

## Translation Analysis of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) in the Indonesian Movie “KKN di Desa Penari”

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### A B S T R A C T

Translation of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) in audiovisual media plays a crucial role in supporting cross-cultural understanding and preserving cultural meaning. However, previous studies have predominantly focused on translation strategies, with limited attention to how translated CSIs contribute to cultural understanding among global audiences, as evaluated through the extent to which the translations preserve referential meaning, retain cultural nuances, and remain comprehensible to target viewers. This study aims to analyze the translation of CSIs in the Indonesian horror film *KKN di Desa Penari* by applying Newmark’s (2010) CSI categories and Aixelá’s (1996) translation strategy framework. This research employs a qualitative descriptive case study design. The data were collected from movie dialogues and their English subtitles using observation and note-taking techniques. The analysis identified 41 CSIs classified into six categories, with social life and private passions emerging as the most dominant. The findings also reveal that while many translations successfully preserve referential meaning, some cultural nuances are reduced in the process. This study contributes to audiovisual translation research by highlighting the role of CSI translation not only as a linguistic process but also as a mediator of cultural understanding. It shows that although translation enables international audiences to access Indonesian cultural elements, certain layers of cultural depth may not be fully conveyed.

**Keywords:** *Translation Analysis, CSIs, Indonesia Movie*

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, humans have developed to the point that obtaining information related to the cultures of other countries in the current digital era is becoming easier, because information technology enables people to learn about foreign cultures around the world. Therefore, cross-cultural understanding becomes an important element to learn, as it can increase tolerance and help preserve existing cultures so that they do not become extinct. In the modern world, understanding a culture can easily be achieved through social media, films, video games, and podcasts; however, among all these media, there is one medium that has a greater impact in conveying information, namely films. Media such as films provide cultural understanding through audiovisual content that is easy to comprehend, functioning as both a source of information and entertainment, so that audiences can understand what the cultures of other regions are like, thereby strengthening unity, fostering appreciation of cultural differences, and increasing knowledge. According to (Sukmono et al., 2025) The existence of films can help audiences from various countries to engage with stories from multiple perspectives, reflecting social and cultural realities through diverse human experiences.

Most films in Indonesia raise mystical themes related to local community beliefs, and this reflects the existing diversity. Especially in the film “*KKN di Desa Penari*”, which is produced by MD Pictures and Pichouse Films, with Manoj Punjabi as the producer, the film made history as one of the highest-grossing Indonesian horror films of all time, with a total

audience of 10,061,033 viewers, and very strong cultural elements. Audiovisual Translation has become one of the rapidly growing fields in translation studies due to the increasing distribution of films and digital media worldwide. In audiovisual products, subtitles play an important role in transferring meaning across languages and cultures. Moreover, audiovisual texts "need to be seen and heard to be understood and their meaning translated" (Rahmalina et al., 2025). Therefore, audiovisual translation is essential in facilitating intercultural communication through films and digital media. This Indonesian film, which belongs to the horror genre, correlates with Indonesian culture, which is characterized by stories related to Javanese mystical culture, presenting narratives with a cultural background that explains spiritual symbols that are usually found in traditional rituals. With cultural elements that may be foreign to both international and domestic audiences who enjoy this film, it will have an impact on their understanding of Indonesian culture, so that it has the potential for Indonesian films to be more widely recognized by international audiences. In research conducted by (Rahmalina et al., 2025), it is emphasized that horror films provide a pathway for future studies related to socio-cultural aspects, while also serving as a medium of entertainment that enables audiences to understand the cultural identities of other countries.

In research on culture-specific items (CSIs), the language context can be fully understood through cultural meanings that are directly related to linguistic elements, so that they can only be comprehended if the audience has knowledge of that culture. Based on the research, the focus is on the categorization of culture for identification, which distinguishes a particular culture (CSF). In this study, the term culture-specific items (CSIs) refers to linguistic elements that convey distinctive cultural meanings, as classified by (Newmark, 1988, 2010). In his earlier work, (Newmark, 1988) categorized cultural elements into five main groups: ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations or customs, and gestures and habits. This classification was later revised by (Newmark, 2010) into broader categories, namely ecology, public life, social life, personal life, and customs and pursuits. Furthermore, another relevant theoretical framework in the study of CSIs in film is the translation strategy approach proposed by (Leppihalme, 1997), which emphasizes the role of norms and ideological choices in cultural translation. In the context of film, strategies such as retention, substitution, generalization, and adaptation are commonly employed to bridge cultural differences between source and target audiences. Recent studies on film subtitling indicate that translators tend to adopt target language-oriented strategies to enhance audience comprehension, although this may reduce the distinctiveness of the source culture. So, audiovisual Translation studies have been among the burgeoning disciplines in translation studies (Wang & Daghigh, 2024).

Translation has a close relationship with culture, so it plays a significant role in conveying meaning across languages. Therefore, understanding the context of cross-cultural communication in expressing a culture through translation is essential. In the film industry, translation is very important, particularly in subtitles, so that international audiences can understand what the film conveys in a cross-cultural context if it is translated correctly, because inappropriate film translation can lead to the loss of cultural meaning. Culture-specific items in the film facilitate cross-cultural understanding to ensure that audiences understand the cultural meaning. It is necessary not only to create a translation strategy that is accurate linguistically but also one that is appropriate to the cultural context of international audiences in order to reduce misunderstandings. Sometimes, translating Cultural-Specific Items (CSIs) could present numerous challenges for translators because each culture communicates differently (Halim et al., 2024).

