

TRANSLATION STRATEGY ANALYSIS OF KAKAWIN ARJUNA WIWAHA (PUPUH I.6)

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Abstract

Ancient manuscripts are handwritten documents created in the past to record events and phenomena that occurred during those times. Translation is understood as the process of rendering a source-language text into a target-language text so that the message in the source text can be understood by readers of the target text. This study aims to analyze the translation techniques applied by Djapa (2013) in translating the content of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha manuscript through excerpts of *pupuh* contained in an article titled “Tantra dalam Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha (Kajian Filosofi)” (2025). This study focused on analyzing the translation techniques used in *pupuh* I.6 and employs the 18 translation techniques identified by Molina and Albir (2002) as a theoretical framework throughout the analysis. Qualitative and descriptive methods were used in this study. Djapa (2013), in general, applied 6 translation techniques, including linguistic compression, pure borrowing, generalization, linguistic amplification, modulation, and amplification, to translate Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha manuscript from Old Javanese into Indonesian.

Keywords: *Ancient manuscripts, Arjuna Wiwaha, Kakawin, Molina-Albir, Translation techniques*

I INTRODUCTION

Ancient manuscripts are handwritten textual documents that record various events and phenomena that occurred in the past at the time the manuscripts were written. Ancient manuscripts generally take the form of literary texts and use the language commonly spoken by the people during the period when the manuscripts were created. Ancient manuscripts may contain historical records regarding the development of a civilization, evolving religious teachings, laws related to the system of government, traditional knowledge such as medicine, advice, and various stories containing moral values that are certainly very important to preserve (Jannah et al., 2024: 50). Ancient manuscripts in Javanese society are generally divided into six types: *Babad*, historical texts intended to legitimize royal authority; *Serat* or *Piwulang*, literary works in the form of poetry intended to teach etiquette, morals, ethics, philosophy, and worldviews; *Kakawin*, literary texts in the form of epic tales intended to provide moral and spiritual-religious education and to reveal aesthetic values related to religious schools of thought and traditions; *Primbon*, texts intended to provide guidelines regarding calculations such as divination and astrology; *Kitab*, a religious text intended to teach religious schools of thought along with their philosophies of life; and *Candra Sengkala*, a chronogram intended to provide records regarding the calendar.

Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha is an ancient epic literary work composed by Mpu Kanwa around 1028-1035 CE (Divayana et al., 2026: 915-916). The message contained in Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha is conveyed poetically and is divided into 36 sections (*pupuh*), 354 stanzas, and 24 *wirama* (metrum). Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha recounts Arjuna's spiritual journey as well as the test of his resolve administered by the Dewa Indra (God Indra) while Arjuna was performing ascetic practices and austerities on Mount Indrakila. This served as a trial for Arjuna to control his worldly desires before he received the magical weapon bestowed by the gods from heaven to save them from the threat of a giant.

Translation is the process of conveying the message and information contained in a source-language text into a target-language text by adapting the linguistic and cultural elements of the target language so that the message and information in the source text can be understood by the readers of the target text. Translators must first understand the intended meaning of the source text (the original text) so that they can convey their understanding of the source text into the target languages (Hidayah & Nu'man, 2025: 29). Translation certainly requires strategies, as the translator's means of understanding and navigating the linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target languages, as well as techniques serving as a systematic foundation that translators can apply to translate texts from the source language into the target language. The translation process has been enriched by various theories developed by linguists to serve as a theoretical foundation when translating from the source language into the target language. Molina and Albir (2002) are two linguists who introduced 18 translation techniques based on a comparative method between the source-language text and the target-language text.

Several previous studies relevant to the topic of this research include an article titled “Tinjauan Semantik Naskah Nazm Waraqat Karya Shaikh Syarif Al-Din Yahya Al-Imriti Koleksi Surau Simaung, Sumatra Barat” by Sari et al., (2025), which traces the translation history of Kitab Nazm Waraqāt by Shaikh Syarīf al-Dīn Yahya al-‘Imrītī in the year 890 Hijri, specifically focusing on its semantic aspects, as well as the article titled “Terjemahan Syair Bahasa Aceh ‘Munajat Perempuan Sufi Aceh Pocut di Beutong’ dalam Bahasa Indonesia: Analisis Strategi Penerjemahan” by Fadhillah (2020), which examines the translation of the poetic text *Munajat Perempuan Sufi Pocut di Beutong* from Acehnese language into Indonesian.

