

THE MAIN REWRITING CHILDHOOD: A LINGUISTIC STUDY OF TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES IN INDONESIAN-ENGLISH BILINGUAL BOOK

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the translation procedures employed in the bilingual children's storybook "*Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*", written by Fita Chakra and Indra Bayu and translated into English by Wicha S.B. The aim of this study is to identify the types of translation procedures applied as well as to determine the most dominant procedure used in the English version of the storybook. Utilizing the model proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet's translation procedures as discussed by Munday (2022), this study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through close reading and note-taking techniques, focusing on sentences that reflect specific translation procedures. The findings reveal that five translation procedures were identified in the book: literal translation (11 data), transposition (3 data), equivalence (3 data), amplification (3 data), and economy or reduction (3 data). Among these procedures, literal translation was the most frequently applied method, indicating a strong source-text orientation. Although the translations are generally accurate and age-appropriate, several minor translation shifts were noted. These findings highlight the significance of procedural choices in translating children's literature, particularly in texts intended to promote character education and bilingual language acquisition. This study contributes to translation studies by offering insights into the translation of culturally embedded content for young readers and may serve as a reference for future research in this field.

Keywords: *Translation Procedures, Bilingual Children's Storybook, Character Education, Cultural Translation*

INTRODUCTION

The increasing number of individuals of mixed heritage in one location and the growing trend of people migrating from one place to another, communication has become increasingly complex and challenging. As a result, international languages such as English, Chinese, and Arabic are utilized as bridges to facilitate effective communication. Consequently, there is a growing awareness among individuals of the need to equip themselves and their children with proficiency in one or more international language (Chavez, 2023). This awareness has contributed to the widespread circulation of translated foreign children's literature in the market. According to Rodari (2025), children tend to be drawn to translated foreign stories due to the expansive role of imagination that is stimulated by the narrative structure, setting, and characterization. In addition to engaging plots, vibrant and colorful illustrations serve as an added attraction. As a genre, bilingual storybooks primarily function as sources of entertainment by delivering messages through narrative plots enriched with joyful, dramatic, and action-oriented elements (Wang & Shao, 2025). However, in the current global context, such storybooks are increasingly regarded as dual-purpose media, offering both entertainment

and language learning opportunities in response to the growing demand for international language proficiency.

In this regard, the researcher selected the bilingual children's storybook "*Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*" written by Fita Chakra and translated into English by Wicha S.B. In language learning, children's storybooks play a significant role, most commonly in the form of fables and serialized stories focused on character education. Bilingual storybooks, in particular, allow children to learn both their first language (L1) and a foreign language simultaneously. The most common form of bilingual children's storybooks in Indonesia features English-Indonesian or Indonesian-English versions. According to Garraffa et al. (2023), a bilingual book is defined as a book that contains two different languages presented either on the same page or on facing pages. Through these books, children are introduced not only to another language but also to another culture that coexists within the context of the bilingual text. This also implies that they are exposed to new and unfamiliar words, which contributes to the development of their vocabulary (Sunarto & Puspojudho, 2025).

In terms of culture, this aspect is also reflected in the children's storybook "*Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*" through the frequent and varied use of onomatopoeia. According to Andrason & Benson (2024), onomatopoeia refers to adverbs that describe states, sounds of objects, or sounds of activities occurring within a given situation. Onomatopoeia is categorized into giongo and gitaigo; giongo generally represents the imitation of sounds made by inanimate objects, while giseigo refers more to the imitation of sounds made by living beings. (Körtvélyessy & Štekauer, 2024) argue that the term onomatopoeia originates from the Greek word *onomatopoeia*, which refers to the naming of objects or actions through sounds associated with those objects or actions, such as crowing, buzzing, roaring, growling, chirping, and so on. In relation to this, translators hold responsibility for written, bilingual, and international communication between authors and readers (Katan & Taibi, 2021). They are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and faithfulness of the message conveyed in the source text, mainly in its context (Nuckolls, 1999).

To avoid translation errors and misunderstandings, translation procedures provide several strategies to address issues that may arise during the translation process. The following are translation procedures commonly employed by translators to overcome translation difficulties, as proposed by (Vinay & Darbelnet in Munday, 2022). These procedures are as follows: (1) Borrowing, (2) Calque, (3) Literal Translation, (4) Transposition, (5) Modulation, (6) Equivalence, (7) Adaptation, (8) Amplification, (9) Explication, (10) Compensation, (11) Generalization.

