

# CROSS-LINGUISTIC INTERTRANSLATABILITY OF CULTURALLY LOADED TERMS

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## ABSTRACT

The paper tests if the translation of Javanese local cultural terms can denotatively be conveyed in English. The tool employed for this purpose is componential analysis of meaning, which can objectively assess the accuracy of the translation. In addition to this analysis, this study also discusses connotative assigned to the cultural terms by native speakers of Javanese and English. Connotative meanings were determined by collecting data from native speakers via questionnaires. The responses indicate which connotative meanings the respondents assigned to local cultural terms and their English equivalents. The findings indicate that at the denotative level, local cultural terms are very problematic. It is driven by the fact that though translators have tried to find the closest equivalents in the target language, there are still semantic features that differentiate both the source text and the target text. It demonstrates that full intertranslatability of cultural terms is not possible at denotative level. This study classifies the results of the translation into five classifications: (1) both the denotation and the connotation are different; (2) different denotations but the same connotations; (3) both of denotations and connotations are identical or near identical; (4) generic target text; and (5) specific target text. The findings show that respondents can attribute connotations to cultural terms only if they have been exposed to them and are familiar with the concepts that they convey. The connotations can semantically be classified into good or bad; active or passive; and strong or weak. It is also shown that people of the same cultural background do not always have the same connotations. Their prior knowledge plays an important role in determining what kind of connotations they yield. It is clear that connotations consist of posteriori knowledge.

**Key words:** denotation, connotation, cultural terms, intertranslatability.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Culture is the process, in addition to the product, whereby particular kinds of learning transmittably spread from person to person in a community and minds become more coordinated into shared patterns. These shared patterns make the members of one group or category of people different from another. They guide people in order to behave accordingly in their everyday interaction. This guidance is very powerful element to direct the minds of people to understand how life works and how it should work. All outcomes from which the culture is essential source reflect value orientations. Culture produces value orientations and then it influences value judgment. The behavior of people towards certain issues indicates their value judgment. Because it is conventionally agreed that meaning is not inherently built but it is culturally bound, the translation of local cultural terms into another language is a serious problem in translation studies. Many local cultural terms that entail value judgment are in the form of lexical items. In this study I analyze the translation of local cultural terms expressed in lexical items from Indonesian into English equivalents seen from denotation and connotation perspectives.

The term 'culture' addresses three salient categories of human activity: the 'personal,' whereby we as individuals think and function as such; the 'collective,' whereby we function in a social context; and the 'expressive,' whereby society expresses itself (Karamanian, 2002). To be able to be shared to other societies, culture needs medium. The medium is language. Because language is part of culture, therefore language is essentially rooted in the reality of the culture. It cannot be explained without constant reference to these broader contexts of verbal utterance (Malinowski, 1923/1938: 305). This notion realizes us that language could only be understood with reference to culture and that a language could only be fully understood when the contexts of culture were implicitly or explicitly clear to interlocutors and hearers (Katan, 1999: 72). These are academic arguments unarguably supporting the empiricism in philosophy of language that indoctrinates that language is culturally-bound. Accordingly the people who speak it belong to a culture that is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another one.

There have been many experts believing that there is an inseparable relation between language and culture. Sapir (1949: 204) was convinced not only the importance of the social

background, but the future of language studies would turn to ‘a concept of culture’. He stated that language has setting; the language does not exist apart from culture. Sapir’s idea is supported by Lotman (1979: 211) who stated that no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its centre, the structure of natural language. Bassnet (1980: 13-14) underlined the importance of this double consideration when translating by stating that language is the heart within the body of culture, the survival of both aspects being interdependent. Linguistic notions of transferring meaning are seen as being only part of the translation process; ‘a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria’ must also be considered.

It is obvious that there is an inherent connection among language, culture, and translation. Therefore to uncover the relations of those concepts, the existence of linguistics is a necessary condition. It is linguistics, the scientific study that is to support translation studies. Indeed, translation is a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions. This statement implies that translators are permanently faced with the problem of how to treat the cultural aspects implicit in the source text (ST) and of finding the most appropriate technique of successfully conveying these aspects in the target text (TT). In relation to this issue Burczynska (2012) pointed out that it is a challenge to transfer cultural items from the source language into the target language.

