

TRANSLATING *YI* IN *HIKAYAT TIGA NEGARA* BY USING A CONTEXT-BASED APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Yi is one of the core philosophical terms in Confucianism with multiple contextual meanings, which has caused problems to translators seeking equivalence in a specific literature. Even though attempts have been made to translate the various meanings of *yi* from Chinese to English, the translation of *yi* into Malay remains uncharted. The present study, thus, sets out to interpret and examine the translation of *yi* in *Hikayat Tiga Negara*, which is the notable Malay translation of the great Chinese literary masterpiece, *San Guo Yan Yi* (literally known as The Romance of the Three Kingdoms). Given that the interpretation of *yi* is contextualized, Shehab and Daragmeh's (2014) context-based approach to translation is deployed as the theoretical framework. By situating *yi* in a certain type of discourse (i.e. context of situation), the meaning of *yi* is interpreted and its translation examined. Subsequently, the translation of *yi* is discussed following three types of meaning equivalences subsumed under the approach. The findings reveal that *yi* can be interpreted its meanings by formal equivalence, ideational equivalence, as well as functional equivalence in the forms of literary theme equivalence and interpersonal relationship equivalence, all of which are based on the contextualization cues in its immediate context of use. The study provides meaning equivalences for Chinese-Malay translation of *yi*. It also highlights the significance of context-based approach to translating the philosophy-infused cultural term.

Keywords: context-based approach; contextualization cues; meaning equivalence; *yi*; Chinese-Malay Translation

INTRODUCTION

Hikayat Tiga Negara (literally known as The Romance of the Three Kingdoms) is the translated literature of *San Guo Yan Yi* (三国演义) from Chinese into Malay. It was published in 2012 by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Malaysia (Malaysian Institute of Language and Literature) and has since been highly acclaimed in East Asia. The source text's influence in the region parallels the works of Shakespeare on English literature (Shoji, 2008). Prior to the Malay translation, it had been translated into various languages worldwide to bring the book to a wider readership.

Hikayat Tiga Negara is written against the backdrop of Confucianism, with the primary aim to promote the Confucian virtues of *ren* (仁) (literally means benevolence), *yi* (义) (literally righteousness), *li* (礼) (literally ritual), *zhi* (智) (literally knowledge) and *xin* (信) (literally integrity) as to establish a harmonious social institution. More emphatically, it is to encourage the practice of *yi*, as shown throughout the entire epic. However, the dynamic feature of *yi* with its constant change of meaning in various contexts of situation has caused problems for translators in rendering

its original sense of practice in the source text. Notwithstanding the role of the source context in translating its meaning, the context-based approach to translating *yi* remains uncharted. This paper, thus, aims to investigate the translation of *yi* in terms of meaning equivalence in the contexts of situation, i.e. the plots of narrative on which the source text is based, from the perspective of context-based approach.

To carry out the research, this study draws on Shehab and Daragmeh's (2014) context-based approach to translation in terms of formal equivalence, functional equivalence and ideational equivalence as the theoretical framework. In addition, this study also applies Baker's (2006) conceptions of the dynamic context as the underlying groundwork as to address the dynamic translation of *yi* in a certain type of discourse, i.e. the context of situation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In translating culture-specific items, for example, the philosophical term *yi* in the present study, context-based approach (i.e. recontextualisation) is arguably the most significant means to determine its meaning-equivalents in various contexts of situation. Studies have shown that translation is the process of recontextualisation (Baker, 2006; House, 2006). House (2006) expounds that recontextualisation in translation involves the interrelationship between the linguistic units and the enveloping context of situation whose peculiar features are taken into consideration, interpreted and reconstructed in the minds of translators and their addressees. For this theory to be operationalised, the changes necessitated in the act of recontextualisation are explained with suitable metalanguage (House, 2006: 344). All changes or transformations of the translations are subject to contextual variables to accommodate certain communicative situations (Baker, 2006). Baker's (2006) assumption is taken as the underlying groundwork in this study.

