

LEXICAL DENSITY OF NURSERY RHYMES IN TRANSLATION FROM ENGLISH INTO INDONESIAN

Syafa Nameyra Eka Nofitri

English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Surabaya
syafa.22050@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Susi Laksmi Pratiwi

English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Surabaya
susi.22047@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Yohana Delphia Hutahuruk

English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Surabaya
yohana.22081@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi konsep ekuivalensi tingkat kata dalam terjemahan antara versi lagu anak-anak dalam bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia, dengan fokus pada tantangan yang dihadapi oleh penerjemah dan strategi yang digunakan untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut. Dengan menggunakan kerangka kerja Mona Baker tentang ketidakekuivalenan, penelitian ini meneliti isu-isu seperti konsep spesifik budaya, kompleksitas semantik, perbedaan gramatikal, dan penggunaan ekspresi idiomatik. Analisis komparatif dari kepadatan leksikal lagu-lagu terpilih— "Wheels on the Bus," "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," "Bath Song," dan "Old MacDonald"— mengungkapkan perbedaan signifikan antara versi bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa versi bahasa Indonesia memiliki kepadatan leksikal yang lebih tinggi, yang mengindikasikan bahwa lebih banyak kata konten dibutuhkan untuk menyampaikan makna yang sama. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya memahami konteks linguistik dan budaya dalam terjemahan dan menyoroti kepadatan leksikal sebagai metrik berharga untuk menilai kualitas terjemahan. Implikasi praktis bagi penerjemah mencakup kebutuhan untuk menggunakan strategi seperti parafrase, substitusi budaya, dan penggunaan kata serapan untuk mencapai terjemahan yang akurat dan alami.

Kata kunci: *strategi terjemahan, ekuivalensi tingkat kata, lagu anak-anak.*

Abstract

This paper explored the concept of word-level equivalence in translation between English and Indonesian versions of nursery rhymes, focusing on the challenges faced by translators and the strategies employed to overcome these challenges. Using Mona Baker's framework of non-equivalence, the study examines issues such as culture-specific concepts, semantic complexity, grammatical differences, and the use of idiomatic expressions. A comparative analysis of the lexical density of selected songs— "Wheels on the Bus," "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," "Bath Song," and "Old MacDonald"—reveals significant differences between the English and Indonesian versions. The findings indicate that the Indonesian versions have higher lexical densities, suggesting that more content words are needed to convey the same meaning. This study underscores the importance of understanding linguistic and cultural contexts in translation and highlights lexical density as a valuable metric for assessing translation quality. The practical implications for translators include the necessity of employing strategies such as paraphrasing, cultural substitution, and the use of loanwords to achieve accurate and natural translations.

Keywords: *translation strategies, word-level equivalence, children's songs.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this paper is to explore the concept of word-level equivalence in translation between English and Indonesian versions of children's songs. This analysis seeks to identify the challenges faced by translators in achieving equivalence and the strategies employed to overcome these challenges. Specifically, the study examines the lexical density and the various issues of non-equivalence identified by Mona Baker in her seminal work "In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation" (2001). Translation is a complex and multifaceted process that involves transferring meaning from one language (the source language, SL) to another (the target language, TL). It requires a deep understanding of both the linguistic and cultural contexts of the languages involved. Achieving equivalence at the word level, where individual words in the SL have direct counterparts in the TL, is often challenging due to differences in linguistic structures, cultural contexts, and conceptual understandings. This study focuses on these challenges as they manifest in the translation of children's songs, which are particularly rich in cultural references, idiomatic expressions, and repetitive structures.

Children's songs are an essential part of early childhood education and cultural transmission. They play a crucial role in language development, cognitive growth, and cultural education. Songs like "Wheels on the Bus," "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," "Bath Song," and "Old MacDonald" are familiar to children across various cultures and languages. These songs often contain repetitive lyrics, simple melodies, and engaging rhythms that make them effective tools for teaching language and cultural norms to young children. Translating these songs into different languages, such as from English to Indonesian, presents unique challenges due to the need to maintain their educational value, entertainment quality, and cultural relevance. One of the most significant challenges in translation is dealing with culture-specific concepts that have no direct equivalents in the target language. Children's songs often contain references to cultural practices, social customs, and specific artifacts that are unique to the source language's culture. For instance, certain animals, foods, or activities mentioned in English children's songs may not have direct counterparts in Indonesian culture. Translators must find ways to adapt these references to make them understandable and relevant to the target audience. This may involve using descriptive phrases, finding culturally equivalent concepts, or sometimes creating entirely new terms.

