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TRANSLATION AS IDEOLOGICAL PRACTICE: NEGOTIATING CULTURAL LEXICON FROM *CANTIK ITU LUKA* INTO *AL-JAMĀL JARḤ*

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ABSTRACT

The translation of Indonesian literary works into Arabic constitutes a growing yet insufficiently theorized area within cross-cultural literary exchange. While previous studies have examined the Arabic translation of Indonesian novels predominantly through linguistic lenses, no study has systematically analyzed the ideological orientations operative in the translation of cultural lexicon from Indonesian into Arabic. This study investigates domestication and foreignisation strategies in the Arabic translation of Eka Kurniawan's *Cantik Itu Luka*, rendered as *al-Jamāl Jarḥ* by Ahmad Syafi'i. Drawing on Venuti's domestication-foreignisation framework and Newmark's cultural lexicon taxonomy, this research employs a qualitative descriptive-comparative method. Data were drawn from the seventh edition of *Cantik Itu Luka* as the source text and *al-Jamāl Jarḥ* as the target text, comprising 125 cultural lexical items purposively sampled across five Newmark categories: ecology, material culture, social culture, social organization, and gestures and habits. The findings reveal that domestication predominates, accounting for 65.6% of attested strategies (82 items), while foreignisation accounts for 34.4% (43 items). Domestication prevails in the ecological and gesture categories, whereas foreignisation dominates in social organization through transliteration. These findings demonstrate that the translator's ideological orientation is contextually determined by the degree of cultural specificity embedded in each lexical item, and that foreignisation operates not merely as an ideological choice but as a structural necessity arising from the restricted cultural equivalence between Indonesian and Arabic. This study advances an Arabic-language perspective within the comparative translation scholarship on *Cantik Itu Luka* translations and extends the applicability of Venuti's framework to a non-European translation context.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the translation of Indonesian literary works into foreign languages has expanded markedly, reflecting the increasing international visibility of Indonesian cultural narratives and the escalating global interest in Southeast Asian literature (Subarkah & Lesmana, 2024; Pardoe & Arps, 2023). This expansion not only signals a broader circulation of Indonesian texts across linguistic and cultural boundaries but also attests to the strengthening position of Indonesian literature in global literary discourse (Figlerowicz & Mertehikian, 2023; Pardoe & Arps, 2023). Furthermore, this development is attributable in part to increasing institutional and academic support for translation activities, which has fostered broader dissemination and reception of Indonesian literary works in international contexts (Lutfiani et al., 2025; Angelianawati et al., 2025; Nurmasyitah et al., 2025). At the same time, this trend is accompanied by intensified academic attention to translation practices involving Indonesian texts, including those rendered into Arabic (Yunianti & Fajria, 2023; Anis & Abdullah, 2023; Mukminin & Sajarwa, 2025), reflecting heightened scholarly awareness of the significance of cross-cultural mediation.

In this context, the novel *Cantik Itu Luka* by Eka Kurniawan (Kurniawan, 2015) stands as one of the most influential works of contemporary Indonesian literature, owing to its narrative sophistication and cultural richness (Rifai et al., 2023; Shofa & Istiani, 2024; Lie et al., 2025). The novel integrates elements of magical realism, postcolonial discourse, historical reflection, and feminist criticism (Rosyada et al., 2023; Tanjung & Hayati, 2025; Elvira et al., 2025), enabling the narrative to traverse multiple layers of meaning that challenge conventional narrative structures. Through its depiction of colonial heritage, social stratification, and local mythology, the novel constructs a layered representation of Indonesian cultural experience (Malik & Ikhwan, 2021; Januarti & Saputri, 2025), while simultaneously reconstructing collective memory and cultural identity as archives that encode history and social reality (Suharyo et al., 2025; Nurmasyitah et al., 2025). The international recognition of the novel's narrative richness is reflected in its translations into over thirty languages, including Arabic under the title *al-Jamāl Jarḥ* (Kurniawan, 2018), marking the work's expanded reception into cultural and linguistic spaces historically and epistemologically distinct from its original context.

Although numerous studies have been conducted on translations of *Cantik Itu Luka*, no study has examined the Arabic translation. Previous research indicates that the translation of *Cantik Itu Luka* into English, Russian, and French reflects an ideological orientation that is contextual and conditioned by the cultural distance of the target language. Husba et al. (2019) identified a tendency towards foreignization in the preservation of cultural terms while accommodating shifts in gender aspects. In contrast, Korneenkova et al. (2022) demonstrated that the English version tends towards foreignization through borrowing and amplification, while the Russian version is more domesticated through literal translation and adaptation. Analogous patterns are documented by Fi'aunillah (2018), who revealed the dominance of domestication in the translation of vulgar language, Ilham et al. (2024), who examined the reconstruction of women's social reality in the English translation, and Arrasyid & Sajawarna (2023), who identified resistance and negotiation of religious terms in the French translation. These cross-linguistic findings consistently confirm that translators' ideological orientations are contextual and determined by the cultural distance between the source and target languages (Husba et al., 2019; Korneenkova et al., 2022; Arrasyid & Sajawarna, 2023).