Despite the availability of various translation procedures proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (as cited in Munday, 2022), previous studies on the translation of children's literature have predominantly focused on general lexical or grammatical shifts, with limited attention given to how specific translation procedures are applied in bilingual children's storybooks, particularly within the Indonesian-English context. Moreover, research examining the dominance of certain procedures and their implications for meaning accuracy and child-appropriateness remains scarce. This gap is especially evident in studies analyzing culturally embedded linguistic features, such as onomatopoeia, which play a crucial role in children's comprehension and engagement. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by systematically identifying the translation procedures used in the bilingual children's storybook

Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi and determining the most frequently employed procedure in its English translation. Accordingly, the study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What types of translation procedures are used in the English translation of the bilingual children's storybook *Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*? and (2) Which translation procedure is most dominant in the translation of the storybook?

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method as it aims to identify the types of translation procedures contained in and most dominantly used within the bilingual children's storybook "*Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*", utilizing the translation procedures proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (Munday, 2022). The researcher draws conclusions based on the data collected, as previously explained. Furthermore, qualitative research methods emphasize analysis through a scientific approach (Neuman 2014). As stated by Sudaryanto (2015), qualitative methods are research methods that are purely based on existing facts or phenomena that empirically occur within the speech community, thus the data obtained and recorded reflects the reality as it is.

Source Data

The researcher chose to analyze the text in a bilingual children's storybook entitled "*Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi!*" written by Fita Chakra and Indra Bayu, and translated into English by Wicha S.B. This reading material is part of a children's character education series, published in April 2021 by Bestari Kids.

Data Collection Procedures

Technique refers to the implementation of a research method, which is adjusted according to the tools and nature of the research (Sudaryanto, 2015). The techniques used in this study were the reading technique and the note-taking technique. The note-taking technique was applied to mark and record sentences that correspond to the translation procedures (Friedman, 2014). Meanwhile, the reading technique was employed to search for and identify data that align with the criteria of the translation procedures proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet.

Data Analysis Techniques

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, which produced an analysis process that did not involve statistical analysis procedures or other forms of quantification. In this study, the data were analyzed using the identity method and the distributional method. The identity method was used to analyze the perspective and content of the children's reading material, while the distributional method and referential identity method were used to analyze the forms of language expressions found within the children's storybook (Sudaryanto, 2015). Based on this theoretical framework, the data analysis techniques adopted by the researcher were as follows:

- Identifying dialogues within the reading material that reflect elements of translation procedures.
- Analyzing the discourse by examining words, phrases, and/or clauses, and classifying them according to the characteristics of one of the seven translation procedures proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet.
- Considering the classification of the texts based on the similarities in their nature, function, and specific criteria within the framework of translation procedures.

- Describing the sentences identified as containing elements of translation procedures.
- Drawing conclusions regarding the translation procedures found in the bilingual children's storybook.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

The children's storybook entitled "*Ups Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*", authored by Fitra Chakra and Indra Bayu, comprises several key aspects: content, language, graphics, and presentation. The content of the book revolves around the character Al, a child who frequently exhibits carelessness due to poor time management. The narrative aims to convey educational values to readers—particularly children—emphasizing the importance of avoiding carelessness and developing discipline. The story thus belongs to a series intended for character education. From the linguistic perspective, the language used in the book conforms to the grammatical and stylistic norms of the Indonesian language. Moreover, the use of casual and accessible language is deliberately employed to ensure readability and comprehension for the target audience—children. With regard to graphics and presentation, the typeface selected for "*Ups Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*" is harmonized with the illustrations, thereby supporting rather than hindering legibility. The book's layout and color scheme have also been carefully designed. The placement of illustrations and text is set against appropriate backgrounds to ensure that neither the visuals nor the text distract from the reading process. The storybook serves not only as a medium for moral instruction—imparting values relevant to everyday life—but also as a tool for introducing children to foreign languages and cultures. This includes elements such as sound imitation, or onomatopoeia, which are integrated into the narrative. Furthermore, the book functions as an effective learning resource in educational settings, fostering children's reading habits and interests. The translation of the content is generally acceptable and age-appropriate, thereby enhancing the accessibility and comprehensibility of the text for young readers.

