
Analyzing Translation Techniques in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*

Ages Melinda Sari ⁽¹⁾
Universitas Nasional
agesmelinda13@gmail.com

Evert Haryanto Hilman ⁽²⁾
Universitas Nasional
evhilman@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to identify and analyze the techniques of translation employed in the Indonesian translation of Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Using a descriptive qualitative method with purposive sampling mainly focuses on four related techniques: amplification, reduction, established equivalent, and variation; the research mainly studies how the translator translated the short story from the source language to the target language. The research bases its study on Molina and Albir's theory of techniques of translation, which provides a comprehensive and systematic framework for analyzing translation choices. The findings indicate that four translation techniques are applied in the research, including reduction (30.30%), established equivalent (9.09%), amplification (45.45%), and variation (15.50%). Out of the 33 data samples examined, amplification is the most frequently used technique (45.45%), suggesting the translator's attempt to provide additional contextual information to enhance comprehension for target readers. In contrast, the established equivalent technique appears least frequently (9.09%). This research may contribute to the subject of literature translation by demonstrating that understanding the standard grammar of the target language may help the translator in translating a literary work better to prevent mistranslation or loss of information during the translation process.

Keywords: Literary Translation, Molina and Albir, Short Story Translation, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, Translation Techniques

INTRODUCTION

Translating literary works has its own challenges, especially when translating classic literary works. A translator needs to understand the context and the nuances of the situation or culture in which the author lived in order to accurately convey the message or the information that the author of the work was trying to convey in the literary work.

According to Rohman (2020), a literary work is an art expressed through writings. Translation is an important aspect of language that enables communication between different languages and cultures. A translation enables

information from the source text to be understandable for readers from different languages. According to Newmark (1998, p. 7), a translation serves to convey the meaning of a text into another language based on the interpretation of the translator or author. Nababan et al. (2012, p. 43) stated that a translation is very much influenced by the socio-cultural context and the ideology of the source language author, the translator as the mediator, and the target language readers to convey the meaning as a means of communication. Moreover, translation, according to Warwal (2015), is a creative

process of reproducing a text from one language to another, to comprehend the meaning of the original text and communicate it in the target language. The translation of a short story presents its own challenges, since every aspect of the text needs to be translated linguistically and semiotically by considering signs and symbols from both source and target cultures (Yulitha, 2024).

“The Tell-Tale Heart” is one of the best works ever written by Edgar Allan Poe, conveying a short story of the wickedness of a man and the crime that he committed against an old man due to his fear of the old man’s vulture eye (Zain et al., 2023). According to Lybyer & Roberts (n.d.), this literary work is one of Poe’s shortest works, but this short story is also a profound display of a man’s psychological chaos. This short story both challenges the readers to dive into the psychological realm of the main character and also challenges the translators to maintain the original information, style, and messages in the target language.

Edgar Allan Poe was one of the famous American short-story writers and poets whose works on mystery and horror are well-known. Poe was the son of David Poe, Jr., a Baltimore actor, and the English-born actress Elizabeth Arnold Poe. He went to Scotland and England in 1815–1820, where he took a classical education. Although Poe lived only for forty years, during his brief lifetime, he made a great impact on American literature and also world literature (Barzun et al., 2025).

This short story was written in 1843. The English language used by Edgar Allan Poe in this short story is very different from the English language we found today. Therefore, translators need to fully understand the context of the story that Edgar Allan Poe tried to convey, both from the psychological realm of the narrator and also from the writing style of Edgar Allan Poe himself, for them to be able to present the message or information

contained in the short story to the reader of the target language.

A short story is a text that describes human life in a certain place and certain time frame (Heri, 2019). It serves as one of many reading materials and sources of entertainment and also a medium for authors to express their feelings, creativity, and imaginations. According to Rohman (2020), a short story mostly is a reflection of the events happening in everyday human life. A short story often acts as a medium to convey a variety of messages or stories, such as romance, social or interpersonal conflicts, and even political issues. A short story is one out of many examples of literary works.

