

## **TRANSLATING COOKING RECIPES FROM OTHER CULTURES INTO INDONESIAN**

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### **Abstract**

*This article presents useful information for translating cooking recipes from English into Indonesian in terms of the characteristics of linguistic and cultural aspects in cooking recipes, the challenges that cause translation difficulties, and the strategies to overcome challenges in translation. This article focuses on student translators. Student translators have to translate many kinds of texts, one of them is cooking recipes (procedure text). In order to translate the texts, an understanding of the language structure of source text and target text and the culture aspects are crucial. The challenges that cause translation errors in student translators will be examined through the perspective of the author's teaching experience and a review of the appropriate literature, and then, some tips and strategies will be offered to solve problems in translation.*

**Keywords:** *English-Indonesian translation, teaching translation, language teaching, cooking recipe.*

### **Abstrak**

Artikel ini menyajikan informasi yang berguna untuk menerjemahkan resep masakan dari bahasa Inggris ke bahasa Indonesia dalam hal karakteristik aspek linguistik dan budaya dalam resep masakan, tantangan yang menyebabkan kesulitan penerjemahan, dan strategi untuk mengatasi tantangan dalam penerjemahan. Artikel ini berfokus pada penerjemah mahasiswa. Penerjemah mahasiswa diharuskan menerjemahkan berbagai macam teks, salah satunya adalah resep masakan (teks prosedur). Untuk menerjemahkan teks, pemahaman tentang struktur bahasa teks sumber dan teks sasaran serta aspek budaya sangat penting. Tantangan yang menyebabkan kesalahan penerjemahan pada penerjemah mahasiswa akan dikaji melalui perspektif pengalaman mengajar penulis dan tinjauan literatur yang sesuai, dan kemudian, beberapa tips dan strategi akan ditawarkan untuk memecahkan masalah dalam penerjemahan.

**Kata kunci:** *Terjemahan Inggris-Indonesia, pengajaran terjemahan, pengajaran bahasa, resep masakan.*

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## 1. Introduction

Culture is an integral part of learning a foreign language. Students of English as a foreign language (EFL) have to learn not only language but also culture of English. Paige in Cohen et al. (2003) describes the dimensions of the culture learning model. Paige (2003) groups culture learning into five categories: 1) the self as cultural, 2) the elements of culture, 3) intercultural phenomena (culture-general learning), 4) particular cultures (culture-specific learning), 5) acquiring strategies for culture learning. By exploring these dimensions, teachers can help students connect to the target culture, raise their awareness of cultural differences, and improve their 'intercultural communicative competence' (Byram: 1997).

One of the activities that can be used to help students connect to the target culture, raise their awareness of cultural differences, and improve their 'intercultural communicative competence' is by translation practice. Student translators in university have to translate many kinds of texts, one of them is cooking recipe texts. Cooking recipe texts have several challenging components to be translated. Not only do student translators have to transfer the meaning of source language (SL) into the target language (TL), but they also have to be able to transfer the culture of SL into TL.

This article presents useful information for translating cooking recipes from English into Indonesian in terms of the characteristics of linguistic and cultural aspects in cooking recipes, the challenges that cause translation difficulties, and the strategies to overcome challenges in translation. The explanation is based on the author's teaching experience in using cooking recipe texts to teach language and culture in translation class. In the translation practice, the students were asked to translate a cooking recipe entitled 'Spaghetti with Beef, Smoked Almonds and Basil' from English (SL) into Indonesian (TL). This cooking recipe is written by Giada de Laurentiis and can be accessed at <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/giada-de-laurentiis/spaghetti-with-beef-smoked-almonds-and-basil-recipe-1946918>.

Before translating the source text, student translators have to analyze the source text in terms of extratextual and intertextual factors. According to Nord (1997) extratextual factors consist of: 1) the intended text functions; 2) the addressees (sender and recipient); 3) the time and place of text reception; 4) the medium (speech and writing); 5) the motive (why the ST was written and why it is being translated). Moreover, intertextual factors consist of: 1) subject matter, 2) content: including connotation and cohesion, 3) presuppositions: real-world factors of the communicative situation presumed to be known to the participants, 4) composition: including microstructure and macrostructure, 5) non-verbal elements: illustrations, italics, etc., 6) lexic: including dialect, register and specific terminology, 7) sentence structure suprasegmental features: including stress, rhythm and 'stylistic punctuation'.

