

## Retaining Meaning Across Cultures: Larson-Based Analysis on Metaphorical Figurative Language Translation in Coelho's *The Alchemist*

Mempertahankan Makna Lintas Budaya: Analisis Metafora Berbasis Teori Larson pada Novel *The Alchemist* oleh Coelho

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### Abstract

*The Alchemist* by Coelho is a philosophical novel about the journey of a young shepherd named Santiago, who finds a treasure that is hidden near the Egyptian pyramids. The story is rich in metaphor, which makes it an ideal topic for translation studies that focus on cultural nuances and emotional depth. This study aims to examine how Larson's translation strategies are able to translate significant metaphors while retaining the philosophical and emotional complexity. The data in this study are six key metaphors that convey the concept of personal destiny, spiritual interconnectedness, personal desire, nature signs, gendered image, and peacefulness. This study uses a qualitative method. By applying the analysis of metaphor translation by Larson, the results indicate that effective translation techniques used by the translator, Lesmana (2005), such as generalisation, omission, amplification, adaptation, and literal translation, not only retain the original meaning of the metaphor but also modify them to align with Indonesian culture. This work provides an understanding of the challenges of translating metaphors, which contributes to broadening the discussion regarding how to convey information effectively across cultures in literary contexts.

**Key words:** *metaphorical translation; figurative language; culture; The Alchemist*

### Abstrak

*The Alchemist* (1988) oleh Coelho adalah novel filosofis tentang perjalanan seorang gembala muda bernama Santiago, yang menemukan harta karun yang tersembunyi di dekat Piramida Mesir. Cerita dalam novel ini kaya akan metafora, sehingga menjadikannya topik yang ideal untuk studi terjemahan yang fokus pada nuansa budaya dan kedalaman emosional. Studi ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji terkait bagaimana strategi terjemahan Larson mampu menerjemahkan metafora yang signifikan sambil mempertahankan kompleksitas filosofis dan emosional. Data dalam penelitian ini adalah enam metafora inti yang menyampaikan konsep takdir pribadi, keterkaitan spiritual, keinginan pribadi, pertanda alam, citra gender, dan kedamaian. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Dengan menerapkan analisis terjemahan metafora oleh Larson, hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa teknik penerjemahan efektif yang digunakan oleh penerjemah, Lesmana (2005), seperti generalisasi, omisi, amplifikasi, adaptasi, dan terjemahan harfiah, tidak hanya mempertahankan makna asli metafora, tetapi juga memodifikasinya agar selaras dengan budaya Indonesia. Karya ini memberikan pemahaman terkait tantangan dalam menerjemahkan metafora, yang berkontribusi untuk memperluas diskusi mengenai bagaimana menyampaikan informasi secara efektif lintas budaya dalam konteks sastra.

**Kata kunci:** *terjemahan metafora; bahasa kiasan; budaya; The Alchemist*

## INTRODUCTION

Retaining meaning in translation is a process that requires more than linguistic equivalence, as translators must maintain the cultural essence in the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). Retaining meaning implies that the source and target languages share cultural elements in an efficient manner which remains the same across nations and cultures (Mahmud et al. 2024). Akhtar et al. (2024) state that translators must infer the cultural transfer by altering the original impact of the source text culture into the target culture. Qiong and Xiaobing (2005) assert that translators act as "the bridge" between two cultures in order to assist the target readers to understand the cultural nuance in the source text. As "the bridge", the translator must be able to connect people from different cultures and have knowledge of both the source and target cultures (Thohiriyah 2023). Therefore, translators have advanced challenges in retaining meaning since they must correlate the messages between two cultures (Imami, Mu'in, and Nasrullah 2021).

The challenges of retaining meaning often appear in the figurative language translation of literary texts. The figurative language translation refers to the expressions that should be translated socio-culturally into the target language. Figurative language applies analogies to convey a meaning that should not be interpreted literally (Pramudyawan and Cahyaningrum 2022). In a socio-cultural translation context, metaphor is a type of figurative language that is essential since it often shows variations in culture. Nilufar (2024) defines metaphor as a figurative expression that compares two objects by making a similarity between one thing to something else. When translating metaphorical figurative language, it's essential to consider the cultural variations between the source and target languages since some metaphors could just make logical sense in a particular culture. For instance, the meaning of a metaphoric expression 'Life is a journey' is translated into Indonesian as follows: (1) *Hidup itu kembara*; (2) *Hidup itu kelana*; (3) *Hidup adalah sebuah pengembaraan yang panjang*; (4) *Pengalaman adalah guru yang paling baik*; (5) *Hidup adalah safari tiada henti*. Those translation variations are caused by the metaphorical expression tied to the speakers' cultural perspective, so translators should be able to translate the metaphorical expression that is suitable to the target language culture (Hartono 2012). The previous studies conclude that the significant challenge in translating metaphors is retaining the meanings while ensuring that the target language maintains cultural values.