With regard to cultural translation, the research on the approach to translating culture-specific items are saturated with foreignisation (close to the source text) and domestication (close to the target text) strategies (al-Rikab & Mahadi, 2018). As *yi* is not within the conceptual range of the target culture, and it may also take an alternate English translation as the translation might not match English perfectly (Eno, 2015), this may well explain the extant various meaning-equivalents in the translation of *yi*. To address the indeterminant translation of *yi*, this paper takes a different approach to translating it, i.e. the context-based approach.

In view of the meaning-equivalence of *yi*, many scholars have interpreted and translated it subjectively. For instances, *yi* has been translated as 'meaning', 'significance', 'righteousness', 'rightness', 'right', 'principle', 'integrity', and sometimes 'just' or 'justice' in the *Mencius* (Tan, 2014) even though Tan (2014) argued that *yi* should be translated as 'relational appropriateness' since it has no direct link to 'justice' as a prevalent equivalent term for *yi*. Besides, *yi* is widely used in Chinese classical philosophical texts and Great Qing Code, whose meanings are equivalent to righteousness, rectitude, justice, correct, right, friendship and justice, or greater good (Cao, 2018). The usage of *yi* can also be found in Chinese idioms and phrases to mean the different attributes of *yi*, for example, 恩山义海 (*en shan yi hai*) is equivalent to deeply grateful and loyal, 恩义 (*en yi*) means grace, gratitude, or obligation (Cao, 2018), among others. In addition, in the *Xunzi*, one of the Chinese philosophical classics, *yi* represents a restricted notion of justice even

though it is a norm to translate it as ‘righteousness’, i.e. ‘justice’ (King, 2018). King (2018) expounds that *yi* can be translated as a particular role virtue such as ‘filial piety’, a social role or obligation, and other virtues, as the text (or context) seems fit.

In light of the previous studies, it is interesting to note that the studies in different Chinese philosophical texts have led to varying meaning-equivalents of *yi* in English. However, how *yi* can be translated in the Malay language and literature has yet to be explored. The paper argues that *yi* should be interpreted in the context of situation where *yi* displays its function. The following section will discuss how a context-based approach to translation works in the Chinese-Malay translation of *yi*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study on translating *yi* is based on context-based approach. The procedures of conducting the research are interpreting and examining the translation of *yi* descriptively in the various contexts of situation. 103 contexts that contain *yi* were collected and used as the corpus data. *Yi*, in each context, enacts a specific meaning or function, which will be examined in this research.

Due to the different forms of *yi* with the inherent meaning or function in each context, *yi* is classified into seven categories for the convenience of presenting the statistics of its meaning equivalence. Besides the quantitative part of the study, the larger portion of it is placed on the qualitative part where the interpretation and examination of the translation are done. To examine the translation of *yi*, the interpreted meaning was compared with the translation in Malay to see if the translation accords with the context of situation. Any discrepancies in the translation are discussed based on the contextual meaning portrayed in the particular context of situation. All of the examination and discussion are based on the three types of meaning equivalences, namely formal equivalence, functional equivalence and ideational equivalence subsumed under the context-based approach by Shehab and Daragmeh (2014).

To contrast with the reader-oriented context-based approach by Shehab and Daragmeh’s (2014), this study focuses on the author-oriented context-based approach so as to enhance the readers’ experience in appreciating the source culture of *yi* through translation. This approach was originally used in translating Arabic proverbs into English. As *yi* is also a culture-loaded word whose meaning must be interpreted in the contextualized situations, this approach is employed in this study as to aid translators in dealing with the translation of the source meaning of *yi*.