Previous studies examining culture-specific items have been conducted, such as a study by (Rianis Tsani et al., 2026) on the Indonesian series *Induk Gajah*, applying (Newmark, 2010) classification to identify categories of CSIs along with subtitling strategies, which found how translators prioritize audience comprehension when dealing with culture-bound expressions in film subtitles. Similarly, a study by (Fitriani et al., 2022) in the documentary film *The Mark of Empire, Majapahit* used Newmark's model to categorize CSIs. The study found that cultural elements in the film were retained to maintain authenticity despite potential

challenges of comprehension for international audiences. This thus demonstrates how film translation often balances preserving cultural identity and ensuring accessibility for the target audience. In another study, (Safitri et al., 2023) examined a Javanese short film using Newmark's classification and translation procedures, revealing that material culture was the most frequently occurring CSI category. Their previous studies indicate that cultural elements such as food, clothing, and traditional objects are prominent in audiovisual texts and require careful translation strategies.

However, there is still a gap in existing research. Most previous studies have primarily focused on identifying and classifying translation strategies, treating translation as a technical process rather than examining its impact on audiences. This limitation matters because the ultimate purpose of audiovisual translation is not only to transfer linguistic meaning but also to enable viewers from different cultural backgrounds to understand, interpret, and engage with culturally embedded content. Without evaluating how translated Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) actually function in conveying cultural meaning, it is difficult to determine whether these translations successfully bridge cultural differences or merely simplify them. As a result, important aspects such as the loss of cultural nuance, shifts in meaning, or audience misinterpretation remain underexplored. Addressing this gap is essential to assess the effectiveness of translation in fostering genuine cross-cultural understanding, particularly for international audiences who rely entirely on subtitles to access the source culture. According to (Wulandari et al., 202) audiovisual translation plays a crucial role in bridging cultural gaps for a global audience. regarding how elements of local Indonesian mystical culture in the film "*KKN di Desa Penari*" are translated into English and how these translations facilitate cross-cultural understanding for global audiences. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how culture-specific items in the film are translated into English and to examine the extent to which these translations support cross-cultural understanding. These objectives are formulated into two research questions: (1) How are culture-specific items in the film translated into English? and (2) How do the English translations of culture-specific items in the film facilitate cross-cultural understanding? Research related to the translation of culture-specific items is not a new field of study. Therefore, there are several previous studies that are relevant, which have discussed translation strategies in film.

## METHOD

### Research Design

This research uses a qualitative approach with the aim of achieving an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of translating cultural elements or culture-specific items (CSIs) in the Indonesian film "*KKN di Desa Penari*." The research design adopted in this study is a descriptive case study. According to (Creswell, 2007) A case study is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. In this study, the bounded system is the translation of CSIs within a single film, making the case study approach particularly relevant.

Furthermore, Creswell emphasizes that a case study is suitable when the researcher seeks "an in-depth understanding of the case" and when the case has clear boundaries. (Creswell, 2007). This aligns with the objective of this research, which focuses specifically on one film as the unit of analysis. In addition, case study research allows the researcher to consider contextual conditions, which are often essential in understanding cultural translation. As cited in (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2003) states that the case study method is used when the researcher wants to examine contextual conditions highly pertinent to the phenomenon under study. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore more comprehensively the meaning, cultural values, and complex contexts contained in the film's dialogue and subtitles. The research data were obtained through observation of the film's dialogue and subtitles, particularly those containing distinctive cultural elements. The research design used was a descriptive case study. This approach is considered relevant because it can provide an in-depth understanding of a specific case, namely the translation of

CSIs in a single film. By using a case study, this research not only identifies the forms of CSIs but also examines the reasons behind the translator's choice of translation strategies. This is expected to contribute to the development of cultural translation studies, particularly in the context of Indonesian horror films.

### **Instruments and Procedures**

This research employed a purposive sampling technique, which intentionally selects data based on its relevance to the research objectives. The sample consisted of words, phrases, or expressions in the film "KKN di Desa Penari" that contain cultural elements (CSIs). This selection was made because not all dialogue contains significant cultural values. The primary data source for this study was the film "KKN di Desa Penari," specifically the version with English subtitles. The data collection procedure involved several stages. First, the researcher watched the film in its entirety to understand the storyline and the cultural context depicted. Second, the researcher identified and recorded all data that fell into the CSIs category. Third, the data were then classified based on the CSIs categories according to (Newmark, 2010), which include:

- Ecology (natural environment, such as geological),*
- Public life (politics, governmental),*
- Social life (Social Terms, Economy, Health, Occupations, Education),*
- Personal life (Kinship, Food, Housing, Patterns, Clothing),*
- Customs and pursuits (Pursuits, Customs),*
- Private passions (religion, spiritual terms, music).*

The collected data included both single lexical items and phrases representing local culture in the film.

### **Data Collection**

The data of this study were collected from the Indonesian horror film "KKN di Desa Penari" with a Disney+ subtitle and a film duration of 2:08:21. The researcher used observation and case study techniques to obtain the data. First, the researcher watched the film repeatedly to understand the storyline, cultural context, and subtitle translation. Second, the researcher identified dialogues, words, phrases, and expressions containing Culture-Specific Items (CSIs). Third, the identified data were noted and classified according to (Newmark, 2010) categories of CSIs, namely ecology, public life, social life, personal life, customs and pursuits, and private passions. The collected data consisted of both source language (Indonesian/Javanese expressions) and target language (English subtitles). The researcher then organized the data into tables to facilitate analysis of translation strategies and their role in supporting cross-cultural understanding.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis in this study used thematic analysis, which aims to identify patterns of meaning within the collected data. The analysis process was carried out through several systematic stages.

