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An Analysis of Word Level Non-Equivalence and Translation Strategies in Madeline Miller's Novel '*Circe*'

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the complexities of translation, with a specific focus on word-level non-equivalence in Madeline Miller's novel Circe and its Indonesian translation. Using Mona Baker's framework as a foundation, this study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with disproportionate stratified random sampling to identify types of non-equivalence and analyze the translation strategies employed. The findings reveal that the most frequent non-equivalence issue was culture-specific concepts (36.47%), driven by the novel's rich mythological context. To bridge these gaps, the translator applied various techniques based on Mona Baker's theory, with paraphrasing using a related word emerging as the dominant strategy (28.63%). Conversely, translation by illustration was absent due to the lack of visual materials in the novel. Overall, this study sheds light on the various strategies employed to address non-equivalence issues in mythological literature, offering key insights into the complex realm of translation.

Keywords: Non-equivalence at word level, Mona Baker, translation strategies, Circe

INTRODUCTION

Translators often encounter non-equivalence at the word level when target languages lack direct counterparts for source terms. As stated in Baker's (2018) book *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*, these gaps arise from differences in culture, meaning, and linguistic structures, which makes it challenging to convey culture-specific or expressive nuances fully. This challenge is especially evident in literary translation, where translators must balance meaning, style, cultural references, and readability (Supardi et al., 2021).

To better understand these challenges, scholars have examined equivalence as a whole. Nida & Taber (1982) classified equivalence into two categories: *formal equivalence*, which focuses on strict form and structure, and *dynamic equivalence*, which focuses on natural meaning for the reader. Peter Newmark (1988) also observed that translators must balance accuracy with readability. However, achieving full equivalence is rarely possible. As early theorists such as Catford (1965) and Jakobson (1959) pointed out, some cultural and linguistic elements cannot be directly translated, which is why non-equivalence frequently occurs in culture-heavy texts.

Madeline Miller's novel *Circe* clearly illustrates these theoretical challenges by offering a modern narrative lens on Greek mythology. Miller uses many culture-specific and expressive words, such as *nymph, moly,* and *pharmaka*, that are deeply embedded in ancient Greek lore. Furthermore, the novel's poetic and emotionally rich language plays a pivotal role in shaping its tone and characterization. As Jeremy Munday (2016) notes, meaning in literary texts is intrinsically bound to style and context, significantly increasing translational complexity. Consequently, translating these culturally specific elements into Indonesian often results in non-equivalence, which threatens the faithful transfer of meaning, tone, and character portrayal.

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Additionally, in the Indonesian context, translators need to consider not only the meaning of words, but also how readers will interpret unfamiliar cultural references. Leaving the original terms in place may confuse readers, while altering them too much may diminish the original meaning and tone. Therefore, translating a novel such as *Circe* requires careful choices in order to balance accuracy and readability. This challenge is directly addressed through Mona Baker's (2018) framework of non-equivalence at the word level, which highlights how translators navigate lexical and cultural gaps by selecting specific translation strategies to bridge the difference between the source and target languages.

Numerous earlier studies have examined non-equivalence at the word level using Mona Baker's framework, demonstrating how different genres of text influence translation strategies. For instance, Abdillah (2017) analysed the Indonesian translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, revealing that translation by omission was the most dominant strategy (69.6%), indicating a tendency towards simplification in children's literature. In contrast, Pratiwi (2013) examined the English translation of *Rantau 1 Muara*, demonstrating that culture-specific terms from *pesantren* and Javanese-Islamic contexts create significant lexical gaps, requiring a combination of syntactic and semantic strategies to overcome them. Similarly, Diati (2016) evaluated dialogue translations in *The Lightning Thief*, finding that, although paraphrasing was the most frequent strategy (38.9%), loan words were the most accurate way of dealing with mythological terms. Mahmud (2020) extended this framework to four Indonesian novels and observed that translators primarily relied on general words and loan words with explanations to convey non-equivalent concepts, ultimately arguing against absolute untranslatability. Finally, Aryana (2018) investigated the translation of the Balinese folktale *I Tuung Kuning*, concluding that culture-bound concepts and expressive nuances were most effectively conveyed using neutral words, cultural substitution and omission, although some of the original nuances were inevitably lost.