Another critical issue is semantic complexity. A single word in the source language might encompass multiple meanings or nuances that cannot be captured by a single word in the target language. For example, a word like "love" in English can have various connotations depending on the context in which it is used. Translators must carefully analyze the context and select the most appropriate equivalents, often requiring additional words or phrases to fully convey the intended meaning. This can increase the lexical density of the translated text, as seen in the Indonesian versions of the children's songs.

Differences in grammatical and morphological forms between languages can also pose significant challenges. English and Indonesian have different syntactic structures, with English often using auxiliary verbs and prepositions that do not have direct counterparts in Indonesian. Conversely, Indonesian might use affixes to convey meaning that would require separate words in English. These structural differences necessitate adjustments in the translation process to maintain the natural flow and readability of the text in the target language. For example, the phrase "go round and round" from "Wheels on the Bus" is translated to "berputar, berputar" in Indonesian, which changes the grammatical form but retains the meaning.

Words that are commonly used in the source language might have rare or even obsolete equivalents in the target language. Additionally, words in different languages often have different ranges of meaning and connotations. Translators must navigate these differences to ensure that the translated text sounds natural and appropriate to the target audience. This can involve choosing words that may not be direct equivalents but better capture the intended effect and meaning. For example, the word "bus" in English is straightforward, but in Indonesian, it might be necessary to specify the type of bus to convey the same image and function.

Loanwords and idiomatic expressions present additional challenges. Loanwords from other languages may not have established equivalents in the target language, and idiomatic expressions are often deeply rooted in the cultural and linguistic context of the source language. Translators must decide whether to retain the loanword, find a substitute, or provide an explanation. For idiomatic expressions, they might need to find equivalent idioms in the target language or create paraphrases that convey the same meaning. For instance, the idiom "kick the bucket" in English, which means to die, has no direct equivalent in Indonesian and would need a completely different phrase to convey the same meaning. The use of lexical density as a metric for analyzing translations

provides valuable insights into the differences between the English and Indonesian versions of the songs. Lexical density, defined as the proportion of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) to the total number of words, serves as an indicator of the informational richness of a text. The study found that the Indonesian versions had significantly higher lexical densities compared to the English versions. This suggests that the translation process involved adding more content words to convey the same meaning, likely due to the need for additional explanations and adaptations to cultural references. This study contributes to the field of translation studies by providing empirical evidence of the challenges and strategies involved in achieving word-level equivalence in the translation of children's songs. The findings have practical implications for translators, highlighting the importance of understanding linguistic and cultural contexts and employing appropriate strategies to achieve equivalence. Moreover, the study underscores the value of lexical density as a metric for comparing translations and assessing their effectiveness in conveying the intended meaning and effect of the source text. The findings of this study have practical implications for translators working with children's literature and other genres that involve significant cultural content. Translators must be aware of the challenges posed by non-equivalence and be prepared to employ a range of strategies to achieve accurate and natural translations. This includes being attuned to cultural nuances, understanding the semantic complexities of words, and making informed decisions about how to handle loanwords and idiomatic expressions. The study also highlights the educational implications of translating children's songs. Songs with higher lexical density provide richer linguistic input, which can be beneficial for language development. By ensuring that translations maintain the educational value of the original texts, translators can support language learning and cultural education for young audiences. The findings suggest that Indonesian versions of the songs might offer more opportunities for language enrichment due to their higher content word ratio. While the study provides significant insights, it also has limitations. The sample size of four songs, while providing a focused analysis, may not be representative of all children's songs or other genres of literature. Additionally, the analysis of lexical density, while informative, does not capture all aspects of translation quality, such as fluency, coherence, and stylistic fidelity. Future research could expand the sample size and include additional metrics to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of translation quality.

Future research could explore several avenues to build on the findings of this study. One potential direction is to examine a larger corpus of children's songs and other

genres to see if the observed patterns hold true across different types of texts. Researchers could also investigate the impact of specific translation strategies on lexical density and overall translation quality. Additionally, studies could explore the perspectives of translators and readers to gain insights into the practical challenges and reception of translated texts.

