

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ping_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

ADDRESSING ISLAMIC TERMS IN ENGLISH TEXTS IN THE INDONESIAN CONTEXT: TRANSLITERATION OR TRANSLATION?

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Abstract

Islamic terms are commonly used in Islamic studies throughout Indonesia. However, inconsistent English translation of Islamic terms has posed a point of concern with translation and transliteration used by Indonesian translators. Despite many publications about translating Islamic terms from Arabic to English, little is known about how Islamic terms are translated from Indonesian to English. Using the foreignization and domestication framework, this study investigated translations of Islamic terms from Indonesian to English by 34 translators from three different backgrounds - university translation students, teachers, and certified translators. This study used frequency analysis to count the occurrences of transliteration and translation of Islamic terms in the participants' translated abstracts as the primary data.

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Secondly, the study employed the thematic analysis to find out participants' rationales of transliteration and translation of Islamic term realizations from the interview data. The frequency analysis indicated that transliteration technique was used twice as much as translation in the Indonesian context. Additionally, the certified and university student translators prefer to use transliteration technique while the teacher translators favor translation technique. The study also revealed four rationales for the translators' preference of transliteration and translation techniques. These were common practice, reader orientation, text characteristics, and personal motives. Pedagogical implications of the study were also discussed.

Keywords: Islamic terms, transliteration, translation, English text, Indonesian context

1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigated some issues found in transliteration and translation of English Islamic terms representation in Indonesian. Previous studies have mainly dealt with the translation techniques used to translate Islamic terms in Arabic (Farkhan, 2017; Suriadi, 2017) and the research in the Arabic context has proven it to be problematic (ElShiekh & Saleh, 2011; Hassan, 2016). However, no research has been done in the Indonesian context specifically to address the problem related to Islamic terms translation. The present study, therefore, attempted to explore the issues of Islamic terms translation from Indonesian to English in order to fill the gap.

The phenomenon of translator's preference over transliteration and/or translation has resulted

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from the conceptual issue of formal correspondence and dynamic equivalence (Catford, 1965), overt and covert translation (House, 2010) and foreignization and domestication strategy (Venuti, 2018). The representation of Islamic terms is accordingly done through either transliteration or translation of the Arabic words or both depending on the translators' choices and preferences. Although Alhumaid (2015) claims that the Islamic terms are untranslatable, to a certain extent, it is argued that there is no such an "absolutely translatable or totally untranslatable" undertaking (Mohammadi & Keshavarzi, 2016, p. 139). By acknowledging the degree of differences, this project attempts to contribute to the translation study by offering the general references of transliteration and translation of Islamic terms for the translators to consider in the Indonesian context and beyond.

Islamic terms in this paper refer to the jargons used in the Islamic Studies. Translation of Islamic terms is often challenging as these source language (SL) words are culturally bound and contain religious concepts of Islam. For example, the Islamic word *jihad* is interpreted as equivalent to 'holy war' in English (Cook, 2015). This might mislead to the partial conception of *jihad* since the actual meaning of *jihad* is 'struggling' or 'striving', not a concept of violence as propagated in the West (see detailed discussion in Section 2.3.1).

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If the Arabic terms in Indonesian Islamic texts are not fully or inappropriately translated into English, this might distort a religious message and, consequently, lead to potential confusion and misunderstanding for Muslims, ‘people of Islam’, and for non-Muslims. The status of indirect translation is also claimed to provide less information than direct one (Gutt, 2005). The Islamic terms perplexity should be accordingly avoided since the establishment of full original meaning is thus mandatory for the intercultural messages to be successfully communicated to the religious and non-religious readers.

This study situated in an academic context where a translation of texts fully loaded with Islamic terms is increasingly needed in Islamic Studies at Indonesian Islamic universities. However, there seems no obvious path in translating those Arabic terms whether in their transliteration or translation (ElShiekh & Saleh, 2011; Idlibi, 2019; Kashgary, 2011). Both techniques have their functions to convey the message of translated texts. Therefore, the phenomenon of inconsistent use of Islamic term translation has motivated the present study to explore their differences.

Taking the above into consideration, this study aims to uncover how the Islamic terms are decoded from Indonesian and encoded to English through transliteration and/or translation technique

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and why one technique is preferred to others. It first reviews the relevant literature, describes the research methodology and raises two research questions. The major findings are discussed concerning relevant publications. Finally, the paper is concluded with the implications of the study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the current literature about the translation of Islamic terms and the transliteration and translation techniques (henceforth TTT) of scriptural translation by Kirk (2005) and Chebbo (2006). It also discusses the concept of Islamic terms and their relation to the issues of equivalence and translatability in the target language (TL) (Baker, 2018). Thus, the Islamic terms are reviewed to uncover their position and role in the context of academic Islamic Studies in Indonesia.