While numerous studies have explored non-equivalence and translation strategies in literary works, limited attention has been given to mythological novels with rich stylistic language through the lens of Mona Baker's framework. In particular, the Indonesian translation of *Circe* remains underexplored, despite its extensive use of culture-specific terms, mythological references, and expressive language that often result in non-equivalence at the word level. Therefore, this study aims to analyze non-equivalence at the word level in the Indonesian translation of *Circe* by identifying the types of non-equivalence that occur and examining the strategies used by the translator to address these cases based on Baker's framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions of Equivalence

Equivalence is a fundamental yet highly debated concept in translation studies. It broadly describes the complex relationship of correspondence between a source text (ST) and a target text (TT). Departing from the traditional expectation of absolute structural symmetry, Roman Jakobson (1959) famously argued that translation relies on "equivalence in difference." He claimed that cross-linguistic structural differences are natural and that translators should

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prioritize transferring semantic meaning over reproducing identical linguistic forms. Nida & Taber (1982) expanded on this functional orientation by distinguishing between formal equivalence, which is based on a faithful translation of the message's form and structure, and dynamic equivalence, which is based on achieving an equivalent audience response and cultural naturalness, and the focus shifted toward communicative impact. Peter Newmark (1988) built on these functional dichotomies by differentiating between semantic and communicative translation. Juliane House (2015), meanwhile, introduced the concept of overt and covert translation, proving that the function of a text dictates whether a translation should preserve the foreignness of the source text or operate seamlessly within the target culture.

To refine these theoretical distinctions, Werner Koller (1995) classified equivalence into five dimensions: denotative, connotative, text-normative, pragmatic, and formal-aesthetic. Similarly, Anthony Pym (2010) distinguished between natural equivalence, or pre-existing correspondence across languages, and directional equivalence, or translator-driven correspondence. Following the observations of J. C. Catford (1965) regarding translation shifts and the insights of Gideon Toury (1995) on descriptive target-culture norms, it is clear that complete alignment at the lexical level is rarely achievable due to asymmetrical semantic fields, divergent lexical systems, and cultural conceptual gaps. However, Mona Baker (2018) provides a practical analytical blueprint for dealing with equivalence across word, above-word, grammatical, textual, and pragmatic levels. Within Baker's framework, word-level equivalence serves as the baseline for semantic transfer and deals with fundamental units of meaning.

Non-Equivalence at Word Level

Non-equivalence occurs whenever a translator encounters a source language item for which no direct or straightforward equivalent exists in the target language. Baker (2018) describes this as a situation in which the target language simply has no corresponding term for a concept, object, or expression that is present in the source language. Rather than reflecting a deficiency in the translator's competence, non-equivalence is a structural reality rooted in the fact that each language encodes reality according to the cultural, social, and historical experiences of its community of speakers. Furthermore, the following sections present Baker's (2018) eleven categories of non-equivalence at word level:

1. **Culture-Specific Concept**

   The first and most widely recognized category of word-level non-equivalence involves culture-specific concepts, items that are so deeply embedded in the social practices, beliefs, or material culture of one community that no equivalent term exists in another. Baker (2018) notes that the source language word may denote a concept that is entirely absent from the target language culture, making direct translation impossible and requiring the translator to adopt compensatory strategies such as borrowing, paraphrase, or cultural substitution.

