# THE TRANSLATION OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

# IN TAUFIQ ISMAIL'S POEMS BY JOHN H. MCGLYNN

## A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining

the Bachelor's Degree in English Literature

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**YOGYAKARTA**

**2023**

# MOTTO

**"Life flows like the air"**

(Researcher)

# DEDICATION

*This graduating paper is dedicated to me, my family especially my parents, my*

*friends, and all lecturers of the English Literature Departments of the State*

*Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga.*

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**THE TRANSLATION OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**
**IN TAUFIQ ISMAIL'S POEMS BY JOHN H. MCGLYNN**

Kami menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqosyah untuk memenuhi salah satu syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

Atas perhatiannya, kami mengucapkan terima kasih.

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# FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduating paper is genuinely my work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other researchers' opinions of findings included in this research are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, August 7 2023

The researcher,

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| Abbreviation | Explanation |
|---|---|
| SL | Source Language |
| TL | Target Language |
| TBSF | Trem Berklenengan di San Francisco |
| SDPB | Sapi Daging Peternakan Brenton |
| PTBM | Pantun Terang Bulan di Midwest |
| ASC | Adakah Suara Cemara |
| B | Bulan |
| MSB | Malam Sebelum Badai |
| F | Frequency |

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**The Translation of Figurative Language
in Taufiq Ismail's Poems by John H. McGlynn**

By: Putri Cahya Andriani

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze types of figurative language, the strategy used to translate the figurative language, and to find out how the figurative translation deal with equivalence in translation in six poems by Taufiq Ismail entitled *Trem Berklenengan di Kota San Francisco, Sapi Daging Peternakan Brenton, Pantun Terang Bulan di Midwest*, *Adakah Suara Cemara, Bulan, and Malam Sebelum Badai* that are translated into *The Clatter of Cable Cars in San Francisco*, *The Brenton Stockyards*, *Full Moon in the Midwest, Is It the Sound of Pines*, *The Moon*, and *The Night Before Storm* by John H. McGlynn. This research uses a descriptive-qualitative method. The researcher finds 60 data of figurative language in the Taufiq Ismail's poems. The figurative languages are 18 metonymies, 18 personifications, 14 metaphors, 5 similes, 3 hyperboles, 1 synecdoche, and 1 paradox. The researcher divided the 60 data into 3 categories of translation strategies, and discovers that the most dominant strategy is to substitute the figurative language of source language with the figurative language of target language with 50 data. Last, there are two categories of equivalence, namely formal and dynamic. The researcher discovers that the translation figurative language dominantly consists dynamic equivalence with 40 data, which means besides preserving the sense of figurativeness from the original poems, the translator concerns more with the language naturalness of the translation results. The reader from TL are allowed to experiences the figurative languages as faithful as possible while reading the Taufiq Ismail poems translated by John H. McGlynn. The researcher suggests the next researchers who are also interested in this study to use other theories of figurative language translation strategy and use other object, such as novels and short stories that contain more figurative language.

Keywords: *analysis, figurative language, translation strategy, translation equivalence*

