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# Translation Techniques of Culture-Specific Items in True Beauty Webtoon

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**ABSTRACT**

The global popularity of Korean popular culture has increased the international circulation of digital comics, including Webtoons. As cultural references are embedded in Webtoon narratives, translating culture-specific items (CSIs) presents challenges in conveying cultural meanings across languages. This study aims to identify the categories of Korean popular culture represented in *True Beauty* Webtoon and analyze the translation techniques used to render these cultural elements into Indonesian. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study examines existing data from the official English and Indonesian versions of *True Beauty* Webtoon. The data are classified into cultural categories and analyzed using Aixelá's (1996) framework for culture-specific items and Molina and Albir's (2002) taxonomy of translation techniques. The findings identify six categories of Korean popular culture: beauty culture, food culture, entertainment culture, educational culture, internet culture, and brands and products. The translation examples illustrate the use of borrowing, adaptation, and combinations of translation techniques to render culturally marked expressions into Indonesian. These choices reflect different approaches to retaining cultural references and adapting expressions for the target-language context. This study highlights the role of translation techniques in representing Korean popular culture in digital comics and contributes to the discussion of culture-specific item translation in English–Indonesian Webtoon translation.



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## Introduction

The development of digital technology has transformed the production, distribution, and consumption of comics, making digital comics an increasingly accessible form of visual storytelling. Unlike conventional printed comics, digital comics can reach international audiences through online platforms and digital distribution networks. Among these developments, Webtoon has emerged as a digital comic format associated with online reading and the circulation of popular narratives across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The translation of comics has consequently become an important area of Translation Studies, as it involves not only the transfer of verbal content but also the interaction between language, images, and other visual elements that contribute to narrative meaning (Zanettin, 2008; Kaindl, 2010).

Webtoon also provides a medium through which Korean popular culture reaches audiences beyond South Korea. The global circulation of the Korean Wave, or *Hallyu*, has been facilitated by digital technologies and social media, which have expanded the international distribution and reception of Korean cultural products (Jin, 2016). Although Korean popular culture is widely associated with music, television dramas, and films, its representation also extends to digital comics that portray contemporary lifestyles, beauty practices, food, entertainment, and social interactions. In this context, *True Beauty* Webtoon offers a relevant subject for examining how references to Korean popular culture are conveyed through translation. Translating these references requires attention to their linguistic meanings as well as the cultural associations they carry within the narrative.

Furthermore, comics are multimodal texts in which verbal language and visual sequences work together to construct meaning. Cohn (2013) explains that sequential images in comics have an organized visual structure that interacts with other elements of narrative communication. Similarly, Kaindl (2010) emphasizes the importance of considering the relationship between verbal and visual signs in comic translation. Consequently, the meaning of a cultural expression in Webtoon may depend not only on its lexical form but also on the depicted situation, character interactions, and visual context. Translators therefore need to consider how linguistic choices correspond to the broader narrative and visual presentation when transferring culturally marked expressions into another language.

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One of the challenges in translating Webtoon is the treatment of culture-specific items (CSIs), which refer to expressions associated with particular cultural contexts and may not have direct equivalents in the target language. In English–Indonesian translation, references to Korean beauty products, food, entertainment, educational institutions, and internet culture may require different translation decisions depending on their meanings and cultural functions. Retaining a source expression may preserve its cultural identity, whereas adapting it to a more familiar expression may help readers understand the intended reference. However, these choices may also affect the way the source culture is represented in the translated text. The translation of comics thus involves negotiating linguistic meaning and cultural representation within a multimodal narrative (Zanettin, 2008; Kaindl, 2010).

Translation techniques provide an analytical framework for examining how translators handle these challenges. Molina and Albir (2002) propose a taxonomy of translation techniques that can be used to describe the procedures applied to specific translation units. Applying this framework to culture-specific items in *True Beauty* Webtoon makes it possible to identify the techniques used to render Korean cultural references into Indonesian and to examine the patterns of translation choices in the selected data. Accordingly, this study focuses on identifying the categories of Korean popular culture represented in the selected data and analyzing the translation techniques used to translate these culture-specific items from English into Indonesian. Through this analysis, the study seeks to contribute to the understanding of cultural representation in Webtoon translation and the role of translation techniques in conveying culture-specific meanings across languages.