*First, the researcher reviewed all the data by rewatching the film and focusing on sections containing CSIs.*

*Second, the researcher grouped the data based on the CSIs' categories according to (Newmark, 2010).*

*Third, each piece of data was analyzed using (Aixelá, 1996) The theory of translation strategies is used to determine the techniques used in translating the cultural elements in film.*

*The next stage was a descriptive presentation of the data, followed by an interpretation of the analysis results.*

*Finally, the researcher drew conclusions regarding the tendencies of the translation strategies used and their implications for conveying cultural meaning in the subtitles of the film "KKN di Desa Penari."*

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

## Categories of Cultural-Specific Items

The study analysis of "KKN di Desa Penari" identified several Culture-Specific Items with a total of 41 items of data, classified according to (Newmark, 2010) Six categories: personal life, social life, customs and pursuits, private passions, public life, and ecology. Their distribution is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. CSIs Categories

No.	Category	Subcategory	Data	Total
1	Personal Life	Kinship	2	7
		Food	2	
		Housing Patterns	3	
2	Social Life	Clothing	-	12
		Social Terms	7	
		Economy	1	
		Health	1	
		Occupations	2	
3	Customs and Pursuits	Education	1	7
		Pursuits	2	
		Customs	5	
4	Private Passions	Religion	2	10
		Spiritual Terms	7	
		Music	1	
5	Public Life	Politics	-	1
		Governmental	1	
6	Ecology	Geological	4	4
<b>Total</b>			<b>41</b>	<b>41</b>

Initially, as shown in Table 1, the table presents the distribution of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) found in the dialogue of the film "KKN di Desa Penari", based on the categorization proposed by (Newmark, 2010) classifies CSIs into six categories: Personal Life, Social Life, Customs and Pursuits, Private Passions, Public Life, and Ecology. The table indicates variations in the number of items across each category.

The findings indicate that the most dominant category is Social Life, with a total of 12 items. Within this category, the Social Terms subcategory appears most frequently (7 items), suggesting that social expressions and interpersonal interactions are highly prominent in the dialogue. Other subcategories, including Occupations (2 items), Economy (1 item), Health (1 item), and Education (1 item), further reflect various aspects of social life within the community. The second most prominent category is Private Passions, comprising 10 items. This category includes the Spiritual Terms subcategory (7 items), which dominates the category, followed by Religion (2 items) and Music (1 item). These findings indicate that elements of belief, spirituality, and personal cultural expression play a significant role, particularly in relation to the strong mystical elements depicted in the story. The third category is Personal Life, with a total of 7 items. Within this category, Housing Patterns appears most frequently (3 items), followed by Kinship (2 items) and Food (2 items), while Clothing is not represented. The presence of kinship and food elements highlights the importance of familial relationships and daily consumption habits in portraying the everyday life of the village community.

Similarly, the Customs and Pursuits category also consists of 7 items, including 5 items in the Customs subcategory and 2 items in Pursuits. This reflects the presence of cultural practices, local traditions, and community activities rooted in inherited customs. In contrast, the categories with the lowest frequencies are Ecology and Public Life. The Ecology category contains 4 items, primarily related to geological aspects, indicating limited emphasis on environmental elements. Meanwhile, Public Life appears only once (1 item), specifically within the Governmental subcategory, while Politics is not represented. This suggests that the narrative does not focus on political issues.

Based on data above will be presented to classified frequency CSIs category in table 2 based on the categorization proposed by (Newmark, 2010) classifies.

Table 2. CSIs Categories

No.	CSIs Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Personal Life	7	17.1%
2	Social Life	12	29.2%
3	Customs and Pursuits	7	17.1%
4	Private Passions	10	24.4%
5	Public Life	1	2.4%
6	Ecology	4	9.8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>

Overall, based on the CSIs category in Table 2, Social Life emerged as the most dominant category, accounting for 29.2% of the data, followed by Private Passions (24.4%). Personal Life and Customs and Pursuits each contributed 17.1%, while Ecology represented 9.8% of the total occurrences. Public Life appeared least frequently, with only 2.4%. These findings suggest that the film predominantly reflects social interactions and culturally embedded belief systems, particularly in terms of social relations and spiritual expressions. The findings demonstrate that Social Life and Private Passions are the most dominant categories in the CSI data. This indicates that the film emphasizes interpersonal relationships, social interactions, and spiritual beliefs within a local cultural context. In contrast, categories such as Public Life and Ecology receive less attention, suggesting that political and environmental themes are not explored in depth. Meanwhile, the Ecology category covers environmental aspects such as Geological aspects, with a total of 4 items. This indicates that, despite the strong local setting, the narrative does not primarily focus on political issues but rather emphasizes social and cultural experiences. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the Social Life and Private Passions categories dominate the CSIs' data. This suggests that the film places greater emphasis on interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, and social interactions within a local cultural context. In contrast, categories such as Public Life and Ecology appear less frequently, indicating that the narrative does not explore political or environmental themes in depth, but instead focuses more on social life and village beliefs.

### Personal Life

The Personal Life category refers to aspects of everyday life within a particular culture. This category includes cultural elements related to kinship, food, housing patterns, and clothing that reflect personal life in a society. (Newmark, 2010). In the film "KKN di Desa Penari", this category illustrates the simple lifestyle of rural communities that still rely heavily on the surrounding environment, particularly in their consumption practices and daily habits. These elements are not only functional but also culturally embedded, representing how individuals interact with their environment and maintain traditional ways of living.