RESULTS

This section details the categories of *yi* in various forms, and the frequency of the types of meaning equivalences of *yi*, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

Table 1: Categories of *yi* in various forms

Categories of ‘义’ (<i>yi</i>)	Dictionary meanings	Frequency
‘义’ (<i>yi</i>)	一为适宜；二为合于儒家的道和理；三为道德规范，常和“仁”连用，有从兄、敬长、尊贤等义。 (1) Appropriate and suitable; (2) conducts that are in accordance with the moral codes of Confucianism; (3) moral principles that are in sync with benevolence, such as respect the seniors, virtuous people, etc. (Chinese Dictionary of Confucianism <i>Zhongguo Ruxue Cidian</i> , 1989, pp. 561-562)	36
‘忠义’ (<i>zhongyi</i>)	(1) 忠贞义烈; (2) 指忠臣义士。 (1) Loyal and righteous; also denotes (2) loyal and righteousness people (Chinese Dictionary <i>Hanyu Da Cidian</i> , 1991, p. 419)	32
‘不义’ (<i>buyi</i>)	(1) 不应为的事; (2) 隋规定的十条重罪之一。指杀本属府主、刺史、县令、见受业师；吏卒杀本部五品官以上官长；及闻夫丧匿不举哀、守丧期间作乐、穿吉服及改嫁。 (1) Indecorous; and (2) one of the serious crime dictated during the Sui Dynasty which includes murdering the masters, governors, county magistrate, teachers; officers murdering officials above five-rank; failing to perform mourning at the bereft of the husband, entertaining and wearing auspicious attires during mourning, and remarry (Etymology of Phrases <i>Ci Yuan</i> , 1988, p. 0038)	13
‘无义’ (<i>wuyi</i>)	(1) 没有公理正道; 不讲正义; (2) 没有情谊; 不讲情谊。 (1) Not in keeping with propriety, unjust; (2) disregard friendship (Chinese Dictionary <i>Hanyu Da Cidian</i> , 2000, p. 1442)	6
‘大义’ (<i>dayi</i>)	正道; 大道理 Justice or principle (Chinese Dictionary <i>Hanyu Da Cidian</i> , 2000, p. 738)	7
‘义气’ (<i>yiqi</i>)	(1) 节烈、正义的气概; (2) 为情谊而甘愿替别人承担风险或自作牺牲的气度。 (1) Loyalty; (2) willingness to take risks or sacrifice one’s life for the sake of friendship (Chinese Dictionary <i>Hanyu Da Cidian</i> , 1990, p. 178)	6
‘高义’ (<i>gaoyi</i>)	行为高尚合于正义。 Noble character and lofty sense of justice (Etymology of Phrases <i>Ci Yuan</i> , 1988, p. 1895)	3
Total		103

Table 2: Frequency (Freq) of the types of meaning equivalences of *yi*

Types of meaning equivalence							
	Formal equivalence	Freq	Functional equivalence	Freq	Ideational equivalence	Freq	
‘义’ (<i>yi</i>)	<i>Kebaikan yang bermanfaat</i> (Beneficial gain)	1	T	<i>Setia kawan, semangat setia kawan</i> (Loyalty, fraternity)	8	<i>Keadilan, perasaan keadilan</i> (Justice, a sense of righteousness)	4

						<i>Semangat setia kawan, nilai setia kawan, jiwa setia kawan, setia kawan, setia kawan sejati (Fraternity, virtue of loyalty, spirit of loyalty, true fraternity)</i>	15
			I	<i>Setia kawan, semangat setia kawan (Loyalty, fraternity)</i>	5	<i>Bersemangat setia, kesetiaan (Faithful, faithfulness)</i>	2
						<i>Budi berat (Deep gratitude)</i>	1
‘忠义’ (zhongyi)	<i>Keadilan dan kesetiaan (Righteousness and loyalty)</i>	3	T	<i>Semangat setia kawan, sifat kesetiakawanan (spirit of loyalty, fraternal character)</i>	4	<i>Berjiwa setia kawan dan taat setia, taat dan setia kawan, berjiwa setia kawan dan taat loyal, loyal and fraternal, fraternal and loyal)</i>	7
	<i>Keadilan (Righteousness)</i>	1					
	<i>Taat dan setia kawan, taat setia, setia, jiwa kesetiaan, penuh taat setia, ketaatan serta setia kawan (Loyal and fraternal, loyal, loyal, spirit of loyalty, full of loyalty, loyal and righteous)</i>	11	I	<i>Taat setia, taat dan berbakti, setia kawan, taat lagi setia kawan (Loyal, loyal and dedicated, fraternal, loyal and fraternal)</i>	6		
‘不义’ (buyi)			T	<i>Tidak setia kawan, membelakangi setia kawan (Disloyal, against fraternity)</i>	2	<i>Ketidakterperik emanusiaan (Inhuman)</i>	3
						<i>Tidak setia kawan (Disloyal)</i>	3
						<i>Tidak setia kawan (Disloyal)</i>	1
			I	<i>Tidak setia kawan (Disloyal)</i>	2	<i>Tidak berbudi (Ungrateful)</i>	1
						<i>Tidak adil (Not righteous)</i>	1

