

TRANSLATION IDEOLOGY IN RENDERING COMPLIMENT RESPONSES IN THE NOVEL *BUMI MANUSIA*

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Abstract: Compliment response is an important pragmatic issue in literary translation because it reflects norms of politeness, humility, and interpersonal relationship management that are deeply rooted in culture. This study aims to analyze the translation ideology underlying the translation of compliment responses from Indonesian into English in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *Bumi Manusia*. The data consist of 20 compliment responses identified purposively from the source text and their translations in the target text. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach because the data consists of a linguistic unit, including words, phrases, clauses, or sentences expressing responses to compliments. The data were first analyzed by classifying the types of compliment responses based on Herbert's taxonomy, then examining the ideological orientation based on Venuti's concept reflected in the translation techniques used at the discourse-pragmatic level. The results indicate a strong tendency toward the foreignization ideology in translating compliment responses, reflected by the predominant use of literal translation techniques with minimal adjustments. In other words, the types of compliment responses in the source text are consistently maintained in the target text, in which translation ideology plays a significant role in maintaining the pragmatic interaction patterns of the source culture in literary translation. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of both pragmatic and ideological awareness in translating compliment responses, particularly in the context of postcolonial literary translation.

Keywords: Translation ideology; compliment responses; foreignization; literary translation; *Bumi Manusia*.

INTRODUCTION

Compliments and compliment responses are key components of interpersonal communication, playing a role not only as expressions of appreciation or agreement, but also as practical tools for navigating social relationships, power, and identity. Compliments, as culturally-related speech acts, are shaped by the sociocultural norms, value systems, and ideological beliefs of a community (Herbert, 1986; Maíz-Arevalo, 2026). In literary works, this speech act is even more important because it contributes to character development, narrative dynamics, and the representation of social hierarchies (Maíz-Arevalo, 2026; Silva & Duarte, 2011). As these terms, full of pragmatic and ideological meaning, are translated, translators will inevitably face difficult decisions that may distort their original form, function, or meaning.

The study of compliments and their responses, within pragmatic research, has been thoroughly examined, investigating how these linguistic actions contribute to

maintaining dignity, conveying politeness, and fostering social relationships across diverse cultures. Previous studies have analyzed how different communities recognize and respond to compliments, identifying patterns such as acceptance, rejection, and avoidance, and showing how factors such as culture, gender, and interaction context influence preferred strategies and interpretations in the compliments-giving behavior (Br.Sinulingga et al., 2024; Wulansari, 2020).

In literary discourse, compliments are not merely conversational devices but narrative tools that construct character identities and social hierarchies. They often index status differences, intimacy, or ideological alignment between characters. However, despite their narrative and pragmatic significance, compliments and their responses remain underexplored in literary studies, especially from a translation perspective. Existing translation-focused works tend to concentrate on particular subtopics, such as the translation of gendered

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compliments or implicit compliments in audiovisual texts (Bruti, 2006; Damayanti & Sudarwati, 2024; Svider, 2020), without yet offering a broad, systematic account of how translation ideology, translation techniques, and cross-cultural pragmatics intersect in the rendering of compliment responses in literary texts. Therefore, most pragmatic research has relied on spoken or elicited data, leaving literary texts and their translations largely unexamined as sites of pragmatic meaning-making.

Within the context of literary translation, these decisions cannot be separated from translation ideology, a well-established distinction between foreignization and domestication proposed by Venuti (2017). Foreignization aims to preserve the cultural and linguistic uniqueness of the source text, while domestication focuses on fluency and acceptability in the target language and culture. According to Venuti, these ideological orientations are not neutral; in fact, they reflect broader power dynamics between languages and cultures, and influence how source text values are conveyed to target readers (Tymoczko, 2003; Venuti, 2017). Consequently, the translation of pragmatic units, such as compliments and responses, serves as an ideologically charged context, revealing how cultural distinctiveness is either preserved or absorbed.

Translation ideology has been widely investigated within the context of how translators position themselves between source and target cultures, particularly Venuti's famous dichotomy between foreignization and domestication. These ideological differences have been frequently explored in literary translation, specifically regarding the analysis of cultural aspects, narrative styles, and discourse patterns. However, most empirical research in this field focuses on lexical items, cultural references, or stylistic features, while pragmatic phenomena such as speech acts are rarely considered in ideological analysis. For instance, Rahmah et al. (2025) examine

foreignization and domestication issues in the translation of Sundanese cultural words into English in Julian Millie's *People's Religion*. The results identified three ideological orientations: foreignization, domestication, and hybrid ideology, with domestication emerging as the most dominant, in which strategy selection reflects a negotiated balance between cultural authenticity and readability. On the other hand, Sajarwa (2021) extends the discussion of translation ideology into a diachronic and postcolonial frame by comparing the translation of French novels into Indonesian in colonial and post-colonial periods. The study indicated that, in colonial-period translations, foreignization appears mainly in the treatment of proper names and settings, while domestication is evident in the translation of pronouns and kinship terms; in the post-colonial period, both ideologies continue but with different configurations, including shifts in how self-names are handled. This work underscores that translation ideology is not only a textual preference but also tied to broader power relations, identity issues, and postcolonial negotiations between former colonizers and the formerly colonized.