The subsequent finding reveals that, upon analyzing the dialogue sections of the book, not all translation procedures were employed in the rendering of the conversations. The translation procedures identified include word-for-word translation, equivalence, transposition, addition, and reduction. Conversely, other procedures such as borrowing, calque, modulation, adaptation, explication, and generalization were not observed in the translation of the dialogue.

Table 1. Translation Procedure Data

No.	Translation Procedures by Vinay dan Darbelnet	Frequency Identified
1.	Borrowing	-----
2.	Calque	-----
3.	Wor-for-Word Translation	11
4.	Transposition	3
5.	Modulation	-----
6.	Equivalence	3
7.	Adaptation	-----
8.	Amplification	3
9.	Economy (Reduction)	3

1. Based Word-for-Word / Literal Translation

Vinay and Darbelnet describe literal translation, also referred to as word-for-word translation, as a method in which the source language (SL) text is transferred directly into the

target language (TL), while adhering to the grammatical and idiomatic norms of the TL. In this approach, the translator's role is primarily to preserve structural and linguistic consistency (Newmark, 1988). Essentially, literal translation is a self-contained and reversible procedure that typically does not necessitate modification, except for minimal adjustments to grammar or inflection where necessary. For instance, the English sentence "I wear red hat" is rendered in Indonesian as "*Saya memakai topi merah.*" An example of literal translation can be observed in the following data:

Data 1:

SL : "*Sabtu Pagi Al bangun kesiangan, hari ini dia akan pergi berkemah*"
TL : " Saturday Morning. Al woke up late, today he would go to camping"

Data 2:

SL : "*Kaki Al terantuk meja akibat terburu-buru*"
TL : " Ali's leg was hitting the table because he was in rush

Data 3:

SL : "*Selesai mandi jangan lupa matikan keran, Al! Ibu mengingatkan.*"
TL : " After Taking a bath don't forget to turn off the tap, Al. Mom warned."

Data 4:

SL : "*Dia terburu-buru masuk kamar mandi*"
TL : " He hurried into the bathroom"

Data 5:

SL : "*Al..Al.. kamu kenapa? Ibu menolong Al.*"
TL : " Al.. Al.. what's going on? Mom helped him."

Data 6:

SL : "*Dia belum menyiapkan perlengkapan berkemah. Al menyiapkannya dengan terburu- buru*"
"Al, makan dulu, kata ibu"
"Ya Bu, sebentar, teriak Al sambil membereskan ranselnya."
TL : "He has not prepared equipments for camping, Al prepared it in hurry"
"Al let's eat first, said Mom"
"Yes Mom, wait a minute, said Al while cleaning up his backpack."

Data 7:

SL : "*Al makan dengan terburu-buru.*"
"Al mengangguk dengan mulut penuh nasi."
TL : " Al was eating in hurry."
"Al nodded with his mouth full of rice."

Data 8:

SL : *“Al..! Tiba-tiba Al mendengar suara Dio.”*
“Masuk saja Dio! Teriak Al.”
 TL : *“Al..! Suddenly, Al heard Dio’s voice.”*
“Come in Dio! Al shouted.”

Data 9:

SL : *“Setelah ganti baju dan mengambil senter akhirnya Al siap berangkat.”*
“Yuk Dio, kita berangkat, ajak Al”
“Sebelum keluar rumah, Al mengunci pintu rumah.”
“Tak lupa dia mengikat tali sepatu kuat-kuat”
 TL : *“After changing clothes and taking a flashlight, he was finally ready to go”*
“Come on Dio, we will go, invited Al”
“Before leave the house, Al locked the door.
“Not forget, he tied his shoelaces tightly”

Data 10:

SL : *“Aku kan sudah mengunci pintu, kata Al panik.”*
 TL : *“I’ve already locked the door,” said Al panic.”*

Data 11:

SL : *“Ibu keluar dari dalam rumah, “mengapa kunci rumah kamu biarkan menempel di pintu, Al?”*
Tanya Ibu. “Bagaimana kalau ada orang yang berniat jahat?”
 TL : *“Mom comes out from the house “why did you leave the key stick on the door, Al? asked Mom.”*

Analysis:

A total of 11 data points were categorized under the literal or word-for-word translation procedure found in the bilingual children’s storybook *“Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi”* These data are classified as literal because the translator rendered them directly, without making any modifications. In this case, the researcher found that the data were translated literally into the target language. Although the source language verbs were translated into equivalent verb forms in the target language—as commonly seen in the dialogues above—no adjustments were made, even when the context indicated past actions that had already occurred.