At the micro-linguistic level, several studies have detailed the translation techniques of *Cantik Itu Luka* into English at the lexical and phrasal levels. Febrianti (2018) identified hundreds of cultural terms and their translation procedures, while Dewi et al. (2025) documented a range of translation techniques for culture-bound words that yielded high-quality translations. Lie et al. (2025) demonstrated convergently that translators balance cultural preservation and readability through transfer and cultural equivalence procedures, while Wijaya et al. (2020) argued that linguistic and cultural factors precipitate inevitable loss and gain phenomena. Kinasih (2019) and Shofa & Istiani (2024) found that translators retained most figurative expressions through established equivalence, whereas Wikanditha (2024) and Husba (2021) emphasized that the choice of translation techniques influences meaning shifts in issues of sexism and sexual language. These corroborating findings demonstrate that the research has produced a comprehensive map of translation techniques in the English context (Febrianti, 2018; Kinasih, 2019; Wijaya et al., 2020; Dewi et al., 2025).

Similarly, this density of meaning positions *Cantik Itu Luka* as a text saturated with cultural, ideological, and historical content, such that every translation choice carries the potential to reproduce or distort representations of Indonesian culture. Rahayu & Aurita (2018) demonstrate that the character of Dewi Ayu develops a feminist consciousness that challenges stereotypes of women in a patriarchal society, while Shofa & Istiani (2024) and Tanjung & Hayati (2025) reveal that this novel represents patriarchal hegemony, gender inequality, and forms of female resistance in a multi-layered manner. These findings are corroborated by Rosyada et al. (2023), who examined postcolonial dimensions through the practices of mimicry, hybridity, and the ambiguity of women's power, in alignment with the analyses of Fitria & Asri (2020) and Elvira et al. (2025), who link the women's struggle in this novel with colonial legacies, economic inequality, and patriarchal norms. Suharyo et al. (2025) further positioned this novel as an arena of discourse on power and resistance that actively challenges dominant ideologies. These interlocking layers of meaning affirm that *Cantik Itu Luka* is a text encoding a complex system of values and power relations, such that every translation decision carries the potential to shift, reduce, or reconstruct the cultural and ideological meanings inscribed (Rahayu & Aurita, 2018; Rosyada et al., 2023; Shofa & Istiani, 2024).

The complexity of meaning indicates that each lexicon in *Cantik Itu Luka* carries a symbolic weight that transcends its denotative meaning, rendering the translation process inseparable from ideological considerations. Malik and Ikhwan (2021) argue that this novel represents the discourse of the postcolonial nation-state through the narrative of colonial violence and the construction of national identity. Januarti & Saputri (2025) contend that representations of local and colonial food convey symbols of power relations and postcolonial identity, while Amazeli et al. (2024) reveal that the characters' speech acts reflect trauma, social conflict, and psychological experiences. Wening (2023) and Nurhasanah et al. (2025) further demonstrate that the representation of sexuality, gender inequality, and women's survival strategies harbor ideologies embedded in the narrative subtext. These findings establish that translating the novel's lexicon into Arabic requires not only linguistic equivalence but also ideological decisions regarding the degree to which cultural complexity is maintained or reduced in the target text.

A review of prior scholarship reveals that existing studies have examined the translation of *Cantik Itu Luka* from the perspectives of ideology, technique, quality, and socio-cultural representation. Yet no study has specifically investigated the Arabic translation through the lens of domestication and foreignisation at the level of the

cultural lexicon. This lacuna is significant, given that Arabic exhibits a greater degree of linguistic, religious, and cultural distance from Indonesian than the Western languages hitherto examined, rendering the potential for ideological negotiation in translation considerably more intricate. This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by systematically analyzing domestication and foreignisation strategies in the translation of the cultural lexicon in the Arabic rendering of *Cantik Itu Luka*, employing Newmark's cultural lexicon framework as its analytical lens. Based on this rationale, the research problem is what forms of domestication and foreignization are used in translating the cultural lexicon from *Cantik Itu Luka* into *al-Jamāl Jarḥ*?