Culture-specific items (CSIs) are cultural references that may present difficulties in translation because their meanings and associations are closely connected to the cultural context of the source language. Aixelá (1996) explains that culture-specific items emerge when a source-text expression refers to an entity, concept, or practice that is unfamiliar or functions differently within the cultural system of the target language. The translation of such items therefore involves more than replacing words from one language with words from another. Translators must consider the cultural significance of an expression and determine how it can be represented for readers whose cultural backgrounds may differ from those of the source-text audience. From



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this perspective, CSIs provide an important analytical category for examining the relationship between language, culture, and translation.

In Webtoon, culture-specific items may appear in various forms, including references to beauty practices, food, entertainment, educational institutions, internet culture, and commercial products. These expressions can reflect everyday practices and contemporary cultural identities rather than only traditional customs or historical references. For example, beauty-related terminology may refer to cosmetic products and makeup practices, while food-related expressions may represent culinary traditions associated with a particular society. References to entertainment and internet culture may also convey information about popular media, online communities, and youth identity. These categories demonstrate that cultural meaning in digital comics can be embedded in ordinary dialogue and familiar objects as well as in explicit references to cultural institutions or practices.

Translating CSIs presents several challenges because an expression that is familiar in the source cultural context may not have a direct or equally meaningful equivalent in the target culture. A translator may retain the original expression to preserve its cultural identity, use an established equivalent, or adapt the expression to make its meaning more accessible to target readers. Each decision requires consideration of the expression's meaning, cultural associations, and function within the narrative. Furthermore, Webtoon is a multimodal medium in which verbal expressions interact with images and narrative situations. Consequently, the interpretation of a CSI may depend on visual information, character relationships, and the context in which the expression appears. Translation decisions should therefore be examined in relation to both linguistic form and cultural context rather than through lexical comparison alone (Aixelá, 1996; Kaindl, 2010).

These considerations are particularly relevant to *True Beauty* Webtoon, which portrays the experiences of young characters in a contemporary Korean social environment. The cultural elements identified in the existing data include beauty culture, food culture, entertainment culture, educational culture, internet culture, and brands and products. Examples include *BB Cream*, *Water Tint*, *Beef Dumplings*, *Kimchi Dumplings*, *Dean*, *Ulzzang*, and *Beauty Blogger*. Such expressions represent different aspects of contemporary life and provide a basis for examining how Korean popular culture is conveyed in the Indonesian translation. Their translation may

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involve retaining culturally recognizable expressions or modifying them to fit the linguistic and cultural expectations of Indonesian readers.

Accordingly, the analysis of CSIs in *True Beauty* Webtoon provides a way to investigate how cultural references are translated from English into Indonesian. By identifying the cultural categories represented in the selected data and examining the techniques used to translate them, this study explores the translation choices made when rendering culturally marked expressions in a digital comic. Aixelá's (1996) framework provides the conceptual basis for understanding the cultural specificity of the selected items, while the analysis of translation techniques helps describe how these items are represented in the target text. This approach establishes the foundation for the subsequent examination of translation techniques without assuming in advance that a particular technique is more effective than another.

Previous studies have examined the translation of culture-specific items and translation techniques in digital comics and Webtoons from different perspectives. Putri, Rasyad, and Anggraini (2023), in their study entitled *Translation Techniques of Culture-Specific Items and Translation Ideology in Sarimin Webtoon*, investigated culturally specific expressions in the Webtoon *Sarimin*. Their research focused on identifying cultural terms, examining the translation techniques used to translate them, and exploring the translation ideology underlying the translator's choices. Using Molina and Albir's (2002) framework, the researchers identified several cultural categories and found that adaptation was the most frequently employed translation technique, accounting for 41% of the analyzed items. The study also highlighted the relationship between translation techniques and the tendency toward domestication in representing culturally specific elements. This research demonstrates the importance of examining translation techniques when transferring cultural references in Webtoon narratives (Putri et al., 2023).

