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Transformation of Meaning Based on Cultural Context in the Translation of *Lontar Yusuf* into Indonesian

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the transformation of cultural meaning in the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* into Indonesian to understand the changes in meaning that occur in the process of translating traditional texts rich in cultural and religious values. The research data were sourced from *Lontar Yusuf* Banyuwangi: Pegon Text-Transliteration-Translation and analyzed using an interpretive qualitative approach with a bounded-corpus design. The data were purposively selected based on indications of cultural significance transformations in the source and target texts. Data analysis is carried out through thematic analysis, which includes coding, category grouping, and theme interpretation, and is supported by comparing meaning components to identify the forms of meaning change that occur. The results of the study show that there are four forms of cultural meaning transformation, namely narrowing meaning, expanding meaning, generalization, and shifting spiritual meaning. The findings also show that translation strategies oriented towards the target culture are more prevalent than strategies that preserve elements of the source culture, resulting in a simplification of the representation of cultural and spiritual meaning in the translated text. This research contributes to the study of traditional text translation by deepening understanding of the transformation of cultural meaning in translation and its implications for the preservation of cultural and religious values in target texts.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of translation studies in the last decade shows a paradigm shift from understanding translation as a process of transferring linguistic meaning to a complex process of cultural negotiation (Ji, 2025; Ryan, 2020). In this study, the theoretical position used is integrative by combining perspectives on *cultural translation*, *theory translation shifts* Catford, (1965) and ideological strategies Venuti, (2018) which is used as the main analytical framework in studying the transformation of cultural meaning. This framework views translation not only as a linguistic process but also as an ideological practice that shapes cultural representations in the target text.

In this perspective, text is understood as a cultural product that is tied to values, ideology, and social context. Translation always involves ideological choices in representing the source culture and the target culture, so that it is never neutral (Jaya, 2020). This shows that translation is always situated within the space of meaning negotiation, influenced by social and cultural contexts. (Tulupov, 2025). This issue becomes even more important when translating traditional texts that contain strong cultural, religious, and historical values. Errors or simplifications in the translation process have the potential to change the cultural representation contained in the source text, which affects the reader's understanding of the values inherited by the society that owns the culture (Ji, 2025; Yao et al., 2023).

The phenomenon of meaning transformation in translation becomes even more complex when the object of study is traditional texts containing religious elements, cultural symbolism, and local wisdom (Masduki & Syifauddin, 2025). In this context, Nusantara manuscripts function as a medium for the transmission of moral values, knowledge, and views on people's lives that continue to be reinterpreted in the modern context. One of the manuscripts studied in this study is *Lontar Yusuf* from the Banyuwangi Pegon tradition, which developed within Osing culture and shows traces of Javanese-Islamic cultural influences, particularly in the context of Osing culture in the Banyuwangi area, which has a history of cultural interaction in the East Java region. This interconnectedness shows that texts do not stand within a single culture but are situated in intersecting cultural spaces. *Lontar Yusuf* contains religious narratives and moral values that reflect faith, obedience, and surrender to God. In addition, this text also represents local cultural practices such as oral traditions, pupuh musicalization, and the social values of the supporting communities, thus functioning as a complex and

multidimensional cultural representation (Al Munawar et al., 2024; Sutrisno & Author, 2023).

In understanding this complexity, the study of contemporary translation places language as an integral part of cultural systems. Differences in conceptual systems across languages require adaptation strategies to ensure meaning is understood in the target language. Within this framework, the *cultural translation* used to see meaning as a cultural construct shaped by social and historical contexts (Dewi et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the *theory translation shifts* Catford (1965), was used to identify linguistic changes in the translation process, while the *domestication* and *foreignization* Venuti is used to analyze the ideological orientation of translators in managing cultural elements (Sarrohmaniyati et al., 2025). A combination of these three approaches is used in an integrated manner (*eclectic framework*) to analyze the transformation of cultural meaning, not only at the linguistic level, but also on the reconstruction of cultural values and symbols in traditional texts (Nisrina et al., 2025).

Departing from this framework, previous studies have discussed the translation of cultural and religious texts from various perspectives. The shift in meaning in translation is influenced by differences in cultural systems, social contexts, and translation strategies used. The findings confirm that the translation process involves not only the removal of linguistic elements, but also the negotiation of meanings related to cultural backgrounds (Jamal & Simbuka, 2024). Meanwhile, translation into modern Indonesian tends to simplify structure and meaning to improve the target reader's understanding. These findings suggest a tendency for cultural adaptation in translation, although the implications for changing cultural meanings have not been analyzed in depth (Ondok & Tambunsaribu, 2020). Other research also confirms the importance of *domestication* and *foreignization* in maintaining a balance between textual comprehension and cultural identity preservation. However, most of the research still focuses on the description of the form of language shift and translation strategies, so it has not been in-depth to explain how translation ideology plays a role in reconstructing cultural meanings in traditional manuscripts (Lestari, 2019).

More specifically, research on the value of religiosity in the *Lontar Yusuf* texts shows that the spiritual dimension is an important part of the construction of the text's meaning. However, the study has not examined how religious values transform when texts are translated into target languages. The study's focus remains on identifying religious values in the text, not on reconstructing

cultural and spiritual meaning through translation (Wiyono & Suprihatin, 2021). Thus, previous research has explained the shift in meaning, the value of religiosity, and the use of translation strategies separately, but has not demonstrated the relationship among linguistic changes, translation strategies, and cultural meaning transformations within a single, integrated analytical framework. In addition, no research has been found that specifically makes translation *Lontar Yusuf* as the main object to reveal the process of reconstructing cultural and spiritual meaning through translation. This research gap is the basis for this research: the absence of an integrated study of cultural translation, translation shifts, and strategies of domestication and foreignization to comprehensively analyze the transformation of cultural meaning in translation.