2.1 The translation of Islamic terms

Islamic terms are studied for their relationship with language and translation. For example, Islamic terms along with other different translated religious texts were examined about the (un)translatability of the words with sacred religious meanings (Long, 2005). Regarding Islamic terms, he further mentioned that Islamic terms are rooted in Arabic

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and predominantly referred to words or phrases taken from religious books for Muslims such as *Qur'ān* (the holy book of Islam) and *Hadith* (prophetic traditions). It is also reminded that the Islamic terms from those holy books were translated for communication purpose and, particularly, for guidance reason, therefore the translations must keep the purity of Islamic messages (Long, 2005, 2013).

Commonly used translation techniques for Islamic terms can be summarized into four patterns: (1) words of Arabic origin assimilated into English, (2) quotation from the English translation of the *Qur'ān* and *Hadith*, (3) Arabic quotations reproduced in italicized transliteration with a gloss in English, and, (4) Arabic words and concepts are transliterated but not translated (Chebbo, 2006; Kirk, 2005). When the Islamic texts are translated from Indonesian to English in the Indonesian context, the Islamic terms include the root Arabic words mixed with Indonesian affixes. As they still appear in partly transliteration of the Arabic words, these words are also investigated in this study.

In Indonesian, Islamic terms appear as loanwords such as *hadis* (Indonesian transliteration) from Arabic transliteration *hadits* and some of them have used with Indonesian affixes such as *pendakwah* (preacher) and *mentakwilkan* (to interpret the text). When the Indonesian prefix /pen-

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/ is attached to the Arabic term *dakwah* (to preach), it creates a noun in Indonesian, while Indonesian prefix /men-/ and suffix /-kan/ can be used with an Arabic term *takwil* (to interpret) which creates an Indonesian verb, *mentakwilkan* (to interpret the text) (see Table 1). The two Islamic terms show the Indonesian lexical compounding of Arabic loanwords and Indonesian affixes in Indonesian.

Table 1: The composition of Islamic terms in the Indonesian context

Indonesian affix	Arabic root word	Indonesian part of speech
Prefix: <i>pen-</i>	<i>dakwah</i> (to preach)	<i>pendakwah</i> (preacher): N
Prefix: <i>men-</i> and suffix: <i>-kan</i>	<i>takwil</i> (to interpret)	<i>mentakwilkan</i> (to interpret the text): V

In general, Islamic terms are identified to have three forms: (1) assimilated words, i.e., *jihad*; (2) italicized transliterated words and translated in parenthesis, i.e., *Amir al mu'minin* (Commander of the faithful); (3) translated words or phrases, i.e., the Islamic Civilization (Chebbo, 2006; Kirk, 2005). However, Elewa (2014, p. 27) classifies the Islamic lexical items into terms (mostly religion-specific items), which may be unfamiliar to general translators and terms which are recognized and

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commonly used by the translators in both non-Islamic and non-religious context. These different forms of Arabic terms in English texts might cause misjudgments from the readers upon their effort to conclude certain concepts embedded in those Arabic terms.

2.2 The TTT of Islamic terms

It is more challenging to translate religious texts than non-religious ones due to the culture-specific concepts embedded in words that characterize religious translation. This means that words are bound by culture, and their transference from one language to another should also be included in an analysis of contextual factors embedded in the words. Therefore, the typical strategies that follow are also expected to be different from general translation because unlike general lexical words, culturally-bound words of the SL most often do not have their equivalents available in the TL. Although Baker (2018) has suggested the strategy to translate specific cultural items, such a translation practice is rarely conducted due to a wide gap between two different cultures as seen between Arabic and English (Dweik & Shakra, 2011).

Translation of general words simply renders words into their equivalent words in the target text while certain specific translation strategies are

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needed to decode and encode culture-loaded words (Baker, 2018; Hatim & Munday, 2004; Newmark, 1988). Their categories are sometimes referred to in different terms, but they have similar concepts (Outratová, 2013). In a similar vein, Fernández Guerra (2012) adds that terms of strategies share the same references but termed in different catalogues. For example, cultural equivalence is closely similar to calque and shift is another terms for transposition. According to Fernández Guerra (2012), Baker's translation strategies are more practical in terms of the naming than the other two.

The strategies of cultural word translation mentioned above are used in two realizations – translation or transliteration. The translation is, in essence, decoding the SL and encoding the TL with the closest meaning possible while transliteration is converting the liturgical writing system into the Latin alphabet of the closest target sounds. It is found in this study that transliteration converts the Arabic sounds to the similar ones written in English phonemic symbols. The transliteration of Islamic terms varies with the sounds available in the TL (Wattles & Radic-Bojanic, 2007). For example, the Arabic word الحديث – *al hadits* is transliterated into English as hadith by omitting the prefix 'al' from the proper noun and the Indonesian sound /ts/ is replaced with its closest sound /th/ in English.

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However, the Arabic transliteration is used when a similar sound is unavailable in the TL.