Another relevant study was conducted by Ahmadi, Darmawan, and Samosir (2024), entitled *Translation Techniques in the Comic "Pyramid Game"*. The researchers examined the translation of English sentences into Indonesian in the digital comic *Pyramid Game*. Employing a qualitative approach, they analyzed 15 selected English sentences from Parts 1 to 10, focusing on their linguistic complexity and relevance to the Indonesian context and culture. Their findings identified various translation techniques and illustrated how translation choices were applied according



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to the context of individual sentences. Although this study provides insights into translation techniques in digital comics, its primary focus is on sentence-level translation rather than the systematic identification and classification of culture-specific items (Ahmadi et al., 2024).

Sacko (2025), in a study entitled *Lost in Translation? Analyzing Semantic Shifts in the English-to-Indonesian Translation of the Webtoon Flawless*, investigated semantic shifts in the translation of the Webtoon *Flawless*. Using Mujiyanto's framework, the study identified 57 instances of semantic shifts, which were classified into five categories: generalization, specification, substitution, reversal, and deviation. The findings showed that deviation was the most frequent category, followed by generalization and substitution. The study demonstrated that translating Webtoon content may involve changes in meaning as translators accommodate linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target languages. However, its primary concern was semantic shifts rather than the classification of culture-specific items and the translation techniques used to render them (Sacko, 2025).

Although these studies have contributed to the understanding of translation practices in digital comics, their different analytical focuses leave room for further investigation. Putri et al. (2023) examined culture-specific items and translation ideology in *Sarimin*, while Ahmadi et al. (2024) focused on translation techniques at the sentence level in *Pyramid Game*. Meanwhile, Sacko (2025) investigated semantic shifts in the English–Indonesian translation of *Flawless*. The present study builds on these contributions by focusing specifically on the categories of Korean popular culture represented through culture-specific items and the translation techniques used to render them into Indonesian in *True Beauty* Webtoon.

The selection of *True Beauty* provides a different cultural context from the Webtoons examined in the previous studies. Its narrative incorporates various aspects of contemporary Korean popular culture, including beauty practices, food, entertainment, educational institutions, internet culture, and commercial products. These elements provide an opportunity to examine how culturally marked expressions are represented through translation in an English–Indonesian digital comic. Unlike studies that primarily examine translation ideology, sentence-level techniques, or semantic shifts, this research combines the classification of cultural elements with an analysis of translation techniques. Therefore, the study aims to contribute to

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Translation Studies by providing a focused account of how culture-specific items representing Korean popular culture are translated in *True Beauty* Webtoon.

Based on the research gap identified in the previous studies, this study focuses on the translation of culture-specific items representing Korean popular culture in *True Beauty* Webtoon. Specifically, the study has two objectives: (1) to identify and classify the categories of Korean popular culture represented by culture-specific items in the selected data from *True Beauty* Webtoon, and (2) to analyze the translation techniques employed to render these culture-specific items from English into Indonesian.

To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What categories of Korean popular culture are represented by the culture-specific items in the selected data from *True Beauty* Webtoon?
2. What translation techniques are employed to translate these culture-specific items from English into Indonesian?

By addressing these questions, this study seeks to provide an understanding of how Korean cultural references are represented and translated in digital comics. It also aims to describe the translation techniques used to negotiate cultural meanings between the source and target languages.

## Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to examine the translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) in *True Beauty* Webtoon from English into Indonesian. A qualitative approach was selected because the study focuses on identifying, classifying, and interpreting cultural references and the translation techniques used to render them in the target language. Rather than measuring translation quality or testing causal relationships, the research provides a descriptive account of the cultural categories represented in the selected data and the translation procedures applied to them.

The analysis was conducted in two stages. First, the identified culture-specific items were classified into categories representing Korean popular culture based on their cultural characteristics and contextual meanings. Second, the English source expressions and their Indonesian translations were compared and analyzed using the translation techniques proposed by Molina and Albir (2002). Through these stages, the



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study describes how different translation techniques are employed to convey culturally specific expressions in the Indonesian version of *True Beauty* Webtoon.