The local cultural term implications for translation may take several forms that range from lexical and syntax to ideologies and ways of life in a given culture. The translator, therefore, also have to decide on the importance given to certain cultural aspects and to what extent it is necessary or desirable to translate them into the target language ([www.//accurapid.com/journal/22delight.htm](http://www.//accurapid.com/journal/22delight.htm)). This is actually a stance showing that the word culture and translation are being increasingly linked, although there is a debate to what extent translation is relevant to account for culture. Katan (1999: 7) pointed out that the two different views are that either everything can be translated without loss or that nothing can be translated without loss.

The statement written above obviously demonstrates that language and culture are being closely linked and both aspects are a must to be considered for translation. It is also

conventionally understood that a translator is not only a bilingual, but s/he must also be bicultural. Not only is a translator faced with the linguistic problem, s/he deals with cultural problems. When considering the translation of cultural words, Newmark (1988: 96) proposed two opposing methods: transference and componential analysis of meaning. As Newmark pointed out, transference offers local color and atmosphere and enables the readership to identify the referent without difficulty. At the other end, there is componential analysis, which he considers as being the most accurate translation procedure. Componential analysis is based on a common component to the source language and the target language.

In translation studies, cultural concepts-related hampers are ones that are hard to solve. Every community has their own concepts that are possibly no equivalent in other cultures. In English, for example, has words such as *hamburger*, *sandwich*, *hot dog*, and many others into which Indonesian has no. On the other hand, Indonesia has words, such as *padi*, *gabah*, *beras*, *menir*, *nasi* of which English has no. In Javanese exists *nyunggi*, *nyangking*, *ngindhit*, *mikul*, *mundhak*, *nggendhong*, which generally represent the ways of someone carries something. *Nyunggi* means carrying something on one's head; *nyangking* is to bring something with a hand; *ngindhit* defines to bring something on one's waist; *mikul* is equivalent with carrying the same or different things put in two different sides with carrying pole on one's shoulder; *mundhak* refers to carry something directly on one's shoulder; *nggendhong* means to carry something on one's back.

Triggered by such phenomena, here the writer wants to do research related to local cultural terms from Indonesian into their English equivalents. This research analyzes the denotations and connotations of the local cultural terms both in the source language and the target language. Assumptions underlying this research are that (1) every language has its own unique way to express its meaning through words, therefore this uniqueness gives special effects to their denotations and connotations; (2) there is a widely spread belief that intertranslatability, as the nature of translation, could only occur at the denotative level, hence it automatically assures good translation; (3) connotations, as a kind of meaning, are posterior knowledge, for this reason, those who have been exposed with and immersed to the culture of the local cultural concepts could only educe these, and (4) connotative meanings and connotations are notoriously

culture specific, consequently they make different associations for those whose cultures are different.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Doing translation can also mean doing culture in general sense. When we do translation, most probably we deal with other cultures from which we try to understand something that is not familiar to us. Our unfamiliarity with other cultures encourages us to become familiar with them. It will only be possible with translation. George Steiner (as quoted by Katan, 1999: 12) pointed out that a translator is a bilingual mediating language community. It means that ideally a translator, as a cultural mediator, must, not only should, master the SL and the TL-related linguistic problems in depth.

Everybody who seriously tries to learn a foreign language will sooner or later realize how different languages are, not only with respect to grammar and pronunciation but also with respect to their vocabularies and how it is organized. When we naively begin to learn a new language, we will probably start with the unconscious working hypothesis that for each word in our native tongue there is a corresponding word in the target language (Lobner, 2002: 153). It is a working hypothesis that is employed by new language learners. This will soon get crumbled as we study the new language deeply. People who have managed to master a foreign language to a degree of native-like competence would probably admit that semantic equivalence of two lexemes is an exception rather than a rule. In fact there are different types of mismatch. One language may have two or more words where another language has merely one.