Some previous studies (Dweik & Shakra, (2011; ElShiekh & Saleh, 2011; Farkhan, 2017; Hassan, 2016; Purwanto, 2013; Shayeb, 2016) have confirmed that Islamic terms are represented in other languages through both translation and transliteration techniques. These realizations in Islamic terms imply the dimensions of language and culture-specific to Islam. The translation and transliteration of Islamic terms are similar to what Venuti (2018) describes as the strategy of foreignization and domestication that account for two dimensions - language and culture.

2.3 Translation of religious texts

The relevant translation theory is concerned with aspects related to the translation of different religious texts. These aspects include conceptual discussions of equivalences, untranslatability, and contexts.

2.3.1 Linguistic and cultural in-equivalence

Translation equivalence essentially looks for meaning similarities between an SL and a TL (House, 2014), but linguistic and cultural differences between them make it challenging to

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find a term with absolutely equivalent meaning (Hassan, 2014). Linguistic equivalence in translation exists at different levels (e.g., word, sentence, grammatical, textual, pragmatic, and semiotic) and is a central issue in any translation process (Baker, 2018) particularly when the SL and TL are from different language families, for example, Arabic from Afro-Asiatic language family (Newman, 2002) and English from Indo-European language family (Baldi, 2008).

Added to the linguistic differences are cultural differences that make translation more challenging. Nida (1964) illustrated the concept of equivalence when she translated ‘Lamb of God’ in the Bible into ‘Seal of God’ because the Eskimos are more familiar with ‘seal’ than with ‘lamb’ and ‘seal’ is more relevant to Eskimos culture. However, the concept of equivalence can be problematic in translating Islamic terms to another language (Al-Kanani & Saidi, 2017). For example, although *shahadatin* is a declaration of faith, it is mistranslated into ‘the doctrinal formula’, thus failing to convey its closest religious meaning. For another example, *jihad*, as mentioned in the introduction, is also mistranslated into ‘a holy war undertaken by Muslims against non-believers’ by the Western media. In fact, the literal translation of *jihad* is ‘struggle’ and is not always associated with violence or war. Similarly, when jihadists are

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mentioned, they are associated with “the guns and the blaze” and have nothing to do with the love of poetry, “a rich aesthetic culture”, “personal humility, artistic sensitivity, and a display of emotion” (Hegghammer, 2017, p. 1). Indeed, the translation without a proper understanding of the culture-loaded words may create not only misunderstanding but also cause damage to the associated culture. Malmkjær (2005) argues that it is not easy to translate culture-bound words since “no pair items can be equivalence, and therefore no translation can be adequate” (p. 31). Thus, the search for translation equivalents seems to be a proper translation mission impossible and therefore we are talking about translation as finding near-equivalents across languages and cultures.

To avoid the mistranslation of culture-bound terms, it should be clear that the meaning equivalence should be associated with either denotative, connotative, text normative, dynamic or formal equivalence (Munday, 2013). He further explains that denotative refers to literal content while connotative equivalence is based on contextual factors. Text normative is indicated by meaning as a function while dynamic equivalence is communicative and formal equivalence is concerned with the aesthetic of the source text and its feature techniques.

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2.3.2 (Un)translatability

Whether the SL is translatable or untranslatable refers to the availability or unavailability of equivalent meaning in the TL. There are two opposing views on this. Whereas Newmark (1988) thinks it possible to render all languages, other translation scholars, such as Hassan (2014), Malmkjær (2005) and Anderman (1998), state that equivalent words are not always available across languages and cultures due to different contextual factors. From the contrasting views above, the translatable words are the common words that are mostly available in languages while the words difficult to translate may relate to the cultural references that are not always available from one language to another.

According to Catford (1965), there are linguistic untranslatability and cultural untranslatability. The former occurs when a lexical or syntactical substitute is not available while the latter refers to the absence of specific reference in the target culture. The translation of Islamic terms involves both linguistic and cultural untranslatability. For example, it is inaccurate to simply translate *zakat* as ‘charity’, *haram* as ‘prohibited’ and *halal* as ‘permissible’ since these Arabic terms have culture-specific theological senses that are hardly translatable (Alhumaid,

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2015). However, translation of culture-general texts is considered translatable as it allows the general readers to comprehend the denotative meaning only (Kashgary, 2011).

2.4 Rationales for transliteration and translation technique preferences

Translators' rationales inform their decisions throughout the process of translation. This cognitive reasoning can be discovered by assessing their translation competence based on their translations. Armstrong (2005) suggests that adequate information about their world view of language and cultural information of both SL and TL may describe translators' cognitive processes. He provides an example of a French word 'préfet' as 'perfect' to illustrate how the word requires a context where a rational translation decision is made. The decisions that are based on a comprehensive rationale might be regarded to affect their translation works (Hermans, 2007).