This study is important because *Lontar Yusuf* is a manuscript that not only contains local cultural values, but also represents the religious and spiritual values of the supporting community. The transformation of meaning that occurs during translation can affect the representation of these values in the target language. Therefore, understanding the form of cultural meaning transformation is important to maintain the sustainability of the cultural and spiritual interpretation contained in the manuscript. Through this approach, this research offers a conceptual solution to address the limitations of previous research by presenting an analysis that connects linguistic, cultural, and ideological aspects simultaneously. The results of the research are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of cultural meaning transformation in traditional manuscript translation and become a reference for culture-based translation research on other archipelago manuscripts.

The novelty of this research lies in analyzing the transformation of cultural meaning in the translation of *Lontar Yusuf*, combining cultural translation, translation shifts, and domestication and foreignization strategies within a single, integrated analytical framework. This approach is used not only to identify linguistic shifts but also to explain how cultural meanings are reconstructed through the choice of translation strategies in the context of Nusantara manuscripts. Based on this background, this research is formulated in three questions: (1) what forms of cultural meaning transformation appear in the translation of *Lontar Yusuf*; (2) what translation strategies are predominantly used; and (3) what are the cultural implications of the change in meaning. Based on this formulation, this study aims to analyze the

transformation of cultural meaning in the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* into Indonesian, focusing on the form of meaning change, translation strategies, and cultural implications. Theoretically, this study strengthens the study of *cultural translation* in the context of archipelago manuscripts. Practically, this research contributes to translators' and academics' understanding of cultural sensitivity in translating traditional texts, not only to maintain the text's comprehension but also to preserve the cultural and spiritual values it contains.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses an interpretive qualitative approach to analyze the transformation of cultural meaning in the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* into Indonesian. This approach was chosen because the study not only identifies changes in the form of language in translated texts but also interprets changes in cultural meaning, spiritual values, and social representations that arise from the translation process. Through an interpretive approach, the meaning in the source and target texts is understood in light of the Javanese-Islamic cultural context that serves as the background. Qualitative research emphasizes interpreting meaning in the context of its use, allowing researchers to understand phenomena in depth (Flick, 2022). In addition, qualitative approaches are relevant for examining the construction of meaning in cultural texts because they focus on understanding, interpretation, and the socio-cultural context surrounding them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Methodologically, this study uses a *bounded corpus design*, which limits the corpus to a specific part of the text relevant to the research objective, rather than the entire text. The corpus is limited so that the analysis can focus on text units that indicate the transformation of cultural meaning, allowing a more in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under study. Research data in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and expressions in the *Lontar Yusuf* text, which contain cultural, religious, and symbolic elements and show a transformation of meaning in the translation process. The source of research data is books *Lontar Yusuf Banyuwangi: Pegon Text-Transliteration-Translation Works* (Indiarti, 2018). Philologically, this edition is the result of transliteration and documentation of Pegon manuscripts that have undergone academic processing and are used as a single representation (single witness text): São Paulo São Paulo *Lontar Yusuf* in Banyuwangi.

This study acknowledges the limitations, namely the unavailability of comparative manuscript variants. Therefore, the analysis focuses on the data available in the issue, which constitutes a limited corpus of research. The researcher is also aware that academic editors perform transliteration from the Pegon script to Latin, so potential transliteration bias remains a possibility. However, all analyses were carried out using the text form established in the edition, without reconstructing the original manuscript. Data collection is carried out through documentation techniques and literature studies. Documentation techniques are used to identify and record data units that contain cultural, religious, and symbolic elements in both the source and target texts. Literature studies are used to establish theoretical foundations for cultural translation, translation shifts, cultural semantics, translation strategies, and the transformation of cultural meaning.

The data collection steps are carried out systematically. First, the researcher reads the entire corpus to gain a general understanding of the text's content. Second, the researcher identifies data units that have the potential to transform cultural meaning. Third, the identified data is recorded and classified according to its cultural, religious, and symbolic characteristics. Fourth, data selection was carried out based on the previously determined research indicators.

The validity of the data is maintained through several procedures. First, *peer debriefing* is conducted with peers to discuss the results of data coding and interpretation, thereby minimizing researchers' subjectivity bias. Second, theoretical triangulation is used by combining the perspectives of *cultural translation*, *translation shifts*, *domestication* and *foreignization strategies*, and cultural semantics in the data interpretation process. Third, the research applies the principle of *trail audit* by using a coding sheet that documents the entire process of identifying, classifying, and analyzing data systematically, ensuring traceability of the research process.

Data analysis is carried out through several stages. The first stage is data reduction. At this stage, the researcher identifies all text units relevant to the cultural context, then conducts a screening based on three main criteria: the presence of changes in lexical or semantic meaning, the relationship with cultural or religious elements, and the representation of variations in the form of meaning transformations. Data that does not meet these criteria is excluded from the analysis.

The second stage is data encoding. All selected data are recorded on a coding sheet that

includes the source text, target text, meaning transformation category, type of translation shift, and translation strategy used. Coding is done manually through a *close-reading technique to maintain the accuracy of data interpretation*.

The third stage is thematic analysis, using the *thematic analysis* developed by (Braun et al., 2022). The analysis is carried out in six stages: data familiarization, initial coding, theme search, theme review, theme definition, and report writing. The resulting themes were used to identify patterns of transformation in cultural significance within the research corpus.