**The Translation of Figurative Language
in Taufiq Ismail's Poems by John H. McGlynn**

By: Putri Cahya Andriani

**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis jenis bahasa kiasan, strategi yang digunakan untuk menerjemahkan bahasa kiasan, dan untuk mengetahui bagaimana kesetaraan penerjemahan dalam bahasa kiasan pada enam puisi milik Taufiq Ismail berjudul *Trem Berklenengan di Kota San Francisco, Sapi Daging Peternakan Brenton, Pantun Terang Bulan di Midwest*, *Adakah Suara Cemara, Bulan dan Malam Sebelum Badai* yang diterjemahkan menjadi *The Clatter of Cable Cars in San Francisco*, *The Brenton Stockyards*, *Full Moon in the Midwest, Is It the Sound of Pines*, *The Moon*, dan *The Night Before Storm* oleh John H. McGlynn. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif-kualitatif. Peneliti menemukan 62 data bahasa kiasan di dalam puisi-puisi Taufiq Ismail, yaitu 18 metonimia, 18 personifikasi, 14 metafora, 5 simile, 3 hiperbola dan 1 sinekdok, dan 1 paradox. Penerjemah membagi 60 data tersebut menjadi tiga kategori strategi penerjemahan dan menemukan bahwa strategi yang paling dominan dipakai adalah untuk mengganti bahasa kiasan dari bahasa sumber dengan bahasa kiasan dari bahasa sasaran dengan 50 data yang telah ditemukan. Terakhir, ada dua jenis kesetaraan dalam penerjemahan, yaitu formal dan dinamik. Penerjemah menemukan bahwa penerjemahan bahasa kiasan ini dominan mengandung kesetaraan dinamik dengan 40 data, yang berarti selain mempertahankan sense bahasa kiasan dari puisi asli, penerjemah juga cenderung memperhatikan kealamian bahasa di hasil penerjemahannya. Pembaca dari bahasa sasaran juga bisa merasakan bahasa kiasan setepat mungkin ketika membaca puisi Taufiq Ismail yang diterjemahkan oleh John H. McGlynn. Peneliti memberi saran bagi peneliti selanjutnya yang tertarik dengan penelitian ini untuk menggunakan teori lain mengenai strategi penerjemahan bahasa kiasan dan juga menggunakan objek lain seperti novel dan cerita pendek yang mengandung lebih banyak bahasa kiasan.

Kata kunci: *analisis, bahasa kiasan, strategi penerjemahan, kesetaraan penerjemahan*

**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 Background

Allah blesses humans with the ability to speak, distinguishing them from other creatures on Earth. Speech is not merely communicating, but there are intelligence activities behind it that make human communication the highest rank of quality. Allah put consciousness and feeling in the human body, which they collaborate to make humans have the urge to communicate. It is in line with the verse of the Quran, which reads:

<div dir="rtl">

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ (٤)

</div>

"and taught them speech." (Ar-Rahman: 4)

According to tafsir of Al-Mukhtasar, under the supervision of Syaikh bin Abdullah bin Humaid (the Imam of Masjidil Haram) in (*Surat Ar-Rahman Ayat 4*, n.d.), the verse explains that Allah taught humans how to convey what is in his heart with utterance and writing.

Allah also created language as one of the intermediaries for humans to communicate. As widely known, people worldwide speak many languages, and each language has its characteristics. These characteristics distinguish one language from another, which makes the languages vary and diver. It is also in line with another verse in the Quran, which reads:

<div dir="rtl">

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَالِكَ لَآيَا تٍ لِلْعَالِمِينَ (٢٢)

</div>

"And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your language and colours. Surely in this are signs of those sound knowledge." (Ar-Rum: 22)

"Language represents the culture because the words refer to the culture" (Nida, 2001, p. 27). Language is a set of verbal symbols, most of which are auditory and some written, which are the most distinctive cultural features that reflect the beliefs and practices of a society. An expert translator realizes that, in the end, words only have meaning concerning the culture in question. (Nida, 2001, p. 13). Therefore, a translator, besides being required to master the language, must also understand the differences that exist between languages. As previously explained, language is part of the culture, so one language cannot be equated with another language even though it is still in the same language family. Some concepts and rules must be obeyed in a language. So, translation is a bridge to unite two different languages.

People surely touch a lot with languages other than their mother tongue for various purposes. For instance, to read written literary works such as poetry in other languages. Bilingual or multilingual people will not find it difficult. Still, the thing is different for those who may not be able or are not given the opportunity to learn the other language. In this phenomenon, translation is needed.

Nonetheless, they do not need to painstakingly translate the works word for word since there are translated versions of those works provided by a translator. A translator is a person who is especially dedicated to translating text from one language to another language. Thanks to translators, those works can be

read by the general public without any obstacles in the form of language differences.

