

Exploring Cultural Meanings in the English Translation of Pantun in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*

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ABSTRAK

This study investigates the representation of cultural meaning in the English translation of a Minangkabau *pantun* featured in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* by Hamka. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research analyzes two *pantun* stanzas alongside their English translations. The data were collected through document analysis and examined using Newmark's (1988) framework of cultural categories. The findings identify several cultural elements, including geographical references, agrarian imagery, and the culturally embedded concepts of *kampung* and *merantau*. The analysis indicates that while some cultural elements are retained in their original form, others are adapted to enhance accessibility and comprehension for target readers. Although certain cultural nuances are inevitably diminished during the translation process, the core themes of homesickness, separation, and emotional attachment to one's homeland are effectively preserved in the translated text. Overall, the study underscores the significance of cultural competence in literary translation and highlights the challenges of conveying culturally embedded meanings across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

KEYWORDS:

Cultural meaning; Hamka; literary translation; Minangkabau pantun; merantau.

INTRODUCTION

aspect of the nation's cultural heritage. It embodies valuable local wisdom related to nature, everyday life, customs, traditions, and moral values (Gajah & Lubis, 2024). As a literary form, *pantun* is distinguished by its use of figurative language and indirect expressions to communicate meaning (Rizky & Simarmata, 2017). Translating *pantun* into another language presents considerable challenges due to differences in cultural backgrounds and social values between the source and target languages. Cultural expressions, metaphors, and idiomatic language often lack direct equivalents, requiring translators to determine whether to preserve the original cultural features or adapt them to improve accessibility for target readers. As a result, literary translation frequently involves striking a balance between maintaining fidelity to the source text and producing a translation that is both comprehensible and culturally appropriate for the target audience (Poerwanto, 2024).

Recent research has emphasized that literary translation extends beyond the transfer of linguistic forms to encompass the negotiation of cultural meaning, ideology, and identity across languages (Cheng & Xu, 2024; Jaya, 2021). Because literary works are deeply rooted in their cultural contexts, the translation of culture-specific elements presents significant challenges. The meanings of these elements are often inseparable from the values and experiences of the source culture, making them difficult to reproduce accurately in the target language. Consequently, cultural references may undergo shifts, adaptations, or partial losses of meaning during the translation process, particularly when no direct cultural or linguistic equivalent exists in the target

language (Mukminin et al., 2025).

Structurally, a *pantun* consists of several essential components, including stanzas, lines, rhyme schemes, *sampiran* (introductory lines), and *isi* (the main message). In addition to these structural features, rhythm plays a crucial role in both the oral performance and recitation of *pantun*. Within Minangkabau society, *pantun* functions as an important medium of communication and continues to be preserved as a significant literary tradition. As a form of poetry, *pantun* comprises both physical and inner structures. The physical structure encompasses observable linguistic elements, such as form, diction, and sound patterns, whereas the inner structure refers to the underlying meaning and message expressed through the poem (Waluyo, 1987).

Minangkabau culture is characterized by a rich and complex system of social values and cultural norms. One of its most distinctive features is the matrilineal kinship system, in which family lineage and inheritance are traced through the maternal line (Hanifah & Saputro, 2026). Consequently, translating literary texts rooted in Minangkabau culture requires more than linguistic proficiency; it also demands a high level of cultural competence. This is because the meanings embedded in such texts are deeply intertwined with the community's social practices, cultural values, and worldview, making them challenging to convey accurately in another language.

Several previous studies have examined Minangkabau culture from different perspectives. Noviyola and Wulandari (2024) investigated the representation of Minangkabau regions in traditional Minangkabau *pantun* using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach. The study identified six *pantun* from *Pantun Adat Minangkabau* by N. M. Rangkoto and interpreted their meanings through a hermeneutic analysis. The findings revealed that *pantun* serves as a medium for preserving cultural knowledge, including geographical identity and traditional values of Minangkabau society. However, the study focused on the interpretation of cultural meanings within the original *pantun* and did not address issues related to translation or the representation of cultural meaning in another language.