The fourth stage is data interpretation. At this stage, the data is analyzed using the theory *translation shifts* (Catford, 1965) to identify forms of linguistic shift, strategies of *domestication* and *foreignization* (Venuti, 2018) to examine the ideological orientation of translation, as well as the perspective of *cultural translation*, to explain the reconstruction of cultural meaning in the target text. Analysis is strengthened by *componential analysis* through the identification of core meanings, additional meanings, and changes in contextual meaning to explain forms of narrowing and expansion of meaning, generalization, and shifts in spiritual meaning.

The data analyzed are presented descriptively and analytically in tables and narrative descriptions. Each piece of data is displayed as a pair of source and target texts, followed by the category of meaning transformation, the type of translation shift, the translation strategy used, and the cultural implications it entails. The data were presented systematically to show the relationship between linguistic change and the reconstruction of cultural meaning, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the study's results.

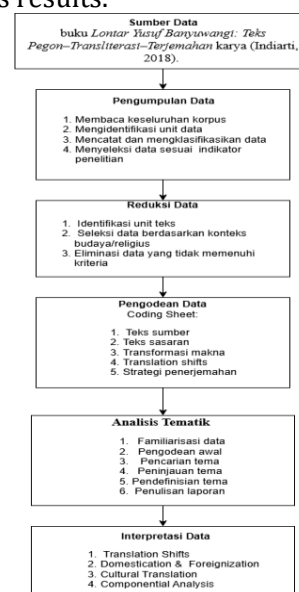


Image 1. Research Stage Flow Chart

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of data identification and classification, four forms of cultural meaning transformation in the translation of Lontar Yusuf into Indonesian were found: narrowing of meaning, expansion of meaning, generalization, and shift of spiritual meaning. The transformation appears in religious terms, social relations, and Javanese-Islamic cultural symbols, all of which have changed

in the translation process. The analysis was carried out by identifying linguistic changes in the form of *structural shifts, lexical substitutions, and semantic expansions, as well as examining domestication and foreignization strategies to explain the resulting changes in cultural meaning*. The data on the transformation of cultural meaning in this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Data on Cultural Meaning Transformation in Yusuf's Lontar Translation

Code	Data (Pegon + Translation)	Analysis (Meaning, Linguistic Change, Strategy, Culture)
D1	Sapolahé Yusup iki → Segala perikehidupan Yusuf	Literal meaning: The life of Joseph. Cultural Meaning: Narrative of the life of a sacred figure. Transformation of meaning: Narrowing of meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Lexical substitution</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: The term "source culture" is replaced by a more general term, thereby reducing some cultural nuances.
D2	against the → with their relatives	Literal meaning: With family. Cultural meaning: The social structure of the family in Javanese-Islamic culture. Transformation of meaning: Generalization. A form of linguistic change: <i>Structural shift</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: Social relations are translated into a form that is easier for the target reader to understand.
D3	A beautiful face → with a beautiful face.	Literal meaning: Faces are very beautiful. Cultural meaning: Representation of the perfection of the Prophet figure. Transformation of meaning: Expansion of meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Lexical substitution</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: Physical descriptions are clarified to make the meaning more explicit.
D4	ya ta nané dhèng Pangeran → maka ia bermohon kepada Tuhan	Literal meaning: To plead with God. Cultural meaning: The relationship between humans and God in the Javanese-Islamic tradition. Transformation of Meaning: A Shift in Spiritual Meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Lexical substitutions</i> that result in <i>semantic shifts</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: The term "local cultural-religious" was replaced with a more common Indonesian term.
D5	"What do you think of the → the Witch	Literal meaning: Hermit. Cultural meaning: A symbol of religious asceticism. Transformation of meaning: Narrowing of meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Lexical substitution</i> . Strategy: <i>Foreignization</i> . Cultural analysis: The element of asceticism is retained, even though some nuances of local culture are diminished.
D6	A Man Who Wanted to Meet → Prophet Joseph	Literal meaning: I want to meet the Prophet, Joseph. Cultural meaning: Spiritual relations and the example of the Prophet. Transformation of Meaning: A Shift in Spiritual Meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Lexical substitution</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: The lexical choices in the target text retain the meaning of the encounter with the Prophet Joseph, but simplify the nuances of spiritual closeness and personal experience implied in the source text.
D7	It has been a long time coming → do not let me die.	Literal meaning: A living application. Cultural meaning: Religious emotional expression. Transformation of meaning: Expansion of meaning. A form of linguistic change: <i>Structural shift</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: The sentence structure is expanded to clarify the speaker's intent.
D8	Yes, the Gospel of God → God has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit	Literal meaning: Granted by God. Cultural meaning: Divine intervention. Transformation of meaning: Narrowing of meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Lexical substitution</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: The cultural-religious term "Widi" was replaced with a term more common to Indonesian readers.

D9	D'Agostino was → the Spaniard's request	Literal meaning: Hermit's request. Cultural meaning: The structure of prayer in the Javanese-Islamic tradition. Transformation of meaning: Generalization. A form of linguistic change: <i>Structural shift</i> . Strategy: <i>Foreignization</i> . Cultural analysis: The main meanings are retained, but the structure of the expressions is simplified.
D10	sinembadan sakarsané → dipenuhi kehendaknya	Literal meaning: A will granted. Cultural meaning: The concept of will and destiny in a religious context. Transformation of Meaning: A Shift in Spiritual Meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Lexical substitution</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: Some theological nuances are presented in a more general, communicative form.
D11	Dadi sira ngeréngén swara → maka ia mendengar isyarat suara	Literal meaning: Hearing sounds. Cultural meaning: A representation of spiritual communication. Transformation of meaning: Expansion of meaning. Forms of linguistic change: <i>Semantic expansion</i> . Strategy: <i>Foreignization</i> . Cultural analysis: The target text adds a meaning that clarifies the spiritual context.
D12	The Atapa said → said that the hermit	Literal meaning: Spiritual instruction. Cultural Meaning: The Relationship of Spiritual Authority. Transformation of meaning: Narrowing of meaning. A form of linguistic change: <i>Structural shift</i> . Strategy: <i>Domestication</i> . Cultural analysis: The structure of speech is changed to make it easier for target readers to understand.