The data for this study were obtained from the official English and Indonesian versions of *True Beauty* Webtoon, a digital comic that portrays contemporary Korean youth culture and everyday social life. The study focused on the first ten episodes of the Webtoon. Both language versions were used to identify and compare culturally specific expressions in the English source text and their corresponding translations in Indonesian. The selected episodes were chosen as the data source because they contain cultural references related to various aspects of Korean popular culture, including beauty, food, entertainment, education, internet culture, and commercial products. These cultural references served as the basis for examining the translation techniques employed in the Indonesian version.

The data were selected from the first ten episodes of *True Beauty* Webtoon using purposive sampling. The selection focused on expressions that represent Korean popular culture and are considered culture-specific items within the context of the narrative. The unit of analysis consisted of cultural expressions in the English version and their corresponding translations in the Indonesian version. The selected items were then grouped according to their cultural categories and examined to identify the translation techniques employed.

The identification of culture-specific items (CSIs) was guided by Aixelá's (1996) concept of cultural references, which refers to expressions associated with a particular cultural context and may present translation difficulties when transferred into another language. In this study, an expression was considered a culture-specific item when it represented a cultural reference associated with Korean society or popular culture within the context of *True Beauty* Webtoon.

The identified items were examined in their narrative contexts to determine their cultural associations and meanings. The analysis focused on expressions referring to aspects of contemporary Korean popular culture rather than general linguistic expressions without identifiable cultural significance. After identification, the data were classified into six categories based on their cultural characteristics: (1) beauty culture, referring to cosmetic products and beauty practices; (2) food culture, referring to Korean food and culinary references; (3) entertainment culture, referring to popular entertainment and media; (4) educational culture, referring to terms associated with

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educational institutions; (5) internet culture, referring to digital expressions and online identity; and (6) brands and products, referring to commercial names appearing in the narrative.

This classification was used to organize the cultural references found in the selected episodes and to provide a basis for the subsequent analysis of translation techniques. Each identified item was documented alongside its English expression and corresponding Indonesian translation to facilitate comparison between the source and target texts.

The translation techniques employed in rendering culture-specific items were analyzed using the framework proposed by Molina and Albir (2002). Their framework provides a taxonomy of translation techniques that can be used to identify the procedures applied to translation units in a particular context. In this study, the analysis focused on comparing the English source expressions with their corresponding Indonesian translations to determine how Korean cultural references were transferred into the target language.

Each translation pair was examined by considering its linguistic form, contextual meaning, and cultural associations. The analysis identified the techniques used to translate the selected culture-specific items, particularly borrowing, adaptation, established equivalent, and amplification. When more than one technique was identified within a translation unit, the combination of techniques was also considered. The classification was based on the characteristics of each translation choice and its correspondence with the definitions provided by Molina and Albir (2002).

The identified techniques were subsequently described and interpreted in relation to the cultural characteristics of the translated expressions. The analysis aimed to explain how the translator retained, modified, or clarified cultural references when rendering them into Indonesian. Representative examples were presented to illustrate the application of each technique and the different approaches used to convey Korean popular culture in the Indonesian version of *True Beauty* Webtoon.

The data analysis was conducted through several systematic stages. First, culture-specific items were identified from the English version of the first ten episodes of *True Beauty* Webtoon by examining expressions associated with Korean popular culture. Second, the identified items were classified into six cultural categories: beauty culture, food culture, entertainment culture, educational culture, internet culture, and brands



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and products. This classification was based on the cultural characteristics and contextual meanings of the expressions.

Third, each identified item was compared with its corresponding Indonesian translation to examine the changes or adjustments made in the target text. Fourth, the translation techniques were identified and classified using Molina and Albir's (2002) framework. Particular attention was given to borrowing, adaptation, established equivalent, amplification, and combinations of techniques when applicable. Finally, the findings were descriptively interpreted by examining the translation choices in relation to the cultural characteristics of the source expressions. The results were presented in tables and supported by selected examples to illustrate the translation techniques used to represent Korean popular culture in the Indonesian version of *True Beauty* Webtoon.