Similarly, Pratama (2024) examined cultural conflicts in Hamka's novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study found that the conflict between Minangkabau customary values and individual desires constitutes the central theme of the novel. The research highlighted how social status, lineage, and traditional norms influence the lives of the characters, particularly in the relationship between Zainuddin and Hayati. While the study successfully revealed the role of Minangkabau culture in shaping social conflicts, it did not investigate how cultural meanings embedded in the novel are represented in translation.

Furthermore, Husna, Yanuarsih, and Letreng (2024) explored Minangkabau cultural identity in the film adaptation of *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. Their study demonstrated that the film represents various aspects of Minangkabau culture, including the matrilineal kinship system, traditional marriage customs, and social values inherited across generations. The findings emphasized the importance of cultural identity in constructing the narrative and conflicts within the story. Nevertheless, the research focused on cultural representation in a film medium and did not examine the translation of cultural expressions found in the literary work.

Likewise, Dewi, Aswoyo, and Putri (2023) analyzed the depiction of Minangkabau culture in the film *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* through the elements of *mise-en-scène*. The study found that cultural values are represented through traditional houses, clothing, properties, and visual symbols reflecting Minangkabau social life. Their findings confirmed the significant role of cultural elements in shaping audience understanding of Minangkabau identity. However, the study concentrated on visual representation and did not discuss how cultural meanings are transferred or represented through language translation.

Based on these previous studies, it can be observed that research on Minangkabau culture has primarily focused on cultural interpretation, cultural conflict, identity representation, and visual representation in literary and film works. Although Noviyola and Wulandari (2024) examined Minangkabau *pantun*, their study focused on hermeneutic interpretation rather than translation. Similarly, Pratama (2024), Husna et al. (2024), and Dewi et al. (2023) discussed cultural values and identity in the novel and its film adaptation without addressing translation issues. Therefore, a significant research gap remains regarding how cultural meanings embedded in Minangkabau *pantun* are represented in English translation. In particular, culturally specific concepts such as *kampung*, *merantau*, geographical references, and agrarian imagery have not been examined from the perspective of cultural translation. To fill this gap, the present study investigates the representation of cultural meaning in the English translation of a Minangkabau *pantun* found in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* by applying Newmark's (1988) cultural categories. This study

contributes to literary translation studies by providing a deeper understanding of how Minangkabau cultural values are preserved, adapted, or transformed in translation.

Beyond its role as a form of entertainment and artistic expression, *pantun* serves as an important medium for preserving and transmitting cultural values from one generation to the next. The meanings embedded within *pantun* are typically expressed indirectly through symbols, metaphors, and culture-specific expressions that reflect the worldview and collective experiences of a particular community. Consequently, translating *pantun* requires not only linguistic competence but also a deep understanding of the cultural context to ensure that the intended meanings of the source text are effectively conveyed in the target language.

During the translation process, many of these culturally embedded elements lack direct equivalents in the target language. As a result, translators must determine whether to retain the distinctive characteristics of the source culture or adapt them to align with the cultural background and expectations of target readers. Such translation choices can significantly influence the representation of cultural meaning in the translated text, particularly in literary works that are deeply rooted in local traditions and cultural values.

Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck was selected as the object of this study because it presents a rich representation of Minangkabau culture through its narration, dialogues, and the *pantun* recited by the characters. These *pantun* serve not only as literary and aesthetic elements but also as vehicles for conveying cultural values that reflect the social identity and worldview of Minangkabau society. Consequently, investigating the representation of cultural meaning in their English translation is essential for understanding how these culturally embedded values are preserved, adapted, or transformed during the translation process. Accordingly, this study aims to examine how cultural meaning is represented in the English translation of a Minangkabau *pantun* featured in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*.

METHOD

its English translation. The primary data consisted of two stanzas of a Minangkabau *pantun* extracted from the original novel and their corresponding English translations. These *pantun* were selected because they contain culture-specific elements that reflect Minangkabau social and cultural values, including geographical references, local imagery, and concepts associated with homeland and migration.

Data were collected using the document analysis method. The researcher first identified the *pantun* in the source text and then located their corresponding translations in the English version of the novel. Both the source and target texts were subsequently compiled and systematically organized for analysis. The selection of the data was based on the presence of culturally embedded elements that represent meanings specific to Minangkabau society and are therefore relevant to the objectives of this study.