Armstrong (2005) recommends that translators should perform "an imaginary readership" act to assure that the translation choices meet readers' understanding. Similarly, Pearson (1998) contends that intended readership should be the first thing they have in mind when doing the translation. Besides the external factor, it is also

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important to further find out translators' translation competence. This is a complex term (Esfandiari, et al., 2015) covering a combination of abilities, skills, and knowledge that a translator must acquire. In specific, Campbell (1997) mentions that the hardest part in translation competence is to comprehend the source text as well as to convey the intended message into the foreign language. However, he further argues that their translation competence may have improved depending on their relevant professional development and work experiences.

Having reviewed the relevant literature above, we want to propose the following research questions in this study.

- a. How did the translators select transliteration or translation technique when dealing with Islamic terms in Indonesian academic context?
- b. What are the rationales behind the translators' preferences for transliteration and translation techniques?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study investigated the TTT preferred by Indonesian translators in translating Islamic terms. A descriptive qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014) was used to study the two research questions raised above. Thirty-four Indonesian translators were recruited, and they were divided into three groups:

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student translators (ST), teacher translators (TT), and certified translators (CT). A pseudonym was used to protect each interviewee's identity when the data are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized in the findings and discussion section. For example, Majid (ST) is the pseudonym of the interviewee and he is a student translator with its acronym in brackets.

Thirteen STs (9 females and 4 males) were in the final year in an Islamic university in Indonesia. They were around 22 to 23 years old and were enrolled in two translation units in the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program. The two translation units were translation one (translation from English to Indonesian) and translation two (translation from Indonesian to English). They were taught the theoretical and practical aspects of relevant translation studies with the emphasis to provide more awareness of the contextual meaning and the grammatical aspects of both languages. The students' English language proficiency was categorized as a post-intermediate user as shown by their TOEFL scores with 508 on average.

Eleven TTs (5 females and 6 males) were the teaching staff members of the translation unit in the Department of English Education at two universities. They have had an average of 10 years teaching experience in translation, teaching bi-directional translation in Indonesian and English.

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They all teach translation to students of English as a foreign language and Islamic studies. The teachers also have experience in translating texts in legal, economy, politics, and health areas.

Ten CTs (2 females and 8 males) were members of the Indonesian Translators Association or *Himpunan Penerjemah Indonesia* (HPI). They come from different HPI membership – three associate members and seven full members. They have different expertise in such areas as education (e.g., Islamic Studies included), business, legal, and finance. Two translators came from a non-English-major background and eight from English-major background. They have expertise either in English-Indonesian or Indonesian-English translation.

The source of data in this study includes the English translation of an Indonesian thesis abstract (see Appendix) and interviews with the participants after the translation task. The participants were asked to translate the abstract from Indonesian to English and email through the translation within a week. There were 367 words in the Indonesian abstract and 24 of them were words or phrases of Islamic terms that appeared several times in it. There was a total of 71 Islamic terms in the source abstract. Thirty-four participants were interviewed in a semi-structured mode. The interviews were conducted face to face or via phone for approximately 10 minutes depending on

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participants' preferences, aiming to find out their choices of the translated words and the reasons for such choices. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian and audio-recorded. The interview recordings were transcribed and translated into English. Using Nvivo 12, the interview data were thematically coded and so that theme categories could be classified for contents analysis. The analytical result was used to triangulate the findings of the analysis of translated abstracts, thus contributing to the comprehensive findings of the study.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study focused on the Islamic terms representation in English as a result of its translation from Indonesian. The following findings and discussions begin by exploring why participants transliterated or translated the Islamic terms in the target texts and what rationales they had for the transliteration or translation techniques.

4.1. TTT of Islamic terms

It was found that some of the Islamic words in the abstract were used with Indonesian affixes (*me-kan* or *meng-kan*) and a suffix (*nya*), such as *mentashihkan*, *mengistinbathkan*, *kemaslahatan*

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umat, *mentakwilkan*, *kitabnya*, *haditsnya*, and *matannya*. The affixes show that the words are verbs while the suffix – *nya* forms possessive pronouns placed after the Islamic terms. Table 2 shows the list of Islamic terms and their frequency in the source text.