2. Transposition

Vinay and Darbelnet characterize transposition as a translation technique that entails substituting one grammatical category with another while preserving the original meaning or message. This procedure can be classified into two forms: obligatory transposition, which is required due to structural differences between languages, and optional transposition, which is employed at the translator’s discretion to enhance naturalness. It typically involves grammatical modifications between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL), such as converting singular forms to plural, repositioning adjectives, or shifting between different parts of speech. An example of transposition can be observed in the following data:

Data 1:

SL : *“Tetapi Ali tidak mendengarkan Ibu.”*

TL : *“ But Al did not listen to her”*

Analysis:

In this datum, the translator replaced the source word *“ibu”* (mother) with the target language equivalent *“her.”* This change was made because the pronoun *“her”* refers to *“ibu”* (the mother of the character who reminds Al to be careful), which had already been mentioned earlier in the text. This avoids redundancy and does not alter the meaning conveyed to the reader.

Data 2:

SL : *“Maafkan Al, Bu. Al Ceroboh, sesal Al”*

TL : *“I’m sorry Mom, I have been careless, Al regreted”*

Data 3:

SL : *“Dan ada satu lagi yang kamu lupakan, Al, Ibu berkata,*

“Kamu lupa pamit pada Ibu”

TL : *“And there is one more thing that you have forgotten Al, said her*

“you forgot to say goodbye to me”

Analysis:

The two data above illustrate the use of transposition, similar to what was observed in Datum 1. In Datum 2, the word *“Al”* is translated into the target language as *“I’m,”* where *“I’m”* refers to Al. In Datum 3, the word *“Ibu”* (mother) is rendered as *“me”* in the target language, also referring to the mother. When examined in context, these shifts in personal pronouns do not alter the meaning of the dialogue between the mother and the child.

3. Equivalence

Vinay and Darbelnet employ the term equivalence to describe situations in which two languages convey the same meaning or situation through differing stylistic or structural means. This procedure is especially valuable when translating culturally bound expressions such as idioms, proverbs, and interjections. Instances of cultural translation using the equivalence strategy can be identified in the following data:

Data 1:

SL : *“Aduh, Aku terlambat!”*

“Duk...! “Auw! Sakit!”

TL : *“Oh, I’m Late!”*

: “Blam...!” Ouch! It’s hurt!”

Data 2:

SL : *“Dia menyalakan keran lalu mengguyur badan dengan air. Byur... Byur!”*

TL : *“He turned on the tap and flushed his bodies with water. Slash..Slash!”*

Data 3:

SL : *“Ya ampun, aku lupa mematuikan keran!”*

TL : “Oh my god, I forget to turn off the tap!”

Analysis:

In the three data above, several interjections or exclamatory expressions rooted in Indonesian culture can be observed in the source language, such as *“Aduh”, “Duk”, “Auw”, “Byur”,* and *“Ya ampun”*. These exclamations are then translated into culturally appropriate equivalents in the target language, such as “Oh”, “Blam”, “Ouch”, “Slash”, and “Oh my God”.

4. Amplification vs. Economy

Amplification vs. Economy refers to a contrast in translation techniques where amplification occurs when the target language (TL) uses more words than the source language (SL), while economy refers to a translation technique in which the meaning (signified) of the source text is conveyed using fewer words in the TL. Examples of amplification and economy in translation can be observed in the following data:

Data 1 Amplification :

SL : *“Mandi yang bersih Al! Teriak Ibu.”*

TL : “Just take a bath wash yourself cleanly, ok?! Mom shouted.”

Analysis:

In Datum 1 above, the translator added the target language phrase “just take a bath” in the translation. This addition was made to complete the active sentence, even though such a phrase does not appear in the source language text.