Excerpt 1:

SL (Source Language):

*Di desa ini hampir semua rumah terbuat dari anyaman bambu.*

TL (Target Language):

*Almost all of the houses here are made of bamboo weaving.*

Excerpt 1 presents subcategory housing patterns. From the perspective of the translation theory proposed by (Newmark, 2010). The concept of personal life refers to everyday experiences, social realities, and cultural elements embedded in the source language community. The sentence "Di desa ini hampir semua rumah terbuat dari anyaman bambu" reflects the lived reality of rural Indonesian society, where local materials are used as part of tradition and economic conditions. The translation "Almost all of the houses here are made of bamboo weaving" shows a tendency toward a literal approach, as the phrase "anyaman bambu" is directly rendered as "bamboo weaving." Although lexically understandable, this choice sounds somewhat unnatural in English and does not fully convey the intended contextual meaning. According to Newmark's communicative translation approach, translators should prioritize naturalness and acceptability in the target language. Therefore, an alternative such as "woven bamboo" would be more appropriate. In this sense, translation that takes personal life into account requires not only semantic equivalence but also the ability to convey an equivalent cultural experience for target audiences.

## Excerpt 2:

SL (Source Language):

*"Diminum dulu kopinya. Nggak baik menolak pemberian tuan rumah."*

TL (Target Language):

*"Drink the coffee. It's not polite to refuse the host."*

Excerpt 2 demonstrates the use of a subcategory related to food and beverage consumption being classified under personal life (Amenador & Wang, 2022; Newmark, 2010). The term "*Diminum dulu kopinya. nggak baik menolak pemberian tuan rumah*" represents a drink that reflects a specific cultural consumption practice within a particular community. As part of the Personal Life category, food items are significant because they embody local identity, taste preferences, and cultural traditions that are passed down through generations. In the translation, the term is rendered literally as "Drink the coffee. It's not polite to refuse the host," allowing the basic meaning to remain accessible to the target audience. However, this literal translation does not fully capture the cultural nuances, preparation methods, or social context associated with the drink. As a result, while the referential meaning is preserved, the cultural richness and experiential value embedded in the original term are partially reduced. This reflects a common challenge in translating culture-specific items, where equivalence at the linguistic level does not always ensure equivalence at the cultural level. Therefore, the term "kopi" or "coffee" is classified under the Personal Life category, specifically within the subcategory of food and beverage consumption, as it directly represents daily dietary practices and culturally specific consumption habits.

## Excerpt 3:

SL (Source Language):

*"Jadi Kalau mau mandi, mas-masnya mandi di sungai."*

TL (Target Language):

*"If you want to bathe, the men bathe in the river."*

Excerpt 3 illustrates a representation of the daily lifestyle patterns of rural communities. The activity of "*mandi di sungai*" or bathing in the river reflects a way of life that directly utilizes natural resources, indicating both cultural habits and infrastructural conditions within the community. This practice highlights not only simplicity but also adaptability, where natural environments serve as essential components of everyday life. From a cultural perspective, such activities are deeply rooted in tradition and are often shaped by geographical and socio-economic factors. Within Newmark's framework, these habitual actions fall under Personal Life because they represent routine behaviors that define how individuals live on a daily basis.

In the translation, the meaning is conveyed clearly and remains easily understandable for the target audience. However, the broader social and ecological context, such as the absence of modern facilities, communal practices, and the relationship between humans and nature, is not fully expressed in the target language. The translation focuses primarily on the informational aspect rather than the cultural depth of the activity. Consequently, while the denotative meaning is successfully transferred, the connotative and contextual layers are less visible. Therefore, this data is classified within the Personal Life category, specifically in the subcategory of daily lifestyle patterns, as it represents habitual actions that characterize everyday living within a specific cultural and environmental setting. Overall, both excerpts demonstrate how Personal Life elements function as important cultural indicators in translation. These reveal that everyday practices, whether related to food consumption or daily routines, carry deeper cultural meanings that may not always be fully conveyed through direct translation, thus highlighting the complexity of translating culture-specific items across different cultural contexts.

**Social Life**

The Social Life category is related to the structure and practices of social life within a society, including norms, social interactions, and patterns of relationships among individuals in a community. (Newmark, 2010) framework, Social Life encompasses aspects such as social institutions, education, occupations, and community-based interactions that reflect how

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individuals function collectively in society. In the film "KKN di Desa Penari", this category is reflected through the interactions between the students and the villagers, as well as the social values that regulate individual behavior within the community. These interactions highlight how newcomers must adapt to existing social systems, emphasizing respect, cooperation, and sensitivity toward local customs as integral parts of communal life.

Excerpt 4:

SL (Source Language):

*"Program kerja kami akan membantu warga desa."*

TL (Target Language):

*"Our Project will help the people."*

This excerpt 4 demonstrates social practice within the context of KKN activities as a form of community service. The term "program kerja" reflects an organized social system embedded in student activities that directly engages with the local community. It signifies not only a set of planned actions but also an institutionalized framework shaped by educational and social responsibilities, where students are expected to contribute meaningfully to society. This aligns with the concept of Social Life in Newmark's categorization, as it involves structured interaction between social groups, students as agents of change and villagers as recipients and participants of development initiatives. Furthermore, the phrase highlights a cooperative relationship that is central to Indonesian communal culture, where collective benefit and mutual assistance are prioritized. In the translation, the term is rendered functionally as "project," which successfully conveys the general meaning and purpose to a global audience. However, the translation slightly reduces the institutional nuance of "program kerja," which in the Indonesian context often carries formal, academic, and bureaucratic connotations tied to national education systems and community service obligations. As a result, while the denotative meaning is preserved, some socio-cultural specificity is diminished. Therefore, the term "program kerja" is classified within the Social Life category, particularly under the subcategory of social practices within a community, as it represents organized, collective action shaped by societal structures.