Considering the significant challenge, some studies have overcome the process of retaining meaning by applying several translation theories. *First*, Sastrawinata (2023) in *The Alchemist: Figurative Language Translation Analysis*, applies Newmark's and Chesterman's translation theory to reveal 54 syntactic strategies and seven pragmatic strategies in figurative language translation in Coelho's *The Alchemist*. *Second*, Denroche (2023) in *Translating Figurative Language*, suggests using Larson's translation strategy, resulting in three-way choices of strategies for translating metaphors: (1) change the original figurative with a target figurative that is suitable for the receptor culture, (2) add more explicit equivalents, (3) add non-figurative equivalents. *Third*, Larson (1984) in *Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence* encodes an event proposition to analyse metaphors that are identified into four parts: topic (non-figurative representation or the subject of metaphor), image (figurative representation), point of similarity (found in the comments about the topic and the image), and nonfigurative meaning (provides literal interpretation as a bridge cultural gaps). This analytical approach helps translators dissolve into the parts of metaphors in a methodical way so that they retain the emotional impact of the original text. *Fourth*, Akhtar et al. (2024) in *A Study of Cultural Propositions in the Urdu Translation of The Alchemist*, suggest using Venuti's foreignization and domestication theories, resulting in 13 translation procedures and 10 culture-specific items in the English-Urdu translation of Coelho's *The Alchemist*. The previous researchers' suggestions conclude that employing Larson's translation strategy is necessary to analyse the retaining meaning process in metaphorical figurative language.

This study analyses the retention of the meaning process of metaphorical figurative language in Coelho's *The Alchemist* English-Indonesian translation. Coelho's *The Alchemist* was originally written in Portuguese, then the English translator, Clarke, translated the novel into English, and then the translator, Lesmana, translated the Indonesian version (Akhtar et al. 2024). Throughout the novel, Coelho often applies metaphorical expressions in the main character, Santiago, and the supporting character, The Alchemist, in order to highlight the cultural nuances. By implementing in-depth observation, this study aims to analyse the retention meaning process of metaphorical figurative language translation, considering English and Indonesian cultures. The findings of this study will provide an enhanced understanding of cross-cultural translation through the process of retaining meaning in metaphorical expression in terms of literary texts.

## METHODS

This study applies a qualitative methodology to analyze the English-Indonesian metaphorical expression translation in Coelho's *The Alchemist* (1988). By using Larson's (1984) translation strategy, the study aims to examine the process of retaining meaning in metaphorical expressions. The data source of this study involves the English and Indonesian novel of *The Alchemist* by Coelho. The collecting data process includes in-depth observation of metaphorical expression, involving a systematic review of the text to evoke relevant metaphorical expressions and their translation. The extracted metaphors will be analysed using Larson's (1984) translation theory, including a framework to indicate metaphors into three components: topic, image, and non-figurative meaning. Further, the data-collecting process also involves 1) closely reading and understanding the novel, 2) listing the metaphorical expressions, 3) classifying the translation techniques, and 4) interpreting each metaphorical expression with Larson's (1984) metaphorical analysis framework. The results of the study are organised classically and descriptively, reflecting the qualitative approach.

In addition, this study employs referential adequacy as the primary validation technique, in conjunction with Larson's analytical framework. To ensure the accuracy of metaphor identification, each metaphorical

figurative language is maintained in its original English form alongside the Indonesian translation, thereby forming a reference corpus that enables re-examination and ensures the figurative expressions retain their metaphorical function within the narrative context. This procedure and re-examination will result in metaphorical constructions being included in the analysis. Moreover, Larson's analytical framework helps to identify metaphors systematically by mapping the components of the metaphor's topic, image, and non-figurative meaning. By applying both referential adequacy and Larson's analytical framework, this study maintains consistency in categorizing metaphorical components within each metaphor's data, thereby preventing interpretive bias in determining translation strategies. The preserved source–target text serves as a stable reference point, enabling every metaphor classification to be validated in concrete linguistic evidence.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The findings highlight the retaining meaning process within the concept of personal destiny, spiritual interconnectedness, personal desire, natural signs, gendered image, and peacefulness in metaphorical expressions in Coelho's *The Alchemist* (1988). By employing Larson's translation strategy, this section reveals the whole process of retaining meaning in metaphorical expression. Further, this study also presents another translation strategy framework for classifying the translation technique used in each concept.