Data 2 Amplification :

SL : *“Selesai mandi, Al baru ingat”*

TL : “After bathing, he remembered something”

Analysis:

Datum 2 above demonstrates a combination of two translation procedures: transposition and amplification. Regarding transposition, the translator changed the subject “Al” to “he” without altering its meaning. In the case of amplification, the translator rendered a non-equivalent expression in the target language by adding the word “something,” which was not present in the source language.

Data 3 Amplification:

SL : *“Saat lewat di depan kamar mandi”*

TL : “When he passed in front of the door”

Analysis:

It is clearly evident in Datum 3 that the addition of the word “he” serves to clarify the subject as the agent who is walking in front of the bathroom.

Data 1 Economy/Reduction:

SL : “*Kalau makan pelan-pelan Al! Ibu mengingatkan*”

TL : “Eat slowly, Al! Mom reminded.”

Analysis:

In the translation of Datum 1 under the economy procedure, a reduction can be identified through the omission of the word “kalau, whose meaning is not reflected in the target language.

Data 2 Economy/Reduction:

SL : “*Baru sampai depan gang, Al ingat sesuatu.*”

TL : “At the alley, Al remembered something.”

Analysis:

A similar case to Datum 1 can be observed in Datum 2, where a reduction occurs in the target language translation. In the source language, the phrase “*Baru sampai*” (just arrived) is present, but this meaning is not conveyed in the target language, which only renders “at alley”—a phrase that merely indicates a location.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that literal translation is the most dominant procedure used in the English translation of *Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*, reflecting a strong source-text orientation. This result is consistent with previous studies on children’s literature translation, which report that translators often rely on literal translation to maintain simplicity, clarity, and parallel linguistic structures for young readers (Newmark, 1988; Wang & Shao, 2025). Such an approach supports bilingual language exposure, as discussed in the Introduction, by allowing children to associate lexical items directly across languages. However, similar to findings reported by Katan and Taibi (2021) as well as Catford (1965), the excessive use of literal translation in this study also led to minor grammatical and contextual shifts, particularly in tense usage. This suggests that while literal translation is effective for preserving meaning, it may compromise naturalness in the target language if not accompanied by necessary grammatical adjustments.

The use of transposition in this study aligns with earlier research indicating that grammatical shifts are essential when translating between structurally different languages such as Indonesian and English (Garraffa et al., 2023). By replacing nouns with pronouns, the translator improved cohesion and avoided redundancy, thereby enhancing readability without altering meaning. Equivalence was mainly applied to interjections and onomatopoeic expressions, supporting Andrason and Benson’s (2024) and Nuckolls (1999) argument that sound-symbolic expressions require culturally appropriate rendering rather than formal equivalence. This finding echoes earlier studies showing that equivalence is a preferred strategy for translating expressive and affective elements in children’s texts (Körtvélyessy & Štekauer, 2024).

Finally, the use of amplification and economy reflects adaptive strategies commonly observed in children’s literature translation to clarify implicit meanings or reduce unnecessary

information (Munday, 2022). Overall, the findings answer the research questions by demonstrating that multiple translation procedures were employed, with literal translation as the most dominant. The study reinforces previous research while contributing empirical evidence from an Indonesian–English bilingual children’s storybook, highlighting the need for balanced procedural choices to ensure both linguistic accuracy and child-appropriate readability.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the bilingual children’s character-building book entitled “*Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*”, several conclusions can be drawn from this study. The first conclusion is that the translation procedures used in this book include: Literal Translation, Transposition, Equivalence, Amplification, and Economy. Literal translation or word-for-word translation was found in 11 data entries, transposition in 3 entries, equivalence in 3 entries, amplification in 3 entries, and economy in 3 entries. This does not suggest that other procedures are not applicable; rather, these findings are limited to the data identified in the book. The second conclusion is that the most dominant procedure used throughout the storybook is literal translation, with 11 instances found. Therefore, it can be concluded that the translation of “*Ups! Aku Tidak Ceroboh Lagi*” is largely literal in nature, indicating a source-text-oriented approach, as reflected in the findings and discussion. Although many translations were appropriate, a few translation errors were identified. These errors were mostly due to shifts in meaning. However, further research is recommended on the quality of bilingual storybook translations, especially considering their role in engaging early readers.

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