‘无义’ (wuyi)	Tidak mengenang budi (Ungrateful)	2	T	Tidak setia kawan (Not fraternal)	1	Tidak setia kawan (not righteous)	1
			I	Tidak bersemangat setia kawan, tidak setia kawan (Not fraternal, disloyal)	2		
‘大义’ (dayi)	Keadilan, hakikat keadilan (Justice, reality of justice)	6				Budi dan keadilan (Gratitude and justice)	1
‘义气’ (yiqi)	Semangat setia kawan (Spirit of loyalty)	1	I	Semangat setia kawan, bersemangat setia kawan (loyalty, spirit of loyalty)	5		
‘高义’ (gaoyi)	Sangat mengutamakan setia kawan (A strong sense of loyalty)	1	T	Semangat setia kawan (spirit of loyalty)	1	Sangat mengutamakan setia kawan (emphasise loyalty)	1
Sub-total		26			36		41
Total					103		
Percentage (%)		25.24			34.95		39.81
Total (%)					100		

Label of abbreviation:

T: Literary theme-based functional equivalence

I: Interpersonal relationship-based functional equivalence

Table 1 reveals that there are seven categories of *yi* represented by different forms and original meanings outside any context. The table is used as the control data of this study to examine the conceptual range of *yi*. On the other hand, Table 2 illustrates the types of meaning equivalences found in the translation of *yi* in *Hikayat Tiga Negara*. It highlights that ideational equivalence (39.81%) has the highest percentage of meaning equivalence, followed by functional equivalence (34.95%) and formal equivalence (25.24%).

It should be noted that ideational equivalence takes into account the communicative sense of *yi* in the situated contexts concerning the intended meaning in the utterances that emphasises the connotative use of *yi*. This result agrees with the notion of ideational equivalence propounded by Shehab and Daragmeh (2014) in specifying that “ideational equivalence exclusively stresses the communicative sense of an utterance rather than its formal and/ or functional correspondence in the TL”. (p. 54). Another significant finding is that functional equivalence does not only convey the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, but also reflect the literary theme and the interpersonal functions of the contextualized *yi*, depending on the extratextual features in the particular contexts. It is the translator’s task to identify the extratextual features in order to determine the text function. To quote Nord (1997/2012), while the function of the original is

defined with regard to its own referent and situation, the function of the translation has to be first defined with regard to the source text (p. 51). Thus, the translator has to identify “the signals of the sender’s intention found in the text” (Nord, 1997/2012), all of which by examining the general background knowledge of the text or literature, communicative needs and the communicative situation in which the text is received. By referring to the notion of function by Nord (1997/2012), it is worth noting that translators attempt to produce the same function or at least the subfunction as the source text at best, based on their interpretation of the situational markers and recontextualise the same function in the target language.

As the result of the findings, *yi*, in its various forms and original meaning, can be represented in the translation through formal equivalence, functional equivalence and ideational equivalence based on the interpretation of the situational markers in the source text from the perspective of context-based approach (Shehab and Daragmeh, 2014) to translating *yi*. However, the study reveals that the functional equivalence by Shehab and Daragmeh (2014) can be modified by adopting the notion of functional translation by Nord (1997/2012) and combining it together with its original operative meaning to enhance the performative function of *yi* in the contextualized situations. Furthermore, the study also reveals that Shehab and Daragmeh’s (2014) ideational equivalence adapted from Farghal (1992) should take into account the connotative sense of the source text considering that *yi* can hardly be represented by a concrete meaning due to its abstract meaning or functional quality in nature.