Excerpt 5:

SL (Source Language):

*"Ojo nggawe masalah."*

TL (Target Language):

*"Don't cause trouble."*

This excerpt 5 reflects a social norm within Javanese society that emphasizes harmony, self-restraint, and the maintenance of social order in interpersonal interactions. The expression "ojo nggawe masalah" functions not only as a prohibition but also as a subtle form of social control that encourages individuals to behave in ways that avoid conflict and preserve group cohesion. In Javanese culture, maintaining harmony is a fundamental value, and language plays a crucial role in reinforcing this principle through indirect yet meaningful expressions.

Additionally, the phrase carries pragmatic and cultural weight, as it may imply expectations of politeness, awareness of social boundaries, and respect for communal stability. It is often used not merely to warn against problematic behavior, but to remind individuals of their responsibility toward the collective well-being of the group. In the translation, the basic meaning is retained through the phrase "Don't cause trouble," which clearly communicates the intended directive. However, the deeper cultural values associated with collective harmony and indirect communication are not fully represented in the target language, as English tends to convey such messages in a more direct and less culturally layered manner. This shift illustrates a common challenge in translating culture-specific expressions, where pragmatic and cultural nuances may be partially lost despite accurate semantic transfer. Therefore, this expression is classified within the Social Life category, specifically under the subcategory of social norms, as it encapsulates culturally embedded expectations that govern individual behavior within a community.

### Customs and Pursuits

The concept of Customs and Pursuits can be understood as encompassing a broad spectrum of culturally grounded behaviors, including traditional practices, socially accepted norms, inherited systems of values, and everyday expressions such as idioms, proverbs, and habitual forms of speech. These elements are not merely repetitive actions, but rather meaningful cultural patterns that function as guidelines for how individuals should behave, communicate, and interact within their social environment. They are deeply embedded in the collective consciousness of society and are often transmitted implicitly through daily interactions, rituals, and shared experiences rather than through formal instruction. In the context of "KKN di Desa Penari", these cultural aspects demonstrate how Javanese traditions remain highly influential in shaping both individual conduct and group dynamics. The characters' behavior, choice of words, and responses to certain situations reflect an internalization of cultural expectations that prioritize harmony, respect, and social balance. This indicates that Customs and Pursuits operate not only at the surface level of observable actions but also at a deeper level as an internal moral framework that governs decision-making and interpersonal sensitivity. Furthermore, these cultural practices often function as mechanisms for maintaining social order and reinforcing hierarchical relationships within the community. Through language use, gestures, and adherence to customary rules, individuals signal their awareness of social roles and their respect toward others, particularly those who are older or hold higher status. As a result, Customs and Pursuits play a crucial role in sustaining cultural continuity, as they connect present-day behavior with ancestral traditions and long-established societal values.

Excerpt 6:

SL (Source Language):

*"Jogo sikap, jogo ucapan."*

TL (Target Language):

*"Watch your behavior and your words."*

This excerpt 6 "*Jogo sikap, jogo ucapan*" represents an advisory expression in Javanese culture that emphasizes the importance of maintaining proper behavior and speech. The phrase carries significant ethical value, as it reflects the expectation that individuals must always be mindful of their actions and language in social contexts. In Javanese society, such expressions are often used to reinforce politeness, self-control, and respect toward others, particularly in maintaining harmony within the community. Although the translation conveys the general meaning in a descriptive manner, the cultural nuance related to refined politeness and moral discipline is not fully represented. The original expression contains a deeper philosophical tone that goes beyond mere instruction, functioning as a moral reminder embedded in cultural wisdom. Therefore, this expression is classified under the Customs and Pursuits category, specifically within the subcategory of cultural norms and ethics.

Excerpt 7:

SL (Source Language):

*"Itu salah satu cara kami untuk menghargai **adat-istiadat** leluhur."*

TL (Target Language):

*"That is one way we honor our ancestral **traditions**."*

Excerpt 7 illustrates a culturally significant practice centered on the preservation and respect of ancestral heritage, which plays a vital role in shaping identity and social continuity in Indonesian communities, especially within Javanese culture. The phrase "*adat-istiadat*" refers to a comprehensive and multifaceted system of traditional values, customary laws, rituals, and social norms that have been transmitted across generations. It encompasses both tangible elements, such as ceremonies, dress, and ritual practices and intangible aspects, including belief systems, moral codes, and communal philosophies that guide everyday life. The act of honoring these traditions is not merely symbolic but involves active participation in cultural practices, demonstrating a sense of obligation, reverence, and collective memory toward one's ancestors. Such practices often serve to reinforce social cohesion, cultural identity, and a shared sense of belonging within the community. While the translation

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"ancestral traditions" effectively communicates the general meaning, it does not fully capture the depth and institutional role of "*adat-istiadat*," which functions as a living system regulating social behavior and preserving cultural continuity. Thus, this expression is categorized under the Customs and Pursuits category, specifically within the subcategory of cultural practices, as it highlights deliberate actions undertaken by individuals and communities to sustain and honor inherited cultural values in both ritualistic and everyday contexts.