This study has highlighted the complexities and challenges involved in achieving word-level equivalence in translation, particularly in the context of children's songs translated from English to Indonesian. The significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions underscores the importance of using appropriate translation strategies to convey the intended meaning and effect of the source text. Translators must navigate linguistic, cultural, and contextual challenges to produce translations that are both accurate and engaging. The findings from this study provide valuable insights for translators and highlight the importance of considering lexical density as a metric for evaluating translation quality. By understanding the factors that contribute to differences in lexical density, translators can develop more effective strategies to achieve word-level equivalence and maintain the intended meaning and effect of the original text.

Translation studies have long been concerned with the notion of equivalence, which is central to the practice of translating texts from one language to another. Equivalence refers to the relationship between a source text (ST) and a target text (TT) that allows the latter to be considered as equivalent to the former in terms of meaning and effect. Mona Baker's (2001) exploration of equivalence at the word level provides a detailed framework for understanding the complexities involved in this process. According to Baker, word-level equivalence is the most basic form of equivalence, focusing on individual words and their direct counterparts in the target language (TL). However, achieving word-level equivalence is not always straightforward due to differences in language structures, cultures, and contexts.

Baker identifies several problems of non-equivalence at the word level, which can pose significant challenges for translators. These problems include culture-specific concepts, the absence of a concept in the target culture, semantically complex words, differences in form, varying frequencies of usage, differences in range of meaning, the use of loanwords, and idiomatic expressions. Each of these issues requires careful consideration and often creative solutions to convey the same meaning and effect in the TL as in the source language (SL).

The aim of this paper is to provide a detailed analysis of the issues of non-equivalence at the word level in the translation of children's songs from English to

Indonesian. By focusing on popular children's songs, the study seeks to highlight the practical challenges faced by translators and the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges. Children's songs, with their repetitive structures and cultural references, provide a rich context for examining issues of non-equivalence and strategies for achieving equivalence.

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in Mona Baker's (2001) concept of word-level equivalence, which identifies eight key issues of non-equivalence at the word level. Each of these issues presents unique challenges for translators and requires specific strategies to address.

Some words are deeply embedded in the culture of the source language (SL) and do not have direct equivalents in the target language (TL). These can include terms related to social customs, religious practices, and specific cultural artifacts. For instance, words describing particular holidays, traditional clothing, or social rituals may not have direct counterparts in the TL, necessitating creative translation solutions that convey the cultural context and meaning.

Sometimes, the concept itself may not exist in the target culture, making it challenging to find a suitable translation. For example, certain terms related to local flora, fauna, or cuisine may not have equivalents in the TL because the concepts they represent are unknown in the target culture. This lack of equivalence can require the translator to provide additional explanations or find approximate terms that capture the essence of the original concept.

A word in the SL may encompass multiple meanings or concepts that cannot be captured by a single word in the TL. This semantic complexity requires careful consideration to convey the full meaning in translation. For example, a word like "spirit" can have various interpretations, including religious, emotional, or cultural connotations, depending on the context. Translators must analyze the specific usage in the SL and choose the best possible equivalent in the TL.

The SL might have a specific grammatical or morphological form that the TL lacks. For example, some languages use gender-specific forms for certain words, while others do not. These structural differences can complicate the translation process. A language like French, which distinguishes between masculine and feminine nouns, may pose challenges when translating into English, which does not make such distinctions. Translators need to adapt the grammatical structures while

A word in the SL might be commonly used, while its closest counterpart in the TL might be rare or even obsolete. This can affect how natural or appropriate the translation sounds. For instance, an English word

frequently used in everyday conversation might have a formal or outdated equivalent in another language. Translators must balance fidelity to the original text with the need to produce a translation that sounds natural and relatable to the target audience. Words often have different connotations or a different scope of meaning across languages. A direct translation might cover only part of the original meaning, or it might have additional, unintended connotations. For example, the English word "home" conveys not just a physical space but also emotional warmth and comfort. Its translation into another language might capture the physical aspect but miss the emotional nuances. Translators need to understand these nuances to achieve a more accurate translation. When the source text includes words borrowed from other languages, these might not have established equivalents in the TL. Translators need to decide whether to retain the loan word or find an appropriate substitute. For instance, technical or scientific terms often remain in their original language in translations, but this practice can vary depending on the field and the target audience's familiarity with the terms. Idioms and fixed expressions rarely translate directly. Their meanings are often specific to the cultural and linguistic context of the SL, requiring creative solutions to convey the same sense in the TL. For example, the English idiom "kick the bucket" (meaning to die) has no direct equivalent in many languages. Translators must find idiomatic expressions in the TL that convey the same meaning or paraphrase the idiom to fit the cultural context.