The data were analyzed using Newmark's (1988) framework of cultural categories, which classifies cultural elements into ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations, customs and activities, and gestures and habits. The analysis was conducted in three stages. First, the cultural elements embedded in the *pantun* were identified and categorized according to Newmark's classification. Second, the source text was compared with its English translation to examine how these cultural elements were represented in the target language. Finally, the translated text was interpreted to determine whether the cultural meanings of the original *pantun* were preserved, adapted, modified, or reduced during the translation process.

To ensure a systematic analysis, each identified cultural element was examined by comparing its cultural significance in the source text with its representation in the target text. This comparison enabled the researcher to evaluate the extent to which the original cultural meanings were maintained, adapted, or transformed in translation. The findings were then described and interpreted to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Minangkabau cultural meanings are represented in the English translation of the selected *pantun*.

The analysis emphasized the representation of cultural meaning rather than linguistic equivalence. Accordingly, the study explored how cultural concepts, geographical references, and culture-specific practices were conveyed in the English translation and assessed whether their cultural significance remained comprehensible and accessible to target readers. To ensure the credibility of the findings, the interpretation was carried out through repeated comparisons of the source and target texts, taking into account the cultural contexts in which both texts are situated.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Result

The analysis focuses on identifying cultural elements embedded in the selected Minangkabau pantun and examining how these elements are represented in the English translation. By applying Newmark's (1988) cultural categories, the study seeks to reveal the relationship between language and culture in the translation process. The cultural elements identified in the pantun include geographical references, natural imagery, and culturally specific concepts that reflect the worldview and social values of Minangkabau society. These elements serve not only as poetic devices but also as carriers of cultural meaning that contribute to the overall message of the pantun.

Furthermore, the comparison between the source text and the target text demonstrates how translators negotiate cultural meaning when direct equivalence is difficult to achieve. Some cultural elements are preserved in their original forms to maintain cultural authenticity, while others are adapted to ensure comprehensibility for target readers. The findings indicate that the translation attempts to balance cultural preservation and readability, allowing the central themes of homesickness, migration, and attachment to one's homeland to remain accessible in the target language. The identified cultural elements and their translation representations are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Cultural Elements Identified in the Pantun

Cultural Element	Category	Translation	Representation
Bukit Putus	Ecology	Bukit Putus	Preserved
Rimba Ketuang	Ecology	Rimba Ketuang	Preserved
Jagung	Ecology	Corn	Equivalent
Kampung	Social Culture	Home	Partially Preserved
Laut Ketahun	Ecology	Ketahun Sea	Preserved
Merantau	Customs and Activities	Long years away	Adapted

Table 1 indicates that the majority of the cultural elements identified in the *pantun* fall within Newmark's category of ecology. This finding demonstrates that the cultural meanings embedded in the *pantun* are closely associated with the natural environment and geographical landscape of Minangkabau society. Furthermore, the inclusion of the concepts of *kampung* and *merantau* reflects distinctive social values and cultural practices that play a significant role in shaping Minangkabau cultural identity.

The dominance of ecological elements indicates that the pantun is deeply rooted in the physical environment and everyday experiences of Minangkabau society. Natural features, agricultural products, and geographical locations are not merely decorative components of the poem but also function as cultural symbols that reflect the community's relationship with nature. Through these references, the pantun conveys cultural knowledge that has been transmitted across generations and remains closely connected to local identity.

In addition, the presence of social and cultural elements such as *kampung* and *merantau* demonstrates that the pantun communicates not only descriptions of the environment but also values and experiences that are central to Minangkabau life. These concepts embody emotional attachment, social belonging, and the tradition of migration that characterizes Minangkabau culture. Therefore, examining how these cultural elements are represented in translation is essential for understanding the extent to which the cultural meaning of the original pantun is maintained in the target text.

Source text

*Bukit putus, Rimba Ketuang,
direndam jagung dihangusi.
Hukum putus badan terbuang,
terkenang kampung kutangisi.*

*Batang kapas nan rimbun daun,
urat terkenang masuk padi.
Jika lepas laut Ketahun,
merantau panjang hanya lagi.*

Target text

Bukit Putus, Rimba Ketuang,
Corn is soaked and burned along.
Cast away and left alone,
I weep and long for my dear home.

