

IN TEACHING TRANSLATION, WHICH SHOULD COME FIRST: FROM ENGLISH TO INDONESIAN OR VICE VERSA?

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Abstract

Students still have difficulty translating from native language into the target language. This research is triggered by the problems faced by most sixth semester students based on their previous semester tests, in which meaning is not well transmitted. The result of the previous semester test showed that the translation from English to Indonesian was good enough but it was negative for the translation from Indonesian to English. From the problems / facts above, the question of teaching translation arises, i.e. which should be taught first: teaching translation from Indonesian into English then English into Indonesian or the other way around? Conducting qualitative research, the researchers try to prove which of both methods is better applied in teaching translation.

Key words: *translation, teaching translation, source language, target language*

INTRODUCTION

Translation cannot be separated from the activities of ESL learners in comprehending any foreign language directly and indirectly. Any activities related to changing words, phrases, idioms, sentences, and texts in the form of written or spoken from the first language into the second one needs translation. Mental translation and physical translation occur in all of these situations. Mental translation (or interpretation) occurs when learners communicate orally. While physical translation occurs in writing from source language (SL) to target language (TL).

Learners must be careful when they do the activity of physical translation. The target text should be as close to the source text as possible. Unlike mental translation (or interpreting), where the words interpreted cannot readily be traced back to the origin to see whether the interpretation was accurate or not, written translation can be viewed immediately and determined whether it conveyed the meaning adequately or not. In translating both source language and target language can switch roles. In translating English to Indonesian, English is the SL and Indonesian the TL. When going in the opposite direction, Indonesian is the SL and English the TL. ESL works well when translating from English to Indonesian, particularly when dealing with textbooks and other academic material. On the other hand, translation suffers when going from Indonesian to English. Problems arise in this translation direction because the learner does not have sufficient knowledge of the TL (in this case, English). Sufficient knowledge includes familiarity with aspects such as idiomatic expressions, culture and gender.

This study was prompted by the problems faced by sixth semester students in the English department at Unipa Surabaya when translating into Indonesian or English. In the English language to translate materials into Indonesian or Indonesian to English translations where the outcome was not well-transferred in meaning. Further, after having a closer look that vocabulary and grammar contributed to the generating meaning of the result of students' translation.

Translation focus for ESL learners

In general, before starting to translate from the source language to the target language learners should make decision about: 1) what is to be translated, 2) aspects of translation, and 3) methods of translation.

The text that will be interpreted as a translation of material for learners in general is a source of learning from textbooks or other materials for learning in English. Other materials to be translated among them are printed materials in English such as newspaper, magazine, brochures, etc. For English learners material to be translated can be in English into Indonesian or Indonesian into English.

The next decision is related to the aspects of translation. It will not be far from what Machali (2000) states that language is (1) a structured system, (2) sound system that is arbitrary, and (3) a means of interpersonal communication. Linguistic aspects that must be understood and addressed by the translators include the forms (sound, text, and structure), meaning, function, and diversity of languages. Hierarchies language unit is sentence, clause, phrase, word, and morpheme. The meaning can be in terms of relations with other words (lexical, grammatical, contextual, and sociocultural) as well as in terms of origin (primary or secondary or referential and connotative).

At the early stages of translation for learners focus on some basic element in structured system. The elements are 1) vocabularies, and 2) grammar. At the first stage of translation, learners will interpret the literal word for word translation. At this stage learners are generally affected by the transfer of the vocabulary of the source language to the target language. Learners should master a level of vocabulary such as a 1000-words vocabulary or more to ensure the understanding of the target language. Better interpreting some target text will be gained from higher level vocabulary mastery. In a way that translation and vocabulary mastery works on the other way around is represented by some earlier studies. Findings from the research done by A. Majid Hayati reveals that in EFL context using translation in communicative framework enhance vocabulary learning at deeper level of cognitive processing leading to deeper vocabulary gain for unknown words.

The next step to translate the source language (SL) to target language (TL) concerns with grammatical aspects. As some grammatical features of both languages pose problems in translation from Indonesian into English or vice versa. Learners should know that English grammar is not identical with *Bahasa Indonesia*'s grammar so they cannot translate each other in a direct way.

At the time of translating the text, learners will not only translate grammar, words, or style. What learners have to translate is all. All the way is to get one thing, the meaning. But if they translate the literal meaning, they will get the translation of weak and boring, because it will not deliver the exact effect of the language of the original text. Therefore, learners should be aware of this. It must be very careful to use well-formed structure to write grammatical sentences and semantically correct to keep a true copy of the text of the translation, for example, translating to follow sentences into English.

Simply, translating process whether it is done by qualified or ordinary persons have to follow certain stages (Azizinezhad, 2006). The first step in translation is to

take a dictionary after receiving a text or material to be translated, start the translation work, and do it from the first line to the last. The translator should do some of these steps: 1) read the text as whole, 2) read the text in detail by paragraph, 3) find appropriate terms in the dictionaries, 4) prepare the first draft, 5) reading and editing the first draft, 6) prepare the second draft, 7) consult with a) translation experts, b) TL readers, and c) TL grammar scholars, and 8) prepare final draft.

Quoting Qassim that translation needs to be explored thoroughly. This requires covering a comprehensive field. However, it would be long winding way to deal with all facts, principles and problems in translation. Therefore, the present study deals merely with such a limited section of this subject as the literal translation in which vocabulary and grammar are supposed to transform meaning concerned from English into Indonesian or the other way around.