### 1. Retaining the Concept of Personal Destiny and Spiritual Interconnectedness

This discussion examines the retention of concepts such as personal destiny and spiritual interconnectedness in the translation of metaphorical expressions, including "The Soul of the World," "Warrior of the Light," and "Personal Legend," in Coelho's *The Alchemist*. These two concepts are closely connected, particularly in an individual's spiritual relationship with the universe. The concept of personal destiny and spiritual interconnectedness is presented by Coelho in terms of humans' emotions, natural spiritual elements, life values, and enlightenment, forming a philosophical message. The concept of personal destiny and spiritual interconnectedness closely portrays how Coelho links the universe's message and humans' self-realization and enlightenment.

Additionally, the discussion also demonstrates how Larson's strategy in translating metaphors effectively preserves the philosophical essence and emotional impact while accommodating cultural contexts, resulting in an enriched readers' engagement and understanding of interconnected human experiences across various cultures. The following are examples of the translation draft result using the metaphorical translation strategy.

#### Data 1. Translation draft using a metaphorical strategy.

Source Text (ST): "Yes, or even search for treasure. The Soul of the World is **nourished** by people's happiness. And also by unhappiness, envy, and jealousy."

Target Text (TT): "Ya, atau bahkan mencari harta karun. Jiwa Dunia **dihidupi** oleh kebahagiaan orang-orang. Juga oleh ketidakbahagiaan, rasa iri, dan cemburu."

Back Translation (BT): "Yes, or even search for treasure. The Soul of the World is **lived** by people's happiness. And also by unhappiness, envy, and jealousy."

The translation of the phrase "The Soul of the World is nourished by people's happiness" to Jiwa Dunia dihidupi oleh kebahagiaan orang-orang is indicated using a generalisation technique. The source phrase "**is nourished by**", which means "*dipelihara oleh*", is generalised to "*dihidupi oleh*", which has a literal meaning "**is lived by**". The translator reflects a word change involving a meaning shift while retaining the original context and generalises the ST to the cultural and linguistic form of TT (Nanda et al. 2023). Further, the translator uses the word "*dihidupi oleh*" to retain the philosophical nuance and encourages target readers to explore significant topics of spiritual interconnection. This interconnectedness is regarded as a virtue, referred to as "spiritual excellence," which requires using a worldview that emphasises transformative experiences (Byerly 2024). Accordingly, the back translation (BT) portrays that people's happiness and unhappiness are linked to human emotions, such as joy, sorrow, envy, and jealousy, which widely exist in the world. Moreover, BT is also supported by the phrase "**The Soul of the World**", translated as "*Jiwa Dunia*", which conveys a universal scope, that everything possesses a soul, including inanimate objects (Nandan 2023). This concept presents a crucial concept in literary and philosophical discourse by implying that human experiences are interconnected. Since the phrase "*Jiwa Dunia*" has a spiritual and universal meaning, suggesting that all things have a spiritual core, the translator uses a literal translation to effectively maintain its metaphorical depth (Burmakova and Marugina 2014). Further, the translator keeps the essence of the metaphor in "The Soul of the World" or "*Jiwa Dunia*" to maintain the fundamental concepts and emotional significance of metaphors while modifying them to align

with the cultural context of the TT (Larson 1984). The literal translation of "The Soul of the World" to "*Jiwa Dunia*" retains the philosophical nuance and encourages readers to explore significant topics of spiritual interconnection. This translation maintains the essence of the metaphor "The Soul of the World," highlighting the interconnectedness of human experiences and the material world (Colman 2011). Another concept of "The Soul of the World" and an example of metaphorical translation application is found in the following translation draft.

Data 1.2 Translation draft using a metaphorical strategy.

ST: "Those who don't return become **a part of the clouds, a part of the animals that hide in the ravines and of the water that comes from the earth**. They become a part of everything, they become the Soul of the World."

TT: "Mereka yang tidak kembali, menjadi **bagian dari awan-awan, binatang-binatang yang tersembunyi di jurang-jurang, dan air yang memancar dari dalam bumi**. Mereka menjadi bagian dari segala sesuatu, mereka menjadi *Jiwa Dunia*."

BT: "Those who don't return become **part of clouds, animals that hide in the ravines, and water that gushes from inside the earth**. They become a part of everything, they become the Soul of the World."