One of the examples in analyzing the extratextual factor is to find information about the medium of the text. The cooking recipe text entitled 'Spaghetti with Beef, Smoked Almonds and Basil' is taken from [www.foodnetwork.com](http://www.foodnetwork.com). Food Network is a unique lifestyle network, website and magazine that connects viewers to the power and joy of food. Food Network is distributed to nearly 100 million U.S. households and draws over 46 million unique web users monthly. From this information, the students will understand that the source text readers are U.S. households and the source text is written in American English. Then, in the process of translation, the student translators will consult American English dictionaries or other sources to find the meaning of words and specific cultural words.

## **2. The Characteristics of Linguistic in Cooking Recipes**

Different texts have different characteristics of linguistics. In translation class, students have to translate many kinds of texts. One of the most interesting texts to be translated in translation class are cooking recipes. Cooking recipes usually consist of several parts: 1) a title or the name of the recipe, 2) a list of ingredients, 3) instructions, and 4) external

instructions or comments, for example information about some ingredients or how to serve the dish and the information on the number of portions a recipe will make.

In translating cooking recipes, students will also find specific vocabulary, for example:

- 1) food jargon such as *recipes* or *food*.
- 2) ingredients such as *beef tenderloin steaks*, *Kosher salt*, *black pepper*, *Herbes de Provence*, *olive oil*, *spaghetti*, *pasta*, *tomatoes*, *basil leaves*, *garlic*, *lemon juice*, *lemon zest*, *smoked almonds*, and *Parmesan*.
- 3) non-English terms such as *Herbes de Provence*.
- 4) kitchen tools such as *oven*, *oven rack*, *baking sheet*, *pot*, *food processor*, *serving bowl*, *grill pan*, and *gas or charcoal grill*.
- 5) preparation methods such as *chop*, *grate*, *preheat*, *season*, *sprinkle*, *drizzle*, *roast*, *boil*, *stir*, *drain*, *reserve*, *combine*, *process*, *toss*, *thin out*, *garnish*, *slice*, and *grill*.
- 6) amounts and measures such as *minute*, *pound*, *ounce*, *inch*, *teaspoon*, *cup*, and *degree of Fahrenheit*.

A cooking recipe consists of a set of instructions. The instruction that explains the food preparation process is often presented in imperative sentences. Diemer and Frobenius (2013) state that the most prevalent syntactic features of recipes are the use of subjectless, verb-initial imperative sentences. The imperative sentences in cooking recipe start with active verb, for example:

- 1) *Sprinkle the Herbes de Provence on both sides of the steaks.*
- 2) *Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.*
- 3) *Roast for 10 to 12 minutes for medium-well.*

Sometimes the instruction is not initiated with active verb, for example:

*In a food processor, combine the tomatoes, basil, garlic, lemon juice, lemon zest, and 1/4 cup olive oil.*

In the target language (Indonesian), the instruction that explains the food preparation process is also often presented in imperative sentences.

Student translators can easily form imperative sentences in the target language. However, it becomes a problem when student translators have to translate instructions in the example above which have slightly different sentence patterns. Student translators have two options to translate this kind of sentence: 1) follow the source text sentence pattern, or 2) change the source text sentence pattern, for example:

Source text:

In a food processor, combine the tomatoes, basil, garlic, lemon juice, lemon zest, and 1/4 cup olive oil.

Target text (1):

*Dalam food processor, masukkan tomat, basil, bawang putih, jus lemon, parutan kulit lemon, dan ¼ gelas minyak zaitun.*

In a food processor, combine the tomatoes, basil, garlic, lemon juice, lemon zest, and 1/4 cup olive oil.