## Discussion

### Categories of Culture-Specific Items in True Beauty Webtoon

The analysis of the selected episodes of *True Beauty* Webtoon identified six categories of culture-specific items representing different aspects of contemporary Korean popular culture. These categories include beauty culture, food culture, entertainment culture, educational culture, internet culture, and brands and products. The identified items reflect various aspects of everyday life, social practices, consumer lifestyles, and digital culture portrayed in the narrative.

The classification was based on the cultural characteristics and contextual meanings of the expressions found in the selected episodes. Rather than focusing exclusively on traditional cultural references, the analysis also considers contemporary cultural elements associated with beauty practices, popular entertainment, educational settings, and online identity. Table 1 presents the categories of culture-specific items identified in the selected data, along with their descriptions and representative examples.

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Table 1. Categories of Culture-Specific Items in True Beauty Webtoon

| No | Cultural Category | Description | Cultural Element |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Beauty Culture | Cosmetic products and beauty practices commonly associated with beauty culture. | BB Cream, Lip Tint, Water Tint, Mascara, Eyelid Glue |
| 2 | Food Culture | Food items and culinary references appearing in the narrative. | Beef Dumplings, Kimchi Dumplings |
| 3 | Entertainment Culture | References to popular entertainment and media. | K-pop Concert, Paradise Kiss |
| 4 | Educational Culture | Terms related to educational institutions and roles. | Dean |
| 5 | Internet Culture | Digital expressions and online identity in contemporary society. | Ulzzang, Beauty Blogger |
| 6 | Brands and Products | Commercial names and products appearing in the narrative. | XX Medical |

The six categories demonstrate that cultural references in *True Beauty* extend beyond traditional cultural practices and include various aspects of contemporary Korean society. The following discussion examines each category based on the cultural elements identified in the selected data.

1. Beauty Culture

Beauty culture represents one of the prominent cultural categories in the selected data. This category includes expressions such as *BB Cream, Lip Tint, Water Tint, Mascara,* and *Eyelid Glue*. These terms refer to cosmetic products and makeup-related practices that are closely associated with contemporary beauty culture. Their presence is particularly relevant to the narrative of *True Beauty*, which portrays a young female character whose appearance and use of cosmetics play an important role in her social experiences. These references illustrate how beauty products and makeup practices are incorporated into the everyday lives of the characters. They also reflect the association


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between beauty practices and contemporary Korean popular culture, particularly the global visibility of K-beauty.

2. Food Culture

Food culture is represented by the expressions *Beef Dumplings* and *Kimchi Dumplings*. These references introduce culinary elements into the narrative and reflect the role of food in everyday social interactions. Food-related expressions can function as cultural markers because they represent particular eating habits, ingredients, and culinary traditions. In this context, the reference to kimchi is particularly relevant because it is closely associated with Korean cuisine. The presence of these expressions contributes to the representation of food culture in the Webtoon and provides cultural references that may require consideration when translated for Indonesian readers.

3. Entertainment Culture

Entertainment culture is represented by *K-pop Concert* and *Paradise Kiss*. These expressions refer to popular entertainment and media that form part of the cultural environment portrayed in the narrative. The reference to K-pop reflects the international visibility of Korean popular music and its influence on contemporary youth culture. Meanwhile, *Paradise Kiss* represents a reference to popular media within the entertainment category. Together, these elements demonstrate how entertainment-related references contribute to the cultural background of the story and connect the narrative to broader popular media.

4. Educational Culture

The educational culture category is represented by the term *Dean*. This expression refers to an institutional position within an educational setting. Its inclusion indicates that institutional roles and educational environments also form part of the cultural references identified in the Webtoon. The translation of educational terminology requires attention to the institutional context because the organizational structures and terminology used in educational systems may differ across countries. Therefore, this expression provides an example of how institutional references can become relevant in cross-cultural translation.