Unlike previous studies, this research aims to analyze the translation techniques employed by I Wayan Djapa in translating Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript from Old Javanese (the original language of the manuscript or source language/SL) into Indonesian as the target language (TL). I Wayan Djapa’s translation was published in a book of the same title, “Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha”, in 2013 by the Graduate Program at Universitas Hindu Indonesia. Djapa’s translation of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript is also included in an article titled “Tantra dalam Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha (Kajian Filosofi)” (2025) in the form of *pupuh* excerpts and one of these excerpts will serve as the primary data for this study. The 18 translation techniques outlined by Lucia Molina and Amparo Hurtado Albir (2002) will serve as the theoretical foundation for analyzing I Wayan Djapa’s translation of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript.

II METHOD

Qualitative research is the primary method used in this study, supplemented by descriptive analysis to interpret the research findings. In linguistic research, qualitative research is a holistic procedure that focuses on society and social behavior as its subjects and aims to generate descriptive data in the form of words, whether verbal or textual, to understand language use practices and linguistic phenomena within society (Nasrullah, 2025: 20). Descriptive is a fundamental characteristic of qualitative research. It emphasizes the use of an inductive approach and presents research findings based on data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation, expressed in sentences that form paragraphs. Qualitative research is divided into eight types, including ethnography, case studies, document analysis, naturalistic observation, phenomenology, historical studies, grounded theory, and biography (Sulistiyo, 2019: 3-5). Based on the data sources and data analysis process, this study can be categorized as qualitative research using a document analysis approach.

Our literal translation of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript is presented here as a comparison to the translation by I Wayan Djapa, while also providing information on the true meaning of each stanza in Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript (its original meaning) as background knowledge before analyzing the translation techniques applied by I Wayan Djapa to render these stanzas while adapting them to the intended context within the narrative of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha. The process of translating Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript literally was assisted by AI-based software, ChatGPT, to provide a rough list of Old Javanese vocabulary (raw data) along with their Indonesian translations. We combined these into complete sentences as the literal translation of each stanza in the manuscript, for example, the word “tumahā” has its literal translations as “padahal”; “sementara itu”; “justu”.

Not all sections (*pupuh*) of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript were included as material in this study, because the manuscript consists of a very large number of sections (*pupuh*), making it impractical to analyze the translation techniques for all of them in this study. The excerpts from Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha, specifically *pupuh* I.6, which we obtained from an article titled “Tantra dalam Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha (Kajian Filosofi)” (2025) represent a small portion of the entire Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript. We compared the translations of these sections, specifically a literal translation and I Wayan Djapa’s translation, to understand the translation techniques applied by I Wayan Djapa based on the 18 translation techniques introduced by Molina and Albir.

III RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Molina and Albir (2002) are among the linguists who introduced translation techniques as part of a translator’s strategy for translating a source-language text (ST) so that the message contained in that text can be well understood by the target audience in the form of a target-language text (TT). Molina and Albir classified translation techniques into 18 categories, including: adaptation, amplification, borrowing, calque, compensation, description, discursive creation, conventional equivalents, generalization, linguistic amplification, linguistic compression, literal translation, modulation,

particularization, reduction, substitution, transposition, and variation (Amelia et al., 2023: 63-65). *Pupuh* I.6 in Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript fall under a broader theme concerning sexuality and spiritual transformation in Tantric teachings. The passage in *pupuh* I.6 describes the process by which the character Arjuna faces various trials sent by *Hyang Indra* to test Arjuna's resolve. The passage in *pupuh* I.6 carries philosophical significance, grounded in Tantric teachings that worldly energies — including human desire and sexuality — are not to be rejected, but rather must be tested, refined, and transformed into a higher spiritual power (Udayana et al., 2025: 64-65).

In his book “Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha” (2013), I Wayan Djapa attempts to translate the Old Javanese used in each stanza of this *pupuh* into Indonesian sentences so that the message conveyed in excerpts from *pupuh* I.6 can also be understood by readers with a background in modern Indonesian. Udayana et al., included I Wayan Djapa's translation in an article titled “Tantra dalam Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha (Kajian Filosofi)” which was published in the *Pramana Journal* in 2025. Excerpts from *pupuh* I.6 of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript can be found in Table 1. The analysis of the translation techniques applied by I Wayan Djapa to translate *pupuh* I.6, along with a comparison to the literal translations of each verse, is further elaborated in the explanatory paragraphs accompanying Table 1.