Target text (2):

*Masukkan tomat, basil, bawang putih, jus lemon, parutan kulit lemon, dan ¼ gelas minyak zaitun ke dalam food processor.*

Combine the tomatoes, basil, garlic, lemon juice, lemon zest, and 1/4 cup olive oil in the food processor.

The target text (1) is an example of literal translation by following source text sentence pattern. The target text (2) is an example of shift or transposition in translation by changing source text sentence pattern into target text. This change of grammar from ST to TT is called Shifts of Transpositions (Newmark: 1988). A shift or transposition is a translation procedure involving a change in the grammar from SL to TL. The ST sentence is an imperative sentence which is initiated by an adverb of place and followed by an active verb that indicates imperative mood. In the target text (2), the adverb of place moves to the last part of the sentence.

### **3. The Cultural Aspects in Cooking Recipes**

According to Cohen et al. (2003) elements of culture refer to things like the beliefs, values, customs, products, and the communication styles of a given culture or society. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning (NSFLEP 1999) provides a framework for students to integrate ‘the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products—both tangible and intangible—of a society’. This has become known as the 3P model of culture:

- 1) Perspectives (what members of a culture think, feel, and value),
- 2) Practices (how members communicate and interact with one another),
- 3) Products (technology, music, art, food, literature, etc.; the things members of a group create, share, and transmit to the next generation)

Food is a product of culture. Culture is one of the challenges in translation. Student translators should be able to understand the source and the target language cultures and also choose appropriate strategy to translate cultural terms in order to make the target readers understand the translation. In choosing appropriate strategy to translate cultural terms, student translators have to consider the purpose of the translation. In deciding the purpose of translation, student translators may consider the type of translation product (and process). Nord (2005) makes a distinction between two basic types of translation product (and process), which are documentary translation and instrumental translation.

Documentary translation ‘serves as a document of a source culture communication between the author and the ST recipient’. For example, in literary translation, where the TT allows the TT receiver access to the ideas of the ST but where the reader is well aware that it is a translation. Other examples are word-for-word and literal translation and ‘exoticizing translation’. In the latter, certain culture-specific lexical items in the ST are retained in the TT in order to maintain the local color of the ST.

Instrumental translation ‘serves as an independent message transmitting instrument in a new communicative action in the target culture, and is intended to fulfill its communicative purpose without the recipient being conscious of reading or hearing a text which, in a different form, was used before in a different communicative situation’. In other words, the TT receivers read the TT as though it were an ST written in their own language.

In translating cultural terms, student translators may choose several strategies. Newmark (1988) proposed several translation procedures (other experts use the term ‘translation strategies’) to overcome translation problems in sentences and the smaller units of language, for example cultural terms. According to Newmark (1988) literal translation is the most important of the procedures, however there are other translation procedures, whose use always depends on a variety of contextual factors, such transference, naturalization, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, descriptive equivalent, synonymy, through translation, shifts or transpositions, modulation, recognized translation, translation label, compensation, componential analysis, reduction and expansion, paraphrase, couplets, notes, additions, and glosses.

Which strategy is best to translate cultural terms will depend on the purpose of the translation. If the purpose of translation is to produce documentary translations, which introduce SL culture to TL readers, student translators could choose transference or combine with notes, additions, and glosses procedure/strategy. If the purpose of translation is to produce instrumental translation, which is intended to fulfill its communicative purpose, student translators could choose naturalization or cultural equivalent.

- 1) Transference (loan word) is the process of transferring an SL word to a TL text as a translation procedure.
- 2) Naturalization is the procedure that succeeds transference and adapts the SL word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology (word-forms) of the TL.

- 3) Cultural Equivalent is an approximate translation where an SL cultural word is translated by a TL cultural word. This strategy can be used in general texts as well as for brief explanations to readers who are ignorant of the relevant SL culture.
- 4) Notes, Additions, Glosses. Additional information in the translation may take various forms: 1) Within the text, 2) Notes at bottom of page, 3) Notes at end of chapter, 4) Notes or glossary at end of book.