With regard to the literary theme-based functional equivalence, Halliday’s (2014) thematic equative (theme=rheme) is being referred to in this study to establish a meaning-equivalence link between *yi* and the overall theme of *Hikayat Tiga Negara*, as most of the contexts of situation in this epic are anchored upon the Confucian virtue of *yi*. As such, the group or phrase complexes (of *yi* in this study) functioned as theme in a particular clause type is being exploited to form a thematic equative in the identifying clause. The clause (that forms a message) exhibits a meaning equivalent to the theme of *yi*.

Furthermore, in relation to interpersonal relationship-based functional equivalence, the meaning or mood (i.e. tenor) in the conversational contexts enacts a certain interpersonal meaning between the parties involved. The finding is in accordance with Halliday’s (2014) description of tenor in the dialogic contexts in which “tenor values resonates with interpersonal meanings depending on the tenor values of the context in which it operates”.

In summary, the translation of *yi* is a contextualization activity under the context-based approach. It is the process of a translator’s problem solving and decision making in macro-regulating, goal-directing and finalising her/ his translation linguistic choices anchored upon the contextual variables of social-cultural stratum of a translation activity, situational translation function and the source text function (Sang, 2018). Thus, the context-based approach to translation considers different aspects of meaning within the interaction among various contextualisation clues, which should be explored in depth in order to justify the translations.

DISCUSSION

As mentioned earlier, the study interprets the original meaning of *yi* in the context of situation, followed by examining the translation of *yi*. As this study involves a total of 103 contextualised

yi, only four significant examples representing translations with formal equivalence, ideational equivalence, functional equivalence in the forms of literary theme equivalence and interpersonal relationship equivalence respectively are discussed in this section. However, this does not mean that only four patterns of the contexts of situation are found in *Hikayat Tiga Negara*. Nonetheless, the four examples are indicative of how the meanings are interpreted in the context of situation and consequently, how they come under each type of meaning-equivalence in the translation via the context-based approach by Shehab and Daragmeh (2014). Accordingly, this section discusses the interpretation of meaning and the translation of *yi* under the subheadings of each type of meaning equivalence aforementioned.

As follows, the data in both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) are shown. For Malay translation in the target text, an English equivalent is given in the back translation (BT). As the Malay translation is a literal translation of the ST in the Chinese language, together with some explicitations as to bridge the structural differences in both ST and TT, the same BT for the ST are not shown to avoid redundancy. To elucidate how meaning is interpreted from each example, the numberings ①, ②, ③ and so on are used to indicate the contextualization cues. The contextualization cues function as the determinants of the interpretation, and accordingly the translation can be examined by comparing it with the interpreted meaning. All the interpretations are ST-based.

Example 1: Formal Equivalence

ST: ②辽曰：“玄德不知存亡，翼德未知生死。昨夜曹公已破下邳，军民尽无伤害，差人护卫玄德家眷，不许惊忧。如此相待，弟特来报兄。”关公怒曰：“此言特说我也。③吾今虽处绝地，视死如归。④汝当速去，吾即下山迎战。”张辽大笑曰：“兄此言岂不为天下笑乎？”公曰：“①吾仗忠义而死，安得为天下笑？” (Chapter 25, p. 212)

TT: “②Kini, entahlah sama ada Liu Xuande mati atau hidup, Zhang Fei juga entah maut atau tidak. Semalam, Tuan Cao Cao sudah menakluk kota Xia Pi. Penduduk dan tentera sekalian tidak diapa-apakan. Malah ada juga dihantar orang untuk melindungi ahli keluarga Liu Xuande supaya mereka tidak diganggu atau digugat. Layanan yang diberikan baik-baik belaka. Sebab itu saya datang ke sini untuk memberitahu abang,” terang Zhang Liao. Guan Yunchang meradang, lalu menegur, “Kata-kata kau ini ternyata bermaksud untuk memujuk aku. ③Walaupun pada masa ini aku dalam keadaan terhimpit dan putus asa, namun aku tidak akan menyerah pada maut. Eloklah kau pergi dari sini, ④aku akan turun seberapa segera untuk menentang musuh.” Zhang Liao ketawa terbahak-bahak seraya memperli, “Tidakkah kata-kata abang ini akan diketawakan seisi negara kelak?” Guan Yunchang menjawab dengan tegas, “①Aku rela mati demi **keadilan dan kesetiaan**, masakan akan ditertawakan seisi negara?” (Chapter 25, pp. 484-485)

