphor types and their translation methods to determine whether they affect the meaning produced in its translation.

METHOD

In this study, the author uses a descriptive qualitative research method with a comparative nature, by comparing the source-language novel with its translation. Qualitative methods focus on deep understanding of social phenomena or human behavior, often used to examine individuals' experiences, perceptions, or meanings related to specific events (Hasan et al., 2025). In this research, the descriptive qualitative method analyzes metaphor translation in Zoulfa Katouh's novel "As Long As The Lemon Trees Grow". The author analyzes the translator's strategies for metaphors in the target-language novel based on Newmark's theory (1988). In addition, since no one has analyzed the translation of this novel yet, the author examines the metaphors in Chapter I. In Chapter I, Zoulfa Katouh introduces the situation in Syria through visualizations in the form of metaphors, so readers can become immersed in the described conditions and then sink into the story further.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the analysis conducted using Peter Newmark's (1988) metaphor translation strategies, the researcher identified 51 metaphorical expressions within the 14 pages of Chapter I. Among these 51 metaphors, four types were found based on Newmark's (1988) theoretical framework: dead metaphors, cliché metaphors, original metaphors, and stock metaphors.

Table 1. Metaphor Types Appear in Chapter I of *As Long As The Lemon Trees Grow*

No.	Types of Metaphor	Frequency
1	Dead metaphor	11
2	Cliché metaphor	1
3	Original metaphor	20
4	Stock metaphor	19

Furthermore, the study found that three translation methods were utilized: semantic translation (33 instances), communicative translation (17 instances), and free translation (one instance).

Table 2. Translation Methods Used in Chapter I of *As Long As The Lemon Trees Grow*

No.	Translation Method	Frequency
1	Semantic	33
2	Communicative	17
3	Free Translation	1

Total	**51**

According to the aforementioned results, the most frequent type of metaphor identified was the "original metaphor," while the most dominant translation strategy was "semantic translation." This preference exists because the translator primarily maintained the metaphorical nuances of the source language within the target language. Conversely, cliché metaphors were the least common type because they are highly conventional within literary works. Free translation was the least utilized strategy, as it involves the translator altering the metaphorical expression while retaining the core meaning of the source text. Finally, communicative translation was also found to be relatively common; its purpose is to render the source metaphor into a natural and conventional expression for the target audience without necessarily retaining the original metaphorical effect.

Discussion

Semantic Method

Semantic translation is the method most closely aligned with faithful translation; however, the distinction lies in the fact that semantic translation places a greater emphasis on aesthetic value, naturalness, and the preservation of the original meaning inherent in the source language. Consequently, this translation strategy is highly suitable for metaphor translation when the objective is to maintain the original metaphorical nuances of the source text. The following are metaphors found in the novel "As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow "that utilize the semantic translation strategy:

(1) SL : …our martyrs' blood seeps beneath my skin, into my cells. By now it's probably encoded in my DNA.
TL : …*darah martir kami meresap ke balik kulitku, memasuki sel-sel, dan saat ini mungkin telah terkode dalam DNA-ku*
(p.3)

(2) SL : The house was the embodiment of Layla's soul.
TL : *Rumah itu adalah perwujudan jiwa Layla.*
(*p.6)*

(3) SL : But my poor stomach rumbles,…
TL : *Namun, karena perutku telah bergemuruh,…*
(p.7)

(4) SL : …neither she nor I can walk four hundred miles dodging death the whole way.
TL : …*baik aku maupun dia tidak akan mampu berjalan kaki sejauh 640 kilometer sambil mengelak dari ancaman maut.*
(*p.8)*

The type of metaphor mentioned in data (1) is an original metaphor. According to Newmark (1988), this metaphor is purely the product of an author's creativity and imagination, designed to imbue an expression with aesthetic value. In the translation, the metaphorical expression from the source language is preserved, ensuring that the emotional nuance intended by the author is effectively conveyed to the target reader.