The cotton stalks are lush with leaves,
Veins visible down to the rice grains.
Once beyond Ketahun Sea,
Long years away will be.

Table 1 indicates that the majority of the cultural elements identified in the selected *pantun* fall within Newmark's (1988) categories of ecology and organizations, customs, and activities. The predominance of ecological elements suggests that the cultural meanings embedded in the *pantun* are closely connected to the natural environment and geographical landscape of Minangkabau society. Meanwhile, the concepts of *kampung* and *merantau*, categorized under organizations, customs, and activities, represent distinctive social values and cultural practices that are central to Minangkabau cultural identity. Overall, these cultural references demonstrate how the *pantun* reflects both the physical environment and the socio-cultural traditions of the Minangkabau community.

The findings also indicate that cultural meaning in the *pantun* is conveyed through a combination of concrete and symbolic expressions. Geographical references, natural imagery, and cultural practices function as linguistic representations of the social realities experienced by the Minangkabau community. These elements contribute not only to the aesthetic quality of the *pantun* but also to the transmission of cultural values, collective memory, and local identity. Therefore, understanding the cultural significance of these references is essential for interpreting the message embedded in the text.

Moreover, the interaction between ecological and cultural elements creates a coherent representation of Minangkabau life and worldview. The natural environment portrayed in the *pantun* is closely connected to social experiences such as attachment to one's homeland and the tradition of migration. As a result, the cultural elements identified in the text cannot be interpreted separately from the broader cultural context in which they are embedded. This interconnectedness becomes particularly important when examining the overall meaning conveyed by the *pantun* and its representation in translation.

Overall Meaning of the Pantun

The selected *pantun* primarily conveys themes of separation, longing, and emotional attachment to one's homeland. The first stanza expresses feelings of sorrow and loss through the lines, "*Hukum putus badan terbuang, terkenang kampung kutangisi.*" These lines portray the emotional distress experienced by an individual who is separated from both their homeland and loved ones. The reference to remembering one's *kampung* and weeping symbolizes a profound sense of nostalgia and homesickness, highlighting the emotional bond between individuals and their place of origin.

The second stanza reinforces these themes by introducing the concept of *merantau*, a cultural practice that holds particular significance in Minangkabau society. The line, "*Jika lepas laut Ketahun, merantau panjang hanya lagi,*" evokes the experience of undertaking a long journey away from home, emphasizing not only physical distance but also emotional separation. In this context, *merantau* is portrayed as more than a geographical movement; it represents a cultural experience marked by loneliness, longing, and an enduring connection to one's homeland.

Taken together, the *pantun* illustrates the emotional consequences of leaving one's place of origin while reflecting core values embedded in Minangkabau culture. The use of natural imagery, geographical references, and the concept of *merantau* collectively conveys themes of identity, belonging, and attachment to cultural roots. These culturally embedded meanings play a central role in the overall message of the *pantun* and present significant challenges for translators seeking to convey them accurately in another language while preserving their cultural significance.

Discussion

1. Ecological Cultural Elements

The first cultural category identified is ecology, which encompasses geographical references and natural imagery. Expressions such as *Bukit Putus*, *Rimba Ketuang*, and *Laut Ketahun* refer to specific locations that are closely connected to the cultural landscape of Minangkabau society. According to Newmark (1988), geographical references constitute significant cultural elements because they are deeply embedded in the source culture and may not be readily understood by readers from different cultural backgrounds.

The retention of place names such as *Bukit Putus* and *Rimba Ketuang* demonstrates an effort to preserve the geographical identity and cultural authenticity of the source text. By maintaining these original references, the translation enables target readers to recognize the cultural origin of the *pantun* while retaining its local atmosphere and contextual richness. This strategy helps preserve the ecological dimension of the original text, even though some of the cultural associations attached to these locations may remain unfamiliar to readers outside the source culture.

Furthermore, the use of geographical references in the *pantun* serves a broader cultural function beyond identifying physical locations. Place names such as *Bukit Putus* and *Rimba Ketuang* evoke a sense of familiarity and collective memory among members of the Minangkabau community. These references help establish the cultural setting of the *pantun* and reinforce the connection between individual experiences and the cultural landscape in which they occur. As a result, the geographical elements contribute significantly to the construction of cultural identity within the text.