The translation of the phrase "**a part of the clouds, a part of the animals that hide in the ravines and of the water that comes from the earth**" to "**bagian dari awan-awan, binatang-binatang yang tersembunyi di jurang-jurang, dan air yang memancar dari dalam bumi**" is indicated using the omission technique. The translator does not translate the phrase "**a part of**" before the phrase "**the animals**", and directly translates into "*binatang-binatang*" since the message in "**a part of**" is already conveyed effectively. By omitting non-essential phrases, translators can improve clarity and maintain the flow of the text, ensuring that the translation is relevant to the Indonesian readers (Du 2015). Meanwhile, the translator also uses an amplification technique in the phrase "the water that **comes from the earth**", which has a literal meaning, "*datang dari bumi*," which is translated as "**air yang memancar dari dalam bumi**". The translator adds the word "**dalam**" and generalises the word "**comes**" into "**memancar**" in the phrase "**memancar dari dalam bumi**", which means "**gushes from inside the earth**", in order to define an analogy phrase, avoid uncertainty, and add connections (Lestari et al. 2020). BT highlights the spiritual interconnection between human destinies and the three elements of nature, such as air, earth, and water, emphasising that no experiences, whether joyful or tragic, are wasted (Ade 2024). Moreover, BT also portrays another concept of "The Soul of the World" as personal destiny and spiritual interconnection. According to Lane (2019), the spiritual interconnection between nature and humans emphasises how elements such as trees, rivers, and mountains function as guides in our spiritual journeys. In this case, the invocation of natural elements in the concept of "The Soul of the World" acts as a medium for emotional and spiritual contemplation, which signifies a concept of unity and continuity. Further, the translator uses a compelling translation to retain the literal meaning and underlying emotional and philosophical significance in the source text. Aligning with Larson's strategy, the translation of the image in Data 1.2 effectively aligns with the target cultural context, as it creates imagery that resonates with the Indonesian perspective, prevalent in natural images and spiritual meaning. Another example of a metaphorical translation application is found in the following translation draft.

Data 2. Translation draft using a metaphorical strategy.

ST: "It's good that you've learned that everything **in life** has its price. This is what the **Warriors of the Lights** try to teach."

TT: "Syukurlah kau sudah belajar bahwa segala sesuatu **di dunia ini** ada harganya. Itulah yang berusaha diajarkan oleh **Para Ksatria Cahaya**."

BT: "It's good that you've learned that everything **in this world** has its price. This is what the **Knights of the Lights** try to teach."

The translation of "everything **in life** has its price" into "**segala sesuatu di dunia ini ada harganya**" shows the literal translation, yet the translator changes the term "**in life**", meaning "*di kehidupan*", into "**di dunia ini**", which means "**in this world**". This transition can be perceived as a generalisation technique which illustrates diverse interpretations and expressions of the value of life and worldly experiences. The translator generalises the word "**in life**" into **di dunia ini** or "**in this world**" to expand the interpretation by including worldly experiences, aligning the translation with the target readers' understanding (Liu 2013). BT represents a universal concept that conveys spiritual and philosophical implications on worth, consequence, and the lessons gained throughout life. Moreover, BT significantly impacts individuals as they consider the consequences of their decisions, also underscoring the importance of their existence in the world (He et al. 2022). This contrast allows the translation to maintain the significance of the metaphor, emphasising the intrinsic worth of life experiences. The metaphorical balance shown in both translation techniques ensures that conceptual nuances

are conveyed accurately and aligned with the literary perspective on metaphor (Chunying 2020). In this context, the translator helps the target readers to expand their complex understanding related to the metaphor, since TT resonates with the target culture and the target readers' understanding. This notion aligns with the function of the metaphor to reflect the understanding and interaction with the world (Chunying 2020).

Accordingly, the translation in the phrase "This is what the **Warriors of the Lights** try to teach" into "*Itulah yang berusaha diajarkan oleh Para Ksatria Cahaya*" is indicated using an adaptation translation technique. The phrase "the **Warrior of the Lights**" is literally translated as "*Para Prajurit Cahaya*". In this case, the back translation "**the Knights of the Lights**", signifying a noble hero or knight in Indonesian culture, enables a seamless transition that maintains the significance and implications of the original. This adaptation aims to enhance interpretation for Indonesian readers while also creating a connection between these figures to the target culture (Yesi 2023). Moreover, BT retains the metaphorical meaning from the word "Lights" or "Cahaya" that conveys the concept of enlightenment and positive moral attitudes. The translator not only effectively maintains the metaphor's integrity but also links profoundly with the value of goodness prevalent in Indonesian culture. The concept of "Lights" or "Cahaya" and "**the Knights of the Lights**" aligns with the Indonesian conceptual framework of moral integrity and spirituality, highlighting courage, enlightenment, and nobility. These principles are significantly built into the character education paradigm prevalent in many aspects of Indonesian society. According to Wiradani (2022), traditional customs in Indonesia tend to focus on social values that highlight positive moral attitudes—values conveyed by the term "Ksatria". As a result, Indonesian society often signifies the term "Ksatria" as a role model that could inspire every individual. BT also retains the concept of "Ksatria" as a role model for moral behaviour, which is a crucial pillar of Indonesian culture. Further, the interpretation of "Lights" or "Cahaya" is often conveyed as a spiritual enlightenment related to Indonesian traditional beliefs. In modern Indonesian culture, the concept of cahaya remains significant in both religious and cultural contexts. For instance, the synthesis of Islamic and local traditions during the Islamic era has produced a distinctive cultural identity that emphasises the significance of light as a symbol of divine presence and moral guidance. Meanwhile, Javanese cosmology considers "Lights" or "Cahaya" as a bridge between the macrocosm, the universe, and the microcosm, humanity (Riyanto 2023; Surjono et al. 2023). However, the selection of equivalent metaphors assists in the reader's comprehension of abstract concepts by establishing them in familiar cultural contexts (Burmakova and Marugina 2014). The translation maintains the same figurative elements, which allows readers to connect their personal experiences of enlightenment and positive moral attitudes. Accordingly, the retention of metaphorical elements in both the source and target texts preserves their meanings and enhances the thematic elements of enlightenment present in Coelho's work (Hakami 2022). Another example of a metaphorical translation application is found in the following translation draft.