METHOD

This study uses a comparative descriptive method with a qualitative approach, given that the study is oriented toward the interpretive examination of cultural-lexical meaning and the analysis of ideological tendencies in literary translation, consistent with the tradition of qualitative descriptive research on the translation of cultural elements in literary works (Yatuzzuhriyyah & Hilman, 2022; Husba et al., 2019; Korneenkova et al., 2022). This method is applied to identify and analyze culturally specific linguistic units in the novel *Cantik Itu Luka* (Kurniawan, 2015), the source text, and compare them with the Arabic translation, *al-Jamāl Jarḥ* (Kurniawan, 2018), translated by Ahmad Syafi'i, the target text. The data corpus comprised words, phrases, and expressions instantiating cultural lexicon, consistent with the methodological conventions of culture-specific item studies (Widyastuti et al., 2023; Dewi et al., 2025; Lie et al., 2025), which were purposively delimited according to Newmark's five cultural categories: ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations and customs, and gestures and habits (Newmark, 1988).

Data were gathered through systematic reading and documentation and operationalized within a qualitative document analysis framework (Husba et al., 2019; Korneenkova et al., 2022). An intensive comparative examination of both texts was conducted through iterative close reading to identify cultural lexical items and their target-language renderings, thereby ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the mapping of culture-bound expressions (Widyastuti et al., 2023; Arrasyid & Sajawarna, 2023). The data were subsequently coded and classified according to Newmark's (1988) taxonomy, and then interpreted through Venuti's (2017) domestication-foreignisation framework to determine the translator's ideological orientation. The analysis proceeded through three sequential qualitative stages as delineated by Miles et al. (2018): data reduction to select analytically relevant cultural lexical items; data display in tabular form comprising lexical items, target-language equivalents, category classifications, and translation strategies; and conclusion drawing and verification through interpretive analysis of the emergent strategic patterns. Trustworthiness of the data was secured through source triangulation, achieved by cross-referencing the findings across the source text, the target text, and relevant prior translation studies, thereby ensuring the methodological warrant for the consistency of analytical interpretations.

RESULT

This study identified 125 cultural lexicons and classified them into five main categories: ecology, material culture, social culture, organization and customs, and gestures and habits. Table 1 systematically presents the frequency and percentage of

each cultural lexicon category, providing an empirical overview of the distributional tendencies within the data corpus.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Cultural Lexicon Translation from Cantik Itu Luka into al-Jamāl Jarḥ

No	Cultural Categories	Translation Ideologies		Total	Percentage
		Domestication	Foreignization		
1	Ecology	24	14	38	30,4%
2	Material Culture	26	7	33	26,4%
3	Social Culture	19	7	26	20,8%
4	Organizations and Customs	4	15	19	15,2%
5	Gestures and Habits	9	0	9	7,2%
Total		82	43	125	100%

Domestication in Translating Cultural Lexicon from *Cantik Itu Luka* into *Al-Jamāl Jarḥ*

Venuti (2017) characterizes domestication as a translation strategy and ideological orientation through which a source-language text is adapted to the cultural norms, values, and stylistic conventions of the target language, thereby rendering it familiar and intelligible to target-culture readers. This approach operates by assimilating the foreign text into the domestic cultural frame, thereby attenuating the otherness of the source culture for readers of the target language. In the Arabic translation of *Cantik Itu Luka*, domestication is operationalized by substituting Indonesian culture-specific terms with target-culture equivalents that are more immediately accessible to Arab readers.

One instantiation of domestication within the ecological category is presented in Excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1 *"Kau tiba-tiba telah berumur empat puluh tahun. Sebentar lagi tua dan keriput." Sambil berkata begitu, Dewi Ayu tertawa kecil, mencoba membuat meja makan jadi meriah bagi mereka bertiga. "Seperti kodok," kata Rosibah dengan bahasa isyarat. "Seperti komodo," kata Dewi Ayu lagi.* (Kurniawan, 2015:24)

في غمضة عين تصبحين في الأربعين ولن يمر وقت يذكر حتى تصبحي عجوزا متغضنة الجلد .وكانت ديوي آيو تضحك ضحكة خافتة وهي تقول ذلك محاولة أن تلطف جو العشاء .قالت روسينا بلغة الإشارة متغضنة "الجلد كالضفدعة .مازحتها ديوي أيو"كالسحلية"
(Kurniawan, 2018:45)

In the blink of an eye, you'll be forty, and before long, you'll be a wrinkled older woman. Dewi Ayu chuckled softly as she said this, trying to lighten the mood at dinner. "Wrinkled skin like a frog's," Rosina said in sign language. "Like a lizard", Dewi Ayu teased.