From a translation perspective, retaining these geographical references can be viewed as a strategy to preserve the source culture in the target text. By maintaining the original place names, the translator allows readers to encounter cultural elements that are unique to the Minangkabau context. Although some target readers may not fully understand the cultural significance of these locations, the preservation of the original terms helps maintain the authenticity of the text and reflects the cultural richness embedded in the *pantun*. This finding supports the view that literary translation involves not only linguistic transfer but also the representation of cultural knowledge and identity across languages.

2. Agrarian Imagery

In addition to geographical references, the *pantun* incorporates several images associated with agricultural life, including *jagung* (corn), *kapas* (cotton), and *padi* (rice). According to Newmark (1988), these elements are classified under the category of ecology because they are closely linked to the natural environment and the everyday lives of a particular community. Their inclusion

reflects the agrarian character of Minangkabau society, where agricultural practices have traditionally played a significant role in shaping both cultural identity and social values.

Beyond describing the natural environment, these agricultural images function as cultural symbols of rural life. In traditional *pantun*, references to crops and other natural elements are commonly employed in the *sampiran* to create imagery that is familiar and meaningful to the local community. Through the use of *jagung*, *kapas*, and *padi*, the *pantun* highlights the close relationship between humans and nature, illustrating a fundamental aspect of the Minangkabau cultural worldview.

In the English translation, these agricultural references are rendered as corn, cotton stalks, and rice grains. The translation preserves the original ecological images and allows target readers to recognize the agrarian setting of the source text. Although the literal meanings are successfully transferred, some cultural associations attached to these images may not be fully understood by readers who are unfamiliar with Indonesian rural life. Nevertheless, the preservation of these ecological elements contributes to maintaining the cultural atmosphere and local identity of the original *pantun*.

Furthermore, agrarian imagery in the *pantun* reflects the economic and social background of traditional Minangkabau society. Agricultural products such as corn, cotton, and rice are closely associated with rural livelihoods and daily activities. Their presence in the *pantun* demonstrates how local communities draw inspiration from their surrounding environment to express thoughts, emotions, and cultural experiences. Consequently, these ecological references function not only as descriptive elements but also as representations of a way of life that is deeply connected to agriculture and nature.

In addition, the use of agricultural imagery contributes to the symbolic meaning of the *pantun*. In traditional literary expressions, natural and agrarian elements are often employed to create associations between the physical environment and human experiences. The references to crops and plants in the *pantun* help establish an atmosphere that is familiar to members of the source culture while supporting the emotional themes conveyed in the poem. Therefore, preserving these ecological images in translation is important because they strengthen both the cultural setting and the symbolic richness of the original text.

3. Social and Cultural Meaning of Kampung

Another prominent cultural element identified in the *pantun* is the concept of *kampung*. Although it may be translated literally as “village” or “hometown,” its cultural significance extends far beyond its geographical meaning. Within Indonesian and Minangkabau culture, *kampung* symbolizes not only a place of origin but also strong family ties, a sense of communal identity, and deep emotional attachment to one’s homeland. As a result, the concept carries cultural and emotional connotations that are not fully captured through a direct lexical equivalent in the target language.

In the target text, the word *kampung* is translated as *home*. This translation effectively conveys the emotional attachment and sense of longing expressed in the original *pantun*. However, the cultural meaning of *kampung* extends beyond the notion of a physical place or residence. Within Minangkabau culture, the term embodies broader associations with family relationships, communal identity, and a deep sense of belonging to one’s place of origin. The line “*terkenang kampung kutangisi*” expresses profound nostalgia and homesickness, illustrating how a single lexical item can encapsulate complex cultural and emotional meanings. Although translating *kampung* as *home* successfully preserves the emotional dimension of the original text, it does not fully capture the communal and socio-cultural values embedded in the source language. Consequently, some cultural nuances are inevitably diminished, highlighting the challenge of maintaining both the emotional and cultural significance of culture-specific concepts in literary translation.

Furthermore, the concept of *kampung* occupies a significant position in Indonesian culture because it embodies a sense of belonging and collective identity. For many individuals, *kampung* represents more than a place of residence; it is a cultural space where family relationships, social interactions, and local traditions are maintained. As a result, references to *kampung* often evoke emotional responses associated with memory, security, and attachment to one’s cultural roots.