Excerpt 8:

SL (Source Language):

*"Nuwun sewu, Pak."*

TL (Target Language):

*"Excuse me, Sir."*

This excerpt 8 exemplifies a polite and culturally nuanced expression in the Javanese language that conveys respect, humility, and an acute awareness of social hierarchy. The phrase "*nuwun sewu*" is not simply equivalent to "excuse me," but carries a deeper connotation of asking permission or expressing deference, often used when interrupting, passing by, or addressing someone of higher status or older age. The addition of "*Pak*" (a respectful term for an adult male) further reinforces the hierarchical sensitivity embedded in the interaction. In Javanese sociolinguistic practice, language is stratified into different levels, where word choice reflects the speaker's respect toward the listener. The use of expressions like "*nuwun sewu*" indicates the speaker's awareness of these social norms and their intention to maintain politeness and social harmony. It also reflects key cultural values such as *andhap asor* (humility) and respect for authority or seniority, which are fundamental to Javanese interpersonal communication. Although the English translation "Excuse me, Sir" conveys the functional meaning, it simplifies the expression and does not fully represent the cultural depth, politeness level, and social sensitivity inherent in the original phrase. The Javanese expression operates within a broader cultural framework where language serves as a tool for negotiating social relationships and preserving harmony. Therefore, this expression is classified under the Customs and Pursuits category, specifically within the subcategory of cultural expressions, as it reflects culturally conditioned language use shaped by norms, values, and hierarchical awareness.

### Private Passions

The Private Passions category refers to expressions of spirituality and belief that are closely connected to cultural values and ways of understanding the unseen world. In audiovisual translation, these elements are not only linguistic but also cultural, meaning they require careful interpretation to ensure that their meaning is preserved across different audiences. The category is strongly represented because the story focuses on the interaction between humans and supernatural beings. The film presents a perspective in which the physical and spiritual worlds exist side by side, and spiritual practices are part of everyday life. Therefore, this category plays an important role in shaping both the storyline and the cultural meaning conveyed in the film "*KKN di Desa Penari*".

Excerpt 9:

SL (Source Language):

*"Kopi ireng itu biasanya kita pakai buat persembahan untuk nenek moyang kita."*

TL (Target Language):

*"That **black coffee** is usually used as an offering to the ancestors."*

This excerpt 9 represents a ritual practice grounded in ancestral veneration, in which "*kopi ireng*" (black coffee) functions as a symbolic offering to deceased ancestors. Within many Indonesian traditional belief systems, particularly those influenced by animistic traditions, ancestors are not perceived as entirely absent but rather as spiritual entities that continue to exist alongside the living and may influence human life. Such beliefs emphasize an ongoing relationship between the material and spiritual realms, where rituals serve as a medium of interaction and communication. In this context, offerings such as food and drink, including coffee, are not merely physical objects but carry layered symbolic meanings. They are

understood as expressions of respect, gratitude, and a request for protection or guidance from ancestral spirits. Studies on ritual offerings in Indonesian culture show that elements like coffee are deliberately selected and embedded with cultural values, functioning as symbolic tools to honor ancestors and maintain spiritual harmony within the community. More specifically, black coffee may signify simplicity, sincerity, and purity of intention, reinforcing the seriousness of the ritual act. The act of presenting such offerings reflects a culturally constructed belief that maintaining a harmonious relationship with ancestral spirits is essential for avoiding misfortune and ensuring well-being. In this sense, the ritual is not only spiritual but also social, as it reinforces collective identity and continuity between generations. From a translation perspective, the rendering of "kopi ireng" as black coffee successfully conveys the referential meaning. However, it does not fully capture the cultural and symbolic dimensions associated with its ritual use. The target text presents the item as an ordinary beverage, thereby neutralizing its deeper spiritual significance as a medium of communication with the ancestors. As a result, while semantic equivalence is achieved, the translation reduces the cultural density of the original expression. Therefore, this excerpt is categorized under Private Passions, specifically within the subcategory of spiritual belief in ancestral reverence, as it encapsulates both the metaphysical worldview and the ritual practices that sustain the relationship between the living and the ancestral realm.

Excerpt 10:

SL (Source Language):

*"Dia satu dari ratusan penghuni desa. Desa yang tidak semua orang bisa lihat."*

TL (Target Language):

*"He is one of hundreds who inhabit the village. This village that not everyone can see."*

This excerpt 10 reflects a worldview in which the visible and invisible realms coexist within the same spatial reality. It implies that the village is inhabited not only by humans but also by spiritual entities whose presence is culturally acknowledged as real and influential. Such a perspective aligns with animistic belief systems, where spirits are understood to inhabit the environment and actively affect human life. The phrase "*tidak semua orang bisa lihat*" introduces the notion of selective spiritual perception, suggesting that access to the unseen world depends on individual sensitivity or spiritual capacity. This indicates a culturally specific epistemology in which knowledge of reality extends beyond empirical observation and is validated through spiritual experience. In the translation, the term "many beings" preserves the referential meaning but neutralizes its cultural depth. It lacks the specific connotations associated with local concepts such as ghost, thereby reducing the symbolic and cultural richness of the original expression.

Excerpt 11:

SL (Source Language):

*"Kunir ini bisa bantu menangkal marabahaya di sekitar sini."*

TL (Target Language):

*"This might help to make them stay away."*

This excerpt 11 highlights the integration of natural substances into traditional spiritual practices, where "kunir" (turmeric) is attributed with protective and symbolic power beyond its physical properties. In many Indonesian communities, turmeric is not only recognized as a culinary or medicinal ingredient but also as a ritual object embedded within systems of belief that associate natural elements with spiritual potency. Historically, turmeric has played an important role in Austronesian and Southeast Asian ritual practices, where it is used for protection, purification, and the maintenance of spiritual balance. The expression "*menangkal mara bahaya*" (to ward off danger) reflects a belief that misfortune is not solely caused by physical factors but may also originate from unseen spiritual disturbances. In certain local traditions, including those found in Kalimantan, turmeric is used in healing or protective rituals intended to counteract disturbances believed to be caused by spirits or supernatural forces. This demonstrates a holistic understanding of danger, where physical and

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metaphysical threats are interconnected, and protection requires both material and spiritual intervention. However, in the target text, the translation of "kunir" as "turmeric" successfully preserves lexical accuracy but fails to convey its ritualistic and symbolic significance. The phrase "ward off danger" communicates a general protective function but lacks the cultural depth associated with traditional practices, such as healing rituals, spiritual cleansing, or the mediation between human and unseen forces. As a result, the translation presents turmeric as a functional object rather than a culturally meaningful symbol embedded within a broader spiritual system.