The term *komodo* in Excerpt 1 refers to a reptile species endemic to Indonesia and widely recognized as part of the country's ecological identity. Based on Newmark's cultural classification, this term is categorized as an ecological element because it

denotes a natural phenomenon closely associated with a specific geographic environment. Its presence in the narrative attests to the novel's deployment of biogeographical referents as culturally situated markers of place and identity. In the Arabic translation, the term *komodo* is rendered *al-ṣihliyah* 'lizard'. This rendering substitutes the source-culture-specific ecological referent with a superordinate zoological category. As a consequence, the identity of *komodo* as a geographically and ecologically specific endemic species is not preserved in the target text. Ideologically, this rendering instantiates domestication by displacing the culture-specific referent with a broader, typologically more familiar term; the translator assimilates the source-text element to the conceptual horizon of the target-language readership. While this strategy enhances target-text comprehensibility, it simultaneously entails the attrition of the ecological specificity inscribed in the source-text lexeme. This finding indicates that the translator accorded primacy to target-language readability and accessibility, albeit at the cost of the ecological and cultural identity encoded in the source text. Apart from the ecological category, domestication strategies in the material culture, gesture, and habits categories are exemplified in Excerpts 2 and 3.

Excerpt 2 *Minumannya sejenis larutan bening dengan potongan-potongan kecil sarang burung walet*. (Kurniawan, 2015:23)

وكان حساؤها خفيفاً صافيًا تسبح فيه أعشاش طيور. (Kurniawan, 2018:44)

Her soup was light and clear, and birds' nests swam in it.

Excerpt 3 *Di sepanjang jalan, orang-orang pribumi berjongkok di kiri-kanan jalan, memandang orang-orang yang berdesakan di atas truk dengan tatapan yang tak bisa ditebak.* (Kurniawan, 2015:62)

كان أبناء البلد **قاعدين** على جانبي الطريق شاخصين إلى المتزاحمين في خلفية الشاحنة بنظرات بليدة. (Kurniawan, 2018:96)

The locals sat on both sides of the road, staring blankly at the crowd in the back of the truck.

The term *sarang burung walet* in Excerpt 2 refers to edible swallow's nest. A delicacy made from a swallow's nest is widely known in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia. Within Newmark's cultural taxonomy, this term is classified as material culture, specifically within the domain of traditional food and culinary practice. In Arabic, the term is rendered as *aʿshāsh ṭuyūr* 'bird's nest'. This translation replaces the culturally specific term *sarang burung walet* with a general expression that does not specify a particular bird species or its cultural significance as a delicacy. Consequently, the cultural specificity of the edible swiftlet nest as a socioculturally valorized food item in the Indonesian context is not adequately preserved in the target text. From the perspective of translation ideology, this rendering instantiates domestication. By substituting the culturally dense source term with a semantically broader, target-culturally more familiar expression, the translator prioritizes immediate comprehensibility over cultural fidelity.

Meanwhile, the term *jongkok* in Excerpt 3 refers to a posture in which a person sits with the knees bent, and the body lowered close to the ground. In numerous Indonesian sociocultural contexts, this posture carries significant cultural and social connotations,

classifying it within Newmark's category of gestures and habits. The squatting position constitutes a culturally embedded somatic practice, commonly associated with quotidian activity, social positioning, and, in particular contexts, the negotiation of hierarchical relationships. In the source text, the word *jongkok* not only describes a physical action but also implicitly conveys social attitudes, such as submission, marginality, or respect, within a particular socio-cultural environment. In Arabic, the term is rendered as *qā'idīn* 'sitting', conveying a more general, neutral posture. This translation replaces the specific body position with a broader, less precise equivalent, thereby losing the cultural nuances associated with *jongkok* as a socially meaningful gesture. While this domestication strategy prioritizes accessibility for Arabic-speaking readers, it simultaneously effaces the cultural specificity and socially indexical dimensions embedded in the source-text expression.

Within the social culture category, the domestication strategy is further exemplified in Excerpts 4 and 5.

Excerpt 4 *Dua puluh satu tahun lalu, ia mati dua bela shari setelah melahirkan seorang bayi perempuan buruk rupa, begitu buruk rupanya sehingga dukun bayi yang membantunya merasa tak yakin itu seorang bayi dan berpikir itu seonggok tai.* (Kurniawan, 2015:2)

كانت ديوي أبو قبل إحدى وعشرين سنة قد ماتت طوال اثنى عشر يوما بعدما أنجبت تلك الطفلة الدميمة التى بلغت من الدمامة أن القابلة التي أولدتها لم تدر هل ما بين يديها طفل أم ربما كومة خراء. (Kurniawan, 2018:44)

Twenty-one years earlier, Dewey Abo had died twelve days after giving birth to that hideous child, so hideous that the midwife who delivered her couldn't tell if she was holding a baby or perhaps a pile of excrement.