Although research on translation ideology in literary works continues to increase, previous studies have mostly focused on macro-level characteristics such as narrative voice, cultural references, and vocabulary choices. Micro-level pragmatic features, including compliments and compliment responses, are relatively less discussed considering their importance in generating interpersonal meaning. For instance, Damayanti & Sudarwati (2024) examined implicit compliments in the movie *Bumi Manusia* by analyzing the original Indonesian dialogue and the English translation. The findings show that translators used various translation procedures, including modification, transposition, transference, and cultural equivalence, to render the implied meaning of compliments that refer to achievements or comparisons. However, responses to

compliments, which are sometimes more culturally sensitive than the compliments themselves, remain underexplored in translation studies, especially in terms of ideological shifts. Such a gap is clearly visible in Indonesian literary translation studies, as pragmatic analysis has not been fully integrated with ideological perspectives.

Several previous studies focusing on the novel *Bumi Manusia* have generally centered on the translation of cultural terms, particularly terms of address (Ardianto, 2019; Tumbale & Cholsy, 2022), as well as the analysis of methods and strategies for translating cultural elements (Ibadurrohman, 2019; Mazaya, 2023). In addition, some studies have examined translators' practices and translation ideologies, postcolonial traces, and ideologies in the translation of cultural terms (Purwanti & Mujiyanto, 2015; Wahyuningsih, 2023; Wedhowerti, 2023). Beyond the realm of translation, research on this novel also includes analysis of moral values, reflections on human values, and expressive speech acts (Amir et al., 2023; Nursiah & Liusti, 2020; Putra et al., 2025). There has also been a study that specifically examined the translation of implicit compliments in the subtitles of *Bumi Manusia* (Damayanti & Sudarwati, 2024). Nevertheless, these studies tend to focus on lexical, thematic, or specific speech act aspects without deeply examining responses to compliments as complex pragmatic units. No previous studies have specifically analyzed translation ideology in the translation of compliment responses, particularly by linking compliment response strategies to ideological orientations at the discourse-pragmatic level. Thus, this study aims to fill this gap by examining how translation ideology, either foreignization or domestication, is manifested in the translation of responses to compliments in the novel *Bumi Manusia*.

The novel *Bumi Manusia*, written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, was first published in 1980 and later translated into English as *This Earth of Mankind* by Max Lane in 1990

(Miranda, 2021; Toer, 2002), making the work accessible to international readers. In the context of postcolonial literature, the author of the original novel believed that the use of Indonesian functions as a means of expressing national identity and the struggle during the Dutch colonial period (Wedhowerti, 2023). However, translating such a text might lead to various cultural complexities related to linguistic elements that are only understood within a specific context. Thus, the selection of this novel as the subject of this study is based on the richness of its interactive dialogues, which represent social relations, hierarchies, and power dynamics within a colonial context, making it highly relevant for examining compliments responses as a pragmatic phenomenon.

Furthermore, the cultural diversity of the characters in this novel presents a variety of complex and socially meaningful strategies (Nursiah & Liusti, 2020) for responding to compliments. The availability of an established translation also enables a systematic comparative analysis between the source text and the target text. Compared to other literary works, the novel offers richer pragmatic and ideological complexity, making it particularly suitable for examining how translation ideologies, either foreignization or domestication, are manifested at the discourse-pragmatic level in the translation of responses to praise.

In this study, translation ideology is explored through the translation of responses to compliments in *Bumi Manusia*. Considering how ideological shifts occur at the pragmatic level, it will highlight the importance of examining translations beyond lexical equivalence and textual fluency. The findings may contribute to translation studies by revealing how ideological orientation manifests in everyday linguistic actions found in literary texts. Thus, it may broaden the discussion on the role of translators, intercultural representation, and pragmatic translation in postcolonial literature.

METHOD

This study was designed as a qualitative research approach with a descriptive-analytical method. This approach was chosen because the purpose of the study was to analyze the ideological orientation reflected in the translation of compliment responses, which required more in-depth interpretive analysis rather than statistical generalization (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Data sources include the source text (ST) *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer and the target text (TT) *This Earth of Mankind* in English, translated by Max Lane. Compliments that occur in dialogue between characters served as the units of analysis. These units were selected based on their function within the narrative as culturally and ideologically sensitive speech acts expressing interpersonal relationships and social hierarchies.

Data collection was conducted through documentary analysis, a method suitable for examining written texts and their translations (Bowen, 2009). The procedure involved close reading and systematic identification of relevant speech acts in both the ST and TT. Furthermore, the identification of compliment responses was guided by a framework proposed by Herbert (1986). These criteria describe compliments as utterances that express positive evaluations and compliment responses as verbal reactions that accept, deflect, or reject those evaluations.

Table 1. *Types of Compliment Responses in the Novel Bumi Manusia*

	Response Types		Frequency
Agreement	Acceptances	Appreciation Token	2 (10%)
		Common Acceptance	1 (5%)
		Praise Upgrade	1 (5%)
		Reassignment	3 (15%)
		Positive Combination	1 (5%)
Non-agreement	Question		5 (25%)
		Nonacceptance	1 (5%)
Other Interpretation	No Acknowledgment		6 (30%)

Based on the distribution of compliment response types identified in the novel *Bumi Manusia* and their English translations, a total of 20 instances of responses were analyzed and classified,

Data analysis employed ideologically evaluating the corresponding target-text expressions based on Venuti's concepts (2017) of foreignization and domestication. A translation is considered "foreignizing" if the compliment responses of the source language are preserved, whereas it is "domesticating" when the compliment responses are rendered as natural and fluent as possible in the target language. Therefore, through this analysis, ideology can be seen as an outcome of concrete, pragmatic implementation rather than an abstract construction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of compliment responses in *Bumi Manusia*, along with the ideological tendencies in their English translations, are presented in this section.