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2. **The Source-Language Concept Is Not Lexicalized in the Target Language**
   A related but conceptually distinct problem arises when a concept does exist in the target culture but has not been assigned a single dedicated lexical item. Baker (2018) distinguishes this from a total absence of the concept: the target language community may recognize and experience the phenomenon, but their language has simply not generated a single word to name it, relying instead on descriptive phrases or borrowing from other languages.
3. **The Source-Language Word Is Semantically Complex**
   Some words in the source language encode multiple layers of meaning within a single lexical form, and no single word in the target language can replicate the full range of those meanings. As Baker (2018) observes, a single word may convey complex propositional content, attitude and social context simultaneously, meaning that any one-word translation is inevitably reductive.
4. **The Source and Target Languages Make Different Distinctions in Meaning**
   Languages do not divide semantic fields in the same way. What one language treats as a unified category may be subdivided into distinct terms in another language, and vice versa. As Baker (2018) explains, when the source language makes a distinction that the target language does not, the translator must decide whether to lose the distinction or compensate for it with additional explanation.
5. **The Target Language Lacks a Superordinate**
   Mona Baker (2018) explains that non-equivalence may occur when the target language possesses a range of specific terms (hyponyms) but lacks a more general word (superordinate) that can encompass them, as found in the source language.
6. **The Target Language Lacks a Specific Term (Hyponym)**
   As Baker (2018) notes the inverse problem arises when the source language uses a highly specific term, or hyponym, for which the target language can only provide a broader, more general term. When a target language lacks these precise lexical subdivisions, translators are confronted with semantic non-equivalence, forcing them to either ascend to a more generalized hypernym or unpack the specific nuance through structural paraphrase.
7. **Differences in Physical or Interpersonal Perspective**
   This type of non-equivalence explains that two languages may describe the same physical or social reality from different points of view. This creates translational asymmetry because they foreground different aspects of the situation.
8. **Differences in Expressive Meaning**
   Baker (2018) explains that non-equivalence may arise from differences in expressive meaning, particularly when a word in the source language carries a specific emotional or attitudinal nuance that is not equally reflected in the target language. This becomes

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problematic when the closest equivalent in the target language differs in intensity, such as being more neutral, more negative, or more positive than the original.

9. **Differences in Form**
   Baker (2018) observes that differences in the structure of source and target languages can result in non-equivalence. Certain English prefixes and suffixes that convey meaning, such as propositional meaning, often have no direct equivalent in other languages.
10. **Differences in Frequency and Purpose of Using Specific Forms**
    In this type of non-equivalence, the issue is not that the target language lacks a particular form, but rather that a different form is used more frequently or for a different purpose. Baker (2018) explains, even when two languages have equivalent structures, they may differ in how frequently those structures are used and in what contexts. This can affect the naturalness of a translation. A simple example is the English -ing clause, which is frequently used to connect actions in a compact way.
11. **The Use of Loan Words in the Source Text**
    It explains that non-equivalence may also arise when the source text uses loan words for stylistic or social effect. In such cases, the translator must convey not only the propositional meaning but also the connotations attached to the borrowed term.

Strategies in Non-Equivalence at Word Level Problems of Translation

Different types of non-equivalence at the word level need different solutions. Some are simple, while others are more complex and challenging to implement. According to Baker (2018), translators can apply strategies designed specifically to address these diverse forms of non-equivalence. Examples include:

1. **Translation by a More General Word (Superordinate)**
   This approach is particularly useful when a specific word or expression in the source language has no direct equivalent in the target language. By selecting a broader term that is semantically related, the translator can convey the essential meaning even though some specificity may be reduced.
2. **Translation by a More Neutral/Less Expressive Word**
   In this strategy, translators may employ the more or less expressive word, if the source language exhibits differences in expressive meaning, in order to maintain the original idea of the text while ensuring that it does not come across as overly emotional or culturally biased.
3. **Translation by Cultural Substitution**
   This translation strategy involves substituting a culture-bound term from the source language with an expression that is more familiar or acceptable in the target culture.
4. **Translation Using a Loan Word or Loan Word Plus Explanation**
   When translating words that are usually cultural terms, modern concepts, or trendy words, sometimes, there is no equivalent word for the said word in the target language.

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A borrowed word from another language can be introduced with a loan word plus explanation strategy the first time it appears.