Recent studies, such as Ghufuron et al. (2022), analyzed the translation techniques from the movie subtitle “Inside Out” with Molina & Albir’s techniques and found twelve translation techniques from the audiovisual data source. Sianturi & Adha (2022) studied the application of Molina & Albir’s translation techniques in the serial drama “Go Ahead Episode 1” using sixteen translation techniques. Puruhito (2021) studied types of swear words and Molina & Albir’s translation techniques from the Netflix series’ subtitle “Everything sucks” using six translation techniques. Meanwhile, this study analyzes the techniques of translation from a short story data source. Yulitha (2024) studied the translation methods based on Newmark’s theory from the short story named “The Tell-Tale Heart” authored by Edgar Allan Poe. She found that the translator used mostly communicative translation methods to preserve the horrific atmosphere of the story and Poe’s distinct writing style.

In light of the challenges and the fact that most of the previous studies did not examine the translator’s translation results against the standard Indonesian grammar; this study, compared to the previous studies, has the novelty of verifying the translation result with several dictionaries, such as English-

Indonesian dictionaries (KII), *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia*, online dictionaries (Collins Dictionary, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, and Urban Dictionary), and a thesaurus (*Tesaurus Bahasa Indonesia*); and analyzing the grammatical structure of the translation result with *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia* (TBBBI). This approach ensures the accuracy and validity of the analysis results.

This research aims to study how the techniques of translation proposed by Molina & Albir are applied in the translation process of Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Tell Tale Heart". This study employs Molina & Albir's theory of techniques of translation. Several advantages of Molina & Albir's theory of techniques of translation include its clarity, its orientation to the translation result, its comprehensive and flexible theory, its relevance for translation studies, and its practical framework that allows researchers to identify and analyze the reason for choosing a certain technique of translation and the implication to the translation result. Their techniques of translation consist of 18 techniques. They are adaptation, amplification, borrowing, calque, compensation, description, discursive creation, established equivalent, generalization, linguistics amplification, linguistics compression, literal translation, modulation, particularization, reduction, substitution, transposition, and variation.

The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the importance of understanding the standard Indonesian grammar when translating a text from the Source Language to Indonesian as the Target Language, to ensure that the original content or information of the literary work is preserved and well-delivered in the translation.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a purposive sampling method to collect data with the main focus on

four related techniques: amplification, reduction, established equivalent, variation; as a limit to prevent the study from being too extensive and to avoid the inaccuracy of the analysis since only four techniques are found to be theoretically accurate. The data, which consists of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences found in the short story "The Tell-Tale Heart" in English text, serves as the source language (SL), and its translation "*Hati Yang Berkhianat*" in Indonesian translation serves as the target language (TL), which are derived from Anonymous (2024) and are then subsequently analyzed with a descriptive-qualitative approach with Molina & Albir's theory to identify & determine the techniques of translation employed in each data. The researcher then analyzes the rationale behind its choosing in the translation by employing various established linguistic resources to strengthen the interpretative validity, including dictionaries (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* / KBBI, *Kamus Inggris Indonesia* / KII), online dictionaries (Collins Online Dictionary, online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, and Urban Dictionary), thesaurus (*Tesaurus Bahasa Indonesia*), and grammatical theory framework with *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia* / TBBBI. This multi-source approach ensures robust verification of vocabulary interpretations and translation accuracy. The researcher examined 33 data samples found in the source text, which belong to the four translation techniques, as the material for the analysis.

The overall process of the analysis is simplified as follows:

1. Step One: Each data pair undergoes examination to identify the specific technique of translation employed, with Molina and Albir's theoretical framework as the basis of the analysis.
2. Step Two: Individual data points receive classification and coding

according to their corresponding technique categories to systematically organize the data. The coding structure is set as follows:

001/TTTH/ENG/002

SL: Source Language (ENG / English)

001/HYB/INA/002

TL: Target Language (INA / Indonesia)

- The initial numerical sequence “001” indicates the chronological order of data collection.
- The code “TTTH” represents “The Tell Tale Heart” (English version), while “HYB” refers to “Hati Yang Berkhianat” (Indonesian version).
- The final number “002” indicates the page location where the data appears.