Types & Frequency of Compliment Response

A framework by Herbert (1986) for compliment response types has been established that distinguishes between three main categories: agreement, disagreement, and other interpretations. The analysis reveals that compliment responses in the novel exhibit a range of response types, reflecting interpersonal relations and social positioning among characters. Table 1 below summarizes the distribution of compliment response types identified in the data based on Herbert's (1986) taxonomy.

consisting of agreement, non-agreement, and other interpretation strategies. As shown in Table 1, other interpretation, particularly no acknowledgment, emerges as the most dominant response type, accounting for 6

instances (30%) of the total data. This finding indicates a strong tendency toward silence or non-verbal responses when addressing compliments, reflecting culturally grounded norms of restraint and indirectness in interpersonal interaction.

Within the agreement category, several subtypes are identified with varying frequencies. Appreciation tokens occur in 2 instances (10%), representing direct expressions of gratitude. Comment acceptance and praise upgrade each appear in 1 instance (5%), suggesting that explicit verbal acceptance and intensification of praise are relatively limited. Reassignment constitutes 3 instances (15%), making it the most frequent agreement-related strategy, as respondents often shift the focus of praise away from themselves to external factors. Additionally, positive combination responses are found in 1 instance (5%), demonstrating the use of layered strategies that combine acceptance with mitigation or deflection.

In contrast, non-agreement strategies account for a substantial proportion of the data. Question responses are identified in 5 instances (25%), indicating a preference for responding to compliments by seeking clarification rather than accepting or rejecting them directly. Disagreement, as a form of nonacceptance, occurs in 1 instance (5%), reflecting a more explicit rejection of the compliment, though it remains relatively infrequent.

Overall, the distribution of compliment response types suggests that indirect and non-explicit responses, such as no acknowledgment, questioning, and reassignment, are more prevalent than direct acceptance strategies. This pattern highlights the pragmatic complexity of compliment responses in *Bumi Manusia* and provides a foundation for the subsequent discussion on translation ideology, particularly the tendency to preserve source-text interactional norms in the target text.

Translation Ideology in Compliment Responses

The analysis focuses on identifying dominant ideological tendencies manifested through

translators' micro-level decisions in handling culturally sensitive pragmatic units. The ideological categorization is based on Venuti's (2017) framework of foreignization and domestication.

The figure below presents the results of the analysis concerning the translation ideology underlying the rendering of compliment responses in *Bumi Manusia*, with particular attention to how pragmatic features of compliment responses are preserved or adapted in the English translation.

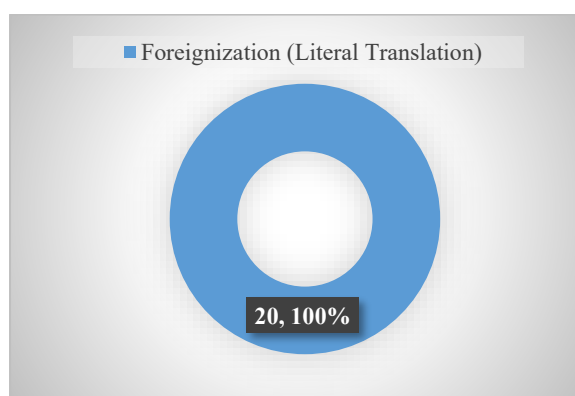


Figure 1. *Translation Ideology of Compliment Responses*

As illustrated in Figure 1, all 20 instances of compliment responses in the dataset are categorized as reflecting a foreignization ideology, specifically through literal translation strategies. No instances of domestication were identified in the translation of compliment responses. This result indicates a consistent tendency to preserve the source-text pragmatic forms and interactional norms rather than adapting them to target-language conventions.

The dominance of foreignization suggests that the translator maintains the cultural and pragmatic specificity of the source text, allowing Indonesian norms of modesty, indirectness, and pragmatic restraint to remain visible in the English translation. Compliment responses that involve questioning, non-acknowledgement, or indirect agreement are retained without significant pragmatic adjustment, even when such responses may appear less natural or less explicit to target-language readers. From

a results perspective, this finding demonstrates a clear and uniform ideological pattern in the translation of compliment responses, providing a strong empirical foundation for further discussion on ideological implications and translator positioning in the subsequent section.

Analysis of Compliment Responses in Translation

Data 1 (Appreciation Token)

SL C: “*Kau lebih cantik daripadanya?*”

R: “*Te-ri-ma-ka-sih, Minke,*” jawabnya tersipu.

TL C: “You’re more beautiful than she.”

R: “Thank you, Minke,” she answered, embarrassed.