5. **Translation by Paraphrase Using a Related Word**
   This strategy is used when the idea exists in the target language, but in a form that is not exactly the same, either in the form of a phrase or with different grammar, as long as it still conveys the same idea.
6. **Translation by Paraphrase Using Unrelated Words**
   This strategy is applied when a source-language word or expression is completely absent from the target language, including in similar or related forms. In such situations, the translator may convey the intended meaning through paraphrasing by explaining the concept using simpler components.
7. **Translation by Omission**
   This strategy means leaving out a word or expression during translation if it's not important to the overall meaning of the text.
8. **Translation by Illustration**
   A strategy used when there's no direct equivalent for a word in the target language, especially when the word refers to something physical that can be shown visually. Instead of explaining it with words, the meaning is conveyed with pictures, diagrams or symbols.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative descriptive research approach to examine non-equivalence at the word level in the Indonesian translation of *Circe* by Madeline Miller. This approach was chosen because it focuses on describing and interpreting linguistic phenomena rather than measuring them statistically. Specifically, the study examines lexical items based on Mona Baker's (2018) framework of eleven common problems of non-equivalence and the eight translation strategies used to address them.

The data were obtained from *Circe*, an English novel by Madeline Miller, and its Indonesian translation. This study's population consisted of all 255 single-word lexical items identified across the novel that exhibited non-equivalence at the word level, as defined by Baker's framework. However, analysing every identical or highly repetitive case in detail within the qualitative discussion would be redundant. Therefore, a specific sample of these items was selected for in-depth qualitative analysis.

The data were collected through documentation. Firstly, the researcher thoroughly read the English and Indonesian versions of *Circe* to gain a comprehensive understanding of the text. Secondly, all single-word lexical items that potentially contained non-equivalence were identified and highlighted. Thirdly, the identified words and their Indonesian translations, together with their page numbers, surrounding contexts and initial categories, were recorded in a data sheet. Finally, each datum was verified using English dictionaries (*Oxford* or *Cambridge*) and *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI)* to ensure it met the required criteria before being included in the final dataset.

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To select the sample, this study employed a disproportionate stratified random sampling technique. In this technique, the population is divided into distinct subgroups, or 'strata', based on specific characteristics. A sample is then drawn from each stratum, without adhering to strict numerical proportions (Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, the 255 non-equivalent words were categorised into strata representing the various types of non-equivalence issues outlined by Baker (2018). As the number of items varied significantly across the categories, with some containing a large number of cases and others containing very few, thus disproportionate sampling was applied. This ensured that smaller or less frequent categories were still adequately represented in the qualitative discussion alongside dominant categories. A final sample of representative data was then selected from these strata for detailed analysis, while all remaining identified cases were counted and categorised to inform the overall findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Types of Non-Equivalence at Word Level

The analysis revealed a total of 255 cases of non-equivalence at word level proposed by Mona Baker. The researcher found that eight of the eleven types of non-equivalence appear in the novel. These include culture-specific concepts, the source concept is not lexicalized in the target language, semantically complex words, different distinctions in meaning, a lack of specific terms (hyponyms), differences in expressive meaning, in form, and differences in the frequency and purpose of using specific forms. Meanwhile, the target language lacks a superordinate term, differences in physical or interpersonal perspective, and the use of loan words was not present in the research. Moreover, the findings show that word level non-equivalence issues encountered in *Circe* are mainly related to mythological and cultural references, differences in how words are expressed, and differences in understanding between English and Indonesian.

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Table 1. Types of Non-Equivalence at Word Level

No.	Common Problems of Non-Equivalence	Quantity	Percentage
1.	Culture-specific concept	93	36.47%
2.	The Source-Language Concept Is Not Lexicalized in the Target Language	36	14.12%
3.	The Source-Language Word Is Semantically Complex	31	12.16%
4.	The Source and Target Languages Make Different Distinctions in Meaning	9	3.53%
5.	The Target Language Lacks a Superordinate	0	0%
6.	The Target Language Lacks a Specific Term (Hyponym)	25	9.80%
7.	Differences in Physical or Interpersonal Perspective	0	0%
8.	Differences in Expressive Meaning	49	19.22%
9.	Differences in Form	9	3.53%
10.	Differences in Frequency and Purpose of Using Specific Forms	3	1.18%
11.	The Use of Loan Words in the Source Text	0	0%
	Total Data	**255**	**100%**