Talks about written works, poetry is notorious for its beauty and aesthetic way of delivering thoughts and emotions through language. The poets convey their thoughts either denotatively or connotatively. In denotative conveyance, the reader will easily understand what the poet means. In contrast, connotative conveyance makes the reader read a poem closely and use their knowledge to apprehend what the poet means. It is what is called the figurative language. The use of figurative language in written works such as poetry has an important role in drawing the reader's attention, such as deepening the meaning by escalating the imagination and being a literary device for the poets to enhance the aesthetic value of the poem itself.

Figurative language is a sequence of words that are meaningful but cannot be taken literally. It has many types, classified based on how the idea is explained using a word whose meaning is expanded, distorted, or even narrowed from its literal meaning. These meaning are called sense, "a meaning conveyed or intended" (*Merriam-Webster*, n.d.). The diction used by the poet is words with concepts and meanings that correspond to the language where the word comes from. Using some words in one language and another language of course different and it should be considered. This problem causes using the same words in figurative language to have a different effect in other languages. For example, the word cannot be understood, does not sound natural, or does not match the concept

of the word in the target language. For more understanding, the researcher gives an example of a problem as follows:

| Source Language | Target Language |
|---|---|
| ketika aku masih bercelana pendek | when I was in grade school uniform |

The figurative language above is translated by replacing one word with another. *Celana pendek* means *shorts* in English, but this term cannot be taken literally. The poet used the term *shorts* to substitute grade school uniforms because *shorts* are commonly worn by grade school male students in the source language's culture. The translator cannot translate it into *shorts*, because *shorts* have different functions in the target language's culture. So, the word is translated into its intended meaning. The translated text is a non-figurative to avoid misunderstanding from the reader of the target language.

Nida and Taber stated that "translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent" (Nida & Taber, 1982, p. 12). It means that translating any kind of text, including text that contains figurative language, must produce equivalent results in the target language. Equivalence in the translation of figurative language depends on the translator's intention and perspective in processing the translation.

Larson (in Angelia, 2020, p. 102) stated that "the purpose of a translator in translating figurative language is to maintain the three elements of clarity, forth, and beauty in the language". It means the aim of translating figurative language is to represent it as closely as possible and still be concerned with maintaining the

beauty of the poem. So, thoughtful strategies are required to translate the figurative language in poems, in which translating a figurative language is certainly more intricate because of possible difference in meanings of words between the two languages. The translator certainly uses the best strategy to convey the poet's aims for in figurative language. Whether there is a change in the types of figurative language or not after being translated is also something that has made the researcher curious for a long time.

In this research, the researcher has an ambition to analyze Indonesian poems and their translated version. In Indonesia, there are many great poets whose poems have been translated into English. One of the greatest Indonesian poets is Taufiq Ismail. He is not only famous domestically but also on the world stage. A literary critic from Dutch, A. Teeuw (in El Shirazy, 2014), praised Taufiq Ismail as a writer whose voice is very loud in the middle of the choir of polyphonic Indonesian poetry today. Many poems of Taufiq Ismail have been translated into English. One of the translators is John H. McGlynn, an American editor and translator who has lived in Indonesia since 1976. He has been translating many Indonesian literary works, including six poems from Taufiq Ismail.

Six of Taufiq Ismail's poems, *Trem Berklenengan di Kota San Francisco, Sapi Daging Peternakan Brenton*, *Pantun Terang Bulan di Midwest*, *Adakah Suara Cemara, Bulan,* and *Malam Sebelum Badai* translated by John H. McGlynn in his anthology book entitled *On Foreign Shores: American Images in Indonesian Poetry*. This anthology specifically translated Indonesian poems into English as a summary of American images presented by twenty-one Indonesian

poets, including Taufiq Ismail, who had visited and lived in the United States. In addition, McGlynn (1990, p. viii) stated that the book was published in conjunction with the Festival of Indonesia in the United States in 1990-1991. In this anthology, those poems are translated into *The Clatter of Cable Cars in San Francisco*, *The Brenton Stockyards, Full Moon in the Midwest*, *Is It the Sound of Pines*, *The Moon*, and *The Night Before Storm*.