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

Data 1 represents a pure appreciation token as a response to a compliment. The source-text compliment “*Kau lebih cantik daripadanya?*” directly evaluates the addressee’s physical appearance by positioning her as superior to another person. The response “*Te-ri-ma-ka-sih, Minke,*” jawabnya tersipu consists solely of an explicit expression of gratitude, which is a defining feature of appreciation token responses. The non-verbal description “*tersipu*” further reinforces the acceptance of the compliment while signalling modesty and emotional restraint. The use of an appreciation token in this data reflects a socially acceptable and relatively unmarked way of responding to compliments, particularly those related to physical appearance (Kurita, 2024). This response demonstrates a moment of direct acknowledgment, suggesting a context in which accepting praise does not threaten norms of modesty or social balance.

In the target text, the response is translated as “*Thank you, Minke,*” she answered, embarrassed. The translator applies literal translation, preserving both the lexical choice and the pragmatic force of the appreciation token. The acceptance strategy remains unchanged, and the accompanying emotional cue “*embarrassed*” maintains the nuance of modest acceptance present in the

source text. This is consistent with the findings presented by Ruhi (2006), stating that paralinguistic cues, particularly “*feeling embarrassed,*” indicate a positive response to compliments.

From an ideological standpoint, the translator’s literal rendering indicates a tendency toward foreignization at the lexical level, as expressions of gratitude are culturally and pragmatically equivalent in both the source and target languages. However, the preservation of the affective cue (“*tersipu*”/“*embarrassed*”) subtly maintains the source-text cultural value of modesty, preventing the acceptance from appearing overly confident in the target culture. This variation underscores that translation ideology cannot be generalized uniformly across all data; rather, it operates dynamically in response to contextual, relational, and evaluative factors embedded in the narrative. The faithful transfer of this simple acceptance strategy further demonstrates that even minimal responses can carry ideological and cultural significance in literary translation.

Data 2 (Comment Acceptance)

SL C: “*Aku tidak menyalahi janji, Minke, aku sangat mengagumi lebih daripada yang sudah-sudah,*” dan ia serahkan kotak terikat pita jambu padaku.

R: “*Terima kasih, Rob, untuk kebaikan dan perhatianmu.*”

TL C: “I will not go back on a promise, Minke; I admire and respect you greatly, much more than I have ever done before,” and he handed me a little box tied in pink ribbon.

R: “Thank you, Rob, for your kindness and concern.”

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

Data 2 above presents an instance of a compliment response categorized as agreement, specifically the appreciation token subtype. In the source text, the compliment is realized through an explicit expression of admiration, “*aku sangat mengagumi lebih daripada yang sudah-sudah*”, accompanied by a symbolic gesture

of gift-giving. This utterance functions as a direct positive evaluation, strengthening interpersonal solidarity between the characters.

The response, “*Terima kasih, Rob, untuk kebaikan dan perhatianmu,*” constitutes a clear acceptance of the compliment. The use of *terima kasih* explicitly acknowledges the compliment and expresses gratitude without modification or mitigation. The addressee overtly accepts the positive evaluation conveyed in the compliment. The classification of this response as comment acceptance indicates a direct and unambiguous acceptance of the compliment, which reflects a moment of interpersonal closeness and emotional openness between the characters (Silva & Duarte, 2011). This data in *Bumi Manusia* illustrates a context in which direct acceptance is pragmatically appropriate and socially unproblematic. This finding supports pragmatic studies suggesting that comment acceptance tends to occur in interactions characterized by intimacy, trust, or reduced power asymmetry (Rabab’ah et al., 2024).

In the target text, the response is translated literally as “*Thank you, Rob, for your kindness and concern.*” The translation maintains both the structure and pragmatic force of the source-text response. No pragmatic shift or functional modification is observed, and the response continues to operate as an appreciation token in the target language. From a translation ideology perspective, the translator’s decision to employ literal translation results in a clear case of foreignization, not because the expression appears unfamiliar to English readers, but because the translator preserves the original pragmatic orientation. Thus, the response remains concise, explicit, and affective, mirroring the source-text communicative intent.

The presence of comment appreciation, though limited in frequency, highlights the pragmatic diversity within the novel and demonstrates that translation ideology operates consistently across different response types. By retaining direct

acceptance strategies where they naturally occur, the translation reinforces the narrative dynamics of intimacy and emotional sincerity without imposing target-language norms that might otherwise intensify or dilute the original interaction.

Data 3 (Praise Upgrade)

SL C: “*Terlalu cantik, Mama. Apa kata yang tepat untuk cantiknya cantik? Ya, begitulah kau, Ann.*”

R: “*Ya,*” tambah nyai, “*Pantas untuk jadi Ratu Hindia, bukan Nyo?*” dan berpaling padaku.

TL C: “*Too beautiful, Mama. What words are appropriate for beauty’s beauty?*”

R: “*Yes,*” added Nyai, “*Fit to become queen of the Indies, isn’t she, Nyo?*” and she turned to me.

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

In Data 3, the source-text utterance functions as an explicit compliment directed toward Ann, emphasizing her exceptional beauty. The compliment is intensified through repetition and rhetorical questioning, as seen in “*cantiknya cantik*”, which elevates the evaluative force beyond a simple positive assessment. This linguistic strategy signals a strong affective stance and heightened admiration.