3.1 ORIGINAL TEXT AND TRANSLATED TEXT OF KAKAWIN ARJUNA WIWĀHA PUPUH I.6

The data collected from the movie *Moana* (2016) resulted in 132 utterances delivered by the main character, Moana. These utterances were classified based on Searle's (1979) taxonomy of illocutionary acts. The analysis identified four types of speech acts: assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive. No declarative speech acts were found in the dataset.

The classification process focused on the form and function of each utterance in context, without analyzing the responses from other characters. The speech acts were categorized by observing Moana's dialogues and supported by visual cues from the scenes.

Table 1. Excerpt from the Original Text of Pupuh I.6 and Its Translation (Udayana et al., 2025: 64)

Source Text	Translated Text
<i>“Yāngdé sangśaya ri Hyang Indra tumahā Sang Pārtha tan dhāraka, hétunyan pagawé ta bañcana panoné citta Sang Phalguna, yan hīnā mara tan harēp, harēp amētmētāśrayā lén sira, yapwan tan kawēnang binañcana maran manggēh palinggih nira.”</i>	“Hal itulah yang menimbulkan kecurigaan Sang Hyang Indra, mengira Sang Arjuna tidak tetap teguh. Itulah alasannya beliau lalu mengirimkan godaan, sebagai sarana untuk melihat hati sang Arjuna. Kalau tergoda para dewa tidak akan memerlukannya lagi, akan berusaha mencari bantuan lain dari beliau, kalau tak dapat digoda, agar ditetapkan kedudukannya (sebagai sekutu).”

In the first stanza of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha *pupuh* I.6 (*Yāngdé sangśaya ri Hyang Indra tumahā Sang Pārtha tan dhāraka*), the word “*yāngdé*” literally means “yang”; “adapun yang”, it functions as a sentence marker, meaning “as for the one that.” The word “*sangśaya*” literally means “kebimbangan” or “keraguan”. The word “*ri*” literally means “di”; “kepada”; “terhadap” functioning as a preposition. The phrase “*Hyang Indra*” literally means “Dewa Indra” with the word “*Hyang*” means “Dewa” and “*Indra*” being the name of the god of thunder, the god of weather, the god of rain, and the god of storms in Hinduism. The word “*tumahā*” literally means “padahal”; “sementara itu”; “justru” functioning as a marker of contrast. The phrase “*Sang Pārtha*” refers to the figure of Arjuna (*Sang Arjuna*), with the word “*Sang*” functioning as an article and “*Pārtha*” being one of Arjuna's titles in Mahabharata narrative, based on Arjuna's maternal lineage, where “*Pṛthā*” is the birth name (or original name) of Dewi Kunti, so the word “*Pārtha*” fully means “Putra dari Pṛthā” or “Anak laki-laki dari Dewi Kunti” (Hartanto & Widodo, 2023: 33). The word “*tan*” literally means “tidak”. Last, the word “*dhāraka*” literally means “menahan”; “bertahan”; “gentar”; “mundur”; “kehilangan keteguhan” referring to a verb.

The first stanza of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha *pupuh* I.6 when translated literally, yields roughly the following sentence: “yang masih ragu terhadap Hyang Indra, sementara itu Sang Pārtha tidaklah gentar”. I Wayan Djapa (2013), however, translated that first stanza as “Hal itulah yang menimbulkan kecurigaan

Sang Hyang Indra, mengira Sang Arjuna tidak tetap teguh”. Djapa condensed the message by emphasizing Hyang Indra’s suspicion regarding Arjuna’s steadfastness and Arjuna’s fearlessness in facing the trials that Hyang Indra will impose to test his resolve. Djapa retains the term “Hyang Indra” by translating it as “Sang Hyang Indra” rather than replacing it with a more general term such as “Dewa Indra” and adds the word “Sang” as a mark of respect for Dewa Indra. Djapa chose to translate the phrase “Sang Pārtha” as “Sang Arjuna”, where “Pārtha” is one of the names for Arjuna, but Djapa used a more common term by translating it as “Arjuna” to minimize public confusion in understanding the character “Pārtha” while also minimizing the need for further explanation to describe that character. Based on Molina and Albir’s 18 translation techniques, the translation of the first stanza in the excerpt from *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 demonstrates the application of linguistic compression (the reduction of linguistic elements in the target language without altering the original meaning of the source language), pure borrowing (the direct transfer of words from the source language into the target language), and generalization (the use of a more general term in the target language).