Cultural Significance Transformation

This study uses operational indicators to determine the category of transformation in cultural significance, thereby maintaining consistency in data classification. Classification is carried out based on changes in the meaning components that arise between the source and translated texts. The indicators of each category of meaning transformation are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Indicators of Cultural Significance Transformation Categories

Category: Transformasi	Analysis Indicators
Narrowing of Meaning	Some of the cultural, religious, symbolic, or philosophical meanings contained in the source text do not appear or are reduced in the target text.
Expansion of Meaning	The target text adds elements of meaning or information that are not explicitly stated in the source text, thereby broadening the scope of meaning.
Generalization	Specific cultural terms are translated into more general terms so that the cultural peculiarities of the source are reduced.
Shifting Spiritual Meaning	There is a change in the representation of religious, theological, mystical, or spiritual elements, resulting in spiritual functions and

nuances in the target text that differ from those in the source text.

The determination of categories is carried out by comparing the meaning components of the source and target texts, taking into account the Javanese-Islamic cultural context that forms the background of the *Lontar Yusuf* text. Thus, classification is based not only on changes in the form of language, but also on changes in cultural meaning that arise in the process of translation.

The results of the study show that the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* into Indonesian undergoes various transformations in cultural meaning, influenced by translation ideologies, linguistic changes, and cultural negotiation processes. Of the 12 data analyzed, domestication seems more dominant than foreignization. This dominance is evident in the adaptation of religious terms, social relations, and certain cultural elements to make them more accessible to modern Indonesian readers. These findings suggest that traditional text translation not only serves as a process of translation, but also involves the process of adjusting and reinterpreting cultural meanings into the context of the target language (Qiu, 2023). In the context of the Pegon-Javanese manuscript, the translator faces not only linguistic problems but also the challenge of representing spirituality, cultural symbols, and the perspective of traditional society, which has a different system of meaning from that of modern readers. Therefore, the transformation that appears in the translated text can be understood as a negotiation between

preserving the source's cultural elements and the target reader's understanding.

Domestication and Spiritual Simplification

In this study, the concept of the sacred is understood as a quality of meaning associated with belief systems, religious respect, and transcendental values inherent in entities, actions, or symbols in Javanese-Islamic cultural texts. Sacred not only refers to aspects of formal religious rituals, but also includes the representation of language that contains spiritual authority, closeness to divine figures, and ethical-religious values that live in the traditions of society (Hasan et al., 2023). In the context of the text *Lontar Yusuf*, sacredness is represented through terms, expressions, and narrative structures that reflect human relationships with God and the Prophet, as well as spiritual practices such as *tapa* and prayer. Therefore, a change in meaning is categorized as a spiritual reduction or shift when there is an elimination, reduction, or universalization of elements that contain such transcendental dimensions in the target text.

In D1 data, the phrase *Sapolahé Yusuf iki* translates as "All the life of Joseph." In general, both expressions refer to the life of the Prophet Joseph. However, based on the analysis of the meaning component, the term *sapolahé* in the context of Javanese-Islamic culture not only refers to a person's life but also encompasses elements of the life journey, moral examples, religious experiences, and spiritual values inherent in the figure of the Prophet Yusuf. In the Javanese religious literary tradition, the term is often used to describe life practices that are full of ethical and religious learning (Natae, 2025).

Meanwhile, the term "perikevidaan" in Indonesian is more oriented toward a general description of a person's life and does not explicitly include the dimensions of spiritual exemplarity and religious experience found in the source term. The comparison of the meaning components shows that the elements of the character's life and life journey are still retained. However, the elements of moral exemplarism, religious experience, and Javanese-Islamic cultural nuances are no longer explicitly represented in the target text. The data collected show a narrowing of meaning, a process in which a language form that originally had a broad scope of meaning becomes more limited due to the addition of distinguishing features, so that it represents only part of the previous form's meaning (Fatton, 2021). Therefore, this data is categorized as a narrowing of meaning because some components of cultural meaning present in the source text are not fully present in the translation.

From the perspective of cultural translation, these changes show a tendency toward domestication, aiming to present terms that are easier for modern Indonesian readers to understand. This strategy retains the core meaning of the Prophet Joseph's life, but at the same time simplifies some of the cultural and spiritual aspects inherent in the source term (Ummu Salamah Al-Hasyimi et al., 2025). Thus, the semantic features maintained include the meaning of the character's life and journey, while the features of moral example, religious experience, and Javanese-Islamic cultural nuances are reduced in the target text. The change does not indicate a complete loss of religious meaning but rather reflects a simplification of cultural and spiritual representations during the translation process. These findings show the tendency of the strategy of *domestication* because the term source culture is simplified to make it easier to understand by modern Indonesian readers, which has an impact on reducing the depth of cultural meaning, especially in spiritual aspects and moral exemplary (Masduki & Syifauddin, 2019). A similar phenomenon is also seen in the D3 data, namely, changes from "muwah rupa seru pékike" to "with his very handsome face". The translation expands the meaning by adding a more explicit descriptive element for the target reader. Although the basic meaning of physical beauty is retained, the representation of the character becomes more communicative than the form of expression in the source text.