5. Internet Culture

Internet culture is represented by the expressions *Ulzzang* and *Beauty Blogger*. These items reflect the relationship between digital communication, online identity, and contemporary beauty standards. The term *Ulzzang* is associated with Korean

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internet culture and refers to individuals recognized for their attractive appearance. Meanwhile, *Beauty Blogger* represents an online identity associated with beauty-related content and digital platforms. These expressions illustrate how internet culture and online communities contribute to the representation of contemporary youth lifestyles in *True Beauty*.

6. Brands and Products

The final category is brands and products, represented by the expression *XX Medical*. This item is classified under commercial references because it appears as a name associated with a product or commercial entity in the narrative. Brand-related expressions may carry specific associations that distinguish them from ordinary lexical items. Their presence in the Webtoon illustrates how commercial references can become part of the cultural and social environment represented in digital comics.

**Translation Techniques Used to Translate Culture-Specific Items**

This section discusses the translation techniques used to render culture-specific items (CSIs) from Korean into Indonesian in *True Beauty* Webtoon. The analysis is based on the comparison of the Korean source expressions and their corresponding Indonesian translations. The English version is also considered as a reference to illustrate how the same expressions are rendered in another language. The classification of translation techniques follows Molina and Albir (2002).

Based on the available data, several techniques can be identified, including pure borrowing, adaptation, and the combination of borrowing and adaptation. The following table presents selected examples of the translation of culture-specific items.

Table 2. Translation Techniques Used in Translating Culture-Specific Items

| No. | Korean Source Expression | English Version | Indonesian Translation | Translation Technique |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ulzzang | Hottie | Ulzzang | Pure borrowing |
| 2 | Beauty Blog | Beauty Blog | Beauty Blog | Pure borrowing |
| 3 | BB Cream | BB Cream | BB Cream | Pure borrowing |



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Water Tint | Water Tint | Water Tint | Pure borrowing |
| 5 | Beef Dumplings | Beef Dumplings | Bakpau Daging | Adaptation* |
| 6 | Kimchi Dumplings | Kimchi Dumplings | Bakpau Kimchi | Adaptation and borrowing* |
| 7 | Dean | Dean | Guru Pembimbing | Adaptation* |
| 8 | K-pop Concert | K-pop Concert | N Countdown | To be determined |

*Note: The classifications marked with an asterisk are provisional and require further contextual verification. The technique used for the expression "K-pop Concert" also requires examination of its narrative context.*

1. Pure Borrowing

Pure borrowing is used when a translator takes an expression directly from the source language without changing its form. In the Indonesian version of *True Beauty*, this technique can be observed in the translation of terms such as *ulzzang*, *beauty blog*, *BB cream*, and *water tint*.

The first example is the Korean term *ulzzang*. In the English version, the term is translated as *hottie*. However, the Indonesian version retains the original Korean expression *ulzzang*. This indicates that the Indonesian translator chooses to preserve the source-language term rather than replace it with an Indonesian equivalent. The use of *ulzzang* also reflects the circulation of Korean popular culture terminology in Indonesian-language contexts. Therefore, this translation can be classified as pure borrowing.

Another example is *beauty blog*. This expression refers to a blog that contains discussions, information, or reviews about beauty-related topics. It should be distinguished from *beauty blogger*, which refers to a person who writes or manages a beauty blog. Since the Indonesian version retains the expression *beauty blog*, the translation employs pure borrowing. Maintaining the original expression also preserves the distinction between the platform or content and the person who produces it.

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The same technique is applied to *BB cream* and *water tint*. Both expressions are retained in the Indonesian version without changes to their linguistic forms. These terms are commonly used in the beauty and cosmetics context. Their retention suggests that borrowing is an appropriate strategy for preserving product-related terminology that is recognizable to the target readers.

Overall, the use of pure borrowing in these examples demonstrates the translator's tendency to retain certain expressions rather than replace them with descriptive Indonesian equivalents. This technique maintains the original forms of the terms while allowing readers to encounter terminology associated with beauty culture and Korean popular culture.

2. Adaptation

Adaptation refers to replacing a cultural element in the source language with one that is more familiar or suitable in the target-language culture (Molina & Albir, 2002). In the available data, the expressions *Beef Dumplings* and *Dean* were initially classified under this technique.