*Example 1:*

Javanese	: <i>pari</i>	<i>gabah</i>	<i>beras</i>	<i>menir</i>
Indonesian	: <i>padi</i>	<i>gabah</i>	<i>beras</i>	-
English	:	----- rice -----		

*Example 2:*

Javanese	: <i>kowe</i>	<i>sliramu</i>	<i>sampeyan</i>	<i>panjenengan</i>	
Indonesian	: <i>kamu</i>	<i>engkau</i>	<i>dikau</i>	<i>kau</i>	<i>anda</i>

English : ----- you -----

Translation as a way to transfer the meaning of a source language text into a target language text must meet the requirements of being clear, natural, and accurate (Larson, 1988). One out of some key words in translation is meaning. It is meaning that has to be transferred not the form of the SLT. Meaning basically refers to the idea that someone has being represented in word, phrase, or any other signs. Having been able to gain such criteria, both the translator and his/her work can then be classified as good translator and translation.

Seen from its prominence, meaning can be classified into denotation and connotation. Denotation is one well-known approach to semantics attempts to equate the meaning of a word or phrase with the entities to which it refers (William and Dobrovolsky, 1997: 50). This is part of the meaning of a word or phrase that relates it to phenomena in the real world or in a fictional or possible world (Richard, and Plat and Plat, 1997: 101). The denotation of a word is more than a set of existing entities of that kind. It includes real referents as well as fictitious ones, usual exemplars and unusual ones, maybe even exemplars we cannot imagine because they are yet to be invented (Lobner, 2002: 25). For example, the denotation of the English word bird is a two legged, winged, egg-laying, warm-blooded creature with a beak. Shortly it is said that denotation is closely related to descriptive meaning of content words, and accordingly they are the categories, or sets, of all their potential referents. This approach leads semanticists to end up with a conclusion that the primary function of language is that it allows us to talk about the world around us.

Many semanticists and translation theorists have discussed connotations (Leech, 1981: 12; Larsen; 1988: 132-133; Lobner, 2002: 35-36). If an expression has a descriptive meaning, any mention of it will activate not only the concept for its potential referents but together with it a host of further associations. Among the associations, some are conventional. They are scientifically termed connotation and often considered to be something like a secondary meaning in addition to the primary lexical meaning. Therefore connotation is a kind of meaning that attaches in some way to a word without being real or central part of its meaning and which can vary enormously from person to person or culture to culture.

The fact that translation of lexical items which are unshared in the receptor language is completely difficult to do is hardly a matter of dispute. Unshared concepts in a language indicate that the concepts do not belong to the prominent properties in a culture in which the language exists. A word representing a property in a culture consists of a bundle of meanings. A bundle of meanings or meaning components are applicable to assess the degree of translatability in translation studies. There have been scholars who have tried to study the function of componential analysis of meaning in translation (Nida, 1979: 32; Lyons, 1996: 107-108; Saeed, 2000: 232). The basic theoretical assumption is that the meaning of words can be split up into contrasting features, or components of meaning. In componential analysis of meaning, the distinctive semantic elements become clear and the semantic differences can be distinctly described. It is quite helpful tool for translation of lexical items. This is an example of componential analysis of meaning:

	MALE	ADULT	MARRIED	OLD CONNOTATION
Husband	+	+	+	+
Bachelor	+	+	-	-
Spinster	-	+	-	+
wife	-	+	+	+

Figure 1: The English paradigm of adult human beings

Adapted from Saeed (2000: 231)

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology applied in this paper is naturally a qualitative descriptive research. It describes, analyzes, and elucidates the local cultural terms as the phenomena that are found in the data without any treatment employed to the data source. Since it is the comparison of the linguistic systems, in this case is meaning system of the two languages, therefore it is actually a contrastive analysis.

The data are derived from an Indonesian novel '*Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*' (RDP) authored by Ahmad Tohari (AT) (2003) and its English version '*The Dancer*' (TD) translated by Rene T.A. Lysloff (RTAL) (2003). It is only local cultural terms being employed as the data of this research. Because the novel tells about Javanese culture, more specifically Central Java, accordingly all local cultural terms are Javanese terms.