Translation Strategies Applied in the Translation

To address these lexical gaps, the translator relied primarily on two dominant translation strategies: paraphrase using a related word (28.63%) and using a loan word or loan word plus explanation (27.84%), alongside translation by a more general word/superordinate (14.90%). Through the use of explanatory paraphrases, the translator successfully simplified complex morphological structures (e.g. -less suffixes) and unlexicalized terms, rendering them more natural and accessible to Indonesian readers. Conversely, borrowing loan words for mythological concepts enabled the translator to preserve the novel's authentic setting and original context.

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Table 2. Translation Strategies Applied in the Translation

No.	Translation Strategies	Quantity	Percentage
1.	Translation by a More General Word (Superordinate)	38	14.90%
2.	Translation by a More Neutral/Less Expressive Word	24	9.41%
3.	Translation by Cultural Substitution	10	3.92%
4.	Translation Using a Loan Word or Loan Word Plus Explanation	71	27.84%
5.	Translation by Paraphrase Using a Related Word	73	28.63%
6.	Translation by Paraphrase Using Unrelated Words	28	10.98%
7.	Translation by Omission	11	4.31%
8.	Translation by Illustration	0	0%
	Total Data	**255**	**100%**

In this chapter, the researcher selected representative examples from the data to illustrate and analyze the issues and strategies.

Datum 1

Culture-Specific Concept - Translation Using a Loan Word or Loan Word Plus Explanation.

SL: They called me **nymph**, assuming I would be like my mother and aunts and thousand cousins.

TL: Mereka menyebutku **nymph,** menganggap aku akan menjadi seperti ibu dan bibi-bibi dan seribu sepupuku.

This is an example of non-equivalence due to a *culture-specific concept*. The source language concept here is deeply embedded in a mythological context that is unfamiliar to the target culture. According to the Cambridge Online Dictionary, a ***nymph*** is a mythical creature in the form of a young woman, living in places such as trees, rivers and mountains. Since this entity belongs exclusively to ancient Greek folklore, standard Indonesian lacks a corresponding cultural equivalent. To bridge this cultural gap without distorting the narrative's historical setting, the translator employed the translation strategy of using *a loanword*, directly translating the word *nymph* to *nymph* in the Indonesian language.

Datum 2

The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target language – Translation by a More Neutral/Less Expressive Word

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SL: "Minos claims it, and instead of being a **cuckold** he shares in my sister's glory. He becomes the great king who begets monsters and names them after himself."

TL: "Minos menyatakan makhluk itu miliknya, jadi dia bisa turut serta dalam kemuliaan adikku, bukan hanya menjadi **suami bodoh yang dikhianati istrinya.** Dia menjadi raja besar yang memperanakkan monster dan menamai mereka dengan namanya sendiri."

In Cambridge Online Dictionary, the term ***cuckold*** is used to describe a man whose partner is having a sexual relationship with someone else, often carrying a negative connotation. In the Indonesian language, this concept is not commonly represented by a single lexical item. For this reason, the translator has chosen to describe the meaning of cuckold and translate it as ***suami bodoh yang dikhianati istrinya*** (a foolish husband whose wife has cheated on him). This phenomenon is indicative of non-equivalence, arising from a source-language concept that has not been lexicalized in the target language. The translator employs paraphrases, utilizing related words to convey the intended meaning through a descriptive phrase.

Datum 3

The Source-Language Word Is Semantically Complex - Translation by Paraphrase Using a Related Word

SL: His father was pacified, and the levy paid, with **credit** for next year.

TL: Ayahnya sudah tenang, dan upeti sudah terbayarkan, bahkan **ada lebihnya yang diperhitungkan** untuk tahun depan.