Data 3. Translation draft using a metaphorical strategy.

ST: "And I am a part of your dream, a part of your **Personal Legend, as you call it.**"

TT: "*Aku bagian dari mimpimu, bagian dari **takdirmu, seperti kau katakan.***"

BT: "I am a part of your dream, a part of your **destiny, as you say it.**"

The metaphor addresses the concept of "Personal Legend", translated as "*takdirmu*", as the topic which represents an individual's life purpose. The translation of "**Personal Legend**" to "*takdirmu*" shows an adaptation technique marked by cultural understanding and an understanding of the narrative's philosophical aspects. Although "Personal Legend" is frequently connected with self-actualisation—a common subject across various cultures, including Indonesian philosophy—BT aligns more closely with the concepts of fate and personal destiny in Indonesian perspectives. According to Larson (1984), a translator needs to understand the wider context of the source metaphor to maintain its essential meaning. The concept of personal destiny in BT is shaped by the depth of one's connections with the broader universe, expanding spiritual fulfilment (Byerly 2024). Further, BT maintains the philosophical connotations related to personal destiny and purpose present in the original phrase. In accordance, the translator effectively conveys the essence of the metaphor, which illustrates the interconnectedness between desires and relational ties, to the target audience. This approach supports Larson's (1984) assertion that translating metaphors requires capturing not only surface meanings but also exploring the deeper emotional and cultural implications integrated within the metaphor (Darmapriati and Pratiwi 2024a). Moreover, BT retains the figurative interpretation, improving personal engagement with the text and strengthening self-discovery themes. According to Larson (1984), the translator uses equivalents that are able to maintain the emotional weight and enhance the interpretative experience for the target readers. Relating to emotional weight, BT highlights a vivid image of personal desires and journeys that convey spiritual interconnectedness. The literal translation in the phrase "part of your dream" into "*bagian dari mimpimu*" and the adaptation translation in "Personal Legend" as "*takdirmu*" convey the non-figurative meaning, relating to the influence of humans' relations in someone's life journey. Human relations resonate with

the concept of personal destiny and spiritual interconnectedness (Byerly 2024). In terms of “dream” and “Personal Legend”, the metaphors function as a perceivable tool to enhance the understanding by resonating the abstract concept with common human experiences. This function helps the target readers to understand the actual meaning and concept of the metaphors, improving their interpretation of the source culture (Burmakova and Marugina 2014).

Considering the discussion of personal destiny and spiritual interconnectedness in Data 1 to Data 5, the discussion reveals the retaining meaning process in humans’ emotions, natural spiritual elements, life values, enlightenment, and personal legend as the concept of personal destiny and spiritual interconnectedness. By maintaining the key metaphors, such as “The Soul of the World,” “Warrior of the Light,” and “Personal Legend”, the translator retains both philosophical significance and emotional impact from the source culture.

## 2. Retaining the Concept of Personal Desire and Nature Signs

The concept of personal desire and nature signs is being retained in the notion of “omen” in both the “shepherd” and “butterflies” metaphors. These two conceptual elements are portrayed by Coelho, who constructs personal desire as something that cannot be separated from natural signs, serving as a guide for an individual’s journey to reach self-fulfillment. Coelho functions desire as the interpretive dialogue for the individual and the natural world or universe. The concept of personal desire and nature sign is illustrated in the metaphors of the shepherd’s dream and butterflies, which are symbolized as a good omen, demonstrating how human desire is aligned, directed, and assigned by the universe.

This discussion will also reveal the metaphorical translation process of portraying individual desire and universal signs across cultures. The discussion highlights the strategies applied by the translators in adapting the “shepherd” and “butterflies” metaphors to perfectly convey emotional depth to the target readers. These are examples of translation drafts using a metaphorical translation strategy.