To analyze whether or not the translation of the source text into the target text is accurate, clear, and is producing more or less the same emotional and semantic charge, the denotation of the target text was assessed by referring to *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture* (LDELIC) (1993) as authoritative sources to find clear and accurate target text of the English words. Meanwhile to assess the connotative meaning of the target text, the writer gave questionnaires to some English native speakers. This aims at discovering relatively more general connotative meaning of the target text. The connotative meanings evoked by the subjects of this research are then classified based on the semantic domains: good, bad, active, passive, strong, or weak. Prose form is chosen to elucidate the data.

*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI) (2005) and *Bilingual Indonesian-English Dictionary* (Echols and Shadily) are used to find the semantic features of the local cultural terms. In addition to these two invaluable dictionaries, the researcher, as a native speaker of Javanese, also uses his linguistic intuition to determine the semantic features of the Javanese local cultural terms. This way of data analysis produces denotative elaboration of the data. To know the connotative meanings of the source text, the researcher gave questionnaires to some Javanese native speakers.

Semantic features are applied to judge whether a certain term is culture specific or not. If a term in the source text has no different semantic features of the term in the target text, it is not classified as culture specific. Therefore it is clear that the term local here refers to the existence of the different semantic features found in the target text.

All those features above are presented in a matrix diagram (Newmark, 1988: 117) as a means out of several ones to make elucidation of lexical semantic analysis. A matrix diagram is a chart containing distinctive semantic features from which it can be identified if a certain



semantic feature exists in either the source text or the target text or both of them. Having the matrix diagram that contains translated local cultural terms and their equivalents completed, the next step is to elaborate it in a prose form. From it, the researcher sees that the parameter to assess that certain local cultural terms are assumed to have more or less emotional charge with the target text is the semantic features. The more numbers of semantic features belong to both the source text and the target text, the higher the degree of the sameness of the emotional and semantic charge of the target text; and vice versa.

#### 4. FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

Having analyzed the data employed in this research, I will now present the findings of the data analysis. There are five classifications resulted from it each of which has its own characteristics.

##### A. Classification 1: ST and TT have different denotations and connotations.

This category demonstrates that at the denotative level the STs are translated differently into the TTs. Accordingly they make the denotative meaning untranslatable properly. This difference also occurs at the connotative meaning. Here the ST respondents filled the connotative meanings categorically different from the TT respondents. Therefore this category gave evidence that meaning transferability could not be met.

semantic features	source text	target text
	<b>pesantren</b> (RDP/AT/p. 2)	<b>Islamic school</b> (TD/RTAL/p.viii)
boarding	+	+/-
separating sexes	+	+/-
full day instruction	+	+/-
male students associated with wearing sarongs	+	-

female students associated with headscarf	+	+/-
specific	+	-

SLT: "*Dia dan keluarganya mengelola sebuah pesantren*".

TLT: "He and his family run *an Islamic school*".

*Pesantren* denotatively refers to an Islamic institution at which teaching-learning processes on courses are held in Islamic ways. Here the male and female learners are separated and they live in a dormitory. They study in a full day instruction. Neither are the learners and the occupants allowed to do activities out of supervision of the *pesantren* rules of conduct and schedules. It means that everything is well conducted (well scheduled and well supervised). Mostly the languages to communicate in *pesantren* are highly suggested to be in both Arabic and Indonesian.

Connotatively, *pesantren* produce associations of *sarong*, *cap*, *female headscarf*, *neck and hair*, *studying Qur'an*, and *kitab kuning*. All these were something inherently related to the concept of *pesantren*, for the male learners of this education institution wear *sarong* in the most their activities. Soa are for the rimless cap, headdress worn by Muslim men and female headgear that exposes face but not ears, neck and hair. Studying Qur'an is actually the primary purpose of the existence of a *pesantren*. These indicate that Javanese native speaker tended to associate it with something relatively positive meaning.