This coding structure enables precise tracking of the analysis of the translation across the text of the short story.

- Step Three: Each data point undergoes thorough examination to determine the translator’s rationale in translating the contents of the short story.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following text presents the research findings of the study on the translation techniques employed in the Indonesian translation of the short story “The Tell-Tale Heart”. The data have been systematically classified according to the framework proposed by Molina and Albir’s theory. Each category showcases 2 selected examples which demonstrate the application of specific techniques.

Result

From the data, the researcher found that the translator employed various techniques to deliver the information contained in the SL. This study adopts the techniques of the

translation framework proposed by Molina & Albir (2002), and out of the 33 data samples examined, amplification is found to be the most dominant technique, as much as 45.45% (15 cases), followed by reduction (30.30%, 10 cases), variation (15.15%, 5 cases), and lastly, established equivalent (9.09%, 3 cases).

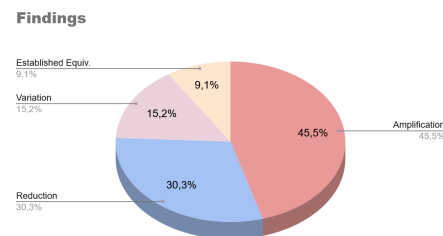


Figure 1. Distribution of the Techniques of Translation in the Short Story “The Tell-Tale Heart”

Discussion

The following are some of the samples being analyzed:

Reduction

- 001/TTTH/ENG/001

SL: “TRUE!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad?”

001/HYB/INA/005

TL: “*Sumpah, aku tidak mengerti kenapa kalian menganggapku gila.*”

The phrase “TRUE!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am” is translated into one word “*Sumpah*”. The phrase “—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am” is omitted and is simply rendered into “*aku tidak mengerti kenapa kalian menganggapku gila*” in the TL.

According to Molina & Albir (2002, p. 510), reduction is suppressing information from the source text in the target text. In the meantime, the word “TRUE!”, according to Urban Dictionary (n.d.), is used in response to

any phrase or to clarify a statement. In the TL, however, it is translated into “*Sumpah*”, which according to KBBI (2008, p. 1553), roughly means a statement of truth and a proof of willingness to suffer if something in the discussion turns out to be false.

In addition, Nida & Taber (1982, p. 168) mentioned that some expressions are naturally reduced in the translation process from one language to another language. The phrase “—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am”, which cataphorically refers to “How, then, am I mad? Hearken! And observe how healthily—how calmly I can tell you the whole story”, is showing extreme nervousness. According to Mark Foley & Diane Hall (2003, p. 328) in “Longman Advanced Learners’ Grammar”, cataphoric reference means referring to something which is described later in the text using some substitution words. Moreover, Halliday & Hasan, in their book *Cohesion in English* (1976), stated that ellipsis is substitution by zero (p. 142). Hence, this translation uses exophoric ellipsis, where the interpretation relied upon the context of the situation (p. 144).

Therefore, it is obvious that the translation result is shorter than the original, but its meaning can still be easily understood. Thus, the technique of translation used here is Reduction.

2. 002/TTTH/ENG/001

SL: “... a pale blue eye, with a film over it.”

002/HYB/INA/001

TL: “... warna biru pucat.”

The phrase, consisting of nine words, “a pale blue eye, with a film over it” in the SL, is translated into three words, “*warna biru pucat*”, in the TL. The phrase “... eye, with a film over it” is omitted.

According to Molina & Albir (2002, p. 510), reduction is suppressing information

from the source text in the target text. Moreover, Nida & Taber (1982, p. 168) mentioned that some expressions are naturally reduced in the translation process from one language to another language. According to Chesterman (2016, p. 100), distribution change means a change in the distribution of similar semantic components, whether into more items (expansion) or fewer (compression). According to KII (2025, p. 519), the word “pale” means “*pucat*”. According to KII (2025, p. 89), the word “blue” means “*biru*”, and the word “film” (2025, p. 301) means “*selaput*”.