Data 4. Translation draft using a metaphorical translation strategy.

ST: “He said that he had always dreamed of being a shepherd, and **that it was a good omen.**”

TT: “*Katanya sejak dulu dia ingin menjadi gembala, dan **kedatanganku merupakan pertanda bagus.***”

BT: “He said that he had always dreamed of being a shepherd, and **my present is a good sign.**”

The translation “that **it was a good omen**” to “*kedatanganku merupakan pertanda bagus*” indicates that the translator uses an amplification technique by adding the word “*kedatanganku*”, which means “**my present**”. By adding the word “*kedatanganku*”, the translator provides the clarity of specifying the presence of someone, which is considered a good omen, that is not inferred explicitly in the source text (Alwazna 2017). Meanwhile, the translator uses a literary technique to translate “**omen**” into “*pertanda*”, meaning “**sign**”. The literal translation of “**omen**” to “*pertanda*” accurately conveys its meaning while retaining the essence of the term “good omen” in Christian belief, where it aligns with the mythological understanding of positive signs that inspire humans, such as Santiago in his journey (Tyshchenko et al. 2021). According to Larson (1984), the translator could employ strategies that focus on retention and generalisation in order to maintain the imagery associated with the shepherd’s role in the target text. BT emphasises the importance of Santiago’s present for Santiago’s friend, who wants to be a shepherd after meeting Santiago and buying Santiago’s sheep. The word “shepherd” carries deep cultural and religious significance in Indonesia, especially among Christian communities. In the religious context, the concept of the shepherd is often associated with leadership, guidance, and nurturing, reflecting the role of religious leaders in guiding their congregations. The term “shepherd” is deeply rooted in biblical teachings, where Jesus is often referred to as the “Good Shepherd”, highlighting attributes such as love, patience, and moral responsibility (Irawan et al. 2024). Meanwhile, the term “shepherd” also reflects the communal and collective nature of Indonesian society. “Shepherd” is symbolised as a unity and peace, especially in terms of a leader who works for the well-being of the community. The concept of community also aligns with Indonesian values of *gotong-royong*, or the concept of community unity, for supporting common goals (Djami and Pane 2023).

According to the concept of “shepherd”, the translator uses literary techniques to convey the metaphor of community and help the readers to understand the spiritual concept and cultural implications in the text (Darmaprawati and Pratiwi 2024). BT suggests that the presence of the main character, Santiago, is supported by supernatural signs regarding the future as reflected in the “shepherd”. In this context, the concept of omens aligns with cultural beliefs that highlight the symbolism of hope and expectations for success in life (Zhang et al. 2013). By retaining the essential meaning in “good omen” or “*pertanda bagus*”, the translator is in charge of interpreting and negotiating the metaphor’s meaning from the source culture to Indonesian culture. The translator improves the understanding of Santiago’s journey by translating the term “good omen” to “*pertanda bagus*”, which highlights the connection between personal desire and cultural beliefs (Larson 1984). Another

example of omen interpretation and a metaphorical translation application is found in the following translation draft.

Data 5. Translation draft using a metaphorical strategy.

ST: "Butterflies were a **good omen**."

TT: "*Kupu-kupu merupakan **pertanda bagus***."

BT: "Butterflies were a **good sign**."

The phrase "Butterflies were a good omen" or "*Kupu-kupu merupakan pertanda bagus*" shows a strong cultural significance linked to positive symbolism in nature. The translator uses the literary technique in "**Butterflies**", which is translated as "*kupu-kupu*", showing the same philosophical meaning of "**butterflies**", as the topic, across the source and target cultures. Further, the notion of positive symbolism in BT carries the significance of meaning transfer across the source text and Indonesian cultures. In this context, the positive imagery of butterflies as symbols of transformation, hope, and new beginnings is accurately translated into the target language, where "good omen" consistently captures the original intent of the phrase (I. Alghbban and Maalej 2023). Throughout the translation process of metaphor that provides an in-depth understanding of the cultural context, the translator retains the concept of a positive symbol of nature, illustrated by the phrase "butterfly" or "*kupu-kupu*" as a topic, and "good omen" or "*pertanda bagus*" as an image (Larson 1984).