BT: “^②Now, nothing is known about whether Liu Xuande is alive or dead, and Zhang Fei is dead or not. Last night, the Lord Cao Cao conquered the city of Xia Pi. Nothing is done to the people and the soldiers. What’s more, someone was dispatched to protect the family members of Liu Xuande lest they were disturbed or harmed. The treatment given to them is good. That’s why I came to tell you.” Said Zhang Liao. Guan Yunchang was angry, then chided, “These words are certainly meant to talk me over. ^③Though I am tortured and disappointed, I won’t surrender to death. You would better depart from here and ^④I would go down soonest possible to combat the rivals.” Zhang Liao laughed out loud while ridiculed, “Surely your words will be laughed at by the whole country. Guan Yunchang answered firmly, “^①I shall die for **justice and loyalty**. What is there to laugh about?”

In Example 1, the dialogic context illustrates that ^②Zhang Liao persuaded Guan Yunchang to not protect the city of Xia Pi and Liu Xuande’s family members after telling him that the city has been seized and Liu’s family is well taken care of by Cao Cao, the conniving ruler. However, ^③Guan Yunchang refused to surrender to Cao Cao even if he is under the intimidation of Cao Cao. Nevertheless, ^④he is willing to combat with the enemy despite sacrificing his life. The account of Guan Yunchang’s indomitable spirit to save the city from the attack of the enemy and to protect his sworn brother Liu Xuande’s family from Cao Cao has indeed revealed his righteousness, i.e. doing what is morally correct, and fraternal loyalty, i.e. resembling brotherly love or brothers-in-arms. Due to the dual contextualization cues of ‘忠义’ (*zhongyi*) exhibited by Guan Yunchang in the discussion revolving around Cao Cao’s taking care of the sworn brother’s family, ‘忠义’ (*zhongyi*) can be interpreted as righteousness and fraternal loyalty.

By comparing the interpreted meaning with the translation, i.e. ‘keadilan dan kesetiaan’ (literally means justice and loyalty), it is observed that ‘keadilan’ (justice) is less accurate in that it does not reflect the fair execution of judgment in the context, even though it might mean doing justice to eradicate the enemy in the city implicitly, as could have been interpreted by the translators. On the other hand, ‘忠义’ (*zhongyi*) illustrates the uprightness, integrity or righteousness of Guan Yunchang in protecting the city, as illuminated through the contextualization cues. Nevertheless, the translation in Malay can be categorised in formal equivalence as the other translation ‘kesetiaan’ (loyalty) fits well into the context despite a slight difference in meaning due to the decontextualised interpretation of the partial meaning of ‘忠义’ (*zhongyi*).

Example 2: Ideational Equivalence

ST: 珩乃擲剑于地，大呼曰：“^②吾受袁公父子厚恩，^③今主败亡，智不能救，勇不能死，^①于义缺矣！^④若北面而降操，吾不为也！” (Chapter 33, p. 282)

TT: Apabila sampai giliran pegawai pengiring Han Heng, dia pun mencampakkan pedang ke atas lantai, seraya menyeru, “^②Saya ini sudah menerima budi besar daripada keluarga Yuan, bapa dan anaknya. Akan tetapi, ^③kini apabila tuan

kita tewas dan meninggal, yang berakal tidak cuba menyelamatkan mereka, dan yang berani tidak sanggup berkorban! ①Ternyata perbuatan sebegini kehilangan **semangat setia kawan**. ④Kalau masih tetap mahu menyerah kalah pada Cao Cao di utara, saya tidak akan ikut serta!” (Chapter 33, p. 656)

BT: When it was the accompanying officer Han Heng’s turn, he dashed his sword to the ground, crying “②I have received great benefits from Yuan’s family, his father and children. However, ③now when our lord was vanquished and died, the knowledgeable ones had not tried to salvage him, and the courageous ones had not been willing to sacrifice. ①Indeed these acts are void of **loyalty**. ④If it is mandatory to surrender to Cao Cao, I would refuse to follow suit.