Mona Baker's framework provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the complexities of word-level equivalence in translation. Each issue of non-equivalence requires careful analysis and thoughtful strategies to ensure that the translation remains faithful to the original text while being meaningful and natural in the target language. This theoretical framework serves as the foundation for analyzing the translation of children's songs in this study, highlighting the practical challenges faced by translators and the creative solutions they employ to achieve equivalence.

Lexical density, defined as the proportion of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) to the total number of words, provides a useful metric for comparing translations. Higher lexical density indicates a higher proportion of content words, which can reflect the complexity and richness of the text. This study examines the lexical density of English and Indonesian versions of selected children's songs to understand how translation affects the content and structure of the songs. The songs selected for this study are "Wheels on the Bus," "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," "Bath Song," and "Old MacDonald." These songs are widely known and have been translated

into numerous languages, including Indonesian. They provide a rich context for examining issues of non-equivalence and the strategies translators use to achieve word-level equivalence.

METHOD

This study employed a comparative analysis to examine the English and Indonesian versions of four selected children's songs: "Wheels on the Bus," "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," "Bath Song," and "Old MacDonald." These songs were chosen for their popularity and the availability of both English and Indonesian versions. The first step involves transcribing the lyrics of both the English and Indonesian versions of each song to ensure that the analysis is based on accurate and complete representations of the texts. The transcriptions are reviewed for consistency and accuracy, providing a reliable foundation for the analysis. Lexical density, defined as the proportion of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) to the total number of words, serves as a key metric in this study. Calculating lexical density involves identifying and counting the content words in each version of the songs and dividing this count by the total number of words. This calculation provides insight into the complexity and richness of the language used in each version.

To determine if there are significant differences in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the songs, statistical tests, including t-tests, are employed. The t-test is appropriate for this analysis as it helps to determine whether the observed differences in lexical density are statistically significant or could have occurred by chance. The analysis aims to test two hypotheses: the null hypothesis (H0) that there is no significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the children's songs, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) that there is a significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the children's songs. By testing these hypotheses, the study seeks to understand whether the process of translation significantly alters the lexical density of the songs, indicating changes in content richness and complexity.

The data for this study are collected from publicly available videos of the selected children's songs on YouTube. The English versions are sourced from popular channels such as Cocomelon, while the Indonesian versions are obtained from equivalent sources that provide accurate and culturally relevant translations. Each song is transcribed manually to ensure precision, and the transcriptions are cross-checked for accuracy. The process of calculating lexical density involves identifying content words, counting the total number of words, and calculating the proportion of content words to the total number of

words. For instance, if the English version of "Wheels on the Bus" has 204 words, with 86 being content words, the lexical density would be calculated as approximately 42.16%.

To compare the means of the lexical densities between the English and Indonesian versions, the means are calculated, and t-tests are performed to determine if the differences are statistically significant. The results of the t-tests indicate the probability that the observed differences occurred by chance. A p-value less than 0.05 is typically considered statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H0) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H1), suggesting that there is a significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the songs. Lexical density provides a quantitative measure of how information-rich a text is. Higher lexical density indicates a greater proportion of content words, which typically suggests a more complex and informative text. By comparing the lexical densities of the English and Indonesian versions, this study seeks to understand how translation impacts the content richness and complexity of children's songs and what strategies translators use to address issues of non-equivalence. This methodology provides a systematic approach to analyzing word-level equivalence in translation, highlighting the practical aspects of translation and contributing to the broader field of translation studies by providing empirical evidence on the impact of translation on lexical density and content richness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

1. Statistical Analysis Lexical Density Calculation

Lexical density, which is the proportion of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) to the total number of words, serves as a key metric in this study. To calculate lexical density, content words were identified and counted in both the English and Indonesian versions of each song. This count was then divided by the total number of words in each version, providing a quantitative measure of the text's information richness.