The researcher chose the poems from Taufiq Ismail as the object of this research because Taufiq Ismail is a Muslim poet, and his poems are rich with figurative language. The researcher also used Taufiq Ismail's poem translation from John H. McGlynn because he has a big name in his profession as a translator and has been involved in translating Indonesian literary works for decades. His ability to translate literary works is no longer in doubt.

## 1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the researcher proposes several problems which are:

1. What types of figurative language are found in Taufiq Ismail's poems in the anthology *On Foreign Shores* by John H. McGlynn?

2. What strategies are used in translating the figurative language in Taufiq Ismail's poems in the anthology *On Foreign Shores* by John H. McGlynn?

3. How is the equivalence of figurative language translation in Taufiq Ismail's poems in the anthology *On Foreign Shores* by John H. McGlynn?

**1.3 Objective of Study**

As shown in the background of the study and the research questions, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To find and classify the types of figurative language used in the poems of Taufiq Ismail in the anthology *On Foreign Shores* by John H. McGlynn

2. To identify the strategies used by the translator in translating the types of figurative language in Taufiq Ismail's poems in the anthology *On Foreign Shores* by John H. McGlynn

3. To find out the dominant types of equivalence in the translation of the figurative language in the anthology *On Foreign Shores* by John H. McGlynn

**1.4 Scope of Study**

The scope study of this research is the lines and stanzas of Taufiq Ismail's poems entitled *Trem Berklenengan di Kota San Francisco, Sapi Daging Peternakan Brenton*, *Pantun Terang Bulan di Midwest*, *Adakah Suara Cemara, Bulan,* and *Malam Sebelum Badai* that contains figurative language. To be more specific, this research focuses on the types of figurative language, the strategy of translating figurative language, and the types of equivalence in the translation of figurative language.

**1.5 Significance of Study**

This research aims to add a contribution to the knowledge about the translation of figurative language. This research proposes a broader view in analyzing the translation of figurative language, which is discovering the alteration types of figurative language before and after being translated and

figuring out how the equivalence appears in the translation of figurative language. The equivalence in translating of figurative language becomes an interesting topic since figurative language is more complex than literal language.

## 1.6 Literature Review

As already explained, this research aims to figure out the classification of figurative language found in Taufiq Ismail's poems and to explain the strategy and the equivalence in translating the figurative language by the translator. The researcher found several previous research that are related to this research. The previous research are also focused on translating figurative language.

Firstly, a journal entitled *Translation Strategy of Figurative Language in the Novel the Fault in Our Stars* by Deby Angelia from the University of Petra Christian in 2020. Angelia's research focuses on describing the strategy applied in translating the figurative language in the poem. Angelina divided the poems into three parts of strategy following the theory of Larson and explained how the strategy is used to translate figurative language.

Secondly, a thesis entitled *Figurative Language Translation of Indonesian-English Poems by John H. McGlynn* by Irfan Hardiyatna from The State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah in 2019. Hardiyatna's thesis focuses on examining the types of figurative language used by the translator and figures out how the strategies applied by the translator represent the translation style of the target poems. Hardiyatna used the figurative language translation theory by Patrizia Pierini to discuss the translation of figurative language.

Thirdly, a thesis entitled *The Translation Strategy of Figurative Language in A Song of the Sea by Hsu Chih Mo's Poetry* by Rima Fauziah from State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah in 2017. Fauziah's research focuses on analyzing the strategy used by the translator and figures out how the translation strategy applied in translating the poetry contributes to the aesthetic values of the target language. Fauziah also used figurative language translation theory by Patrizia Pierini to discuss the translation strategy of figurative language.