The target text, *Islamic school* if it is analyzed from the denotative viewpoint, means that it is schools that apply the Islamic principles to the schools from day to day operation. Not only is it a *pesantren* but it can also be a *non-pesantren*. This indicates that the target text is generic. There is still subordination of it, therefore it cannot automatically lead the mind of its readers to refer to the source text yet. It is also an indication that the semantic charge produced by this target text is different from the source text.

Analyzed from the connotative viewpoint, the target text readers produce associations of *East Java*, *morality*, *discipline*, *high values*, *old fashioned*. *East Java* is the first association evoked by subjects. Apparently and empirically, it is a self-evident that there are thousands

pesantren in East Java. Hence when this meaning comes into the mind of the subjects, they then tend to associate it with East Java. The subjects also associate it with morality as a set of fundamental values that guides human beings' behavior in their daily life. It is plausible for it is one of the cordial subjects in pesantren.

Clearly it is concludeable that in the denotative, the source text and the target text possibly have different semantic charge. It is indicated by the semantic features belong to the data shown in the depiction above. This phenomenon causes the meaning delivered by the two is also different, at least in the sense of generic and specific. A better alternative for it is Islamic boarding school. It semantically has relatively the same semantic features, therefore it semantic and emotional charges are also closer and finally intertranslatability can complete.

**B. Classification 2: The ST and TT have different denotations but the same connotations.**

This category proves that at the denotative level the STs are translated differently into the TTs, therefore it causes readers have different referents compared to the TT readers. It shows that the primary meaning of the STs cannot be transferred into the TTs. On the other hand the secondary meaning can be classified as having the same category.

semantic features	source text	target text
	<b>air tajin</b> (RDP/AT/p.30)	<b>rice porridge</b> (TD/RTAL/p.27)
thick water from cooked rice	+	-
water only	+	-
milk substitute	+	-
usually fed to infants	+	-

SLT: "*Oleh Nyai Sakarya, Srintil diberi hidup dengan air tajin*".

TLT: "To quieten her, Mrs. Sakarya fed her *rice porridge*".

*Air tajin* discussed from the denotative viewpoint refers to thick water from cooked rice usually fed to infants as milk substitute. It is merely thick water without any boiled rice in it. A person (usually a mother) who purposively wants to make *air tajin* will carefully strain the boiled rice in order that it does not get mixed with the *air tajin*. The reason of straining the boiled rice is because *air tajin* is made when the boiled rice is still medium cooked, hence if the boiled rice is consumed, the consumer will usually get stomachache. This depiction implies that it is only the haves who do not consume it for the have can afford the original milk to feed their infants. This shows that there is a belief, particularly from mother, that *air tajin* can function as milk function.

Connotatively, *air tajin* produces some associations for the subjects of the study. Those are poor, something to eat during bad times, salty, and villagers. The first three of the associations: poor, something to eat during bad times, and villagers are related to one another. It is commonly only the poor the one who consumes *air tajin*. It is familiarly consumed as the substitute of milk during bad times. It is also closely related to villagers, the ones who make use *air tajin* as something to eat. Salty is also an association of it for it commonly tastes salty. It seems that the subjects of this research tend to produce something strong, active, yet negative meaning to the local cultural term.

Denotatively rice porridge refers to a soft breakfast food made by boiling rice in water. A chef or person will lift the rice being boiled/cooked from the stove if it has been well cooked and thick. Rice porridge is a typical Indonesian breakfast menu. It is usually served and topped with fried chicken slices.

Connotatively rice porridge produces associations of *chicken soup*, *sticky*, *bland*, *children*, *ill*, and *tongue burning* for the subjects of this research. These associations can actually be subjective judgments, in the sense that every target text readers make the associations based on their empirical knowledge. Though it is a self-evident statement yet a general assumptions is empirically also evident.

This description leads us to infer that denotatively between *air tajin* and rice porridge are different. Those terms do not refer to the same entity. It means that the main ingredients of the

two are also different. Therefore when *air tajin* is translated rice porridge in English, it has something different. The further logical difference is that it brings about different semantic charge. The better alternative in English for this unknown concept is boiled rice water.