For example, in the English version of "Wheels on the Bus," the total number of words is 204, with 86 of these being content words. The lexical density is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Lexical Density} &= \left(\frac{\text{Content Words}}{\text{Total words}} \right) \times 100 \\ &= \left(\frac{86}{204} \right) \times 100 \\ &= 42.16\% \end{aligned}$$

A similar calculation is performed for the Indonesian version, which has 110 total words with 70 being content words:

$$\text{Lexical Density} = \left(\frac{\text{Content Words}}{\text{Total words}} \right) \times 100$$

70

$$\begin{aligned} &= \left(\frac{\quad}{110} \right) \times 100 \\ &= 63,4\% \end{aligned}$$

Statistical Tests

To determine if the differences in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions are statistically significant, t-tests were conducted. The t-test compares the means of the two groups to see if they are significantly different from each other.

Hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the children's songs.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the children's songs.

Example Data Analysis

1. Wheels on the Bus

○ **English:** Total Words: 204,
Content Words: 86, Lexical Density:
42.16%

Indonesian: Total Words: 110, Content

Words: 70, Lexical

Density: 63.64%

2. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

○ **English:** Total Words: 122,
Content Words: 51, Lexical Density:
41.80%

○ **Indonesian:** Total Words:
120, Content Words: 70, Lexical
Density: 58.33%

3. Bath Song

○ **English:** Total Words: 208,
Content Words: 86, Lexical Density:
41.35%

○ **Indonesian:** Total Words:
112, Content Words: 65, Lexical
Density: 58.04%

4. Old MacDonald

○ **English:** Total Words: 204,
Content Words: 100, Lexical Density:
49.02%

○ **Indonesian:** Total Words:
144, Content Words: 80, Lexical
Density: 55.56%

The mean lexical density for the English versions of the songs is approximately 43.08%, while the mean lexical density for the Indonesian versions is approximately 58.89%. Using these means, a t-test can be performed to determine if the difference is statistically significant.

T-test Results

Given the data presented in the analysis of lexical density in English and Indonesian versions of children's songs, the t-test results show a p-value less than 0.05. This indicates that the difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions is statistically significant. Consequently, we reject the null hypothesis (H0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1). This section will explain in detail the implications of these findings, the significance of the p-value, and how this impacts our understanding of translation equivalence.

Understanding the T-test Results

The t-test is a statistical tool used to compare the means of two groups to determine if they are significantly different

from each other. In this study, we compared the mean lexical densities of English and Indonesian versions of selected children's songs. The mean lexical density for the English versions was approximately 43.08%, while for the Indonesian versions, it was approximately 58.89%. The t-test calculated whether the observed difference between these means is statistically significant or if it could have occurred by random chance.

The p-value, obtained from the t-test, represents the probability that the observed difference between the means occurred by chance. A p-value less than 0.05 is typically considered statistically significant in social sciences and humanities, indicating a less than 5% likelihood that the difference is due to random variation alone. In this study, the p-value was less than 0.05, which strongly suggests that the difference in lexical density is indeed significant and not due to random chance.

Rejecting the Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis (H0) in this context posits that there is no significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the children's songs. The alternative hypothesis (H1) suggests that there is a significant difference. Given the p-value obtained from the t-test, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This means that the lexical density of the translated songs in Indonesian is significantly different from that of the original English versions.

Implications of the Findings

Chi-Square

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

$$= \frac{(86 - 42.16)^2}{42.16} + \frac{(70 - 63.64)^2}{63.64} + \frac{(51 - 41.80)^2}{41.80} + \frac{(70 - 58.33)^2}{58.33}$$

$$\chi^2 = 45.08 + 0.635 + 2.024 + 2.39 = 50.573$$

Translation Practices

The significant difference in lexical density indicates that the process of translating children's songs from English to Indonesian involves changes that affect the content richness and complexity of the texts. Translators may need to add more content words in the Indonesian versions to convey the same meaning, which could be due to differences in linguistic structures, cultural references, and the need to maintain naturalness in the target language.

Cultural Adaptation

Children's songs often contain cultural references and idiomatic expressions that do not have direct equivalents

in the target language. The higher lexical density in Indonesian versions suggests that translators are making adjustments to adapt these cultural references appropriately, ensuring that the songs remain meaningful and engaging for Indonesian children.

Educational Impact

The lexical density of children's songs can impact their educational value. Songs with higher lexical density may provide richer linguistic input, which can be beneficial for language development. The findings suggest that Indonesian versions of the songs might offer more content words, potentially enriching the linguistic environment for children learning Indonesian.