The phrase “a pale blue eye, with a film over it” anaphorically refers to “One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture”, which is mentioned in the previous section of the text. Mark Foley & Diane Hall’s book *Longman Advanced Learners’ Grammar* (2003, p. 328) emphasize that anaphoric reference means referring back to something which is described previously in the text. Moreover, Halliday & Hasan, in their book *Cohesion in English* (1976, p. 142), stated that ellipsis is substitution by zero. Hence, this translation uses exophoric ellipsis, where the interpretation relied upon the context of the situation (p. 144).

Thus, the technique of translation used here is Reduction.

Established Equivalent

1. 003/TTTH/ENG/001

SL: “...and observe how healthily—how calmly I can tell you the whole story.”

003/HYB/INA/001

TL: “...*maka perhatikanlah betapa warasnya dan tenangnya aku mengisahkan seluruh cerita ini.*”

The adverb phrase in the SL, “...how healthily—how calmly...”, is translated into an exclamatory sentence, also known as an

interjection or exclamation sentence, by adding the conjunction “*dan*” in “...*betapa warasnya dan tenangnya* ...” in the target language.

Molina and Albir (2002, p. 510) in their “Translation Techniques Revisited” implied that an established equivalent is an equivalent term or expression which is recognized by dictionaries or language in use. According to KII (2025, p. 366), “health” *adj.* “*sehat*” → “healthily” *adv.*, or simply “*waras*” (TBI, 2008, p. 434). While “calm” is an adjective, “*tenang*” → “calmly” is an adverb, “*dengan tenang*” (KII, 2025, p. 119). However, the phrase in the TL was added the suffix “-nya” to express emphasis or intensity of a quality—often in exclamative or descriptive contexts, as explained in the following. In TBBBI (2017, p. 492), exclamatory sentences, also known as interjection or exclamation sentences, are generally recognized by the presence of certain words, including “how” (*alangkah*), “what” (*betapa*), or “so / very” (*bukan main*) as adjectival verbs. The suffix “-nya” in “...*warasnya dan tenangnya* ...”, according to TBBBI (2017, pp. 249-250), functions as an adverb in the form of an affixed word, which is formed by adding the suffix to the root word.

According to Vinay & Darbelnet (1958, p. 90), a situation can be rendered into different languages with a completely different style and structure from the original text. According to Newmark’s procedure (1988, p. 83), functional equivalent is usually applied to a cultural term, which is replaced by another culture-free term or sometimes a new one which generalizes the term from the SL. Thus, the technique of translation used here is Established Equivalent.

2. 004/TTTH/ENG/001
SL: “... my senses ...”

004/HYB/INA/001

TL: “...*panca inderaku*, ...”

The word in the SL “senses” is translated into “*panca indera*” in TL. According to KII (2025, p. 642), the word “sense” means “*indra*”, while in KBBI (2008, pp. 583-4) “*indera*” → “*indra*”. Based on KBBI (2008, p. 1112), “*panca*” means *lima* (five), particularly in compound words like “*pancaindra*, *Pancasila*”.

Molina and Albir (2002, p. 510) in their “Translation Techniques Revisited” implied that an established equivalent is an equivalent term or expression which is recognized by dictionaries or language in use. Moreover, according to Vinay & Darbelnet (1958, p. 90), a situation can be rendered into different languages with a completely different style and structure from the original text. According to Newmark’s procedure (1988, p. 83), functional equivalent is usually applied to a cultural term, which is replaced by another culture-free term or sometimes a new one which generalizes the term from the SL word.

As a result, the word “senses” in the SL naturally translated to “*panca indera*” in the TL, and it is understandable. Thus, the translation technique employed here is Established Equivalent.

Amplification

1. 005/TTTH/ENG/001

SL: “I loved the old man”

005/HYB/INA/001

TL: “*Sebenarnya aku menyayangi orang tua itu.*”

The phrase “I love the old man” in the SL is translated into “*Sebenarnya aku menyayangi orang tua itu*” in the TL. In this data, the word “*sebenarnya*” is not implied in the SL, but there is an addition of the word “*sebenarnya*” in the TL.