#### **4. The Challenges that Cause Translation Difficulties**

Cooking recipes are ones of the specialized and technical texts. According to Paradowski (2010) translating specialized and technical texts requires two kinds of knowledge. The first is familiarity with the minilec – restricted form of practically-oriented technolects used by a limited circle of specialists and/or linked to a limited field. The second is what could be called 'encyclopedic' knowledge and experience.

Paradowski (2010) further exemplifies some of the challenges to be overcome in translating cooking terminology, one being the numerous false friends appearing in what he refers to as the 'culinary lingo'. For instance, 'minced meat' rarely contains any animal products at all, but instead often consists of finely chopped raisins or other dried fruits as filling in pies and pastries. Epstein (2009) in *What's Cooking: Translating Food* identifies four main issues when translating culinary lingo; 1) availability of ingredients, 2) cuts of meat, 3) measurements, and 4) Implements, pots and pans.

#### **5. The Strategies to Overcome Challenges in Translation**

The strategies to overcome challenges in translation related to the main issues when translating culinary lingo (Eipstein:2009) consist of: 1) title of dish, 2) availability of ingredients, 3) cuts of meat, 4) measurements, and 5) Implements, pots and pans.

##### **5.1. Title of Dish**

The title of a dish has to inform the readers about its content and also sound appetizing. In translating the title of the dish, student translators

can use two options depending on the purpose of translation: 1) to translate the ST word and add an explanatory note or to transform a culturally specific name into a more descriptive name. 2) Sometimes certain dish names are simply untranslatable. Multiple dishes were not translated, because the readers use their titles all the time. Such names include pizza and pasta.

## **5.2. Availability of Ingredients**

The availability issue refers to the cases where access to ingredients listed in the original recipe is limited or more expensive in the target language culture, and therefore cannot be used to the same extent as is stated in the recipe. This problem cannot be solved by simply exchanging certain ingredients without further explanation, and that if suggestions or changes are made to the original recipe, it should be clearly stated in the translation what has been changed and why. Ideally, if ingredients are switched, both the original version and the altered one should be tested by the translator or someone related to the project, to make sure the taste, smell, measurements and other features are preserved.

In translating ‘Spaghetti with Beef, Smoked Almonds and Basil’, student translators find several ingredients such as beef tenderloin steaks, Kosher salt, black pepper, *Herbes de Provence*, olive oil, spaghetti pasta, tomatoes, basil leaves, garlic, lemon juice, lemon zest, smoked almonds, and Parmesan. Some ingredients can hardly be found in target culture context (Indonesia) for example Kosher salt and *Herbes de Provence*.

Kosher salt (also called cooking salt, flake salt, rock salt, koshering salt or koshering salt) is coarse edible salt without common additives such as iodine. Typically used in cooking and not at the table, it consists mainly of sodium chloride and may include anticaking agents. This type of salt is cooking salt which may be specific salt that consists of certain ingredients that are different from the salt that is sold in the target language market. In translating this ingredient, student translators can translate Kosher salt into cooking salt that can be found in target language markets, sold in

supermarkets or traditional markets or preserve ST ingredients into Kosher salt.

Another ingredient that is not familiar for target language readers is *Herbes de Provence*. The name is not an English word. It is a French name. *Herbes de Provence* is a mixture of dried herbs considered typical of the Provence region of southeastern France. These blends often contain savory, marjoram, rosemary, thyme, and oregano. Lavender leaves are also included in products in the North American market. The herb mixture is typically used with grilled foods and stews. In translating this ingredient, student translators should check the availability of the ingredient in the Indonesian market (in supermarket or online market), give a brief explanation about the ingredient and where the readers can buy it. Then they have to decide how to translate the ingredients: 1) keep the source text ingredient, or 2) translate with a similar ingredient that can be found in the Indonesian market.

### **5.3. Cuts of Meat**

The cuts of meat problem derive from the fact that different countries have different definitions of cuts of meat, for example from which part of the animal's body the meat is taken and what it is called. Even if finding a sufficient translation for the terminology is relatively easy, it might not always refer to the same body part of the animal in both languages. Solution to this problem is to either find a country specific chart over the cuts of meat, or to ask a professional for help. The student translators first have to check the source of the cooking recipe. Whether it is using American English, British English, Australian English or other English language varieties. For example, when student translators are asked to translate American English cooking recipes, they have to check the type of meat cutting in the U.S.