Translation Strategies

The study highlights the importance of using effective translation strategies to achieve word-level equivalence. Translators might use paraphrasing, cultural substitution, and the incorporation of loan words to maintain the meaning and naturalness of the original text. Understanding these strategies can help improve translation practices and ensure that translations are both accurate and culturally relevant.

Significance of the P-value

The p-value obtained from the t-test is a crucial indicator of the reliability of the results. A p-value less than 0.05 means that there is a less than 5% chance that the observed difference in lexical density is due to random variation. This low probability strengthens the confidence in our findings, indicating that the difference in lexical density is real and significant.

The significance of the p-value extends beyond merely rejecting the null hypothesis. It also provides insight into the degree of change that occurs during translation. The lower the p-value, the stronger the evidence that the observed difference is meaningful. In this study, a p-value less than 0.05 suggests robust evidence that translation significantly impacts the lexical density of children's songs.

Further Analysis and Interpretation

While the t-test results indicate a significant difference in lexical density, it is also essential to understand the underlying factors contributing to this difference. A detailed examination of the specific words and phrases that change during translation can provide deeper insights into the translation process. For example:

Semantic Shifts

Some English words may have broader or narrower meanings compared to their Indonesian counterparts. Translators might need to choose words with more specific or general meanings to convey the same concept, affecting the overall lexical density.

Cultural Nuances

Cultural references and idiomatic expressions often require creative solutions to ensure they are understandable and relevant in the target culture. This might involve adding explanatory words or phrases, increasing lexical density.

Linguistic Structures

Differences in grammatical and syntactic structures between English and Indonesian can also impact lexical density. For example, English might use auxiliary verbs or prepositions that have no direct equivalent in Indonesian, leading to the use of more content words in the translation. To illustrate the challenges and strategies involved in achieving word-level equivalence in translation, let's revisit and expand on the examples provided in the data analysis. These case studies will delve deeper into the nuances of translating popular children's songs from English to Indonesian, highlighting specific issues of non-equivalence and the corresponding strategies used by translators.

1. Wheels on the Bus:

- English: Total Words: 204, Content Words: 86, Lexical Density: 42.16%
- Indonesian: Total Words: 110, Content Words: 70, Lexical Density: 63.64%

The song "Wheels on the Bus" is a classic example of a children's song with repetitive and rhythmic structures. The significant increase in lexical density in the Indonesian version indicates that translators had to add more content words to convey the same meaning. This could be due to several reasons:

Cultural References: The phrase "all through the town" in English evokes a specific image of a bus traveling through various parts of a town. In Indonesian, the translation "keliling kota" directly translates to "around the city," which preserves the meaning but requires fewer words. However, other parts of the song may require more descriptive phrases to explain cultural references or actions that are familiar to English-speaking children but might need further clarification for Indonesian audiences.

Repetitive Structures: The repetitive structure of the song, which is designed to be catchy and easy for children to remember, might be adapted in Indonesian to fit natural speech patterns. For example, the line "The wheels on the bus go round and round" is translated to "Roda-roda bis berputar, berputar," where "berputar" means "to turn." The repetition is maintained, but the translator might add or modify certain words to keep the rhythm and flow natural in Indonesian.

Sound Imitation: The English version uses sound imitations like "beep, beep, beep" and "swish, swish, swish," which are translated to "din, din, din" and "swis, swis, swis" in Indonesian. These onomatopoeic translations are essential to preserve the playful and

engaging nature of the song, but they also contribute to the higher lexical density as different languages often have varying phonetic representations of sounds.

2. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star:

- English: Total Words: 122, Content Words: 51, Lexical Density: 41.80%
- Indonesian: Total Words: 120, Content Words: 70, Lexical Density: 58.33%

"Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" is another classic children's song that presents unique challenges in translation due to its poetic and idiomatic expressions.

Poetic Imagery: The English version uses simple yet evocative imagery, such as "twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are." In Indonesian, this is translated to "Bintang kecil di langit menghiasi angkasa," which means "Little stars in the sky adorn the universe." The translation captures the essence of the imagery but requires more content words to convey the same emotional impact and visual picture.

Idiomatic Expressions: The phrase "up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky" involves idiomatic use of "up above" and the metaphor comparing stars to diamonds. The Indonesian translation "Engkau jauh di sana, indah bagai permata" translates to "You are far away there, beautiful like a gem." While "permata" (gem) is used instead of "diamond," the overall meaning is preserved, though it takes more words to convey the same imagery and emotional resonance.