According to Molina & Albir (2002, p. 510), amplification is a technique to present

some information which is not explicitly present in the source text, also called explicative paraphrasing. According to Vinay & Darbelnet's procedures (1958, p. 500), amplification is employed when the target text employs more information to elaborate syntactic or lexical gaps. Additionally, Nida (1964, p. 227) stated that addition is employed to clarify an elliptic expression, to change a grammatical structure, or to avoid ambiguous translation.

According to KBBI (2008, p. 171), the word "*sebenarnya*" means the right thing or the truth. The word "*sebenarnya*" is a deadjectival adverb. According to TBBBI (2017, p. 257), a deadjectival adverb is an adverb formed by an adjective, both by reduplication or affixation, through an addition of the affix compound *se- ... -nya* to the root word (example: *Sebenarnya kami meragukan kemampuannya*).

Thus, the word "*sebenarnya*" is not implied in the SL but is present in the TL, and gives confirmation about the feeling of the narrator towards the old man. Therefore, the technique of translation used here is Amplification.

2. 006/TTTH/ENG/003

SL: "Presently I heard a slight groan, ..."

006/HYB/INA/003

TL: "*Beberapa saat kemudian aku mendengar suara rintihan kecil, ...*"

The word "Presently ..." in the SL is translated into "*Beberapa saat kemudian...*" in the TL. The technique of translation used here is Amplification.

According to Molina & Albir (2002, p. 510), amplification is a technique to present some information which is not explicitly present in the source text, also called explicative paraphrasing. According to Vinay & Darbelnet's procedures (1958, p. 500),

amplification is employed when the target text employs more information to elaborate syntactic or lexical gaps. Additionally, Nida (1964, p. 227) stated that addition is employed to clarify an elliptic expression, to change a grammatical structure, or to avoid ambiguous translation.

According to KII (2025, p. 557) "presently" means "*segera*" which is synonymous with "*cepat*" in TBI (2008, p. 434). While "*cepat*" means "*dl waktu singkat*" in KBBI (2008, pp. 277 & 1806) "*waktu*", "*saat*". In the meantime, "*singkat*" corresponds to "*sebentar*" (TBBI, 2008, p. 462). According to TBBBI (2017, p. 362), indefinite cardinal numerals, commonly called multipliers, are words that refer to uncertain quantities. Most of these numerals cannot answer questions using the question word "how many". Indefinite numerals include "*beberapa*". According to TBBBI (2017, p. 430), the adverb of time provides information about when an event occurred and is generally placed at the end of a sentence. Adverbs of time may present as a nominal phrase or as a combination of other forms, such as "*tidak lama kemudian*".

The translator translated the word "presently" into "*beberapa saat kemudian*" instead of "*segera*", which has a similar context or meaning, describing what is about to happen after that, which is he was going to hear a slight groan. Thus, the technique of translation used here is Amplification.

Variation

1. 007/TTTH/ENG/001

SL: "One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture ..."

007/HYB/INA/001

TL: "*Dia memiliki mata bak burung vulture ...*"

The translation of the expression "One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture ..." in the SL

into “*Dia memiliki mata bak burung vulture ...*” in the TL, applies the variation technique.

The variation technique is employed to modify the linguistic or paralinguistic elements (example: intonation or gestures), in the SL to change the tone or style in the translation or TL. The noun phrase “One of his eyes ...”, in KII (2025, p. 506) means “one of” that signifies “*salah satu*”, added with “his eyes” that turns out to be “*salah satu mata dia*”, is subsequently translated as “*Dia memiliki mata ...*”. In this case, linguistic components influence shifts in the tone and style of the text. While the verb phrase “... resembled that of a vulture ...” is transformed into a figurative element “... *bak burung vulture ...*”. According to KII (2025, p. 601), “resemble” is “*menyerupai*”, “*mirip*”, and in TBI (2008, p. 36), “*bagaikan*” is synonymous with “*bak*”, “*ibarat*”, “*menyerupai*”, “*mirip*”. At the same time, the word “vulture”, according to KII (2025, p. 790), means “*burung hering, burung pemakan bangkai*”, which is associated with death, decay, or something threatening. However, the word “vulture” in the TL is taken exactly as is, without any changes at all in the TL. The vulture’s eye symbolizes the old man’s perceived evil.