Table 2. Frequency of Islamic terms in an Indonesian abstract

Islamic terms	English translation*	Frequency
1. Hadits	(prophetic tradition)	21
2. Ulama	(Islamic religious) (scholar)	9
3. Nash	(text)	5
4. Matan	(content)	4
5. Sanad	(chain)	4
6. Kitab	(book)	
7. Al Qur'an	(Islamic holy book)	3
8. Hujjat	(argument)	
9. Shahih	(valid)	
10. Muhaddits	(Hadith scholar)	2
11. Fiqih	(Islamic jurisprudence)	
12. Umat	(people)	
13. Takwil	(to interpret)	
14. Mungkir al-hadits	(Hadith refuter) (true Hadith)	1

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ping_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

15. Hadits ahad	(belief)
16. Aqidah	(argument)
17. Dalil	(defected)
18. Hadits dhaif	Hadith)
19. Dakwah	(preaching)
20. Tafsir	(interpretation)
21. Al Sunnat	(another name for Hadith)
22. Mashlahat	(benefit)
23. Tashih	(to interpret)
24. Istinbath	(to formulate)

* The first author's own translation

This study modified Venuti's (2018) theoretical framework of foreignization and domestication by breaking down two broad types of transliteration and translation techniques into a number of specific TTTs, thus gaining an insight into how the three groups of translators used different TTTs available when they made great efforts to decode the Indonesian source abstract and encode the English target text. Two general TTT types for the religion-specific or culture-specific words are grouped into several specific TTT types as seen in Table 3.

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Table 3: Transliteration and translation of Islamic terms with examples

General TTT Types	Specific TTT Types	Examples
Transliteration	Upright transliteration	Hadith
	Italic transliteration	<i>Hadith</i>
	Italic transliteration with explanation in the brackets	<i>Hadith</i> (prophetic traditions)
	Italic transliteration with explanation without the brackets	<i>Hadith</i> or prophetic tradition
	Transliteration with explanation in the brackets	Hadith (prophetic traditions)
	Transliteration with explanation without the brackets	Hadith or prophetic tradition
Translation	Upright translation	Prophetic tradition
	Italic translation	<i>Prophetic tradition</i>
	Italic translation with explanation in the brackets	<i>Prophetic tradition</i> (The prophet Muhammad's sayings and actions)
	Translation with explanation in the brackets	Prophetic tradition (The prophet Muhammad's sayings and actions)

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ping_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

General TTT Types	Specific TTT Types	Examples
	Translation with explanation without the brackets	Prophetic tradition or the prophet Muhammad's sayings and actions

Islamic terms generally appear in two broad TTT types – transliteration and translation. Based on the frequency of Islamic terms utilized in the translated abstracts, this study found that the mean of transliteration (34.7 times) was twice more preferred than translation (21.7 times) (See Table 4). It confirms that translating Islamic terms was such a daunting task for translators that they seemed to preserve the terms in their original transliteration instead of changing them to equivalents in TL. This suggests that translators who use transliteration technique continue to use the same term as source text with some modifications that were suited to the common practice of local TTT or personal preferences.

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_p ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

Table 4. Islamic term TTT preferences for all translator groups

Translator Groups	Frequency	Mean	TTT
CT	36.5		
TT	22	34.7	Transliteration
ST	32.7		
CT	23.9		
TT	35	21.7	Translation
ST	19.2		

As shown in Table 4, the number of transliteration technique utilized was noticeably higher than that of translation technique on average. The CTs used transliteration technique most frequently (36.5), followed by the STs in the second place (32.7). The TTs were the only group that used translation technique more than transliteration, namely the TTs' translation mean was 35, in comparison to the CTs (23.9), and the STs (19.2).

Although transliteration was claimed to be just adjusting words phonologically from ST to TT, this study identified various patterns of transliteration techniques used, while the translation technique was limited. In addition to choices of translation or transliteration, they took options of

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using italics, adding an explanation with or without brackets. The various TTTs may imply the dynamic realization shown by translator performance in translating Islamic terms since no guideline was available as acceptable TTTs for the translators to follow.

Table 5. Types of Islamic term TTT preferences for three translator groups

Types of TTT		CT	TT	ST
Transliteration	Upright transliteration	27	17.2	23.1
	Italic transliteration	5.3	9	7.3
	Upright transliteration with information in brackets	2.3	2.1	1.8
	Italic transliteration with information without brackets	1.6	4.4	1.4
Translation	Upright translation	21.3	23.3	18.8
Others	Other TTTs	1	0.7	1.8
Total		58.5	56.7	54.2

Table 5 summarizes various types of TTTs deployed in translating Islamic terms found in this

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

study. Data analysis shows that in general there was a similarity between the CTs and STs in the preference of TTT types but TTs tended to have different patterns. The most prevailing TTT was the use of upright fonts in transliterating Islamic terms. The CTs used this pattern most (27) while the TTs (17.2) used this pattern least. The TTs had a different translation pattern from the CTs and STs. They used upright translation most in their Islamic term realizations while the CTs and STs dominantly used upright transliteration. This finding indicated that the TTs preferably used English equivalents, if any, to Islamic terms although they frequently exercised the upright transliteration as their second commonly used technique.

The italic transliteration was less common than upright transliteration between the ranges of 5.3 to 9 of the data amongst the three different translator groups; however, it was still the third most commonly used pattern in all the three translator groups. Italics was found in transliteration only and no italic translation was found in the data. It was understandable that additional explanation was optionally added to transliteration with or without the brackets although the total frequency of these examples would be less than 10% of all examples across the three translator groups. This fact also proves that brief information was not necessarily provided in translating each Islamic term.