Furthermore, the translator also uses the literal translation technique similar to Data 4 in terms of the word "**omen**" or "**pertanda**", which also means "**the sign**". The term "omen" or "**pertanda**", as the image of this metaphor, has a similar meaning to Sample 4, where "omen" or "**pertanda**" is defined as the concept that aligns with the cultural beliefs of Christianity (Zhang et al. 2013). However, in terms of "butterflies" or *kupu-kupu*, rather than BT in the word "sign", the word "omen" emphasises the personal desire reflected in cultural beliefs surrounding natural phenomena. In contemporary society, butterflies persevere in inspiring art, literature, and popular culture. They frequently serve as symbols of personal metamorphosis, hope, and resilience (Kim 2022). Similarly, in Indonesian culture, as the target text, the term "**pertanda**" also interprets the concept of a sign, which retains the same thematic essence as "omen". The belief system of "omen" or "**pertanda**", frequently intertwined with historical influences, colonial history, and indigenous beliefs, differs throughout regions such as Java, Bali, and Sumatra. In North Sumatra, the Batu Umang folklore from Durin Tani Village highlights the historical essence of omens. Batu Umang folklore shows the belief in the power of nature and the ancestors, which underscores the importance of omens in guiding the decisions of the community and actions (Situmorang et al. 2023). However, the equivalency of linguistics and cultures is portrayed in the whole metaphor "butterflies were a good omen" or "*kupu-kupu merupakan pertanda bagus*" (Dewantari, Nababan, and Wibowo 2024). The translator expands a cross-cultural understanding of metaphorical concepts of nature signs that deliver the complex perception about Santiago's journey to Indonesian readers (Larson 1984).

Considering the discussion about "shepherd" and "butterflies" in Data 4 and Data 5, the translator successfully manages to retain the philosophical and cultural meaning in both symbols of "omen". The discussion emphasises the term "shepherd" as the symbol of guidance, while "butterflies" are the symbol of transformation and hope. Ultimately, the discussion deeply shows the importance of the complex translation process that enhances the understanding of the concept of personal destiny and natural symbols in the metaphors to the target readers.

### 3. Retaining the Concept of Gendered Image and Peacefulness

The concept of gendered image and peacefulness is conveyed in desert-related metaphors. The translation process underscores the translator's strategy in maintaining the essence of gendered imagery and peace in terms of "capricious lady" and "distant dream". This discussion is also aimed at revealing the translator's strategy in ensuring the impact of the metaphors for Indonesian readers. Moreover, these are examples of desert-related metaphors in translation drafts using a metaphorical strategy.

Data 6. Translation draft using a metaphorical strategy.

ST: "The desert is a **capricious lady**, and sometimes **she drives men** crazy."

TT: "*Padang pasir itu **tak bisa ditebak**, dan kadang **membuat orang jadi sinting***."

BT: "The desert is **unpredictable**, and sometimes **makes people** crazy."

The metaphor "The desert is a **capricious lady**" implies an imagery in nature using gendered metaphors, including the beauty and risk that comes with the desert. The translator uses cultural adaptation to translate "**capricious lady**" into "*tak bisa ditebak*", which means "**unpredictable**", and "**she drives men**" into "*membuat orang*", meaning "**makes people**". This adaptation ensures that the gendered metaphors align with the target readers' beliefs of unpredictability, which reflects their social understanding (Hariyatmi 2022). Considering the adaptation technique, the word "desert" or "*padang pasir*", as the topic, is described as a "capricious

lady” in order to interpret a duality of attraction and unpredictability, highlighting the desert's beauty alongside its inevitable dangers. This distinctive representation of femininity is culturally particular and strongly established in the source language culture, where nature is often perceived as “Mother Nature” (Milstein and Dickinson 2012). As a result, BT retains the established source language culture is necessary, so the translation resonates similarly within the target language culture (Larson 1984). BT effectively retains the desert's unpredictability but loses the gendered connotation related to “capricious lady”. Moreover, the adaptation translation technique from “capricious lady” to “*tak bisa ditebak*”, is applied by the translator to portray the cultural significance by emphasising the desert's unpredictability, as a common cultural association (I. Alghbban and Maalej 2023). The translator avoids using a literal translation of “capricious lady”, which is “*wanita yang berubah-ubah*”, in the target text, as the feminist connotation of “capricious lady” or “*wanita yang berubah-ubah*” does not align with target culture perceptions of nature. Instead, the primary focus of translation is on the desert's unpredictability, which relates more to the target (Chunying 2020; Mukhtorovna 2023; Wang 2013). Further, the translator also applies an adaptation technique to maintain the emotional weight of the original metaphor by translating “**sometimes she drives men crazy**” into “***kadang membuat orang jadi sinting***”, which also means “**sometimes makes people crazy**”. The phrase “*membuat orang jadi sinting*” signifies a broader expression that refers to anyone, altering the emotional dynamics and highlighting irrationality instead of specifically defining it to male experiences of frustration. Stereotypes regarding gender and emotional expression frequently ignore the situational and cultural nuances of emotional expressiveness, indicating that statements such as “*membuat orang jadi sinting*” are not limited to male experiences (Brody 1997). The translator uses an adaptation technique in Indonesian to convey the significant impact of the desert and ensure that the target readers understand the intended meaning (Chita and Stavrou 2020; Darmaprawati and Pratiwi 2024b). Another example of a desert-related metaphor and the translation application is found in the following translation draft.