Excerpt 5 *"Ke mana kau pergi?" "Ke rumah Tuan Belanda." "Untuk apa? Kau tak perlu jadi jongos orang Belanda." "Memang tidak," kata si gadis. "Aku jadi gundik. Kelak kau panggil aku Nyai Iyang".* (Kurniawan, 2015:31)

إلى أين أنت ذاهبة ؟ "إلى بيت لورد هولندى" ."لماذا؟ لا ينبغى أن تكونى خادمة للهولنديين ."قالت الفتاة لن أكون خادمته بل محظيته .يمكنك أن تطلق علي الآن نياي إيانج.
(Kurniawan, 2018:56)

"Where are you going?" "To the house of a Dutch lord." "Why? You shouldn't be a servant to the Dutch." The girl said, "I won't be his servant, but his concubine. You can call me Nyayi Yang now."

The term *dukun bayi* in Excerpt 4 refers to a traditional Indonesian healer who assists with childbirth using local knowledge and practices. This role is deeply embedded in Javanese and broader Indonesian cultural traditions, reflecting community-based therapeutic practice and indigenous cosmological belief systems. Within Newmark's taxonomy, this term falls under social culture, as it designates a culturally specific occupational and ritual role within a particular community. In the Arabic translation, the dukun bayi is rendered as *al-qābilah* 'midwife', which is tied to

the modern medical context. While the term *bidan* is a more common and widely recognized equivalent in the target language, this translation does not fully capture the traditional and cultural dimensions of *dukun bayi* role in the Indonesian context. From the perspective of translation ideology, the translator's choice instantiates domestication, assimilating the source-culture concept into the target culture's biomedical framework and thereby enhancing the target text's accessibility. However, this strategy entails suppressing the cultural distinctiveness and ethnomedical connotations encoded in the original term. This finding indicates that the translator prioritized target-language comprehension over the preservation of the indigenous knowledge system represented in the source text.

Meanwhile, the term *gundik* in Excerpt 5 refers to a concubine. In the historical context of colonial Indonesia, indigenous women were often positioned as companions to European men outside of formal marriage. This term carries complex sociocultural meanings, including issues of power imbalance, gender relations, and colonial hierarchy. Within Newmark's taxonomy, *gundik* falls under the category of social culture, as it encodes a culture-specific social role historically constituted by colonial and patriarchal structures. In the Arabic translation, gundik is rendered as *maḥẓiyyah* 'concubine', a term with a culturally recognizable equivalent in Arab cultural tradition. This rendering conveys the general semantic content of a woman in an extralegal intimate relationship with a man of superior social status. However, the colonial-historical specificity and power-laden connotations inscribed in the Indonesian term are not fully preserved in the target text. Through domestication, the translator assimilates the source-text concept to a culturally familiar Arabic equivalent, facilitating comprehension while simultaneously attenuating the historical and colonial specificity that imbues the original term.

Foreignization in Translating Cultural Lexicon from *Cantik Itu Luka* into *al-Jamāl Jarḥ*

Venuti (2017) defines foreignization as a translation ideology that deliberately retains the cultural distinctiveness of the source language, often at the expense of target-language fluency and convention. This approach foregrounds the translated text's status as a translation, cultivates an awareness of cultural otherness, and affirms the source text's cultural identity rather than assimilating it to the norms of the receiving culture. This strategy renders the foreign text and its author visible, thereby challenging the domesticating tendency to subordinate source-cultural difference to the expectations of target-culture readers.

Representative instances of foreignization in the material culture category are presented in Excerpts 6 and 7.

Excerpt 6 *Dan sesungguhnya tak hanya anak-anak yang berhenti di depan gerbang pagar berharap melihatnya, sebab ibu-ibu yang melintas di dalam becak juga akan menengokkan wajahnya sejenak, begitu pula orang-orang yang berangkat bekerja, dan para gembala yang menggiring domba.* (Kurniawan, 2015:22)

والحقيقة أنه لم يكن الأطفال فقط من يقفون أمام بوابة السياج على أمل أن يروا جمال، فالنساء اللاتى كن ينتقلن بالبيكاك يدرن رؤوسهن أيضا للحظة، شأن الخارجين إلى أعمالهم والرعاة الماضين بماشيتهم (Kurniawan, 2018:43)

The truth is, it wasn't just children standing in front of the fence gate hoping to catch a glimpse of beauty; women traveling by becak also turned their heads for a moment, as did those going out to work, and shepherds passing by with their livestock.

Excerpt 7 *Ibunya membuat semacam pesta kecil atas kesembuhan yang mendadak tersebut, berupa nasi kuning tumpengan dengan seonggok ayam yang disembelih baik-baik.* (Kurniawan, 2015:36)

وأقامت أمه حفلا صغيرًا ابتهاجا بشفائه المفاجئ على قمع من أرز **التومينجان** الأصفر ودجاجة ذبحت كما ينبغي أن يذبح الدجاج (Kurniawan, 2018:62)

His mother held a small celebration to mark his sudden recovery, featuring a cone of yellow tumpengan rice and a chicken slaughtered as chickens should be slaughtered.