The same trend was also found in the D7 data, namely, a shift from "It has Been a Long Time" to "let me not die first". The translation expands the structure and information implied by the source text, making the speaker's intent clearer to modern Indonesian readers. These findings suggest that the expansion of meaning is used as a strategy to improve the comprehension of the target text. These findings are supported by Tulupov (2025) which states that translating texts with cultural and religious nuances often involves explaining meaning to suit the target reader's context and acceptance, without altering the source text's core meaning.

In addition to religious and spiritual terms, the tendency to *domestication* is also seen in the translation of socio-cultural relations. In D2 data, the phrase "*Against the Doubters*" is translated as "with his relatives". This change reflects the translator's attempt to replace more specific cultural terms from the Javanese tradition with a more general form that is easier for modern Indonesian readers to understand. In D2 data, the phrase *Against the Doubters* translates as "with his

relatives." In general, both expressions refer to kinship relationships. However, in the context of Javanese culture, the term *sangkira* refers not only to biological family members but also to the emotional closeness, social solidarity, and communal attachment that develop in people's lives (Damanik et al., 2023).

Thus, the term contains a broader cultural dimension than just family relationships. Meanwhile, the Indonesian phrase "relatives" emphasizes family relationships or kinship without explicitly conveying the cultural collectivity dimension found in the source term. Based on the analysis of the meaning component, the element of kinship is maintained in the target text. In contrast, the elements of cultural collectivity, social solidarity, and communal attachment become less prominent. This data shows the presence of generalization symptoms in the translation process. Generalization is a shift in meaning that occurs when a term that has a special or specific meaning is transferred to a more general form, so that the scope of its meaning becomes wider than the meaning in the source language (Baker, 2018). Therefore, this data is categorized as generalization because meanings originally more specific to the source culture are represented in a more general form in the target language. The change shows that some of the cultural characteristics inherent in the term *sangkira* are not fully represented in translation.

Linguistically, these changes indicate the existence of a *structural shift* because the linguistic elements in the source text are restructured into a form that is more in line with the target language system (Catford, 1965). This change also shows Venuti's domestication strategy, as cultural terms that are local and specific are rendered in more general, familiar expressions for the target reader. In addition, these findings also support Tulupov (2025) which emphasizes that translating texts with cultural nuances involves negotiating meaning between loyalty to the source text and the target text's communication needs, often resulting in the simplification of complex cultural elements. Thus, the translator prioritizes textual comprehension, even though some nuances of social relations and Javanese cultural collectivity conveyed by the term *sangkira* are simplified.

The phenomenon of cultural transformation is also seen in the D4 data, in the phrase *ya ta nané dhèng Pangeran*, which translates to "so he begs God". Denotatively, both terms refer to divine entities. However, based on the analysis of the meaning component, the term *Prince* in the Javanese-Islamic tradition serves not only as a reference to God but also as a local cultural element,

including traditional respect, religious emotional closeness, and a connection to the symbolic system of Javanese society. Meanwhile, the term "God" in modern Indonesian is more general and does not specifically represent a specific cultural identity.

A comparison of the components of meaning shows that the divine element is retained in the target text, but some components of cultural meaning are reduced. The loss of elements of traditional respect and Javanese religious nuances caused the term, which originally functioned as a cultural keyword, to become a more universal religious term.

Table 3. D4 Theory of Theory (→D4 Theory)

Features	Prince	God
Divine entities	+	+
Javanese cultural terms	+	-
Standard Indonesian terms	-	+
Local	+	-
General/national	-	+

Caption: (+) present, (-) absent.

The table shows that the terms "Prince" and "God" both retain references to divine entities. However, the term *"Prince"* carries a meaning specific to Javanese cultural traditions and local usage within the source culture. Instead, the term *"God"* is a more common form in Indonesian and is widely used across various cultural contexts. The change shows that the elements of cultural locality contained in the term *Prince* are not entirely represented by *God*. As a result, there is a shift in spiritual meaning as cultural terms are universalized into a more general form that is easier for the target reader to understand. Thus, the transformation that occurs cannot be categorized as a *category shift*, as stated Catford, (1965), because there is no change in grammatical class. These changes are better understood as lexical substitution, which causes a shift in cultural and spiritual meaning.

Based on the established indicators, this data is categorized as a shift in spiritual meaning because the divine element remains present in the target text. However, the spiritual representation inherent in Javanese-Islamic culture has changed. These changes do not indicate a loss of religious meaning as a whole, but rather reflect a tendency to simplify spiritual representations to make them easier for modern Indonesian readers to understand. These findings are in line with Venuti's (2018) concept of domestication, which holds that translators often adapt elements of the source culture into forms more familiar to the target reader.

A similar pattern appears in the D8 data when the term *God* " is translated as "God". Both terms refer to divine entities, but the more specific cultural-religious terms in the Javanese tradition have been universalized into a more general form in Indonesian. Thus, D8 reinforces the finding that domestication tends to simplify spiritual representations to make them easier for target readers to understand. This is in accordance with (2014). This explains that a translation shift arises from differences in language systems that cause changes in structure and meaning. These findings are also reinforced by (2023), which states that lexical transformation is often used to adapt the text to the target language system.

In the D6 data (mention of the Prophet in the narrative context), the phrase "*swing saw*" in the narrative about Prophet Joseph is translated as "wanting to meet the Prophet, Joseph". In general, both expressions describe the desire to interact with the Prophet Joseph. However, based on semantic analysis, there are differences in the nuances of meaning in the verbal elements used. In Javanese, the word *weruh* not only means seeing or knowing but, in certain contexts, can also carry a more personal meaning of recognition, witnessing, or experiencing a respected figure. Meanwhile, the Indonesian word "*bersua*" emphasizes direct encounter without explicitly conveying the dimension of recognition or inner experience found in the source term.