The expression *Beef Dumplings* is translated into Indonesian as *Bakpau Daging*. The translation replaces the source expression with a food term that is more familiar to Indonesian readers. Similarly, *Dean* is translated as *Guru Pembimbing*. This rendering replaces the original academic designation with an expression that may be more accessible to Indonesian readers.

However, these classifications need to be examined in relation to their specific contexts in the Webtoon. In particular, the analysis should establish whether the Indonesian expressions genuinely replace the cultural concepts in the source text or merely provide more familiar lexical equivalents. Therefore, the classifications in this subsection should be treated as provisional until the contextual evidence is confirmed.

3. Combination of Adaptation and Borrowing

The expression *Kimchi Dumplings* is translated into Indonesian as *Bakpau Kimchi*. This translation was initially classified as a combination of adaptation and borrowing.

The word *dumplings* is rendered as *bakpau*, which represents an adaptation to a food term that is more familiar to Indonesian readers. Meanwhile, the word *kimchi* is retained in its original form. This combination preserves the cultural reference to kimchi while adapting the other element of the expression. Consequently, the



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translation can provisionally be categorized as a combination of adaptation and borrowing.

This example illustrates how a translator may use more than one technique within a single expression. The choice allows part of the source expression to remain recognizable while another part is adjusted to the target-language context. Nevertheless, the classification should also be checked against the context in which the food item appears.

4. Translation of "K-pop Concert" into "N Countdown"

Another example identified in the data is the expression *K-pop Concert*, which is rendered as *N Countdown* in the Indonesian version. The Indonesian wording has been confirmed, but the precise translation technique cannot yet be established without examining its narrative context.

The classification depends on the function of *N Countdown* in the story. If it refers to a specific event or program that replaces the more general expression *K-pop Concert*, the translation may involve a more specific rendering or another technique. Further contextual examination is therefore necessary before assigning a definitive technique.

This example indicates the importance of considering the context of an expression rather than relying solely on the comparison of isolated words. In comic and Webtoon translation, the surrounding dialogue and narrative situation may provide essential information for identifying the translator's choice.

5. Summary of Translation Techniques

The available examples indicate that pure borrowing is used to retain several expressions associated with beauty culture and popular culture. Other examples were initially classified as adaptation or a combination of adaptation and borrowing. However, some classifications still require contextual verification.

The findings suggest that the translation of culture-specific items in *True Beauty* involves both the preservation of source-language expressions and the adjustment of certain terms for Indonesian readers. These choices illustrate how different translation techniques are used to represent cultural references in the target language. The analysis also highlights the importance of considering the linguistic and narrative context when identifying translation techniques.

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## Conclusion

This study examined the categories of culture-specific items (CSIs) and the translation techniques used to render them from Korean into Indonesian in *True Beauty* Webtoon. The findings identified six categories of CSIs in the selected data: beauty culture, food culture, entertainment culture, educational culture, internet culture, and brands and products. These categories illustrate the presence of various cultural references in the Webtoon, particularly those related to everyday life and popular culture.

Regarding translation techniques, the analysis identified pure borrowing, adaptation, and a combination of adaptation and borrowing in the selected examples. Pure borrowing was observed in expressions such as *ulzzang*, *beauty blog*, *BB cream*, and *water tint*, which were retained in the Indonesian version. Other expressions, including *Beef Dumplings*, *Kimchi Dumplings*, and *Dean*, were initially classified as adaptation or a combination of techniques. These classifications require careful consideration of their contextual meanings. The translation of *K-pop Concert* into *N Countdown* also highlights the importance of examining narrative context when identifying translation techniques.

Overall, the findings illustrate how culture-specific items in *True Beauty* Webtoon are rendered through the retention of original expressions and the adjustment of certain cultural references for Indonesian readers. This study is limited to selected data from the first ten episodes of the Webtoon. Further research could examine a larger number of episodes or compare translations into different languages to provide a broader understanding of culture-specific item translation in digital comics.

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