The compliment response is produced by Nyai, who adds “*Pantas untuk jadi Ratu Hindia*”, thereby upgrading the initial compliment by extending its scope and intensity. Rather than merely accepting or acknowledging the compliment, the respondent amplifies it by associating the addressee’s beauty with an elevated symbolic status. This response is classified as agreement, specifically under the subtype praise upgrade, as it reinforces and intensifies the original positive evaluation. The occurrence of this praise upgrade highlights a context in which heightened admiration is pragmatically acceptable and socially meaningful (Maíz-Arevalo, 2026; Zahro & Sudarwati, 2021). It reflects an interactional setting characterized by intimacy and emotional expressiveness. In *Bumi Manusia*,

such responses often function to strengthen interpersonal bonds and affirm shared affective alignment among characters.

In the target text, the response is rendered as “*Fit to become queen of the Indies, isn’t she, Nyo?*” The translation closely mirrors the source-text structure and evaluative content, maintaining both the intensification and the rhetorical function of the utterance. The translation technique applied is literal translation, as the semantic content and pragmatic intent are preserved without modification. From an ideological standpoint, this technique reflects a foreignization orientation, preserving the evaluative intensity and symbolic imagery of the source text. The phrase “*queen of the Indies*” retains its culturally and historically loaded reference, allowing the colonial context and its ideological undertones to remain visible in the translation. Rather than neutralizing or softening the metaphor, the translator reproduces it faithfully, maintaining the source-text’s rhetorical force.

This data demonstrates that foreignization not only operates in the translation of indirect or non-acceptance responses but also in expressively marked agreement strategies such as praise upgrade. By retaining the amplified compliment, the translation preserves the interpersonal dynamics and cultural symbolism embedded in the original interaction. Moreover, the retention of praise upgrade contributes to the broader ideological representation of femininity and social status within the novel. By maintaining the elevated metaphor, the translation allows target readers to access the source culture’s modes of admiration and symbolic elevation without interpretive mediation.

Data 4 (Reassignment)

SL C: “*Akan sahaya simpan seumur hidup Bunda.*”

R: “*Betapa kau pandai menyenangkan hatiku. Itu ucapan anak yang berbakti...*”

TL C: “I will save them until I die, Mother.”

R: “How clever you’ve become in pleasing me. Those are the words of a devoted son...”

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

In Data 4, the source-text utterance “*Akan sahaya simpan seumur hidup Bunda*” functions as a compliment, as it expresses loyalty, affection, and positive moral valuation toward the addressee. Although the compliment is framed as a commitment, it implicitly evaluates the addressee as someone worthy of lifelong remembrance, thereby fulfilling the pragmatic function of praise. The response “*Betapa kau pandai menyenangkan hatiku. Itu ucapan anak yang berbakti...*” does not accept the compliment directly. Instead, the respondent reassigns the positive evaluation by shifting the focus from herself to the speaker’s character, highlighting the speaker’s devotion and filial piety. This response is categorized under agreement, specifically as transfer by reassignment, since the positive evaluation is redirected to the complimenter rather than accepted personally (Herbert, 1986; Ruhi, 2006).

The use of reassignment in this data reflects a culturally embedded strategy for managing praise, particularly within familial and hierarchical relationships. Rather than accepting the compliment, the respondent redirects the positive evaluation toward the speaker, thereby maintaining modesty and reinforcing social roles. This strategy aligns with pragmatic norms that emphasize humility and relational harmony, especially in interactions involving parental authority (Zahro & Sudarwati, 2021).

In the target text, the response is translated as “*How clever you’ve become in pleasing me. Those are the words of a devoted son...*” The translation retains the evaluative redirection and mirrors the pragmatic structure of the source text. The technique applied is literal translation, as both the semantic content and interactional function are preserved. From an ideological perspective, the translator’s reliance on literal translation once again signals a

foreignization orientation. By preserving the reassignment strategy, the translation allows the source culture's approach to praise management to remain visible to target readers. In English, such a response could be pragmatically reframed as explicit gratitude; however, the translator resists this domestication, opting instead to maintain the original interpersonal logic of the interaction.

By retaining the reassignment of praise, the translation preserves the relational dynamics between parent and child, emphasizing moral values such as filial devotion and emotional reciprocity. Moreover, it reinforces the representation of familial hierarchy and moral expectations within the narrative, ensuring that subtle pragmatic cues are not neutralized in the target text (Amir et al., 2023; Jinfang et al., 2025). This case demonstrates that even within agreement strategies, ideological positioning is enacted through micro-level pragmatic choices.

Data 5 (Positive Combination)

SL C: "*Kalau suka bekerja dan berusaha, kau cukup di sini saja bersama kami. Kami pun akan merasa lebih aman dengan seorang pria di dalam rumah ini. Maksudku, pria yang dapat diandalkan.*"

R: "*Terima kasih, Mama. Semua itu baik dan menyenangkan, sekali pun harus kupikirkan dulu.*"

TL C: "if you like to work and strive, you'll be happy here with us. We also will feel safer with a man around the house. I mean, a man who can be relied upon."

R: "Thank you, Mama. That is all good and very pleasing, although I still must give it some thought first."