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ping_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

4.2 Rationales of the TTT choices

The interviews conducted in this study suggested four rationales behind the choices of translators' TTT preferences. First, the translators reported that they looked at the common practice of the Islamic terms in other translated works. This is the simplest way of finding out their realizations within the textual context. Second, when translators made certain choices, they were thinking of the potential impacts of their choices on the readers' comprehension, thus using a reader-oriented approach (Munday, 2013). By putting themselves in readers' shoes, translators were reflecting as a reader of their own translated text. Third, the text becomes the factor that drives the translators to choose a particular TTT. The text of a particular genre also helps the translators makes up their mind to use certain concepts of the terms that are mostly used within the disciplinary study. Finally, some of the translators were highly competent in translation practice and were able to make optimal decisions in TTTs. A complete frequency of translators' considerations over translating Islamic terms can be seen in Table 6.

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ping_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

Table 6. Rationales of TTT preferences

Rationales	Frequency
Common practice	26
Reader orientation	22
Jargon	17
Personal motives	12

This study found that translators' ways of translating Islamic terms were mostly based on the common practice of how they have been dealt with in other published translation texts. They discovered from these texts that both transliteration and translation techniques were practiced in various reading materials, including journal articles, dictionaries, and other texts that show what people commonly do with the Islamic terms. This implies that while some Islamic terms might be changed through translation others were kept in their original or modified transliteration form. This can be illustrated through what TT3, one of the participants in the TTs, said in the interview.

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

Sometimes borrowing makes changing with the spelling. For this case, I just search the texts and follow the common spelling of the terms. (Interview with TT3)

The second preference of translators' TTTs of the Islamic terms was oriented to the readers. Reader-oriented approach (Munday, 2013) explains that some translators aim to mitigate readers' possible confusion and misunderstanding of the text they translated. The choices of the terms, for example, are those that the readers were familiar with just as TT3 put "..., in my opinion, the reader who wants to know in specific about Hadith, they should be familiar with the specific-register terms."

Some other translators also suggested that the word description should be limited, but brief and clear in order to avoid confusion and keep readers' attention (CT2, CT3, CT4, CT5, CT8, ST8, TT7, TT10). For example, ST8 stated, "Since for example, the term *sanad* has its translation word *chains of narrators of hadith*, I am afraid too many parentheses will ruin the layout of the text and probably will make readers feel confused to read it." Additionally, CT4 added that "If the explanation were a bit longer, I am afraid that the readers would be distracted. So, I reduce it a little bit."

The translators also need to consider the characteristics of the texts when they chose TTTs for Islamic terms. The use of many Islamic terms in

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

the source abstract was identified as one of the textual characteristics that jargons related to the Hadith study are oriented to the relevant scholars of the Islamic Studies. The presence of those Arabic terms, furthermore, has helped demonstrate their linguistic and cultural sources in the academic Islamic discourse and accordingly the attempt to change the terms might be suspected to distort the meaning embedded in the terms. This finding is supported by the TT10's argument in the following excerpt.

This means that this term and other terms such as *matan*, *perawi*, *sanad*, *shahih* in Hadith Studies cannot be omitted and changed into English words since they are all one package. Through the lens of culture, it helps us understand that when discussing hadith certain terms are inevitably used to learn hadith. We cannot just translate it into 'reasons' for 'hujjat' since specific meaning cannot be attached to 'reasons' but 'hujjat.' (Interview with TT10)

We can see that TT10 did not think that those Islamic terms did not have the equivalents in English. It could compromise their original meanings when so-called English equivalents or near-equivalents were used.

In addition, the translators identified several suggestions toward the TTT preferences of

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

Islamic terms to manage potentially compromised translation. Firstly, the terms should be fully studied and used consistently in the target text. Their status needs to be examined as to whether they are subject-general or subject-specific terms. This knowledge is a crucial part of recognizing the typical registers of a particular discipline that their uses are inevitably required to explain certain concepts in that discipline. Secondly, a few translators argue that the use of Islamic terms in the source text should be retained without change in the target text. However, other translators may refute this idea and argue that relevant equivalent words can also be used if available and if there is no compromised translation. TT11 explained it in the following excerpt.