**C. Classification 3: Identical or near identical denotations and connotations.**

Data grouped in this category represent successful translation, for the nature of translation can nearly be completed both at the denotative and connotative level.

semantic features	source text <b>sampeyan</b> (RDP/AT/p.16)	target text <b>you</b> (TD/RTAL/P.11)
a term of addressee for the elder/more respected	+	+/-
distanced	+/-	-
casual	-	+

SLT: "Eh, sampeyan lihat sendiri nanti", jawab Sakarya.

TLT: "You will see for yourself", answered Sakarya.

Denotatively *sampeyan* is a term of address for someone whose social status is one step above the one who addresses or both the addresser and the addressee have actually the same social status but the addresser wants to show respect to the interlocutor. It is a middle level of the Javanese language term of address. It applies for both second singular and second plural person. It also applies for both male and female. Hierarchically *sampeyan* is above *kowe* as a low level, and below *panjenengan* as a high level of terms of address in the Javanese language.

Javanese native speakers associated this term with something *polite*, *respected*, and *noble family related*. All these indicated that the subjects of the study give worthy or deference to person being addressed with *sampeyan*. Another semantic dimension of it is that for the one who addresses another with it demonstrates the better degree of personal maturity. It is something possible to address a younger person with it. For the person being addressed it makes him/her

better respected, meanwhile for the addresser it indicates that s/he is a well educated and mature person.

*You* as the lexical equivalent of *sapeyan* refers to both second singular and plural person. It can be used as both subject and object. Hence it talks about the person being spoken. It is a non-stratified word, accordingly it sounds more egalitarian. Anyway *you* is the closest lexical equivalent for *sampeyan*.

For English native speakers this target text gives no connotative meaning. It means that no other associations come out from their minds for this term of address. It indicates that their you related a posteriori knowledge yields nothing else unless the personal pronoun.

This classification proves that *sampeyan* as a term of address in the middle level of Javanese language is a stratified pronoun. It can create relationship between speaker and interlocutor intimate and respect as well. Most of Javanese speakers associate it with something active strong, and positive. On the other hand, its English lexical equivalent you does not indicate any linguistic stratification in itself. Consequently it sounds more equal socially. Therefore it brings about egalitarian.

**D. Classification 4: Too generic target text.** It represents the more general translation strategy, using generic words. It would be acceptable if there were no better alternative translation in the TT, but if there were possibilities to seek better equivalents, it would be misleading.

semantic features	source text	target text
	<b>ronggeng</b> (RDP/AT/P.1)	<b>the dancer</b> (TD/RTAL/p.1)
Central Java-based	+	+/-
Female	+	+/-
Adult	+	+/-
willing to serve men	+	+/-

Married	-	+/-
Specific	+	-

SLT: "*Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*".

TLT: "*The dancer of Paruk village*".

*Ronggeng* as a Javanese cultural term refers to women whose professions perform Javanese traditional dance equipped with shawl on their necks. In addition to it, *ronggeng* can also mean paid dancing or singing girls, sometimes also available for sex.

These denotative meanings, especially the first, seem that there are no differences between *ronggeng* and other dancers in general. On the other hand, the second denotative meaning indicates that actually in practice, and this is culturally and conventionally accepted by the society in which the *ronggeng* exists, a *ronggeng* can do something with which a dancer in general cannot do. Those differences are, for examples, a *ronggeng* must be a woman, she must not marry, and another assodifference that is marvelously astonishing is that a *ronggeng* must be available for serving men.

Connotatively, *ronggeng* drives the minds of Javanese native speakers to associate with something related to *coarse entertainment, drunken men, erotic dance, and whore/prostitute*. Generally, all the connotative meanings for this cultural term mean something negative, active yet weak.

The dancer as the lexical equivalent of *ronggeng* means someone whose profession is to dance. It can be male or female, and they are also not bound not to marry. Usually there is no ritual ceremony to inaugurate someone a dancer as in *ronggeng*. It is obvious that this target text seems too generic. Accordingly it cannot make the understanding of reader of this cultural concept have the same understanding as reader of the lexical equivalent in the target text.