There are similarities and differences between their research and this research. Based on the previous research, they have the same interest which is about figurative language translation, and the literary work used in this study is different from all previous research. The first research uses the same theory about translation strategy from Larson but only focuses on describing the strategy used in translating figurative language. The second and the third research use different main theories. They used the theory from Pierini to discuss the strategy for translating figurative language.

This research has advantages that are not found in previous studies. The translation strategy and equivalence discussed in this study can explain more deeply the changes in the types of figurative language that occur in the translation. In previous studies, it is not explained why changes in the type of figurative language could occur.

## 1.7 Theoretical Approach

This research employs several theories to analyze the figurative language in Taufiq Ismail's poems translated by John H. McGlynn in the anthology *On*

*Foreign Shores.* This research describes the classification of figurative language found in Taufiq Ismail's poems. This research also describes the strategy used to translate figurative language found in Taufiq Ismail's poems and to know the equivalence types that appear in the translation process of figurative language.

To discuss the first problem, the researcher uses the theory from M. H. Abrams and his co-author G. G. Harpham in their book entitled *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, which provides knowledge about figurative language in literary work. Abrams explains that figurative language has many types, which are:

1. Aporia

2. Conceit

3. Hyperbole

4. Irony

5. Litotes

6. Metaphor

7. Metonymy

8. Paradox

9. Periphrasis

10. Personification

11. Pun

12. Simile

13. Synecdoche

14. Understatement

After classifying the types of figurative language between the two versions of the poems, the second problem is adequate to be discussed because using certain strategies has different results, especially in terms of figurative language types. The researcher uses the theory of Mildred L. Larson in his book entitled *Meaning-Based Translating* to examine the strategies used in translating the figurative language that has been found. Larson describes that there are three strategies for translating figurative language based on the sense of the word, which are:

1. Translating the sense of the word non-figuratively

2. Retaining the word in the original but to add sense of the word

3. Substituting the figurative expression of SL with the figurative expression of TL

Since the aim of translation is to produce equivalence in the source language and the target language, the researcher tries to examine the equivalence that appears in the figurative language translation. To discuss the last problem, Eugene A. Nida, in his book entitled *Toward a Science of Translating*, explained that there are two types of equivalence based on how the text is translated, which are:

1. Formal

2. Dynamic

**1.8 Research Method**

**1.8.1 Types of Research**

This research is included in qualitative research. F. Auerbach (2006) stated that the qualitative method involves analyzing and interpreting text, and observations to discover meaningful descriptive patterns of certain phenomena. This research focuses on written literary works to obtain the data collection. The researcher uses descriptive analysis in providing the information and discussed data.

**1.8.2 Data Sources**

The data sources to support this research are primary data and secondary data. The primary data of this research is lines and stanzas that contain figurative language in the original version of Taufiq Ismail's poems. The original poems are *Trem Berklenengan di Kota San Francisco, Sapi Daging Peternakan Brenton*, *Pantun Terang Bulan di Midwest*, *Adakah Suara Cemara, Malam Sebelum Badai*, and *Bulan.* The secondary data are the figurative language in the translation version of Taufiq Ismail's poems, which are *The Clatter of Cable Cars in San Francisco, The Brenton Stockyards*, *Full Moon in the Midwest, Is It the Sound of Pines*, *The Moon*, and *The Night Before Storm.* Both versions are taken from an anthology book, *On Foreign Shores: American Images in Indonesian Poetry*, written by John H. McGlynn.

**1.8.3 Data Collection Technique**

Sugiyono stated that there are several data collection techniques, including observation, interview, documentation, and mixed method or triangulation (2013,

p. 225). A document can be in the form of writing, drawing, or someone's monumental works (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 240). The technique used in this research is documentation. To obtain the data sources, the researcher first reads the original and the translated version of Taufiq Ismail's poems carefully and thoroughly. Second, the researcher identified the figurative language variables found in the poems. Third, the researcher collected the data and created a figurative language database.