Semantic Nuances: The word "twinkle" itself is semantically rich, implying not just shining but doing so intermittently and delicately. Translating this concept accurately requires understanding the cultural and linguistic nuances, which often leads to a higher lexical density in the target language as translators add descriptive elements to capture the full meaning.

3. Bath Song:

- English: Total Words: 208, Content Words: 86, Lexical Density: 41.35%
- Indonesian: Total Words: 112, Content Words: 65, Lexical Density: 58.04%

The "Bath Song" involves instructions and descriptions that are straightforward in English but might require additional words in Indonesian to maintain the playful and instructional tone.

Instructional Phrases: The English version includes lines like "Wash my hair, do-do-do-do-do-do" and "Wash my face, do-do-do-do-do-do." These lines are translated to "Cuci rambut do-do-do-do-do-do" and "Cuci muka do-do-do-do-do-do" in Indonesian. While the structure remains similar, additional descriptive words might be needed in

other parts of the song to maintain the instructional clarity and playful tone, contributing to higher lexical density.

Descriptive Additions: The phrase "I'll be the cleanest kid you've ever seen" might be translated to something like "Aku akan jadi anak paling bersih yang pernah kau lihat," which adds more descriptive elements to convey the same enthusiasm and clarity. This helps children understand the instructions and engage with the song in a fun way, even if it means increasing the word count and lexical density.

4. Old MacDonald:

- English: Total Words: 204, Content Words: 100, Lexical Density: 49.02%
- Indonesian: Total Words: 144, Content Words: 80, Lexical Density: 55.56%

"Old MacDonald" is a song filled with animal sounds and farm-related vocabulary, which can be challenging to translate due to differences in cultural and linguistic representations of these concepts.

Animal Sounds: The English version uses onomatopoeic sounds like "oink-oink," "moo-moo," and "quack-quack" for different animals. These sounds are translated to "uik-uik," "moo-moo," and "kwek-kwek" in Indonesian. While some sounds remain similar, others might require adjustment to fit Indonesian phonetics and cultural familiarity with these sounds.

Farm Vocabulary: Words like "farm," "sheep," and "duck" might not have direct equivalents in Indonesian or might require more descriptive phrases to convey the same meaning. For instance, "farm" is translated to "peternakan," and "sheep" to "domba," which are direct translations but may need additional context or descriptive words in the song to ensure clarity and engagement.

Cultural Adaptation: Translators might need to adapt certain phrases to better fit Indonesian cultural contexts. For example, the repetitive line "Old MacDonald had a farm" might be translated to "Kakek MacDonald punya peternakan," with "Kakek" (grandfather) replacing "Old" to fit a more culturally appropriate term for an elderly farmer. This adaptation not only changes the word count but also aligns the song better with cultural norms.

Discussion

This study has investigated the concept of word-level equivalence in translation, specifically focusing on children's songs translated from English to Indonesian. By analyzing the lexical density of the songs in both languages, the research aimed to identify the challenges

faced by translators and the strategies employed to overcome these challenges. The statistical analysis, particularly the t-tests, revealed a significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions of the songs, suggesting that the translation process has a substantial impact on the content richness and complexity of the texts. One of the most significant challenges in translation is dealing with culture-specific concepts that have no direct equivalents in the target language. For example, children's songs often contain references to cultural practices, social customs, and specific artifacts that are unique to the source language's culture. Translators must find ways to adapt these references to make them understandable and relevant to the target audience. This may involve using descriptive phrases, finding culturally equivalent concepts, or sometimes creating entirely new terms. Semantic complexity is another critical issue, where a single word in the source language might encompass multiple meanings or nuances that cannot be captured by a single word in the target language. Translators must carefully analyze the context in which these words are used and select the most appropriate equivalents, often requiring additional words or phrases to fully convey the intended meaning. This can increase the lexical density of the translated text, as seen in the Indonesian versions of the children's songs. Differences in grammatical and morphological forms between languages can also pose significant challenges. English and Indonesian have different syntactic structures, with English often using auxiliary verbs and prepositions that do not have direct counterparts in Indonesian. Conversely, Indonesian might use affixes to convey meaning that would require separate words in English. These structural differences necessitate adjustments in the translation process to maintain the natural flow and readability of the text in the target language. Words that are commonly used in the source language might have rare or even obsolete equivalents in the target language. Additionally, words in different languages often have different ranges of meaning and connotations. Translators must navigate these differences to ensure that the translated text sounds natural and appropriate to the target audience. This can involve choosing words that may not be direct equivalents but better capture the intended effect and meaning. Loanwords and idiomatic expressions present additional challenges. Loanwords from other languages may not have established equivalents in the target language, and idiomatic expressions are often deeply rooted in the cultural and linguistic context of the source language. Translators must decide whether to retain the loanword, find a substitute, or provide an explanation. For idiomatic expressions, they might need to find equivalent idioms in the target language or create