Excerpt 6 presents the lexical item *becak*, denoting a three-wheeled, pedal-powered conveyance that is an integral element of Indonesia's urban and peri-urban transportation landscape, particularly in and around traditional market zones and densely populated residential areas. In the Arabic translation, the term is rendered as *al-bīkāk*, a direct phonological transliteration of the source-language form into Arabic script, supplemented by the Arabic definite article *al-*. Within Newmark's taxonomy, becak is categorized under material culture, as it designates a concrete, physically tangible artifact embedded in the socio-economic realities of Indonesian urban life. Rather than selecting functionally analogous referents available in the target culture, such as *'arabah* 'cart' or *tuk-tuk*, both familiar in the Middle East and North Africa, the translator opted for a strategy that privileges source-cultural specificity over target-cultural familiarity. The retention of the original phonetic form through transliteration constitutes a deliberate act of foreignisation, preserving the distinctiveness of the Indonesian material-culture artifact in the target text. This strategy positions the Arab reader before an unfamiliar yet culturally authentic dimension of Indonesian urban reality, while sustaining the local texture that forms an integral component of the novel's narrative fabric.

In Excerpt 7, the lexical item *tumpengan* denotes an Indonesian ceremonial culinary tradition in which rice is molded into a conical shape and accompanied by other dishes, typically presented during thanksgiving rituals (*selamatan*) and communal celebratory events. The term is rendered as *al-tūminjān*, a transliteration that adapts the phonological structure of the source-language word to the Arabic phonological system, with a perceptible phonetic shift from tumpengan to *tūminjān* constituting a notable trace of phonological accommodation. Within Newmark's framework, *tumpengan* is classified under material culture, as it designates a culinary object and associated ritual practice that is concretely embodied and indexically tied to a specific ceremonial context in Indonesian culture. As with *becak*, the translator systematically resists cultural substitution, such as rendering it as *ma'dabah* 'feast' or *ṭa'ām al-'īd* 'celebration meal', options that would be semantically more transparent to Arabic readers but would divest the concept of its inherent ritual and symbolic density. The consistency of foreignisation across these two material-culture lexical items substantiates the translator's sustained ideological orientation toward the preservation of source-cultural identity. In this sense, the Arabic text functions as an authentic aperture into Indonesian culture rather than a

domesticated reflection of familiarity with it.

In the socio-cultural category, foreignization strategies are illustrated in Excerpts 8 and 9.

Excerpt 8 *Bahkan mereka berharap sedikit keajaiban daripada sekadar kegaduhan kuburan tua, sebab perempuan di dalam tanah itu pernah jadi pelacur bagi orang-orang Jepang sejak masa perang dan para kyai selalu bilang bahwa orang-orang belepotan dosa pasti memperoleh siksa kubur*. (Kurniawan, 2015:1)

بل إنهم كانوا يتوقعون أن يشهدوا معجزة ما ، لا أن يحضروا مجرد جلبة تصدر عن قبر قديم، وذلك لأن ساكنة تلك البقعة من الأرض كانت في حياتها عاهرة لليابانيين في أثناء الحرب، وكم قال الشيخ الكياي إن من يتلوثوا في حياتهم بالآثام يعانوا لا محالة من عذاب القبر (Kurniawan, 2018:16)

Indeed, they expected to witness a miracle, not merely hear a commotion emanating from an ancient grave, for the inhabitant of that spot of land had been a prostitute to the Japanese during the war, and as the elder kyai often said, those who are tainted in their lives with sins inevitably suffer the torment of the grave.

Excerpt 9 *Maka ia membiarkan perutnya semakin besar, menjalankan ritual selamatan pada umur tujuh bulan, membiarkannya lahir, meskipun ia menolak untuk melihat bayinya.* (Kurniawan, 2015:6)

تركت بطنها يكبر ويكبر، وشاركت في سلامياتان في الشهر السابع، وتركت الجنين يولد وإن رفضت النظر إليه (Kurniawan, 2018:22)

She let her belly grow bigger and bigger, and participated in selamatan in the seventh month, and let the fetus be born even though she refused to look at it.

Excerpt 8 presents the lexical item *kyai*, designating Islamic religious scholars who occupy positions of moral, spiritual, and social authority in Indonesian society, particularly within the Javanese cultural context. In the Arabic translation, the term is rendered as *al-kiyāy*, a direct transliteration of the Indonesian source form into Arabic script. Within Newmark's taxonomy, *kyai* falls under the category of social culture, as it designates a culturally distinctive religious role embedded within Indonesian social hierarchy. *Kyai* are not merely religious instructors but communally constituted moral and spiritual authorities whose influence extends across educational, political, and social domains. Rather than selecting culturally proximate Arabic equivalents, such as *shaykh* or *ustāż*, the translator opts for transliteration. This retention of the original phonological form through transliteration constitutes a deliberate act of foreignisation, privileging fidelity to the source culture's identity over accessibility for the target-language readership. This strategy ensures that the distinctiveness of the kyai as a locally specific Indonesian socio-religious institution is preserved in the Arabic text, thus rendering the target reader epistemically attentive to an unfamiliar yet culturally authentic social reality.