The context in this example connotes the moral attribute inherent in Han Heng. ②Han Heng is a military general who had received great benefits from Yuan Shao’s family. ③When neither of the knowledgeable nor the courageous ones had been willing to try to salvage and sacrifice their life to salvage his lord who was defeated and died in the battle, he felt ①the absence of the sense of loyalty, i.e. ‘义’ (*yi*) towards his lord. This is also evidenced by the fact that ④he refused to submit to the authority of Cao Cao, the country’s enemy. Therefore, ‘义’ (*yi*) can be interpreted as loyalty. On the other hand, whether or not Han Heng’s act was meant to repay the debt of gratitude is not directly expressed in the context based on the contextualisation cues available as shown in the above descriptions.

The interpretation ‘loyalty’ is then compared with the Malay translation ‘semangat setia kawan’ with the dictionary meaning ‘berasaskan (memperlihatkan dsb) perasaan bersatu (bersefahaman, bersepakat dll), mempunyai (membayangkan pendirian dan kepentingan yang serupa dsb)’ (Malay Dictionary *Kamus Dewan*, 2005, p. 1481), literally means ‘based on (shows etc.) the sense of unity (mutual understanding, concession etc.), possess (reflects shared principles and interests etc)’. This definition denotes an alliance based on the principle of unity, which reflects the close relationship between Han Heng and his lord to the extent that he would rather uphold the spirit of ‘义’ (*yi*) than surrender to the enemy despite the death of his lord. With this explanation, the Malay translation ‘semangat setia kawan’ fits well into the context connotatively.

Example 3: Literary Theme-based Functional Equivalence

ST: 张飞…… 挥矛向关公便搠。关公…… 便叫：“贤弟何故如此？②岂忘了桃园结义耶？”飞喝曰：“①你既无义，有何面目来与我相见！”关公曰：“我如何无义？”飞曰：“③你背了兄长，降了曹操，封侯赐爵。……” (Chapter 28, p. 238)

TT: Zhang Fei menggerakkan lembingnya dan terus menikam ke arah Guan Yunchang…… Guan Yunchang menjerit, “Apa sebab kau bertindak sedemikian? ②Adakah kau sudah lupa ikrar setia kawan kita di kebun *tao*?” Zhang Fei menengking, “①Sudahlah kau **tidak setia kawan**, tidak malukah kau datang berjumpa aku lagi?” Guan Yunchang menyoal lagi, “Apakah

sebabnya kau kata aku ini **tidak setia kawan**?” Zhang Fei membidas, “^③Kau mengkhianati abang, dan menyerah diri kepada Cao Cao untuk mendapatkan jawatan dan gaji yang tinggi.....” (Chapter 28, p. 547)

BT: Zhang Fei moved his spear and stabbed towards Guan Yu..... Guan Yunchang shouted, “Why are you doing this? ^②You have already forgotten the fraternal oath at the Peach Garden?” Zhang Fei yelled, “^①Have you become **disloyal**? Don’t you feel ashamed to come and see me again?” Guan Yunchang asked again, “Why did you say that I am **disloyal**?” Zhang Fei scorned, “^③You have betrayed your brother, and surrendered to Cao Cao to get the high position and salary.....”

In Example 3, the contextualisation cue of ‘^②You have already forgotten the fraternal oath at the Peach Garden?’ reflects the fraternal oath, known as the Oath of the Peach Garden among the three blossom friends, Liu Bei, Guan Yunchang and Zhang Fei, which bears a significant extratextual meaning with regard to the literary theme of *Hikayat Tiga Negara*. It marks the spirit of fraternal loyalty among the three sworn brothers that seeks not to be born on the same day but swears to die on the same day. In this context, ^②Zhang Fei accused Guan Yunchang for disregarding the fraternal oath by submitting himself to Cao Cao in order to get the high position and salary, whose act has ^③betrayed the lord Liu Xuande as the eldest brother. The betrayal due to the breach of the fraternal oath portrays the meaning of ‘无义’ (*wuyi*) as disloyalty to the brothers. Guided by the theme ‘义’ (*yi*) of the epic that associates with fraternal loyalty, ‘无义’ (*wuyi*) (literally means unjust or regardless of friendship), thus, can be interpreted as disloyal.