paraphrases that convey the same meaning. The use of lexical density as a metric for analyzing translations provided valuable insights into the differences between the English and Indonesian versions of the songs. Lexical density, defined as the proportion of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) to the total number of words, serves as an indicator of the informational richness of a text. The study found that the Indonesian versions had significantly higher lexical densities compared to the English versions. This suggests that the translation process involved adding more content words to convey the same meaning, likely due to the need for additional explanations and adaptations to cultural references. The findings of this study have practical implications for translators working with children's literature and other genres that involve significant cultural content. Translators must be aware of the challenges posed by non-equivalence and be prepared to employ a range of strategies to achieve accurate and natural translations. This includes being attuned to cultural nuances, understanding the semantic complexities of words, and making informed decisions about how to handle loanwords and idiomatic expressions. The study also highlights the educational implications of translating children's songs. Songs with higher lexical density provide richer linguistic input, which can be beneficial for language development. By ensuring that translations maintain the educational value of the original texts, translators can support language learning and cultural education for young audiences. The findings suggest that Indonesian versions of the songs might offer more opportunities for language enrichment due to their higher content word ratio. While the study provides significant insights, it also has limitations. The sample size of four songs, while providing a focused analysis, may not be representative of all children's songs or other genres of literature. Additionally, the analysis of lexical density, while informative, does not capture all aspects of translation quality, such as fluency, coherence, and stylistic fidelity. Future research could expand the sample size and include additional metrics to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of translation quality. Future research could explore several avenues to build on the findings of this study. One potential direction is to examine a larger corpus of children's songs and other genres to see if the observed patterns hold true across different types of texts. Researchers could also investigate the impact of specific translation strategies on lexical density and overall translation quality. Additionally, studies could explore the perspectives of translators and readers to gain insights into the practical challenges and reception of translated texts.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has highlighted the complexities and challenges involved in achieving word-level equivalence in translation,

particularly in the context of children's songs translated from English to Indonesian. The significant difference in lexical density between the English and Indonesian versions underscores the importance of using appropriate translation strategies to convey the intended meaning and effect of the source text. Translators must navigate linguistic, cultural, and contextual challenges to produce translations that are both accurate and engaging. The findings from this study provide valuable insights for translators and highlight the importance of considering lexical density as a metric for evaluating translation quality. By understanding the factors that contribute to differences in lexical density, translators can develop more effective strategies to achieve word-level equivalence and maintain the intended meaning and effect of the original text.

REFERENCES

- Baker, M. (2001). *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. Routledge. [Link to book](#)
- House, J. (2001). Translation Quality Assessment: Past and Present. *Linguistica Antverpiensia*, 2, 15-35. [Link](#)
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice-Hall International. [Link](#)

Links to Song Lyrics

- "Wheels on the Bus" (English): https://youtu.be/e_04ZrNroTo?feature=shared
- "Roda-Roda di Bis" (Indonesian): <https://youtu.be/1erHKENMY3s?feature=shared>
- "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" (English): https://youtu.be/n38kGst16sI?si=M_Dw1XZgbKnLweYb
- "Bintang Kecil di Langit" (Indonesian): <https://youtu.be/Si97OOPggCO?feature=shared>
- "Bath Song" (English): <https://youtu.be/WRVsOCh907o?si=oHPJAMYoWxaAVWMC>
- "Lagu Mandi" (Indonesian): <https://youtu.be/vB50KVfvHM0?si=DUCmjmYqwrX-Pz7>
- "Old MacDonald" (English): <https://youtu.be/Wm4R8d0d8kU?feature=shared>
- "Kakek MacDonald" (Indonesian): <https://youtu.be/Wm4R8d0d8kU?feature=shared>