Linguistically, these changes indicate the existence of *lexical substitution* because the word *Stuart* replaced by the lexeme "*bersua*" in the target language. This change retains the basic meaning of wanting to relate to the Prophet Joseph, but shifts the nuances of meaning that accompany it. Based on the analysis of the meaning component, the element of encounter with the figure of the Prophet is maintained. In contrast, the element of personal experience and emotional closeness implied in the source term becomes less prominent in the target text. These findings support Ahyar et al., (2021) which explains that the semantic and pragmatic aspects of translation can alter nuances of meaning without altering the basic meaning.

This is also in line with (2026), which suggests that translation techniques can affect the clarity of meaning, thereby improving the readability of the target text. Therefore, this data shows a shift in the level of representation of the relationship between figures and religious figures in the target text. The change did not eliminate the reference to the Prophet Joseph but altered how the relationship was represented linguistically. From the perspective of cultural translation, this change reflects a tendency to domestication, which aims to

present more communicative expressions for modern Indonesian readers. Thus, the transformation is better understood as a simplification of the representation of spiritual relations in the target text, rather than as a definitive reduction of sacred value.

However, the level of sacredness cannot be ascertained definitively, because this study uses secondary data in the form of a transliteration from (2018), rather than the Pegon text directly. This limitation means that verification of honorary tagging or variations in term use in the source text cannot be fully carried out. Therefore, the analysis is limited to linguistic and semantic change and does not conclude that there is an absolute decline in sacred value. Thus, in this study, sacredness is not assumed to be automatically attached to every mention of the Prophet. The determination of the level of sacredness depends on the narrative context and linguistic markers available in the transliteration data source (Indiarti). Based on these limitations, this analysis does not assess the existence of an absolute sacred reduction, but rather a change in semantic relations and spiritual representations in the target text.

In the D10 data, the phrase *sinembadan sacsarané* translates to "fulfilled his will." In the source text, the term *saccharsané* refers not only to will or desire but also to the concept of will, which, in Javanese-Islamic religious narratives, is often associated with divine power and decree. Therefore, the term contains a broader spiritual nuance than its literal lexical meaning. Meanwhile, the Indonesian translation of "will" retains the basic meaning of "a will" or "desire," but does not explicitly convey its relationship to the spiritual dimension of the source term.

Linguistically, the change indicates lexical substitution, as the more common lexeme replaces the term *saccharsané*, meaning "will," in Indonesian. This substitution does not eliminate the basic meaning of the will, but it does affect the representation of the spiritual nuances contained in the source term. Based on the analysis of the meaning component, the element of will is retained in the target text, while the nuances of meaning related to spiritual concepts and divine decrees become less prominent. Thus, this data shows a shift in spiritual meaning because some components of cultural meaning attached to the source term are not fully represented in translation.

From the perspective of cultural translation, this phenomenon shows a tendency to domestication, which prioritizes readability and ease of understanding for target readers. The strategy retains the core meaning of the source text while simplifying certain cultural and spiritual

nuances associated with the term *sakarsané*. Therefore, the transformation that occurs is better understood as an adjustment to the representation of spiritual meaning than as a fundamental theological change. These findings show that the translation process does not eliminate religious meaning, but rather presents a more general and communicative form of spiritual representation for modern Indonesian readers. These findings are in line with (2017), which explains that the equivalence problem causes a shift in meaning when cultural concepts lack a corresponding equivalent. It is also supported by (2013), who emphasizes that equivalence in translation cannot always be fully achieved in cross-cultural texts.

Overall, the data D1, D2, D3, D4, D6, D7, D8, and D10 show that the transformation of cultural meaning in the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* tends to occur through the simplification of the spiritual representations inherent in the source term. Although the religious element and the core meaning are retained, some components of meaning related to moral exemplarity, religious experience, traditional reverence, spiritual emotional closeness, and the concept of divine decree are reduced or universalized in the target text. These findings show that *domestication* strategies not only improve the readability and accessibility of texts for modern Indonesian readers but also reshape the cultural and spiritual representations in the source texts. Thus, the translation process not only transfers linguistic meaning but also negotiates cultural and spiritual values to suit the target reader's context.

Foreignization and Cultural Identity

In the D5 data, the phrase *punang atapa ika* is translated as "the hermit." In general, both terms refer to individuals who are engaged in ascetic practice or a spiritual life. However, in the Javanese-Islamic tradition, the term *atapa* refers not only to the figure of a hermit but also to the practice of *tapa* as a form of self-control, self-seclusion, and the search for spiritual perfection. Meanwhile, the term "ascetic" in Indonesian focuses more on the perpetrator's identity, without explicitly representing the full dimension of spiritual practice inherent in the term's source.

Based on the analysis of the meaning component, the elements of asceticism and spiritual life are still maintained in the target text, while the elements of *tapa* practice, as a typical Javanese cultural and spiritual practice, become less prominent. Therefore, this data is categorized as a narrowing of meaning because some components of the source term's cultural meaning are not fully represented in the translation.

Nonetheless, the use of the term "hermit" shows a tendency *towards foreignization because* the translator still retains the cultural and spiritual elements that come from the source tradition (Venuti, 2018). These findings show that translating the cultural term *atapa* as "asceticism" retains the basic meaning of asceticism while narrowing its scope to aspects of spiritual practice within the Javanese-Islamic cultural context. This is in line with Finsen & Puspani, (2019) which explains that terms related to cultural practices often undergo simplification of meaning in translation. In addition, (Masduki & Syifaiddin, 2025) confirms that problem equivalence can lead to a shift in meaning when cultural elements lack a fully equivalent counterpart in the target language.