In comparison with the literary theme-based functional meaning of ‘无义’ (*wuyi*) in this context, the Malay translation ‘tidak setia kawan’ (literally means disunited or disloyal) also reflects the same meaning that accommodates the present context. Even though the translation does not contain the meaning of ‘fraternal’ disloyalty (or *tidak setia kawan antara adik-beradik* in Malay), it is considered an appropriate rendering in Malay language due to the structural constraint in the dialogic context that permits only an economical way of expression.

Example 4: Interpersonal Relationship-based Functional Equivalence

ST: ^②玄德曰：“^③吾弟^①义气深重，^④若曹操果然投华容道去时，只恐端的放了。” (Chapter 49, p. 407)

TT: ^②Xuande turut meluahkan rasa bimbanganya, “^③Adik saya ini terlalu mengutamakan ^①**semangat setia kawan**. ^④Kalau Cao Cao benar-benar menghala ke Lebuah Hua Rong Dao, saya takut kalau-kalau dia benar-benar melepaskan Cao Cao pergi!” (Chapter 49, p. 941)

BT: ^②Xuande voiced out his worry, “^③My brother emphasises too much on ^①loyalty. If Cao Cao should come to Hua Rong Way, I’m afraid that he will let him go.”

Example 4 illustrates that ②Xuande was worried that ③his sworn brother Guan Yunchang would ④release Cao Cao should Cao Cao come to Hua Rong Way. From the contextualisation cues or the tenor about why Guan Yunchang's character of '义气' (*yiqi*) caused Xuande's worry, it is observed that Cao Cao was Guan Yunchang's former warlord and the then country's betrayer. As Cao Cao's passing by Hua Rong Way would be the best opportunity for Guan Yunchang to seize and bring him to justice, but due to '义气' (*yiqi*), Guan Yunchang would let him go. Given these extratextual clues, the meaning of '义气' (*yiqi*) can be traced back to the relationship between Guan Yunchang and Cao Cao. As Guan Yunchang was deeply attached to the loyalty and the friendship to Cao Cao, it is highly likely that Guan Yunchang would not seize Cao Cao, and this was proven in the later narrative. '义气' (*yiqi*) can thus be interpreted as loyalty to the lord or a friend in this context.

From the perspective of the interpersonal-relationship based functional equivalence, the Malay translation 'semangat setia kawan' (literally means loyalty, as shown in Example 3) is compared with the interpreted meaning. The translation clearly points to the functional meaning of '义气' (*yiqi*), although it does not refer to loyalty to the lord or a friend, i.e. Cao Cao, in view of the fact that this is an extratextual information which is reflected in the story line.

CONCLUSION

The study aims at translating the philosophy-infused cultural term *yi* in *Hikayat Tiga Negara* by using Shehab and Daragmeh's (2014) context-based approach to translation. It begins by interpreting the meaning of *yi* in 103 contexts of situation based on the contextualization cues, and followed by examining its Malay translation. The results from the interpretation and examination of the translation of *yi* reveal that the Malay translation of *yi* can be classified into formal equivalence, ideational equivalence and functional equivalence in the forms of literary theme equivalence and interpersonal relationship equivalence. In addition, any decontextualised interpretation of the meaning of *yi* as interpreted subjectively by the translators may cause the translation to differ from the original contextual meaning, for it might not accommodate the descriptions of a particular context.

In conclusion, the context-based approach is relevant in translating *yi* in that the contextualization cues are paramount in determining the meaning equivalences of *yi*. Thus, the study does not only provide meaning equivalences for Chinese-Malay translation of *yi*, but also highlights the significance of context-based approach to translating the philosophy-infused cultural term.

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