### Public Life

Public Life centers on cultural elements associated with formal authority, particularly those related to governmental and political. This category emphasizes how structured systems of leadership and administration influence collective behavior and social organization. Rather than addressing individual experiences, it draws attention to official roles and their impact on regulating community life. The film "*KKN di Desa Penari*" reflects this dimension through the portrayal of village leadership, where authority figures are shown guiding decisions, maintaining order, and overseeing interactions among residents. These representations demonstrate how governance operates at the local level and how institutional presence shapes everyday social dynamics. As a result, the narrative highlights the importance of formal structures in sustaining stability and directing communal life within the village.

Excerpt 12:

SL (Source Language):

*"mas prabu ki pamong desa wong kene."*

TL (Target Language):

*"Mr. Prabu is the village head."*

This excerpt 12 highlights the term "*pamong desa*," which refers to a formal position within Indonesia's village-level governance system. This role carries defined administrative authority, including decision-making power, management of village administration, and implementation of government policies in accordance with national and regional regulations. In the translation, the term is rendered as "village head," which provides a functional equivalent that is generally understandable to target readers. However, this translation represents a degree of generalization, as it does not fully convey the institutional, legal, and bureaucratic nuances embedded in Indonesia's local governance system, including its hierarchical relationship with higher levels of government. Therefore, the term "*pamong desa*" is categorized under Public Life, more specifically within the subcategory of local governance structure.

### Ecology

Excerpt 13:

SL (Source Language):

*"Sebagian besar warga desa sini menanam jagung."*

TL (Target Language):

*"Most of the villagers here plant corn."*

The excerpt 13 sentence "*Sebagian besar warga desa sini tani jagung*" represents a Culture-Specific Item (CSI) in the ecology category because it contains a strong reference to the physical environmental conditions and nature-based life systems typical of rural Indonesian communities. Within (Newmark, 2010) The framework, the ecology category encompasses elements related to the geographic environment, such as landscape, vegetation, and economic activities that depend directly on nature, including traditional agriculture. The phrase to agricultural land, limited industrialization, and an agrarian lifestyle, while "*tani jagung*" indicates a direct relationship between humans and natural resources as part of the local economic system. In the translation into "Most of the villagers here plant corn," there is a shift from a specific cultural-ecological meaning to a more universal and neutral representation, resulting in a less in-depth articulation of local nuances related to traditional agricultural practices and the context of Indonesia's tropical environment. Thus, although the translation

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is denotatively accurate, it tends to simplify the complexity of the ecological and cultural relationships inherent in the source text.

Excerpt 14:

SL (Source Language):

*"Gapura itu batas antara desa dan hutan."*

TL (Target Language):

*"That monument marks the boundary between the village and the wood."*

Excerpt 14 presents an ecological element in the form of a geographical boundary between two environmental spaces, namely the village and the forest. The term "gapura" not only functions as a physical marker of territory, but also carries symbolic meaning in Javanese culture as a boundary between a safe space, "desa," and a space considered sacred or dangerous, "hutan". The presence of the forest as part of the landscape also reinforces both the ecological and spiritual context in the film. In the translation, the term "gapura" is rendered as "monument," which only represents the physical function without conveying the embedded cultural symbolic value. Therefore, this data is classified into the Ecology category, specifically the subcategory of geographical boundaries and natural landscapes.

### Culture-specific items in the film facilitate cross-cultural understanding

The analysis study provides 14 cultural elements in Table 3 for cross-cultural understanding with the strategy of (Aixelá, 1996).

Table 3. Cultural Elements

No	(Newmark, 2010)		SL (Source Language)	TL (Target Language)	Strategy Aixelá's (1996)	How does it facilitate cross-cultural understanding?
	Category	Subcategory				
1.	Personal Life	Housing Patterns	Di desa ini hampir semua rumah terbuat dari anyaman bambu.	Almost all of the houses here are made of bamboo weaving.	Linguistic Translation	By directly translating bamboo weaving, the subtitle allows viewers to recognize traditional housing materials, supporting basic cultural visualization.
2.	Personal Life	Food	Diminum dulu kopinya. nggak baik menolak pemberian tuan rumah.	Drink the coffee. It's not polite to refuse the host.	Functional Equivalent	Conveys the social function of hospitality, enabling viewers to understand politeness norms.
3.	Personal Life	Housing Patterns	Jadi Kalau mau mandi, mas-masnya mandi di sungai.	If you want to bathe, the men bathe in the river.	Linguistic Translation	Represents rural living conditions clearly, helping viewers understand dependence on natural resources.
4.	Social Life	Education	Program kerja kami akan membantu warga desa.	Our Project will help the people.	Limited Universalization	Generalizes the concept, making it accessible but removing institutional context.
5.	Social Life	Social Terms	Ojo nggawe masalah.	Don't cause trouble.	Autonomous Synonymy	Communicates behavioral norms clearly but reduces cultural nuance.
6.	Customs & Pursuits	Customs	Jogo sikap, jogo ucapan.	Watch your behavior and your words.	Functional Equivalent	Captures advisory function and moral expectations.
7.	Customs & Pursuits	Customs	Itu salah satu cara kami untuk	That is one way we honor our	Limited Universalization	Simplifies complex cultural concepts into understandable terms.