In the D9 data, the phrase *pané dhane sang wahu tapa* translates as "the ascetic's supplication." In general, both expressions refer to a request made by a hermit. However, in the source text, the phrase "*The Vampire Slayer*" not only identifies the figure as a hermit but also conveys the spiritual condition or status the figure is undergoing. Meanwhile, the translation of "the hermit" emphasizes the character's identity without fully conveying the source expression's spiritual context. Based on the analysis of the meaning component, the elements of the request and the figure's identity as an ascetic are still maintained in the target text. In contrast, the elements related to the condition or process of spiritual practice become less visible. Therefore, this data is categorized as generalization because expressions that originally contained more specific cultural information are translated into more general forms. Linguistically, these changes indicate the existence of a *structural shift because* the structure of expressions in the source text is adjusted to the more prevalent patterns in the target language. Nevertheless, the use of the term "hermit" still retains cultural and spiritual elements derived from the source tradition, indicating a tendency towards foreignization (Venuti, 2018). This is in line with (2019), which explains that terms related to cultural practices often undergo simplification of meaning in translation. In addition, Masduki & Syifaiddin (2025) confirm that problem equivalence can lead to a shift in meaning when cultural elements lack a fully equivalent counterpart in the target language.

In D11, the phrase "then he hears a voice" is translated as "then he hears a voice signal." In the source culture, the phrase describes the experience of hearing sounds that can be interpreted as spiritual clues or as certain inner experiences. Meanwhile, the translation of "voice signals" adds meaning in the form of clues or signs that are not explicitly present in the source expression. Based

on the analysis of the meaning component, the listening experience element is retained. However, the target text adds a meaning component by indicating the presence of a specific message or clue. Therefore, this data is categorized as an expansion of meaning because the originally more limited meaning is expanded through the addition of new semantic features. Linguistically, these changes indicate a *semantic expansion* that results in a more explicit interpretation for the target reader.

Despite the expansion of meaning, the phrase "voice cues" still retains associations with the spiritual experience of the source culture. The element of mental guidance or spiritual communication inherent in the source phrase remains recognizable in the target text even if it is represented in a more explicit form. Therefore, the translation strategy for this data shows a tendency toward foreignization because the cultural and spiritual elements of the source text are still preserved in the translation (Venuti, 2018). It supports (Lestari, 2019), which suggests that variation in translation can expand meaning to improve readability. In addition, Scott (2025) explains that pragmatic aspects play a role in changing the level of meaning clarity in the target text.

In the D12 data, *the phrase orang atapa habln* translates to "to say to the ascetic." In general, both expressions relate to acts of communication involving the figure of a hermit. However, in the source text, the word *ngandikan* not only indicates the act of speaking but also conveys nuances of respect commonly used in communication with or about figures who hold a certain position in Javanese culture. Meanwhile, the translation of "said" serves more as a general communication verb than as an explicit marker of respect.

Based on the analysis of the meaning component, the element of communication action is maintained in the target text. In contrast, the element of respect and hierarchical social relations becomes less prominent. Therefore, this data is categorized as a narrowing of meaning because some components of the cultural meaning contained in the source term are not fully present in the translation. Linguistically, these changes indicate a structural shift accompanied by the simplification of expression in the target language (Gunawan, 2019). As a result, the nuances of communication ethics and social relations typical of Javanese-Islamic culture become less visible than in the source text. These findings are consistent with Bilous et al. (2023), who state that lexical transformation often affects the social and expressive nuances of the target text. Despite the

simplification of the form of reverence, the term "hermit" still retains a reference to the source culture, so this data shows a tendency toward foreignization. Thus, the translator retains the basic meaning of the communication while preserving some of the source's cultural identity, although elements of traditional respect are no longer explicitly represented.

In general, the data D5, D9, D11, and D12 show that the domestication strategy does not completely dominate the translation of *Lontar Yusuf*. In some parts, the translator maintains the cultural and spiritual elements of the source tradition through terms and expressions that reflect Javanese-Islamic cultural identity. Despite the narrowing, generalization, or expansion of meaning in some data, elements of asceticism, spiritual experience, and religious identity can still be recognized in the target text. These findings show that *the foreignization* strategy helps preserve the source's cultural traces while maintaining the reader's connection to the text's cultural context. Thus, the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* shows a negotiation between preserving the source's cultural identity and the need for comprehension by target-language readers.

Cultural Negotiation in Translation

The findings of this study show that domestication is more dominant than foreignization in the translation of *Lontar Yusuf*. This dominance is evident in the simplification of religious terms, spiritual symbols, and cultural relations to make them more accessible to modern Indonesian readers. These results are in line with research (Puspitasari, 2020), which states that translators tend to adapt elements of local culture to improve the readability of the target text. Research (Wiyono & Suprihatin, 2021) also explains that *domestication* remains a dominant strategy in cultural translation because it is considered capable of bridging cultural differences between source texts and modern readers. In Venuti's perspective, the strategy shows the translator's ideological tendency to bring the source culture closer to the horizon of the target reader through the simplification of elements of foreign culture (Venuti, 2018).