This datum illustrates a case of non-equivalence due to the *semantic complexity* of the source language word. The English noun ***credit*** has a complex semantic structure with multiple layers of meaning in the financial, academic, moral, and cinematic domains. Indonesian does not have a single word that mirrors this multi-layered semantic map exactly. Consequently, the word cannot be translated in a single way. The translator must unpack the context of the sentence and isolate the intended meaning. In this case, the source text uses the financial term ***credit*** to denote a positive balance. The translator used *Paraphrase Using an Unrelated Word strategy* and paraphrased it based on its practical implications, translating it into the functional phrase ***ada lebihnya yang diperhitungkan*** (There is an extra amount accounted for). This phrase communicates the exact situational reality of the financial transaction in a way that is immediately clear and natural to the Indonesian reader.

DATUM 4

The Source and Target Languages Make Different Distinctions in Meaning - Translation by a More General Word (Superordinate)

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SL: His twin, moonlit Artemis, the pitiless **huntress.**

TL: Artemis yang diterangi bulan, **pemburu** yang tak kenal belas kasihan.

The term ***huntress*** is translated as ***pemburu***, indicating that the terms are not equivalent at the word level due to *differences in meaning distinctions*. The source word specifically refers to a female hunter, whereas the target word does not express gender distinction because in Indonesia the word ***Pemburu*** (hunter) can be used to refer to both men and women. In order to address this distinction, the translator employs *a more general word strategy*, which ultimately results in the loss of the feminine nuance contained in the source text.

Datum 5

The Target Language Lacks a Specific Term (Hyponym) - Translation by a More General Word (Superordinate)

SL: I thought some scrambled thing: that Daedalus must have dropped the **scalpel** inside of her, that a bone had broken in her labor and stabbed me.

TL: Pikiranku berseliweran tak keruan: Daedalus pasti menjatuhkan **pisau** di dalam adikku, atau ada tulang yang patah dalam persalinannya dan menusukku.

The translation of ***scalpel*** into ***pisau*** reflects non-equivalence at the word level due to *the target language lacking a specific term (hyponym)* and can be categorized as translation by *a more general word*. The term scalpel is used to denote a particular instrument employed in surgical procedures. In contrast, ***pisau*** is a more generic term that encompasses a broader category of cutting implements. This shift results in a loss of semantic specificity, particularly the medical nuance of the source term, although it maintains a more accessible expression in the target language.

Datum 6

Differences in Expressive Meaning - Translation by a More Neutral/Less Expressive Word

SL: “That he **fucks** them, of course."

TL: "Bahwa Ayah **meniduri** mereka, tentu saja."

The Cambridge Online Dictionary explains that the verb ***fucks*** in the source text as a rude word, meaning to have sexual intercourse with someone. In the target text, it is translated as ***meniduri*** (to sleep with), which conveys the same basic meaning but in a more neutral and formal manner. This results in a *difference in expressive meaning*, as the intensity and stylistic force of the original word are reduced. Thus, the translator employs a strategy of using *a more neutral or less expressive* word in order to align with the norms of the target language.

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Datum 7

Differences in Form - Translation by Paraphrase Using a Related Word

SL: His twin, moonlit Artemis, the **pitiless** huntress.

TL: Artemis yang diterangi bulan, pemburu yang **tak kenal belas kasihan**.

The translation of the English adjective ***pitiless*** into the Indonesian phrase ***yang tak kenal belas kasihan*** (who knows no mercy) serves as a prime example of non-equivalence resulting from a *difference in form*. This morphological obstacle arises from the frequent use of suffixes such as *-less* (meaning without or lacking) in English language to efficiently compact the base noun (*pity*) into a singular negative adjective. Indonesian lacks direct affixes that can perform the same combining function as in English. Therefore, to address this structural difference, the translator employs a translation strategy involving *paraphrasing using a related word* strategy, which involves the unpacking of the grammatical meaning of the English suffix and root word into an extended, more natural-sounding descriptive phrase in the target language.

Datum 8

Differences in Frequency and Purpose of Using Specific Forms - Translation by Paraphrase Using a Related Word

SL: “A girl,” my mother said to him, **wrinkling** her nose.

TL: "Anak perempuan," kata Ibu kepadanya **sambil mengernyitkan** hidung.