In Excerpt 9, the lexical item *selamatan* denotes a communal thanksgiving ritual performed at the seventh month of pregnancy in Javanese tradition. This practice

simultaneously encompasses spiritual, social, and communal dimensions. The term is rendered as *salāmiyātān*, a transliteration that accommodates the phonological structure of the source form within the Arabic phonological system. Within Newmark's taxonomy, selamatan falls under social culture, designating a ritual practice rooted in local Indonesian cosmological belief systems and communal values for which no direct equivalent exists in the Arabic cultural tradition. As with *kyai* in Excerpt 8, the translator consistently resists cultural substitution or semantic generalization, for instance, rendering it as *ḥaflah du'ā'* 'prayer gathering' or *iḥtifāl* 'celebration', options that would improve target-text comprehensibility but at the cost of the ritual's specific cultural content. The consistency of foreignisation across these two lexical items reflects the translator's sustained ideological commitment to preserving Indonesian cultural identity, ensuring that locally specific ritual practices integral to the narrative texture remain explicitly visible in the target text.

DISCUSSION

Consistent with Venuti's (2017) argument, this study's findings indicate that the translation of the cultural lexicon in *Cantik Itu Luka* into *al-Jamāl Jarḥ* operates as a structured ideological practice rather than a mere technical decision at the lexical level. The distributional pattern of strategies evidences a systematic tendency toward domestication in lexical items of low cultural specificity, oriented toward target-text readability, and toward foreignisation in lexical items of high cultural-identity density, where the objective is to sustain the visibility of source-cultural difference. This configuration indicates that strategic selection is not arbitrary but is governed by the interplay between the communicative demands of the target text and the imperatives of cultural representation. Within this analytical framework, the findings confirm that Newmark's (1988) cultural lexicon taxonomy retains its operational validity for identifying culturally embedded elements even when applied to language pairs characterized by markedly divergent linguistic and religio-cultural systems, such as Indonesian and Arabic. Furthermore, this study extends the scope of translation scholarship on Cantik Itu Luka by introducing an Arabic-language perspective that has hitherto been largely absent from the cross-linguistic comparative literature.

Within the broader context of cross-linguistic comparative translation studies, these findings indicate that the translator's ideological orientation is contextually configured and conditioned by the degree of cultural distance between the source and target languages. The preponderance of foreignisation in the social and material culture lexicon converges with the findings of Husba et al. (2019) and Korneenkova et al. (2022), who documented a tendency to retain source-cultural elements in English translations through borrowing. A comparable pattern is documented in a study by Arrasyid & Sajawarna (2023), which positions transliteration as a strategy of cultural resistance in the translation of religiously encoded terms into French. However, the present findings diverge significantly from the domesticating tendencies documented in the Russian translation (Korneenkova et al., 2022) and in the translation of the vulgar register (Fi'aunillah, 2018). This divergence suggests that the greater typological and cultural distance between Indonesian and Arabic generates distinctive translational consequences, wherein foreignisation operates not merely as an ideological preference but as a structural necessity arising from the paucity of functional cultural equivalents in the target language.

At the level of translation technique, this study identifies a pattern of strategic

convergence in which transliteration emerges as the dominant mechanism for the interlingual transfer of culture-specific lexicon. Functionally, this strategy is analogous to the transference procedure documented by Lie et al. (2025) in the context of English translation, in that both approaches preserve the source-language lexical form without recourse to cultural substitution. However, the dominance of transliteration in the Arabic context has significant implications for the potential attrition of cultural meaning, attributable to the absence of explanatory annotation or contextual glossing, a concern foregrounded by Wijaya et al. (2020), who identify meaning loss as an inevitable consequence of cross-cultural literary translation. This stands in contrast to the English translation, which exhibits a broader diversification of strategies, including cultural equivalence, borrowing, and amplification (Shofa & Istiani, 2024; Kinasih, 2019; Dewi et al., 2025), suggesting that the comparatively restricted range of techniques in the Arabic translation may affect the degree to which cultural meaning is accessible to the target readership. This limitation further raises the prospect of meaning displacement in semantically and ideologically sensitive domains, such as representations of sexism and sexual language, which are frequently subject to differential negotiation across cross-cultural translation contexts.