The aforementioned data analysis is supported by Chesterman (2016) in his *Memes of Translation*, implying that paraphrasing results in a loose, free, or sometimes undertranslated translation in the target text. (p. 101)

2. 008/TTTH/ENG/001

SL: “..., my blood ran cold.”

008/HYB/INA/001

TL: “...*darahku langsung membeku.*”

The translation of the phrase “..., my blood ran cold” in the SL into “...*darahku langsung membeku*” in the TL, employs the Variation technique of translation.

According to Molina & Albir (2002, p. 511), the variation technique is employed to modify the linguistic or paralinguistic elements (example: intonation or gestures), in the SL to change the tone or style in the translation or TL. Stated by LDOCE (2010, p. 165), “blood” → “make sb’s blood run cold” is “to make someone feel extremely frightened”. In the meantime, in Collins Dictionary (n.d.), the idiom “to make your blood run cold” refers to “make one’s blood freeze”. According to KII (2025, p. 154), the word “cold” means “*dingin*” is equivalent to “*beku*” in TBI (2008, p. 134). In KBBI (2008, p. 158) “*beku*” → “*membeku*” means “*menjadi beku*”.

In this case, linguistic components influence shifts in the tone and style of the text. The phrase “ran cold” is transformed into a figurative and culturally appropriate metaphor, “*langsung membeku*”. At the same time, there is an addition of the adverb of time “*langsung*”, implying that it happens at once or without delay, and according to KBBI (2008, p. 875), means “*terus (tidak dng perantaraan, tidak terhenti, dsb)*”. TBBBI (2017, p. 240), added that the adverb of time is an adverb which states a meaning related to the time of the event described by the adverb. In this data, the expression “... my blood ran cold” is transformed into “... *darahku langsung membeku*”, which is associated with fright, something horrifying, or something related to death, which shocked the narrator.

The aforementioned data analysis is supported by Chesterman (2016) in his *Memes of Translation*, implying that paraphrasing results in a loose, free, or sometimes undertranslated translation in the target text. Semantic components at the lexeme level are usually disregarded (p. 101).

The frequent use of Amplification technique is to clarify implicit source text meanings not explicitly conveyed. For instance, the translator translated the word “presently” into “*beberapa saat kemudian*” instead of “*segera*”, providing relevant

additional information about what is about to happen after that, which is he was going to hear a slight groan. The Amplification technique is dominantly applied by the translator to maintain the psychological and emotional nuance presented in the SL, and to strengthen the atmosphere which is currently built in the text narration, so the information which is implicitly contained in the SL becomes explicit in the TL, which in the end, the translation can naturally be understood by the target readers.

CONCLUSION

From this study, the researcher found that the translator employed four related techniques based on Molina & Albir's theory of translation techniques, which are amplification, reduction, established equivalent, and variation. Out of 33 data examined, the amplification technique is the most dominant technique, while the established equivalent technique is the least dominant.

From this study, the researcher concluded that the translator conducted the translation of "The Tell-Tale Heart" in accordance with Molina & Albir's Translation Technique theory and the standard Indonesian grammar. Moreover, the study shows that each translation technique has its own characteristics, such as in the Reduction technique, where there is loss of information from the source text excluded in the translation result; in the Amplification technique, there is addition of words in the translation result, which improves the aesthetic value of the translated expression; in the established equivalent technique, the selection of words in the translation result is easier to be understood by the reader since the word selection is more commonly used in the target language; and in the variation technique, the tone or style of some words are substituted to improve the aesthetic value of the translated expression.

This study also shows that it is important to understand context or information content in the source text and to understand the standard grammar for the target language for the translation of a literary work, especially in a classic literary work, to preserve the accuracy of the information contained in the source text while translating it. Moreover, for future research in the field of translation technique, an evaluation of the accuracy of translation results against the standard grammar of the target language should also be considered.

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