In the second stanza of *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 (*Hétunyan pagawé ta bañcana panoné citta Sang Phalguna*), the word “*hétunyan*” literally means “*penyebabnya*”; “*sebabnya*”, which refers to a noun and derives from the Sanskrit root “*hétu*” + suffix “*-nya(n)*”. The word “*pagawé*” literally means “*perbuatan*”; “*tindakan*”; “*upaya*”; “*pekerjaan*”. The word “*ta*” literally means “*maka*”; “*adapun*” referring to a conjunctive particle. The word “*bañcana*” literally means “*tipu daya*”; “*muslihat*”; “*kelicikan*”; “*siasat*” and is derived from the Sanskrit word “*vañcana*”. The word “*panoné*” literally means “*matanya*”; “*penglihatannya*”, derived from the root word “*panon*” + the possessive suffix “*-é*”. The word “*citta*” literally means “*pikiran*”; “*hati*”; “*kesadaran*”; “*batin*”. Last, the phrase “*Sang Phalguna*” which refers to the figure of Arjuna (*Sang Arjuna*), with the word “*Sang*” serving as an article and “*Phalguna*” as another name for Arjuna, who was born on the slopes of Himalayas (*Himawan*) at a time when *Uttara Phalguna* stars (*Nakshatra Uttara Phalguna*) was shining brightly (Hartanto & Widodo, 2023: 30).

The second stanza in the excerpt from *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 if translated literally, would yield roughly the following sentence: “*Itu terjadi sebabnya tipu daya yang mengelabui penglihatan Sang Phalguna*”. Djapa, however, translated that second stanza as “*Itulah alasannya beliau lalu mengirimkan godaan, sebagai sarana untuk melihat hati sang Arjuna*”. Djapa clarified the message by including the word “*beliau*” which refers to Hyang Indra as the one who sent the trial to Arjuna in the form of a temptation or deception to test the sincerity of Arjuna’s heart. The term “*Sang Phalguna*”, which is another name for Arjuna, is translated using a more general term “*Sang Arjuna*”. Based on Molina and Albir’s 18 translation techniques, the translation of the second stanza in the excerpt from *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 demonstrates the application of linguistic amplification (adding linguistic elements in the target language to make the sentence sound more natural) and generalization.

In the third stanza of *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 (*Yan hīnā mara tan harēp, harēp amétmétāśrayā lén sira*), the word “*yan*” literally means “*jika*”; “*apabila*”, functioning as a subordinating conjunction expressing a condition. The word “*hīnā*” literally means “*hina*”; “*miskin*”; “*lemah*”; “*berkedudukan rendah*” referring to a person’s physical, economic, or social status. The word “*mara*” literally means “*datang*”. The word “*tan*” literally means “*tidak*”. The word “*harēp*” literally means “*berharap*”; “*menghendaki*” or anything related to placing one’s hope in something or someone. The word “*amétmétāśrayā*” literally means “*mencari perlindungan*”; “*mencari sandaran*” derived from the combination of the word “*amét-amét*” means “*mencari*” or to strive to obtain something, and the word “*āśraya*” means “*perlindungan*”; “*tempat bersandar*”; “*pelindung*”. The word “*lén*” literally means “*kepada yang lain*”; “*orang lain*”. Last, the word “*sira*” literally means “*ia*”; “*dia*”; “*beliau*”.

The third stanza of *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 when translated literally, yields roughly the following sentence: “*Apabila seorang yang datang dengan kondisi lemah atau berkedudukan rendah, jangan menggantungkan harapan kepadanya, namun carilah pertolongan kepada yang lain*”. Djapa, however, translates this third stanza as “*Kalau tergoda para dewa tidak akan memerlukannya lagi, akan berusaha mencari bantuan lain dari beliau*”. Djapa condensed the message by emphasizing the gods’ decision to no longer stand by Arjuna if they find wavering in his heart; in other words, if Arjuna proves to be weak-hearted and fails to pass Hyang Indra’s test, the gods (including Hyang Indra) will no longer ally themselves with Arjuna. Based on Molina and Albir’s 18 translation techniques, the translation of the third stanza in the excerpt from *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 demonstrates the application of linguistic compression.