The English source text uses the *-ing* form of the non-continuous present participle, ***wrinkling***, as a clause binder to link the descriptive action with the noun phrase *my mother*. According to the *Oxford Learner's Dictionary* (2020), a present participle is a non-finite verb form that ends in *-ing* and can act as an adjective or adverb to describe a simultaneous action. This is an example of the *differences in frequency and purpose of using specific forms* due to the presence of participial clauses, which are a standard stylistic feature of English narrative, whereas Indonesian syntax lacks a direct structural equivalent to bind clauses in this manner. To address this issue, the translator uses a strategy of *paraphrasing with a related word*. By inserting the temporal marker ***sambil*** (while) alongside ***mengernyitkan*** (to wrinkle), the translator converts the non-finite participle into an expanded relative clause. Consequently, this translation preserves the continuous narrative flow of the source text while adhering to grammatical norms of the target language.

Discussion

This study analyses the Indonesian translation of *Circe* to demonstrate how non-equivalence at word level reflects fundamental linguistic, cultural and structural differences between English and Indonesian. Using Mona Baker’s theoretical framework, the paper shows

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that obstacles to translating literary texts are not isolated or random incidents, but rather the systemic result of different cultural backgrounds, concepts and expressive nuances. This novel presents culture-specific concepts, differences in expressive meaning and unlexicalized terms as inevitable challenges when translating a text deeply rooted in ancient Greek mythology into a culture that lacks corresponding social, religious and folktale equivalents.

The findings reveal that the identified translation strategies not only resolve lexical gaps, but also reinforce each other while maintaining readability. For example, paraphrasing using a related word successfully addresses complex semantic structures and morphological disparities, such as unpacking negative English suffixes like '*-less*' into natural descriptive phrases in Indonesian. Using loanwords, with or without explanation, serves to preserve the preservation of mythological entities (*e.g*. *nymphs*) in order to maintain the narrative's authentic historical setting and foreign atmosphere without distorting the source context. Meanwhile, the use of superordinates and neutral words demonstrates how translators can adjust expressive intensity and gender distinctions to align with the stylistic norms and general vocabulary of the target language. Together, these strategies position translation as a flexible, context-driven process balancing linguistic accuracy with narrative flow.

Ultimately, the analysis of *Circe* reveals that literary translation is more than just a mechanical linguistic conversion; it is also a vital cultural bridge that connects different worldviews. By combining strategic paraphrasing with cultural adaptation, the translated text allows readers to meaningfully engage with unfamiliar mythologies while enjoying an authentic reading experience. Thus, this analysis indicates that translational choices play a significant role in preserving literary aesthetics, educating target audiences and enriching communication between cultures.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that the Indonesian translation of *Circe* contains predominantly word-level non-equivalence, driven primarily by the novel's rich mythological framework, culture-bound concepts and expressive nuances. Culture-specific concepts serve as the primary barrier, accounting for 36.47% of cases. To address these issues, the translator primarily employed paraphrases using a related word (28.63%) and loan words or loan words plus explanation (27.84%). This approach reflects a balanced translation ideology that strikes a compromise between domestication and foreignization, using explanatory paraphrases to ensure readability in the target language while retaining loanwords to preserve the authentic atmosphere of Greek mythology. Ultimately, these findings demonstrate that literary translation requires flexible, context-driven strategies that balance semantic accuracy, cultural preservation and narrative flow, and extends beyond simple dictionary translations.

Based on these insights, this research contributes to the practice and pedagogy of literary translation by offering translators and students a practical guide to making strategic decisions to bridge semantic and cultural gaps. To build on these findings, future researchers are encouraged to extend the scope of non-equivalence analysis to encompass larger linguistic units, such as phrases, clauses or full sentences, and to consider alternative theoretical frameworks or

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comparative models. Furthermore, future studies could apply Mona Baker's framework to contrast the translations of the same novel, or analyse texts from different literary genres, in order to observe how translation ideologies and contextual factors influence the solutions to non-equivalence in practice.

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