In the U.S., beef carcasses are split along the axis of symmetry into 'halves', then across into front and back 'quarters' (forequarters and hindquarters). Then this cut of meat consists of several parts: Brisket,

Chunk, Shank, Rib, Short loin, Tenderloin, Sirloin, Top Sirloin, Flank, Plate, Round, and Shank. The target language (Indonesian) adapted the way of cutting meat in the U.S. The cut of meat in target language is divided into: Neck (*punuk*), Brisket (*sandung lamur*), Chuck (*sampil*), Fore shank (*paha depan*), Rib (*iga*), Short loin, Tenderloin (*has dalam*), Sirloin (*has luar*), Top Sirloin (*has atas*), Flank (*samcan*), Short plate, Rump Cap (*tanjung*), Round (*gandik*), and Shank (*sengkel*).

Source text:

1 pound (1-inch thick) beef tenderloin steaks.

Target text (1):

$\frac{1}{2}$  kg (tebal 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm) steak sapi has dalam.

1/2 kg (2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm thick) beef tenderloin steaks.

Target text (2):

$\frac{1}{2}$  kg (tebal 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm) steak sapi tenderloin.

1/2 kg (2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm thick) beef tenderloin steaks.

The example above shows two options in translating the cut of meat into the target language. Student translators can translate into Indonesian the name of tenderloin, which is *daging has dalam* or using transference (loan word) strategy by preserving source language words since most target language readers are already familiar with source language word 'tenderloin'. The tenderloin sits beneath the ribs, next to the backbone. It is the tenderest part of the beef.

#### 5.4. Prioritize Converting Measures

One of the vocabularies in cooking recipes is the measurement. This becomes one of the problems in translating cooking recipes. Different cultures use different measurement systems. A system of measurement is a collection of units of measurement and rules relating them to each other. Systems of measurement have historically been important, regulated and defined for the purposes of science and commerce. Systems of measurement in use include the International System of Units or SI (the modern form of

the metric system), the British imperial system, and the United States customary system.

The most common practical cooking measures for both liquid and dry ingredients in the U.S. are the teaspoon, tablespoon, and cup, along with halves, thirds, quarters, and eighths of them. Pounds, ounces, fluid ounces, and common sizes are also used, such as can (presumed size varies depending on product), jar, square (for chocolate), stick (for butter), or fruit/vegetable (a half lemon, two medium onions). Degrees Fahrenheit are used in the U.S. to measure temperatures in most non-scientific contexts.

Since the source text ‘Spaghetti with Beef, Smoked Almonds and Basil’ is written in American English and use the United States customary system, student translators will find the minute is the unit of time, the pound (lb) and ounce (oz) is the unit of mass, the inch is the unit of length, the degree Fahrenheit (°F) is the unit of temperature, and the cup to measure liquid, as can be seen in the following example:

1 pound beef tenderloin steaks

15-ounce can diced tomatoes

¼ cup olive oil

preheat the oven to 450°F

Slice the steaks ¼ inch thick

The target language uses a metric unit. Metric unit is a number of units of measurement used in Indonesia to measure length, mass, capacity, etc. In metric units, the second (s) is the unit of time, the meter (m) is the unit of length, the kilogram (kg) is the unit of mass, and the degree Celsius (°C) is the unit of temperature.

Student translators can choose three possible solutions to how to adapt the different measurements to the target language.

1) The first one is to keep the original measurements and in the back of the book provide a conversion table. This will provide a more accurate recipe, but might be quite irritating if the cookbook is frequently used for cooking.

2) The other solution is to change the measurements into the system used in the target language and this can be done in two different ways: complete replacement or replacement and retention. It is important here that all the measurements are changed and that they work equally well as the original. It is possible to convert a measure into another system with the help of a conversion table.