Data 7. Translation draft using a metaphorical strategy.

ST: “The silence of the desert was **a distant dream.**”

TT: “*Keheningan padang pasir **terlupakan sudah.***”

BT: “The silence of the desert **has been forgotten.**”

The translation of the phrase, “the silence of the desert was a distant dream”, conveys a metaphorical experience that requires careful interpretation during translation. In accordance with Larson (1984), the translation retains the fundamental imagery of the topic, “the silence of the desert”, and its connotations of peacefulness and harmony while transferring the meaning into the target text. By using a literal translation in “**The silence of the desert**” to “***keheheningan padang pasir***”, the translator recontextualises the imagery, appealing to how silence and immensity are viewed within the Indonesian cultural framework (Chunying 2020). In Indonesian culture, the term “silence” often symbolises peacefulness and introspection rather than loneliness. By translating “silence” to “*keheheningan*”, the translator tries to retain the associated cultural nuances, such as peace and introspection, in order to accurately convey in both ST and TT as target culture (Anwar 2020). Meanwhile, the adaptation technique is also applied in the translation of the phrase “**a distant dream,**” meaning “*mimpi yang jauh*”, into “***terlupakan sudah***”. The translator extends the original meaning into a reflective interpretation by adapting the term “***terlupakan sudah***”, meaning “**has been forgotten**”, which is not explicitly present in the source text (Aldhafeeri 2022). Moreover, BT reflects an adaptation nuance, a sense of abandonment, which alters the emotional interpretation of the original phrase (Volkova 2014). BT shows that the concept of abandonment indicates a deep emotional significance specific to Indonesian culture, as the target text does not entirely align with the source text interpretation. In this context, BT emphasises the loss of peacefulness in the phrase “The silence of the desert” that represents the Indonesian perspective by portraying a space for intense introspection and connection to one's inner self, similar to the peaceful moments experienced inside a community (Prakosa 2023). This perspective aligns with the Javanese belief that harmony requires communal effort and reverence for the environment, cultivating a profound understanding of the self and one's relationship to the community and the Creator (FX. E. A. Riyanto 2022). However, BT indicates a complex connection between the source and target texts, aligning with Larson's (1984) perspective of translation as a dynamic interpretative process rather than a simple linguistic transposition (Shabrina and Setiarini 2023).

Considering the discussion of desert-related metaphors in Data 6 and Data 7, the translator uses adaptation techniques in order to convey the concept of the beauty, risk, and peacefulness in the desert. By using adaptation techniques, the translator ensures the target readers expand their understanding of the cultural nuance in “desert” that is conveyed in the source text. This consideration remains the significance of the metaphor and the main idea of the story about the philosophical aspect of the “desert”.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study underscores the retaining meaning process in Coelho's *The Alchemist*, focusing on metaphorical figurative language. By implementing Larson's (1984) strategy on analysing metaphors, this study highlights seven key metaphors, such as "The Soul of the World", "Warrior of the Lights", "Personal Legend", "shepherd", "butterflies", and "desert". These seven key metaphors convey several concepts that deliver the cultural nuance, such as personal destiny, spiritual interconnectedness, personal desire, nature signs, gendered imagery, and peacefulness. Throughout the analysis of retaining meaning, this study also reveals the translation techniques used by the translator to overcome the problem of conveying meaning across cultures. The result shows that the translator mostly uses generalisation, omission, amplification, adaptation, and literal translation to retain the original impact from the source culture to the Indonesian culture as the target text. This study emphasises the importance of cultural transfer in metaphorical translation in terms of literary work and improves the advanced understanding of universal human connection.

Furthermore, this study offers practical implications, particularly for professional translators, to highlight the importance of cultural awareness when translating metaphorical and figurative language in literary works. By emphasizing the importance of cultural awareness, the translators can give more philosophical meaning and depth, and also transfer emotional interconnectedness across cultures and nations. Moreover, for translation educators, this study can provide more insight into teaching materials, particularly in the areas of metaphor translation and cultural transfer, utilizing Larson's framework. Additionally, this study offers benefits to society, as readers, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, can gain a deeper understanding of self-awareness, spirituality, and harmony with nature through *The Alchemist*. By understanding the concept of translation in the novel, readers can gain a deeper understanding of different cultures and universal concepts.

This study offers additional guidance for future researchers to explore alternative frameworks in metaphorical translation research for literary texts. Additionally, future research might involve reader-response studies to highlight the actual responses of readers to metaphors in literary works from other cultures and to examine how translation influences readers' understanding.

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