In the context of Minangkabau society, the meaning of *kampung* is closely related to kinship and communal values. The strong social bonds that characterize Minangkabau communities contribute to the emotional significance attached to one’s place of origin. Consequently, remembering the *kampung* in the *pantun* can be interpreted as an expression of longing not only

for a physical location but also for the people, traditions, and social environment associated with it. This broader cultural meaning enriches the emotional depth conveyed in the poem.

From a translation perspective, representing the concept of *kampung* poses a challenge because its cultural associations extend beyond the semantic meaning of a single English word. Although the translation *home* successfully communicates feelings of affection and nostalgia, it cannot fully capture the collective and communal dimensions embedded in the original term. Nevertheless, the translator's choice enables target readers to understand the emotional core of the expression, thereby preserving one of the most important themes conveyed in the *pantun*, namely the enduring connection between individuals and their homeland.

4. The Cultural Concept of Merantau

One of the most significant cultural elements identified in the *pantun* is the concept of *merantau*. Based on Newmark's (1988) category of organizations, customs, and activities, *merantau* can be classified as a culture-specific practice because it represents a long-standing social tradition that is deeply rooted in Minangkabau society. In the Minangkabau cultural context, *merantau* refers to the tradition of leaving one's homeland to pursue education, gain life experience, or seek better economic opportunities elsewhere. Beyond its literal meaning of migration, the concept embodies important cultural values related to maturity, independence, personal responsibility, and social mobility. Therefore, translating *merantau* simply as "to migrate" or "to travel" is unlikely to capture the full range of cultural meanings and social values embedded in the original term.

The line "*merantau panjang hanya lagi*" illustrates the emotional impact of prolonged separation from one's homeland. The cultural meaning embedded in this expression extends beyond the idea of physical movement, reflecting the enduring emotional connection between individuals and their place of origin. Consequently, *merantau* emerges as one of the most culturally significant concepts in the *pantun*, serving as a key expression of Minangkabau identity and cultural values.

Unlike the concept of *kampung*, the meaning of *merantau* is particularly difficult to represent in English because it refers to a distinctive social tradition that is deeply rooted in Minangkabau culture. In the translated text, the emphasis shifts from the cultural practice itself to the consequences of migration, particularly the experiences of separation and longing. Although this translation successfully conveys the emotional dimension of the original expression, it only partially represents the broader cultural significance of *merantau*, making its social and cultural values less apparent to target readers.

The concept of *merantau* has long been regarded as an important cultural institution within Minangkabau society. Traditionally, young Minangkabau men are encouraged to leave their homeland to gain knowledge, work experience, and economic independence before returning to contribute to their community. This practice reflects values of self-development, perseverance, and social responsibility, making *merantau* not merely a physical journey but also a process of personal and social transformation. Therefore, the cultural significance of *merantau* extends beyond migration itself and forms an integral part of Minangkabau cultural identity.

Moreover, the emotional dimension of *merantau* is strongly reflected in the *pantun* through expressions of longing and separation from one's homeland. The experience of being far away from family and familiar surroundings often creates a deep sense of nostalgia, which becomes a recurring theme in Minangkabau literary traditions. In this context, the *pantun* serves as a medium for expressing the emotional consequences of migration while simultaneously reinforcing the enduring bond between individuals and their place of origin. This cultural and emotional complexity explains why the concept of *merantau* presents a considerable challenge in translation and cannot be fully represented through a simple lexical equivalent in English.

5. Representation of Cultural Meaning in Translation

The analysis indicates that the English translation seeks to preserve the cultural meanings embedded in the original *pantun* while ensuring that the text remains accessible and readable for English-speaking audiences. To achieve this balance, some cultural elements are retained in their original forms, whereas others are adapted to communicate their meanings more effectively within the target language and cultural context.

A clear example of cultural preservation is the retention of geographical references such as *Bukit Putus*, *Rimba Ketuang*, and *Ketahun Sea*. Rather than translating or replacing these place names with more familiar geographical terms, the translator maintains their original forms, thereby preserving the cultural setting and reinforcing the local identity of the source text. Although these

locations may be unfamiliar to target readers, retaining the original names contributes to the cultural authenticity of the *pantun* and enables readers to recognize its distinct Minangkabau cultural background.