... in the beginning, I just look for what possibly the equivalent word for the Islamic term in the target language. When I think if it makes sense in the context, then just translate the word. However, if it does not, do not push yourself to translate the word. If you do, then I'm afraid the real meaning will not be made, and the readers do not understand what we mean. (Interview with TT11)

The last reference that this study found is to take personal motives into account when referring to the Islamic term TTTs. This individual intention has been concerned with self-knowledge, opinions,

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

and translation skills. First, it is often the case that a translator may not know exactly about certain word meanings (e.g., discipline-specific or culture-specific terms) even after a long search of different sources. This undoubtedly adds to their frustration and makes them feel at a loss. As the wide range of knowledge is part of translators' competence, the insufficient knowledge base in the specialized area such as Islamic Studies could make them struggle in the translation process as TT2 said;

I am not sure myself because I am not an expert in Islamic Studies. I am not familiar with some of the Islamic terms either. I just play safe when I feel uncertain about a particular word; then I just used the word again. (Interview with TT2)

Translators also indicated that their preference for Islamic term TTT was based on their own opinion. It so happens that certain terms were translated, and others were not due to personal comment toward the essentiality of the words. This personal judgement is clearly illustrated as ST8 said "I just don't think that the terms are really important. That is why they need to be translated. They are just part of hadith and their realizations are not important in this text."

Finally, the Islamic term TTT is also driven by personal translation experiences. TT9 further elucidates;

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_p ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

If we have experiences and a solid reference of readings to it, I believe we have the freedom to mean something as we wish that depends on the references and experiences. (Interview with TT9)

With the TTT rationales put forward by the participants, it sums up that the decisions to choose the TTT are different from one to another based on the common practice, reader orientation, text characteristics and, personal motives. Of four rationales above, general translators seem to follow the common practice of TTT for writing the Islamic terms.

4.3. DISCUSSION

The findings described in the previous section were discussed concerning relevant literature to answer the two research questions proposed earlier. The first research question concerned how the three groups of translators selected transliteration or translation techniques when dealing with Islamic terms in the Indonesian academic abstract on Islamic Studies. It was found that although both transliteration and translation have been utilized when addressing Islamic terms, the former technique dominated the whole TTTs in the CT and ST groups while the latter was preferred by the TT group.

In general, the transliteration technique

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

was translators' favorite for the Islamic term typological styles. This finding thus replicates the previous research of Islamic terms translation conducted by Dweik and Shakra (2011), ElShiekh and Saleh (2011), Farkhan (2017), Hassan (2016), Purwanto (2013), Shayeb (2016), and Suriadi (2017). In addition, the present study shares the same finding as Farkhan (2017) where transliteration was used as the most favorable technique in translating Islamic terms in Indonesian academic context. House (2016) also argues that translators play a key role in communicating the message of the source text by the writer to the readers through the target text across languages and cultures. The reader-oriented translation approach (Munday, 2013) is practical as it aims to make the original terms and text understood by the readers with minimal inaccuracy, which was confirmed as one of the rationales for using some translation techniques discussed by participants of this study.

The domination of transliteration technique used for Islamic terms above indirectly entails the ideology of Indonesian translators. The inclination to the source text context by preserving the original terms in the target texts is similar to the strategy of foreignization over domestication (Venuti, 2018). He further claims that the preference of foreignization over domestication may be argued to lead to translators' ideology indicators. In this

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case, it resides in the Islamic term translation by the three translator groups in the Indonesian context. Different from general words, Islamic terms are part of culture specific to Islam in its religious context. Translating the culture-specific Islamic terms points the translators to the important need to communicate with the readers from different cultures.

This study also considers that typological form of Islamic terms to be an issue where one particular Islamic term appears in different realizations in the same text. Some translators were aware of this inconsistent use of the Islamic terms throughout the text as this could cause a text's typological issue. For example, the term Hadith is retained in an initial paragraph, but in another section, it becomes *Hadith* (in italic) or Hadeeth as used by one of the TTs. The wordy note that the translators add to the term will also distort the layout and readability of the abstract text. Meanwhile, providing brief explanatory information to the term has also been considered irrelevant since besides technically an abstract has a word limit, the meaning has already been inherently attached to the term.

The choices of TTTs in the translation of Islamic terms are mainly referred to as external references. That is the easiest consideration but translators need to take into account of many contextual factors such as meaning equivalents, word choices, target text structure, and term

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

familiarity and readability. Idlibi (2019) justifies the importance of context in translation, especially for the English and Arabic terms and concepts, to determine the appropriate use of transliteration or translation or both. He also advises the translators that the comprehension of the source text should be kept in mind so that providing appropriate text equivalents can be accomplished.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper focuses on how three groups of translators encoded the Islamic terms used in an academic abstract from Indonesian to English through translation or transliteration technique and why they chose one technique rather than the other. General analysis of Islamic terms translation reveals that these Indonesian translators prefer transliteration to translation in dealing with Islamic terms in Indonesian academic abstracts. Translators need to consider the contextual information of the Islamic terms before they choose to use transliteration or translation techniques. The comprehension of the Islamic terms in the source text is well-suggested before transliterating or translating them. Furthermore, translators also need to consider the potential readers' capacity to understand the encoded Islamic terms in TL. Otherwise, personal judgement of translator's

Aminuddin, M., Yang, P. and Muranaka-Vuletich, H. (2020). Addressing Islamic terms in English texts in the Indonesian context: Transliteration or translation? *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 7, 399-444. 10.51287/cttl_e_2020_13_muhammad_aminuddin_ing_yang_hiromi_muranaka_vuletich.pdf

inability in grasping relevant knowledge of the subject matters including linguistic and translation skills may inhibit the conveyance of Islamic term appropriateness in the TL. The analysis of interview data showed that the translators explained their specific reasons why some translated Islamic terms this way while others that way.