The connotations of dancer for its native speakers associate with something related to *ballet, leap, music, enjoyable, beautiful, and performance*. It is plausible connotative meanings.

This happened because of the empirical experience that dancer can create such associations. The semantic charges of this target text mean positive, active, and strong.

**E. Classification 5: Too specific target text.**

This represents the more specific translation strategy by employing specific target text.

semantic features	source text	target text
	<b>pedukuhan</b> (RDP/AT/p.10)	<b>tiny community</b> (TD/RTAL/p.4)
definite border	+	-
formal institution of village government	+	-
headed by a chief	+	+/-
the chief paid	+	+/-
periodically elected	+	+/-

SLT: “*Duapuluh tiga rumah berada di pedukuhan itu, dihuni oleh orang-orang seketurunan*”.

TLT: “Twenty-three homes made up this *tiny community*, inhabited by people with a common genealogy”.

This local term denotatively refers to a unit of region consisting of two or more associations of neighborhood headed by a chief and has a definite and permanent border. This border is usually marked with a gateway.

At the connotative level, the respondents associated it with *remote, isolated and less developed places, puritanism, peace, old fashion, everybody knows everybody*. These secondary meanings seem intelligible. Readers could understand why respondents made such connotations.

The TT, tiny community, denotatively refers to a group of houses constructing bigger groups both in cities and villages. In this community there is no definite and permanent border to



indicate one community to another. Therefore when we read it, we cannot map out the meaning of it definitely.

Respondents of the TT associated it with *family, closeness, small group in a forest, and village*. To some extent these connotations indicate intimacy.

## 5. Conclusion

The data presented above empirically strengthen that there is a close alliance between language and the context of culture. Language as a means to uncover reality of nature as the way it is is bound by its geographical conditions. Consequently, the lexical stocks of the concerned language are dominated by properties that exist in such a place in which the language is spoken. It means that different geographical conditions give different emphasis to languages. This emphasis reflects the spiritual repertory of the community, and accordingly every idea hidden subconsciously in the heart of each member of the community is expressible in that language.

It is true that translation is a bridge to make different communities having different languages get communicated to have their intentions understandable by others. But when this means is employed to make local cultural terms semantically readable in other languages of which the concept of the local cultural terms are not available in the languages, translation cannot convey the out of awareness feeling of native speakers. This research proves that many local cultural terms that are translated as the way they must be are not able to obtain absolutely the same meaning. Their semantic features prove it.

This research also demonstrates that local cultural concept intercommunicatedness could hardly be obtained even at the denotative level. When one local cultural concept equivalent is considered as the best equivalent of another one, it could only lead the mind of its readers to what it can refer, and not to what it must refer. It cannot produce the same semantic charge as it is felt by the native speakers. For this reason, concepts which are unshared in other cultures remain theirs.

This research shows that meaning equivalent, as the essential message to convey from one language into another one, in translating local cultural terms is only utopia. It occurs because the meaning of local cultural terms is also locally and culturally organized. It implies that

cultures establish meanings. Consequently, having mutual understanding in a semantically complete way among people having different cultures is otherworldly, though indeed they can communicate communicatively.

The findings of this research indicate that at the denotative level, local cultural terms are very problematic because though translators have tried to find the closest equivalents in the target language, there are still semantic features that distinguish both the source text and the target text. It means that full intertranslatability of cultural terms is not possible at denotative level. This study classifies the results of the translation into five categories: (1) both the denotations and the connotations are different; (2) different denotations but the same connotations; (3) both of denotations and connotations are identical or near identical; (4) generic target text; and (5) specific target text. The findings show that respondents can attribute connotations to cultural terms only if they have been exposed to them and are familiar with the concepts that they convey. The connotations can semantically be classified into good or bad; active or passive; and strong or weak. It is also shown that people of the same cultural background do not always have the same connotations. Their prior knowledge plays an important role in determining what kind of connotations they yield. It is clear that connotations consist of posteriori knowledge.

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