Another important cultural element is the translation of *kampung* as *home*. In Indonesian and Minangkabau culture, the concept of *kampung* extends beyond a physical location, encompassing emotional attachment, family relationships, communal identity, and a sense of belonging. By choosing *home* rather than *village* or *hometown*, the translation prioritizes the emotional dimension of the original expression over its geographical meaning. Consequently, the sense of nostalgia conveyed in the source text is effectively preserved, although some of the broader cultural and communal associations inherent in *kampung* become less prominent in the target text.

The concept of *merantau*, however, presents a more complex translation challenge. In Minangkabau society, *merantau* refers to a long-established cultural tradition in which individuals leave their homeland to pursue education, gain life experience, or seek better economic opportunities. As a culture-specific practice, it embodies social, historical, and cultural values that cannot be fully conveyed through a single English equivalent. In the translation, the expression is rendered as *long years away will be*, shifting the emphasis from the cultural practice itself to its emotional consequences, particularly prolonged separation from home. While this translation successfully communicates the feelings of distance, longing, and homesickness experienced by the speaker, it only partially represents the broader cultural significance of *merantau*. As a result, some of the social and cultural meanings associated with this distinctive Minangkabau tradition are inevitably diminished in the target text.

The translation also retains several images associated with the natural environment, including *corn*, *cotton stalks*, and *rice grains*. These references contribute to the ecological dimension of the *pantun* while reflecting the agrarian character of Minangkabau society. By preserving these images, the translation enables target readers to engage with aspects of the original cultural landscape. Nevertheless, some of the symbolic meanings and cultural associations attached to these agricultural images may not be fully understood by readers who are unfamiliar with the Minangkabau cultural context.

Overall, the findings indicate that the translation succeeds in preserving the central cultural meanings of the *pantun*, despite certain shifts in cultural specificity. The core themes of homesickness, separation, and emotional attachment to one's homeland remain effectively represented in the English version. However, culture-specific concepts such as *kampung* and *merantau* highlight the challenges of achieving complete cultural equivalence in literary translation. These findings suggest that the translation represents a process of negotiation between preserving the cultural identity of the source text and ensuring that its meaning remains accessible and comprehensible to target readers.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Noviyola and Wulandari (2024), who argue that Minangkabau *pantun* contains significant cultural references that reflect local identity. However, whereas their research employed a hermeneutic approach to interpret the cultural meanings embedded in the *pantun*, the present study focuses on examining how those cultural meanings are represented in the English translation. This distinction highlights the different analytical perspectives adopted by the two studies while demonstrating their complementary contributions to the understanding of Minangkabau *pantun*.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the representation of cultural meaning in the English translation of a Minangkabau *pantun* featured in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. The findings indicate that the *pantun* contains a range of culture-specific elements, particularly ecological references such as *Bukit Putus*, *Rimba Ketuang*, *Laut Ketahun*, and various forms of agricultural imagery, as well as the culturally significant concepts of *kampung* and *merantau*. Together, these elements illustrate the close relationship between the natural environment, cultural traditions, and social values within Minangkabau society.

The analysis further demonstrates that the cultural meanings embedded in the *pantun* extend beyond their literal expressions. The translated text continues to convey the central themes of separation, homesickness, and emotional attachment to one's homeland, all of which are closely connected to the Minangkabau tradition of *merantau*. Among the identified cultural elements, *merantau* emerges as the most culturally significant because it represents a distinctive social

practice that embodies the historical experiences, cultural identity, and core values of the Minangkabau community.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that translating cultural expressions in literary works involves more than the transfer of linguistic forms; it also requires a thorough understanding of the cultural context embedded in the source text. Preserving cultural meaning is therefore essential for maintaining the cultural identity conveyed through the original *pantun* while ensuring that its message remains accessible and meaningful to target readers. This study contributes to the field of literary translation by emphasizing the importance of representing and preserving culturally embedded meanings when translating traditional literary forms such as *pantun* into English. Nevertheless, the study is limited to the analysis of a single *pantun* extracted from one literary work. Future research could expand the scope by examining a larger corpus of Minangkabau *pantun* and comparing different translation strategies to explore how cultural meanings are represented across various translation approaches.

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