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

Data 5 illustrates a positive combination strategy in responding to compliments. The source-text compliments position the addressee as a *reliable man*, emphasizing his diligence, capability, and social value within the domestic sphere. This type of compliment not only evaluates

personal qualities but also implicitly proposes social inclusion and responsibility. The response "*Terima kasih, Mama. Semua itu baik dan menyenangkan, sekali pun harus kupikirkan dulu.*" consists of three interrelated components. First, the expression "*Terima kasih, Mama*" functions as an appreciation token, signaling explicit acknowledgment and acceptance of the compliment. Second, the clause "*Semua itu baik dan menyenangkan*" represents reassignment, as the addressee shifts the focus from self-praise to the situation or proposal implied by the compliment, thereby reducing the emphasis on his own merits. Third, the phrase "*sekali pun harus kupikirkan dulu*" serves as a qualification, introducing a mitigating element that postpones full acceptance and reflects careful consideration rather than immediate compliance.

The use of a positive combination strategy in this data reflects a culturally embedded politeness norm in which praise is acknowledged but not embraced unconditionally. By combining appreciation with reassignment and qualification, the addressee maintains modesty while simultaneously respecting the speaker's positive evaluation (Ruhi, 2006). This strategy allows him to avoid self-aggrandizement and to manage the social implications of the compliment, which in this context carries expectations of responsibility and commitment.

In the target text, the response is rendered as "*Thank you, Mama. That is all good and very pleasing, although I still must give it some thought first.*" The translator employs literal translation, preserving the sequential structure and pragmatic functions of the response. As a result, the combination of acceptance, deflection, and qualification remains intact in the target language. From an ideological perspective, the translator's decision to maintain this layered response through literal translation indicates a tendency toward foreignization at the pragmatic level. Rather than simplifying the response into a straightforward acceptance,

which would be more typical in target-language norms, the translation preserves the source-text caution and indirectness. This finding is consistent with the argument proposed by Sipayung & Wafa (2023) that the application of foreignization ideology, particularly through a literal translation technique, is commonly employed by Indonesian translators for literary translation to ensure not only lexical equivalence but also the preservation of interactional and cultural meaning.

Furthermore, this data reinforces the study's broader finding that compliments in *Bumi Manusia* often function as social acts tied to power relations, familial hierarchy, and moral expectations. The corresponding responses, therefore, are not merely expressions of politeness but strategic acts of positioning within social structures. The faithful representation of this strategy in the target text underscores the translator's role in mediating not only linguistic meaning but also ideological and cultural values embedded in interpersonal discourse.

Data 6 (Question)

SL C: "*Karena tak pernah menyangka akan bisa berhadapan dengan seorang dewi secantik ini.*"

R: "*Siapa kau maksudkan dewi itu?*"

TL C: "Because I never dreamed, I'd ever come face to face with such a beautiful goddess as this."

R: "Who do you mean by this goddess?"

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

In Data 6, the source-text utterance clearly functions as a compliment, as the speaker elevates the addressee through metaphorical praise by referring to her as "*seorang dewi secantik ini*" ("such a beautiful goddess"). The use of metaphor intensifies the compliment by placing the addressee in a divine and idealized position. The response "*Siapa kau maksudkan dewi itu?*" represents a questioning response to the compliment. Rather than explicitly accepting or rejecting the praise, the addressee seeks clarification about the referent of the

compliment. This utterance is categorized as a question, which falls under the broader category of non-acceptance strategies. This type of response allows the addressee to postpone acceptance while simultaneously downplaying the compliment's applicability to herself (Szili et al., 2016).

The use of questioning as a compliment response reflects a pragmatic strategy of deflection, commonly employed to mitigate self-praise while avoiding outright rejection. By questioning the referent of the compliment, the addressee subtly distances herself from the elevated evaluation without directly contradicting the speaker. In the socio-cultural context of *Bumi Manusia*, such a response aligns with norms of modesty and restraint, particularly in gendered interactions involving admiration.

In the target text, the response is translated as "*Who do you mean by this goddess?*" The translator employs literal translation, preserving both the interrogative structure and the pragmatic function of the response. As a result, the questioning strategy remains intact in the target language, maintaining the same level of indirectness and ambiguity toward the compliment. The translator's decision to retain this questioning strategy through literal translation reinforces a foreignization-oriented ideology, as the pragmatic pattern of indirect non-acceptance is transferred without adaptation to target-language politeness conventions. In English, compliment responses often favor explicit acceptance (e.g., "Thank you"), yet the translated response preserves the source-text hesitation and modesty, allowing the interactional nuance to remain visible.

From an ideological standpoint, the preservation of the questioning response contributes to the authenticity of interpersonal dynamics in the narrative. It reflects how modesty and uncertainty are linguistically encoded in the source culture and resists domestication that might simplify the response into a more straightforward acceptance. Overall, this questioning functions as a subtle yet effective pragmatic strategy for managing praise, and its faithful

transfer into the target text underscores the translator's commitment to preserving source-text pragmatic intent.

Data 7 (Disagreement)

SL C: "*Husy, sedikit pun cukup, Yang banyak ada pada kau. Itu sebabnya dia memilih kau daripada aku.*"

R: "*Tuan Dokter,*" *seruku memprotes.*

TL C: "Ah! A little is enough. You're the one who is really handsome. That's why she's chosen you and not me."

R: "Doctor!" I exclaimed, protesting.