3) Another strategy for replacement, the one called replacement and retention, is to provide the shifted measurements in the recipe, but to keep the original in parenthesis.

### **Converting pound (lb) into gram (g) or kilogram (kg)**

Source text

1 pound beef tenderloin steaks

Target text

*500 gram steak sapi tenderloin or*

*½ kilogram steak sapi tenderloin*

500 gram beef tenderloin steaks

Note: 1 pound (lb) is equal to 450 gram or about ½ kilogram

### **Converting ounce (oz) into gram (g)**

Source text

15-ounce diced tomatoes

Target text

*450 gram tomat kaleng cincang*

450 gram diced tomatoes

Note: 1 ounce (oz) is equal to 28 gram (g)

Converting an ounce into acceptable Indonesian standard measurement is tricky. Some student translators think that ounce in source language is similar with *ons* in target language. These two measurements (ounce and *ons*) are totally different amounts in source language and target language perspective. Ounce in source language is equal to 28 gram, while *ons* in target language is equal to 100 gram. *Ons* in target language is derived from Dutch units of measurement that are commonly used as

measurement in Indonesia, especially in the traditional market. The similarity in pronunciation makes some student translators think that the two unit measurements are the same. In the context of the ‘Spaghetti with Beef, Smoked Almonds and Basil’ recipe, the correct conversion of an ounce is 28 gram.

### **Converting cup into milliliter (liquid)**

Source text

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil

Target text

*60 ml minyak zaitun*

60 ml olive oil

Or

$\frac{1}{4}$  gelas minyak zaitun

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil

Note: 1 cup of liquid equals to 240 ml

### **Converting Fahrenheit (°F) into Celsius (°C)**

Source text

preheat the oven to 450°F

Target text

*panaskan oven hingga suhu 230°C*

preheat the oven to 230°C

Note: 1°F is equal to 17°C

### **Converting inch into centimeter**

Source text

Slice the steaks  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick

Target text

*Iris steak setebal  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm*

Slice the steaks  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm

Note: 1 inch is equal to 2.5 cm

### **5.5. Implements, pots, and pans**

Implements, pots and pans refer to different cooking tools and kitchen utensils which might or might not be country specific. There are plenty of regional differences in cookware, as well. A recipe might very well call for an implement or type of pot or pan that doesn't exist in other areas of the world. Student translators have to collect information into alternatives that have some similarity to actual cookware.

In the class practice, for example, students will find several implementations of cooking, such as dice, chop, grate, preheat, season, sprinkle, drizzle, roast, boil, cook, stir, drain, reserve, combine, process, toss, thin out, garnish, slice, and grill. They will also find several types of cookware, such as oven, oven rack, baking sheet, pot, food processor, serving bowl, grill pan, gas or charcoal grill.

Most of the cooking procedures or implementations in the recipe have equivalent verbs in the target language, the students can easily find the equivalent by checking into dictionaries or other sources. For the cookware, student translators are also familiar with several cookware such as oven, baking sheet, pot, food processor, bowl, except gas or charcoal grill. To find the information about a gas or charcoal grill (shape, function, how to operate, etc.) student translators are encouraged to find the information from available sources such as the internet, not only reading the description but also looking at the picture of gas or charcoal grill.

## **CONCLUSION**

Translating cooking recipes is not as easy as it seems. The practice in the classroom is essential for students to be able to understand the source language and culture and translate them into the target language. To translate cooking recipes, student translators should know the component of the cooking recipe, the language feature, and be aware of the differences in culture between source language and the target language. The component of a cooking recipe includes a title or the name of the recipe, a list of ingredients, instructions, and external instructions or comments. The language feature includes a list of vocabulary and sentence structure of

cooking recipes. Related to the culture, student translators have to pay attention to how to translate the dish title, availability of ingredients, cut of meat, measurement, cooking process and cookware. The differences between the source text and the target text can be solved by applying the translation strategies. Before applying the strategy, students have to identify the purpose of translation. Student translators may decide to produce documentary translations which focus in introducing source language culture to target language readers, or to produce instrumental translations which focus in transferring information to target language readers.

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