In the fourth and final stanza of the excerpt from *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha* pupuh I.6 translated by I Wayan Djapa (*Yapwan tan kawēnang binañcana maran manggēh palinggih nira*), the word “*yapwan*”

literally means “apabila”; “jika”. The word “tan” literally means “tidak”. The word “kawēnang” literally means “dapat”; “mampu”; “diperbolehkan”; “sanggup”. The word “binañcana” literally means “diganggu”; “diusik”; “dicampuri”; “dicela”; “dihalangi”; “dilanda malapetaka”. The word “maran” literally means “sehingga”; “sampai kepada”; “menyebabkan”. The word “manggēh” literally means “mencapai”; “memperoleh”; “mendapatkan”. The word “palinggih” literally means “kedudukan”; “singgasana”; “jabatan”; “tempat bersemayam”. Last, the word “nira” literally means “dia”; “beliau” referring to the third-person pronoun used to express respect.

The fourth stanza in the excerpt from Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha pupuh I.6 when translated literally, would yield roughly the following sentence: “Jika tidak ada yang mampu mengusiknya, niscaya dia akan mencapai singgasananya”. Djapa, however, translated this final stanza as “Kalau tak dapat digoda, agar ditetapkan kedudukannya (sebagai sekutu)”. Djapa rephrased the message from a different perspective, focusing more specifically on Arjuna as the main character by replacing the phrase “mencapai singgasananya” with “ditetapkan kedudukannya”. Djapa further clarified the establishment of Arjuna’s status as an ally of the gods by adding a phrase in parentheses. Arjuna’s status as an ally of the gods is a lofty throne granted to him if he can pass the trial set by Hyang Indra with an unwavering heart. Based on Molina and Albir’s 18 translation techniques, the translation of the fourth stanza in the excerpt from Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha pupuh I.6 demonstrates the application of modulation (a shift in perspective in the source text) and amplification (the addition of implied information in the target text).

IV CONCLUSION

Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha is an epic text composed by *Mpu Kanwa* that contains a narrative centred on heroism, spiritual symbolism, and Arjuna’s inner transformation into a protagonist worthy of receiving assistance from the gods in heaven, in the form of weapons, to defeat his enemies. Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha consists of 36 sections called “pupuh”, each of which conveys a distinct message by recounting Arjuna’s story through varying verses and rhythms. I Wayan Djapa (2013) sought to translate the content of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript from Old Javanese into modern Indonesian to make it easier for public to understand the messages conveyed in the manuscript. Excerpt from *pupuh* I.6, which have been translated by I Wayan Djapa, is included in an article by Udayana et al. (2025) that explores the overarching themes of sexuality and spiritual transformation in Tantric teachings.

Based on the framework of 18 translation techniques introduced by Molina and Albir (2002), I Wayan Djapa’s translation of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript, specifically in *pupuh* I.6, employs 6 of 18 translation techniques proposed. The linguistic compression technique was applied to translate 2 stanzas; the borrowing technique was applied to translate 1 stanza (pure borrowing); the generalization technique was applied to translate 2 stanzas; the linguistic amplification technique was applied to translate 1 stanza; the modulation technique was applied to translate 1 stanza, and the amplification technique was applied to translate 1 stanza.

The materials discussed in this study focused solely on an analysis of the translation techniques used in Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha text, specifically in excerpt from *pupuh* I.6, and is limited to the translation by I Wayan Djapa (2013) as published in the article by Udayana et al., and compares it with a literal translation of each stanza. This study certainly opens up vast opportunities for future research on this topic, as the translation of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript is not limited solely to I Wayan Djapa’s translation.

Various *pupuh* in Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript have also been translated by many linguists and professional translators into a variety of languages, not limited to the Old Javanese – Indonesian language pair and not limited to *pupuh* I.6. The theories used as the scientific foundation for analyzing the translations of Kakawin Arjuna Wiwāha manuscript in this study are limited to the 18 translation techniques introduced by Molina and Albir (2002), although there are many other theories discussing translation strategies and techniques beyond those of Molina and Albir, such as Peter Newmark’s 8 translation methods (1988), Peter Newmark’s 11 translation strategies (1981), and J.C. Catford’s 2 translation strategies (1965), which researchers can apply as a scientific foundation for their future research.

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