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

In Data 7, the source-text utterance functions as a compliment, as the speaker positively evaluates the addressee's physical appearance by stating "*Yang banyak ada pada kau*" and explicitly contrasting it with his own. This comparative structure strengthens the evaluative force of the compliment by positioning the addressee as superior in attractiveness. The response "*Tuan Dokter,*" *seruku memprotes* constitutes a direct rejection of the compliment. The utterance does not express gratitude or acceptance; instead, it explicitly signals objection and disagreement through the performative verb "*memprotes*". This response is categorized as non-agreement, specifically under the subtype disagreement, as the addressee openly resists the positive evaluation conveyed in the compliment.

The use of disagreement as a compliment response reflects a pragmatic strategy that actively resists positive evaluation, particularly in contexts involving rivalry or emotional tension (Ruhi, 2006). Unlike strategies such as scale-down or questioning, disagreement represents a stronger form of non-agreement, as it directly challenges the premise of the compliment. In the narrative context of *Bumi Manusia*, this response functions to express discomfort and to reject the implied comparison embedded in the compliment.

In the target text, the response is translated as "*Doctor!*" *I exclaimed, protesting.* The translation preserves the brevity and confrontational tone of the

source-text response, maintaining its function as a rejection rather than an acceptance of praise. The translation technique applied is literal translation, as the pragmatic force and interactional intent are directly retained in the target language. From an ideological perspective, the translator's choice to retain the disagreement through literal translation signals a consistent foreignization ideology. Rather than mitigating the response or rephrasing it as polite deflection, an option that might align more closely with English politeness norms, the translation preserves the abruptness and emotional intensity of the source-text utterance. This allows the interpersonal conflict encoded in the original dialogue to remain visible to target readers.

The preservation of disagreement responses contributes to the broader representation of relational tension and masculinity within the novel. By maintaining a direct and confrontational response, the translation retains the source culture's pragmatic tolerance for explicit protest in emotionally charged interactions. This finding further supports the argument that translation ideology in *Bumi Manusia* is realized through the consistent preservation of pragmatic force, even when such force may challenge target-language expectations of politeness (Nursiah & Liusti, 2020).

Moreover, this data strengthens the study's overall claim that foreignization operates across both agreement and non-agreement strategies, encompassing not only subtle or indirect responses but also overt rejection. The translator's systematic retention of pragmatic intent at the micro-level underscores the ideological coherence of the translation and highlights the analytical value of examining compliment responses as sites of ideological negotiation.

Data 8 (No Acknowledgment)

SL C: "*Gadis tercantik yang pernah kutemui,*" *bisikku sejujur hatiku.*

R: *Ia tak menjawab, juga tak menyatakan terimakasih. Hanya dengan Isyarat ia mengajak pulang.*

TL C: "*The most beautiful girl I have*

ever met,” I whispered with all my heart’s honesty.”

R: She didn’t answer, and she didn’t say thank you either. She signaled we should go home. She walked along silently all the way.

Translation Technique: Literal Translation

In Data 8, the source-text utterance “*Gadis tercantik yang pernah kutemui*” clearly functions as an explicit compliment, expressing a strong positive evaluation of the addressee’s physical appearance. The compliment is intensified by the superlative form “*tercantik*” and the personal sincerity marker “*sejujur hatiku*”, which together enhance its affective and interpersonal force. The response, however, is characterized by the absence of verbal acknowledgment. As explicitly stated in the narration, the addressee “*tak menjawab, juga tak menyatakan terimakasih*” and instead uses a non-verbal signal to initiate departure. This response is classified as other interpretation, specifically no acknowledgement, as the addressee does not orient to the preceding utterance as a compliment and shifts the interaction away from the evaluative act.

The use of no acknowledgement in this data reflects a pragmatic strategy of interactional avoidance, which may signal emotional restraint, discomfort, or socially conditioned modesty. In the narrative context of *Bumi Manusia*, silence in response to compliments can function as a meaningful communicative act, conveying hesitation or internal conflict rather than impoliteness. This finding aligns with pragmatic research by Ruhi (2006) that recognizes silence as a culturally interpretable response within certain communicative contexts.

In the target text, the response is rendered as “*She didn’t answer, and she didn’t say thank you either. She signaled we should go home. She walked along silently all the way.*” The translation preserves both the absence of verbal response and the non-verbal action, maintaining the pragmatic structure of the source text. The translation technique employed is literal translation, as

the narrative description and interactional meaning are retained without modification. From an ideological standpoint, the translator’s decision to retain the silent response through literal translation indicates a consistent foreignization ideology. Rather than explicating or compensating for the silence by adding verbal acknowledgment, an option that might align more closely with English interactional norms, the translator allows the pragmatic ambiguity of the source text to remain intact. This choice preserves the interpersonal tension embedded in the original scene and resists target-culture expectations of explicit politeness.

The retention of no acknowledgement responses also reinforces the broader ideological representation of restraint and emotional subtlety within the novel. By maintaining silence as a valid pragmatic response, the translation foregrounds source-culture communicative norms and invites target readers to interpret meaning beyond explicit verbal exchange. This supports the study’s argument by Jepri (2025) that an accurate translation requires not only copying the content but also capturing the function of words within a specific context; therefore, the translator must understand and replicate the illocutionary purpose of the linguistic act. Thus, the phenomenon of foreignization occurs not only through lexical or cultural markers but also through the preservation of absence as a meaningful pragmatic device.