Meanwhile, the metaphor type used data (2) is a stock metaphor. According to Newmark's (1988) theory, this metaphorical expression is commonly used in the source language while still retaining its metaphorical power. In the example provided, the common expression is "embodiment of something," which represents the realization of a concept. Meanwhile, the metaphor type used in data (3) is a dead metaphor. Based on Newmark's (1988) theory, the form of this metaphor has become so conventional in the target language that it has lost its metaphorical force. For example, the expression "stomach rumbles" has evolved into a commonly used idiom.

Lastly, the metaphor type identified in data (4) is a stock metaphor, specifically the expression "dodging death," which is frequently employed in war narratives, hazardous journeys, or catastrophic events. By applying a semantic translation strategy, this expression is rendered into the target language as "mengelak dari ancaman maut."

Communicative Method

In this translation approach, the source language is rendered by detaching from the nuances of the source language and prioritizing a version that is more accessible to the target audience. The following are metaphors in the novel "As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow" that were translated using this strategy:

(5) SL : …the dried spots of blood that have managed to creep under my lab coat's sleeve.
TL : …*noda-noda darah yang telah meresap dan mengering di jas laboratoriumku.*
(p.3)

(6) SL : The cold air bites through my lab coat's worn-out material, and the harsh touch of it makes me shiver.
TL : *Udara dingin menembus jas lab lusuhku, membuatku bergidik*
(p.4)

(7) SL : I glue my eyes to the brown soup, listening the hissing flames.
TL : *Aku menatap sup di panci, mendengarkan desisan api.*
(p.6)

(8) SL : I open my eyes and watch the thicket of grey clouds outside my window.
TL : *Aku membuka mata dan menatap gumpalan awan kelabu melalui jendela.*
(p.13–14)

The metaphor type used in data (5) is an original metaphor, where the author creates a personification by attributing living traits to an inanimate object. However, it is translated using a communicative strategy; consequently, the metaphorical impression is lost, leaving only a conventional expression so that the target reader can understand it easily. Meanwhile, the metaphor type used in data (6) sentence above is a stock metaphor. The expression "cold air bites" is a conventional metaphor in the source language used to describe excruciating cold. Nevertheless, it is translated using a communicative strategy to ensure it feels natural within the target language culture.

Next, the metaphor type used in datum (7) is a dead metaphor. Expressions such as "glue my eyes to..." and "hissing flames" are commonly used and have evolved into idioms, resulting in the loss of their metaphorical force. These are translated using a communicative strategy because preserving the metaphorical nuances would not feel natural within the target culture. Finally, the metaphor type used in datum (8) is an original metaphor. The phrase "thicket of grey clouds" is a product of the author's creativity and imagination in describing an overcast sky. The translation strategy employed is communicative because the word "thicket", which refers to a dense growth of bushes, would be difficult for the target audience to understand if the metaphorical nuance were preserved.

Free Translation

In this translation strategy, the grammatical form of the source language is sacrificed to present new content while adhering to the core meaning, ensuring that the target audience can easily comprehend the text. The following is a metaphor translated using this strategy in the novel "As Long As The Lemon Trees Grow":

(9) SL**:** …but it amplifies the anguish in my heart.
TL: …*tetapi luka di hatiku terasa semakin perih.*
(p.*2)*

The type of metaphor used in the sentence above is a cliché metaphor. The word "amplify," which means to strengthen or increase, is considered overly common in literary language. It is translated using free translation by removing the metaphorical element and presenting the literal meaning instead, allowing the target reader to understand the sentence clearly.

CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the novel "As Long As The Lemon Trees Grow", the researcher identified four types of metaphors and three translation strategies based on Newmark's (1988) theoretical framework. A total of 51 metaphors were collected from Chapter I, revealing that the "original metaphor" was the most frequent type, with 20 instances. Correspondingly, "semantic translation" emerged as the most dominant strategy, applied in 33 cases. This preference exists because the

translator sought to preserve the author's metaphorical expressions in the source language, ensuring that the aesthetic and imaginative nuances are effectively conveyed to the target audience.

The researcher suggests further studies on this novel regarding translation quality, idiomatic translation strategies, or an overall analysis of the translation techniques employed. In addition to linguistics and translation studies, it would be compelling to conduct psychological research on mental health, particularly given the protagonist's traumatic experiences and their significant psychological impact.

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