However, the findings of this study also need to be read more carefully in the framework of the relationship between the translator's ideology and the limitations of the target language system. Not all forms of meaning simplification can be directly attributed to an ideological decision by the translator. In some cases, the transformation of meaning can also be influenced by lexical and conceptual limitations in modern Indonesian,

which do not always have equivalents for Javanese-Islamic cultural terms in the source text (Anis & Nurulakla, 2023). Thus, what appears to be *domestication* is not always an entirely ideological choice; it can also be a consequence of differences in language systems and communicative needs in the target language.

Based on these considerations, this study views the translation process in Lontar Yusuf as a negotiation between the translator's ideological tendencies and the language's structural limitations. On the one hand, there is a conscious effort to adapt the text to make it easier for modern readers to understand, reflecting a domestication orientation. On the other hand, however, there are linguistic conditions that limit the possibility of fully defending cultural meaning, so that some elements undergo generalizations or shifts without always showing direct ideological intervention. Furthermore, this study presents a more specific finding: namely, that the dominance of domestication in the translation of the Pegon-Javanese manuscript not only resulted in language simplification but also exhibited a tendency to simplify spiritual representations. Some religious terms and cultural symbols undergo a transformation from traditional spiritual meanings to more rational and communicative forms in the context of the target language (Nani Sumarlina & Mohamad Permana, 2025).

This phenomenon shows that there is a process of modernizing cultural meaning in the translation of traditional texts to suit the understanding patterns of contemporary readers. These findings expand the study of cultural translation by showing that cultural adaptation in traditional manuscript texts can change how spiritual values are represented without necessarily altering sacred function as a whole (Setyanto & Amal, 2025). From the perspective of Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, translation is not just a transfer of language but a process of cultural reconstruction influenced by the ideology, social context, and orientation of the target reader (Pujiati, 2018). Contemporary studies also confirm that *cultural translation* involves negotiating cultural identity and representing social meaning in the target text (Meeshi, 2026).

The differences between this study's findings and those of some previous studies are likely influenced by the characteristics of the data and the cultural context of the source text. Previous research generally analyzed popular texts, novels, or modern media, whereas this study focused on Pegon-Javanese manuscripts with stronger spiritual, symbolic, and religious content. As a result, the translation process not only faces

linguistic issues but also involves negotiating the meaning of local culture and spirituality at the level of language representation. In addition, translation into modern Indonesian encourages translators to choose a more communicative form of language so that mystical, philosophical, and religious asceticism elements in Javanese-Islamic culture tend to be simplified. This phenomenon is in line with Newmark's view that cultural and religious texts often undergo semantic adjustments to be effectively understood by the target reader. Research (2021). It also explains that changes in meaning in cultural translation are often influenced by the interpretive process and the translator's ideological adaptation to the target reader's context.

Theoretically, this study strengthens the relationship between translation shifts, translation ideology, and cultural translation in the study of traditional manuscript translation. The linguistic shifts observed not only indicate a change in the structure of language but also reflect a transformation of cultural meaning through ideological and communicative adaptation. These findings expand the theory Catford, (1965) *Because translation shifts in traditional texts, it is not only linguistic but also related to changes in how spiritual values and cultural symbols are represented*. In addition, this study shows that translating Nusantara manuscripts requires a balance between text readability and cultural identity preservation, so that local meaning is not completely reduced in the target language. Thus, this study reinforces the view that traditional manuscript translation is a dynamic process of cultural negotiation between the language, ideology, and social context of modern readers (Al Munawar et al., 2024; Natae, 2025)

Overall, the results of the study show that the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* is a process of cultural transformation that involves linguistic shifts, ideological negotiations, and reinterpretation of spiritual meaning. Strategy *domestication*. It has become a dominant trend as translators seek to present texts that are more communicative to modern readers. However, some elements of *foreignization* are maintained to maintain the cultural identity and spirituality of the source text. These findings reinforce the view that traditional manuscript translation is not just a process of language transfer, but also a process of cultural reconstruction influenced by social contexts, translators' ideologies, and the orientation of target readers (Irodaxon & Dilshoda, n.d.)

CONCLUSION

This study aims to describe the form of cultural meaning transformation in the translation of Lontar *Yusuf* into Indonesian and identify the tendency of the translation strategy used. The results of the study show that the transformation of cultural meaning occurs in several forms: narrowing of meaning, expansion of meaning, generalization, and a shift in spiritual meaning. These changes arise through lexical substitution, semantic adjustment, and structural shifts that affect the representation of Javanese-Islamic cultural elements in the target text. In general, the core meaning is still maintained, but some components of cultural meaning, such as moral exemplary values, social relations, traditional respect, and spiritual nuances, have been reduced or universalized. In addition, this study found that *the domestication* strategy is more dominant than foreignization, which is characterized by a tendency to simplify cultural terms to make them more communicative for modern Indonesian readers, although in some parts there are still efforts to maintain the source cultural elements. Thus, it can be concluded that the translation of *Lontar Yusuf* not only serves as a translation process but also as a process of negotiating cultural and spiritual meanings, producing new forms of representation in the target language.

Advice

This study suggests that the next study should expand the scope of research not only to the Lontar Yusuf manuscript but also to other Pegon-Javanese manuscripts to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the pattern of transformation of cultural meaning in the tradition of translating classical texts in the archipelago. Further research is also recommended using a multimodal approach or by comparing multiple translation versions so that the analysis of meaning shifts can be examined more deeply from linguistic, pragmatic, and ideological perspectives. For translators of cultural texts, it is recommended to pay closer attention to the balance between the target reader's understanding and the preservation of the source's cultural elements, so that spiritual meaning and cultural values are not oversimplified. In addition, for subsequent researchers, the use of more up-to-date translation-studies theories can enrich the analysis, especially when examining the relationship between translator ideology and changes in cultural meaning in traditional texts.

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