Considered within a broader ideological frame, these findings indicate that the cultural and ideological complexity of *Cantik Itu Luka* is consistently carried over into the target text through strategies that sustain elements of source-cultural otherness. This pattern of choices articulates the translator's discernible ideological stance in favor of preserving the source text's cultural identity and ideological content, particularly its postcolonial dimensions, ritual practices, and constructions of social reality. This finding is consistent with the arguments of Rahayu & Aurita (2018), Shofa & Istiani (2024), and Tanjung & Hayati (2025) that reducing these elements can eliminate the ideological dimension. Furthermore, the consistent retention of source-specific lexicon aligns with Rosyada et al.'s (2022) findings on the centrality of hybridity to the novel's meaning structure. This study demonstrates that the ideological dimension of the source text is not passively received but is actively negotiated and reconstructed in the target text.

This study yields several significant theoretical contributions to ideology-oriented translation studies. *First*, the findings operationalize Venuti's (2017) theoretical argument by demonstrating that foreignisation is empirically traceable through specific lexical choices realized in the target text. *Second*, the distributional patterns of domestication and foreignisation confirm that linguistic and cultural distance function as conditioning variables in shaping the translator's ideological orientation, while extending the findings of Korneenkova et al. (2022) and Husba et al. (2019) to the Indonesian-Arabic language pair. *Third*, the sustained applicability of Newmark's (1988) cultural lexicon categories in this study attests to the cross-linguistic generalisability of the framework across typologically and culturally distinct language pairs. *Fourth*, these findings reinforce the view that literary translation is not an ideologically neutral act but rather an ideologically mediated practice through which cultural identities are represented, negotiated, and reconstructed across linguistic boundaries.

Beyond its theoretical contributions, this study also yields practical implications for the development of cross-cultural literary translation scholarship and practice. This study is among the first to systematically map translation strategies for cultural lexical items in the Arabic rendering of *Cantik Itu Luka*, thereby addressing a lacuna in a research landscape previously dominated by European target-language studies. These findings introduce a new comparative dimension that enables more comprehensive evaluation of variation in translatorial strategies and ideological orientations across the

novel's multilingual reception. Furthermore, the predominance of unannotated transliteration raises substantive questions regarding the effectiveness of such strategies in facilitating target-reader comprehension of source-cultural content. The present findings are therefore relevant to translation practitioners deliberating over the appropriate balance between cultural fidelity and target-text readability. More broadly, this research contributes to an understanding of how Indonesian literary culture is mediated and negotiated within the Arabic cultural and epistemological horizon, a space characterized by distinct textual, religious, and aesthetic traditions.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the translation of cultural lexical items in *al-Jamāl Jarḥ* is predominantly oriented toward domestication. At the same time, foreignisation is applied selectively and strategically in response to the degree of cultural specificity embedded in individual lexical items. This ideological orientation is constituted through the cumulative effect of micro-level translational decisions that systematically orient the target text toward readability and cultural acceptability for Arabic readers. The findings further reveal that, within the Indonesian-Arabic language pair, domestication and foreignisation do not operate as mutually exclusive binary opposites but as positions along a dynamic translatorial continuum. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the degree of cultural specificity encoded in each lexical item significantly influences the translator's ideological orientation, particularly regarding whether source-cultural particularity is preserved or accommodated. These results not only consolidate the theoretical relationship between translation technique and ideological construction but also extend the empirical applicability of Venuti's framework to a non-Western, non-European translation context. In practice, these findings underscore the importance of translators carefully considering cultural specificity to achieve a balanced negotiation between readability and the preservation of the source culture's identity.

This study is not without limitations, which must be acknowledged. *First*, the analysis is confined to a single literary work within a single language pair, which may constrain the generalisability of the findings across divergent textual genres and translation contexts. *Second*, the focus on cultural lexicon at the micro-lexical level does not fully capture ideological manifestations operative at the discourse, syntactic, or stylistic levels, leaving the macro-ideological dimensions of the target text largely outside the scope of the present analysis. *Third*, this study does not incorporate the translator's own perspective or empirical reader-reception data, thereby precluding direct investigation of the motivations underlying translation choices and the impact of cultural representations on Arab readerships. Future research is therefore encouraged to expand the corpus to encompass literary works across a wider range of genres and language pairs, thereby enabling a more comprehensive and generalizable account of translation ideology in this domain. Future studies would also benefit from integrating discourse-level and stylistic analysis, investigating reader reception empirically, and employing quantitative or corpus-based methodologies to identify broader distributional patterns and enhance the generalisability of the findings.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The first author conceptualized and designed the research framework, conducted data collection and analysis, and prepared the article manuscript in accordance with the study. The second and third authors provided academic supervision, evaluated the methodological and analytical processes, and delivered critical recommendations to enhance the study's theoretical rigor.

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