### 1.8.4 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique used in this research is the descriptive analysis technique. The researcher did several stages in this research:

1. The researcher collects the figurative language from the poems.
2. The researcher classifies the types of figurative language.
3. The researcher then identifies the translation strategies and the equivalence of figurative language translation.

In drawing the conclusion, the researcher displays quantitative data in the form of percentages. The researcher calculates the percentage (P) of data generated in this research by dividing the frequency (F) of the variable being searched by the number (N) of cases and multiplying it by a hundred per cent. Below is the calculation formula for this research.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

### 1.8.5 Paper Organization

This study contains four chapters. The first chapter presents the introduction, which includes the background of study, research questions,

objective and significance of study, literature review, theoretical approach, and research method. This introduction explains the Islamic integration-interconnection with linguistic matter as a part of humanity and the connection between linguistic matters and the phenomena in the linguistic field. Poetry is one of humanity's products closely related to linguistics, in which research questions could be formulated. The second chapter presents the theoretical background that presents the theories supporting this research. Linguistics is a field that many experts have discussed, so that many theories that could be utilized in the research. The third chapter is a research finding and discussion that elaborates on both data from poetry and theories in chapter two. The last chapter is the conclusion and suggestion from the researcher for the reader concerning this research.

# CHAPTER IV

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### 4.1 Conclusion

Based on the explanation in the previous chapter, several conclusions can be drawn to answer the three research questions proposed in chapter one. The questions are about the types of figurative language found in Taufiq Ismail's poems in the anthology *On Foreign Shores*, the strategy used in translating the figurative language in Taufiq Ismail's poems, and the equivalence in the translation of figurative language in Taufiq Ismail's poems.

First, the researcher discovers that there are 7 types of figurative language found in Taufiq Ismail's poems: metonymy, personification, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, synecdoche, and paradox. From 60 data, the researcher finds 30% of metonymy, 30% of personification, 23% of metaphor, 8% of simile, 5% of hyperbole, 2% of synecdoche, and 2% of paradox. It can be concluded that the metonymy and personification are mainly found in Taufiq Ismail's poems in the anthology *On Foreign Shores.*

Second, after classifying the types of figurative language, the researcher discovers that 3 strategies proposed by Larson are all used by the translator to translate the figurative language. From 60 data, the researcher finds 83% of the strategy to substitute the figurative language of SL with the figurative language of TL, 13% of the strategy to translate the sense of the word non-figuratively, and only 4% of the strategy to retain the word in the original but to add sense. It can

be concluded that the translator mainly used the strategy to substitute the figurative expression in the SL with the figurative expression of the TL.

Third, after identifying the process of translating the figurative languages, the researcher discovered that from 60 data, 67% of data contains dynamic equivalence, and 33% of the data contains formal equivalence. It can be concluded that, besides preserving the sense of figurativeness from the original poems, the translator is also concerned with the language naturalness of the translation results. It means that the readers from TL are allowed to experience the figurative languages as faithfully as possible while reading the Taufiq Ismail poems translated by John H. McGlynn.

## 4.2 Suggestion

This research specifically discusses figurative language in terms of types, translation strategy, and how its translation process contributes to equivalence in translation in poetry. The researcher is aware that poetry is widely known for its language, which is sometimes confusing and does not follow the rules of language in general uses. It causes the possibility of errors in analyzing figurative language, especially in interpretation aspects, which is very essential in understanding what the poet actually wants to say. Therefore, the volition of the reader to participate in the discussion is highly needed to discuss any mistake the researcher probably made. The researcher brings this up to achieve a better understanding for the researcher to create better research in the future.

Besides the strategy for translating figurative language from Larson, many experts also propose other strategies. The researcher suggests the next researchers

interested in this topic use another theory for translating figurative language. This research uses poetry as the object. Therefore, the other researcher can use other objects, such as novels and short stories with more figurative language.

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