This study has meaningful and pedagogical implications for translators translating Islamic terms and culture-specific texts. First, translators need to have a wide range of knowledge base relevant to the topic under translation through various ways, for example, extensive reading of academic publications (e.g., books, book chapters, and journal articles) related to the discipline. Second, translators need to critically analyze their readings, looking at both sides of a coin, evaluating their strengths and weaknesses with supporting evidence (e.g., citing arguments and theories developed by other researchers or their own), and progressing from writing book reviews to publishing their own research outcomes. The CTs may need to undertake professional development and become aware of current translation issues, debates, and research outcomes, and undertake collaborative research projects.

Further research is required in the area of culture-specific translation of Islamic words in order to promote intercultural communication and

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understanding where the translators often face the challenge and lack of understanding of Islamic terms and faith. In this sense, translators of Islamic texts can make the intercultural communication mission possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This paper is part of the first author's PhD thesis project supervised by the second and the third authors. The authors would like to thank all the participants for their generous contributions to this research. The first author wishes to thank the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs for providing scholarships and other funding that make his research on the thesis project at Western Sydney University in Australia possible.

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APPENDIX

Abstract (in Indonesian)

Masa perkembangan Hadits terus menerus melaju dari abad ke abad. Salah satu ulama pada saat sekarang ini yang menjadi pemerhati Hadits adalah Muhammad al-Ghazali, dengan salah satu kitab pembahasan ilmu Haditsnya yang berjudul al Sunnat, al Nabawiyyat Bayna Ahl al Fiqh wa Ahl al Hadits. Dalam karyanya ini beliau menyoroti kedudukan Hadits dan cara mentakwilkan dan menjadikan matan Hadits sebagai hujjat dalam kehidupan sehari-hari dengan metodologinya sendiri yang menimbulkan banyak kontroversi dikalangan ulama. Bahkan sampai ada yang mengatakan bahwa beliau salah seorang mungkir al Hadits. Hal ini disebabkan karena beliau tidak menerima begitu saja Hadits ahad walaupun berstatus shahih, bahkan menolaknya jika berkaitan dengan masalah aqidah jika tidak ada dalil lain yang dapat menguatkannya. Disamping itu, al-Ghazali tampak terlalu berani dalam meragukan bahkan menolak beberapa Hadits yang dikeluarkan oleh beberapa muhaddits yang dipandang oleh mayoritas ulama sebagai muhaddits yang *capable* dalam bidangnya dan kitabnya merupakan kitab kedua

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pegangan umat Islam setelah al Qur'an, dan ia menjadikan Hadits dha'if dari segi sanad sebagai hujjat jika matannya semakna dengan kandungan al-Qur'an dan atau ada Hadits lain yang menguatkannya.

Sebagai juru dakwah yang intelek sekaligus ulama pemerhati Hadits, ia menginginkan adanya kerjasama antara ahli Hadits yang bergelut dengan ilmu Hadits dalam segi sanad, dan ahli fiqih yang memiliki kemampuan untuk memahami kandungan Hadits secara benar dan proporsional, sehingga ajaran Islam terasa makin relevan, rasional dan aplikatif. Dengan demikian, ia berpendapat bahwa penelitian terhadap Hadits bukan hanya tugas ulama Hadits, tetapi juga ulama tafsir, fiqih dan yang lainnya yang mempunyai kemampuan dalam menelitinya. Dan bukan hanya sebatas sanad yang diteliti, melainkan matan secara bersamaan.

Perbedaan penilaian ke-shahih-an Hadits dan cara pandang dalam mengartikan nash Hadits antara al-Ghazali dengan ulama lainnya bisa jadi dikarenakan latar belakang al-Ghazali yang tidak sama dengan ulama lainnya, baik pendidikannya, lingkungan yang membesarkannya, atau pola pikirnya. Atau, al-Ghazali tidak hanya melihat dan menerima nash-nash dengan begitu saja, melainkan ia meneliti baik matan maupun sanad dan membandingkan dengan nash-nash lainnya, baik dari al Qur'an dan al Sunnat, dan yang penting lagi

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adalah beliau menilai Hadits tersebut apakah masuk akal atau tidak dan apakah bertentangan dengan kemashlahat-an umat atau tidak, hingga pada akhirnya banyak penilaian beliau yang bertentangan dengan ulama lainnya dalam men-tashih-kan sebuah Hadits dan meng-istinbath-kan sebuah hukum.