Furthermore, this data strengthens the overall findings by demonstrating that foreignization ideology is consistently applied across different compliment response categories, including those that involve non-verbal or minimal interaction. The translator’s commitment to preserving pragmatic form and function underscores the ideological coherence of the translation and highlights the importance of micro-level pragmatic analysis in understanding translation ideology.

Foreignization in Compliment Responses

The findings of this study demonstrate that compliment responses in *Bumi Manusia* are predominantly realized through non-

agreement and non-acknowledgement strategies, reflecting a strong preference for indirectness and pragmatic restraint. This tendency aligns with previous pragmatic studies (Mokoginta, 2023; Wulansari, 2020) that emphasize modesty and self-effacement as salient norms in many Asian and Indonesian communicative contexts. In the narrative context of *Bumi Manusia*, such responses are not merely politeness devices but function as indicators of social hierarchy, power relations, and ideological positioning among characters living under colonial rule.

The predominance of questioning and no-acknowledgement responses suggests that compliments in the novel often create interactional tension rather than straightforward solidarity. Characters frequently avoid direct acceptance, which may signal unequal power relations, internalized colonial ideology, or strategic self-positioning. These findings reinforce the argument that compliment responses in literary texts operate as culturally embedded pragmatic acts whose meanings extend beyond surface-level politeness (Bruti, 2006; Sari, 2009).

From a translation perspective, the most salient finding is the consistent application of foreignization ideology in rendering all identified compliment responses. The translator's reliance on literal translation indicates a deliberate effort to preserve source-text pragmatic norms, even when these norms diverge from typical English compliment response patterns, which tend to favor explicit acceptance or mitigation through brief acknowledgment. This result supports Venuti (2017) assertion that foreignization foregrounds cultural difference and resists the assimilation of source-text values into dominant target-language conventions. However, this finding contradicts the study conducted by Al Salem (2018) on the translation of compliments, the use of literal translation in rendering compliments results in awkward translations and unclear meanings.

The preservation of non-agreement and non-acknowledgement strategies in the

English translation suggests that the translator prioritizes pragmatic authenticity over communicative naturalness. Rather than adjusting the responses to align with English politeness expectations, the translation allows Indonesian cultural norms of modesty and indirectness to remain visible. This ideological choice positions the target reader as an observer of cultural otherness, reinforcing the foreignized status of the text and maintaining the sociocultural distance inherent in the original narrative (Yang, 2014).

Importantly, the ideological consistency observed at the micro-level of compliment responses contributes to the macro-level representation of colonial society in *Bumi Manusia*. By retaining pragmatically marked responses, the translation preserves subtle cues of power imbalance and social stratification encoded in everyday interactions. Compliment responses thus function as micro-sites of ideological reproduction, where colonial hierarchies and cultural identities are negotiated and made legible to target readers.

This finding challenges the common assumption that foreignization primarily operates through lexical or cultural markers. Instead, the study demonstrates that translation ideology can be enacted through pragmatic choices, particularly in the handling of speech acts that regulate interpersonal relations (Al Sharoufi & Al-fadhli, 2025). Compliment responses, often overlooked in translation studies, emerge here as a crucial analytical unit for uncovering ideological orientation in literary translation.

Overall, this study contributes to translation studies by integrating pragmatic analysis with ideological critique, offering a nuanced understanding of how foreignization and domestication manifest at the level of everyday interaction. By foregrounding compliment responses as ideologically significant units, the research extends existing discussions on translator agency and highlights the importance of micro-level analysis in examining ideological shifts in

postcolonial literary translation.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the translation ideology underlying the rendering of compliment responses in the English translation of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Bumi Manusia* (This Earth of Mankind). Based on the analysis of various compliment response types, ranging from appreciation tokens, comment acceptance, and combinations to questions, disagreement, reassignments, and no acknowledgment, the findings demonstrate that translation ideology operates most prominently at the discourse-pragmatic level rather than at the lexical level. This implies that translation ideology is reflected not only in lexical choices but primarily in how pragmatic meaning and patterns of interaction are preserved or altered in the target text. The study contributes to the field of translation studies by underscoring the importance of discourse-pragmatic analysis in understanding the role of ideology in translation, particularly in culturally sensitive compliment responses.

The results indicate that foreignization is the dominant ideological orientation in the translation of compliment responses. Although literal translation is consistently employed, it functions not merely as a mechanical technique but as a strategic means of preserving source-text pragmatic patterns, such as indirectness, mitigation, modesty, and hesitation. These features are central to the social meanings embedded in compliment responses in the source culture. However, the single use of the combination strategy in the compliment response data highlights that compliment responses in *Bumi Manusia* are not simple reactions to praise but complex acts of social negotiation involving power relations, familial hierarchy, and moral positioning. The translator's decision to maintain these layered responses reinforces the narrative's cultural authenticity and ideological depth.

The findings of this study offer several prospects for future research. Further

studies may adopt a comparative approach by examining compliment responses across different translations of the same literary work or by comparing literary and non-literary texts to explore ideological consistency. Overall, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how translation ideology is enacted through subtle pragmatic choices and opens possibilities for more nuanced investigations into ideology in literary translation.

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