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			menghargai adat-istiadat leluhur.	ancestral traditions.		
8.	Customs & Pursuits	Customs	Nuwun sewu, Pak.	Excuse me, Sir.	Naturalization	Ensures comprehension but removes cultural hierarchy nuance.
9.	Private Passions	Religion	Kopi ireng itu biasanya kita pakai buat persembahan untuk nenek moyang kita.	That black coffee is usually used as an offering to the ancestors.	Linguistic Translation	Introduces ritual practice but reduces symbolic meaning.
10.	Private Passions	Spiritual Terms	Dia satu dari ratusan penghuni desa. Desa yang tidak semua orang bisa lihat.	He is one of hundreds who inhabit the village. This village that not everyone can see.	Absolute Universalization	Makes supernatural ideas accessible but removes specificity.
11.	Private Passions	Spiritual Terms	Kunir ini bisa bantu menangkal marabahaya di sekitar sini.	This might help to make them stay away.	Deletion	Removes cultural item, reducing cultural understanding.
12.	Public Life	Governmental	mas prabu ki pamong desa wong kene.	Mr. Prabu is the village head.	Functional Equivalent	Explains role clearly but simplifies governance system.
13.	Ecology	Geological	Sebagian besar warga desa sini tani jagung.	Most of the villagers here plant corn.	Linguistic Translation	Clearly conveys agrarian lifestyle.
14.	Ecology	Geological	Gapura itu batas antara desa dan hutan.	That monument marks the boundary between the village and the wood.	Limited Universalization	Explains function but removes symbolic meaning.

Based on the analysis of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) in the film *"KKN di Desa Penari"*, it is found that cultural elements are translated into English using various translation strategies proposed by (Aixelá, 1996). In general, these strategies can be grouped into two main tendencies, namely conservation strategies and substitution strategies. Conservation strategies, particularly linguistic translation, are the most dominant in the data. This strategy preserves the denotative meaning of the source language by translating the text directly with minimal cultural adaptation. For example, the phrase *"anyaman bambu"* is translated as *"bamboo weaving,"* and *"mandi di sungai"* is rendered as *"bathe in the river."* Through this strategy, cultural elements from the source language are maintained, allowing the audience to directly recognize the original cultural references. On the other hand, substitution strategies are also employed to adapt cultural elements into forms that are more familiar to global audiences. These strategies include limited universalization, functional equivalent, naturalization, autonomous synonymy, absolute universalization, and deletion. For instance, the term *"program kerja"* is translated as *"project"* through limited universalization, while *"pamong desa"* is translated as *"village head"* using a functional equivalent. Additionally, there are cases of omission, such as the word *"kunir,"* which is not translated in the target text. The use of these strategies indicates that the translator attempts to balance between preserving the original meaning and ensuring comprehensibility for audiences from different cultural

backgrounds Translators serve as vital intermediaries in overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers (Cherouana, 2023).

The findings indicate that the English translations of Culture-Specific Items in the film "*KKN di Desa Penari*" facilitate cross-cultural understanding through two main mechanisms, namely clarity and accessibility. First, clarity is achieved through the use of conservation strategies such as linguistic translation. This strategy allows international audiences to understand the basic meaning of cultural elements while still recognizing their original references. For example, the translation of daily practices such as "bathe in the river" and the use of natural materials such as "bamboo weaving" helps viewers visualize the living conditions of rural Indonesian communities. Thus, this strategy plays an important role in introducing the source culture authentically to global audiences. Accessibility is achieved through substitution strategies such as limited universalization, functional equivalent, and naturalization. These strategies simplify or replace cultural elements with more general and familiar terms in the target language, enabling audiences to understand the context without requiring extensive background knowledge. Culture-specific items comprise elements that represent ideas, objects, and phenomena belonging to a particular speech community (El-Farahaty & Alwazna, 2024). For example, translating "adat-istiadat" as "ancestral traditions" or "nuwun sewu" as "excuse me, sir" allows the cultural message to be conveyed in a more accessible form. However, this process also leads to a reduction of cultural depth (cultural loss). Certain symbolic meanings, philosophical values, and complex social contexts are not fully conveyed in the translation, especially when strategies such as absolute universalization and deletion are applied. As a result, although audiences can understand the general meaning and storyline, they may not fully experience the richness of the source culture.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the analysis of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) in the film *KKN di Desa Penari* demonstrates that the translation of cultural elements plays a significant role in facilitating cross-cultural understanding for international audiences. That indicate that the CSIs predominantly reflect social interaction, spiritual beliefs, customs, and local cultural practices within Javanese society. In translating these elements, the translator mainly employed strategies such as linguistic translation, functional equivalence, generalization, and adaptation to ensure the subtitles remain accessible and comprehensible for target audiences. While these strategies are effective in conveying the general meaning of cultural expressions, the study also reveals that certain cultural nuances, symbolic meanings, and philosophical values are partially reduced in the translation process. Consequently, although the subtitles support audience comprehension, some distinctive aspects of Indonesian local culture become less visible in the target language. Theoretically, this study contributes to translation studies by highlighting the importance of balancing meaning transfer and cultural preservation in audiovisual translation, particularly in the context of CSI translation. Practically, the findings suggest that subtitle translators should adopt more culturally sensitive approaches and consider combining strategies to better retain deeper cultural meanings without sacrificing clarity. For future research, it is recommended to explore audience reception studies to examine how international viewers interpret translated CSIs, as well as to investigate different genres or multilingual subtitle comparisons to gain a broader understanding of cultural translation in audiovisual media.

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