Classroom teaching translation

Translation is not simply replace the activities of the source language text (ST) to the target language text (TT) but rather should be seen as an act of communication, not just a collection of words and sentences (Newmark, 1988b). Translators need to see the translation of the two approaches, namely the processes and products, as well as the need to be equipped with the intellectual tools (ability to source and target language, knowledge about the topic of translation, application of personal knowledge, and skills) and practical (use referral sources as well as directly and indirectly context recognition).

Theories in teaching translation encourages teachers to use the native language in lessons to influence the classroom dynamic and authenticate the learners' experiences. The actual usefulness of translation in English classes lies in exploiting it in order to compare grammar, vocabulary, word order and other language points in English and the student's mother tongue (W. Schweers in Newmark, 1988a). Schweers conducted a research in this context and found out that a high percentage (88.7%) of the student participants felt that the mother tongue should be used in their English classes in the first period of teaching. However, N. J. Ross in Colina (2003), says that if students are aware of the differences, language interference from their own language is likely to be reduced.

Moreover, translation in the TL classroom offers a way to highlight similarities and differences between SL and TL forms. Translation at the final stage of language teaching, translation from SL to TL and TL to SL the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers. No matter how good the students are at comprehending authentic reading or listening materials, the majority keeps mentally translating from TL into SL and vice versa (Munday, 2001). This fact makes teachers of foreign languages conscious of the significance of translation in language classrooms. Students use their mother tongue in class. According to J. Harmer (2001), a principal cause of this SL use is provoked by the activity, i.e. if students are linguistically incapable of activating vocabulary for a chosen task. Another reason is that translation is a natural thing to do in learning a language, and code-switching between SL and TL is regarded as naturally development.

Chomsky's theory (in Soedjatmiko, 2006) of surface and deep structure to explain the process of translation, i.e., analyzing the source text (ST) into kernel sentences, transferring the kernel sentences from ST to the target text (TT), and restructuring the TT kernel sentences into acceptable TT.

RESEARCH METHODS

The designed of methodology used of this research was dominantly qualitative although the researchers also analyzed the data by using Mean or to get the average of the scores. To be focused on the topic of the research, the researchers raised a question as follows:

Which method should be done first in teaching translation: translating from English to Indonesian or from Indonesian to English?

Therefore, the researchers tried to prove which method is better applied in teaching translation whether translating from English to Indonesian or from Indonesian to English.

The object of research was the sixth semester students who signed translation courses. The students were selected with which their previous score on vocabulary and grammar subjects were on the same range. For the purposes of objectivity, the two classes were selected for classrooms' observation and experiment. There was no control class because the researchers analyzed both classrooms. Each class was given the same teaching materials that focus on vocabulary, grammar in relatio with meaning obtained of the pieces of translation.

The population of the research was five classes with each class varied between 20-30 students. Specifically for this research, a purposive sample was taken in consideration of the limitations of teachers. There were two teachers in the subject of translation. The first teacher acted as the primary teacher, the second teacher assisted the primary teacher whose duties were also conducting classroom's observation. During the study, classrooms' activities were also recorded to be back-up analysis of the data when required in this study.

From the teaching translation that has been done, in the first half of the semester English was translated into Indonesian and in the second half Indonesian was translated into English. The difference was made from the first group, up to the first half of semester students were taught translation from Indonesian to English while the material of translation was taken from local newspaper. Then, the second half of semester they were taught translation from English to Indonesian. The material for translation were obtained from textbooks. While the second group were treated on the opposite way. They were taught, first, translating from English to Indonesian then Indonesian to English.

To reduce the deviation of the final judgment, translated material taken from the same source. The local newspaper is a matter of translation from Indonesian to english while the textbook as a translation from English into Indonesian.

Data from the study such as the scoring of the midterm and final exams will be collected to find the Mean. In addition there was the analysis of qualitative data in the form of vocabulary and grammar to generate meaning of the test results in each group.

FINDINGS

In interpreting the data source taken from the students' answer sheets, there were two items should be analyzed: 1) students' scoring upon achievement of their mid-term test and final test, and 2) translation element i.e. vocabulary and grammar to generate meaning of the intended text.

A. Scoring Analysis

One important aspect from teaching is the effect of the teaching to student's comprehension. It is undoubtedly reflected from the performance of the students. Performance can be indicated from scores achievement.

In this study, mid-term test and final test are given to get score from students. Both test has been conducted for the observed classes. The material tested are similar. The results are described on tables below.

Scores obtained by Class A

Test	Teaching Translation	Mean
Mid-term	English to Indonesian	66
Final-term	Indonesian to English	63

Scores obtained by Class B

Test	Teaching Translation	Mean
Mid-term	Indonesian to English	58
Final-term	English to Indonesian	67

The result from the tables shows that in translating text from English to Indonesian, the average score in Class A is 66 while in Class B is 67. It indicates that there is almost no difference at performance of Class A and Class B.

While in translating text from Indonesian to English, the average score in Class A is 63 and Class B is 58. It shows that there is difference performance of Class A and Class B in translating text from Indonesian to English.

Regardless from the input of the students, the difference of performance of Class A and Class B in translating Indonesian into English can be seen from the way the translation is taught. In the first half of semester they are taught to translate English to Indonesian. In this period students are exposed to TL as the text to be translated. Words, phrases, clauses, or idioms in TL are learned. Then, in the second half of semester their skill and knowledge from the previous learning are carried out when they translate Indonesian into English.

B. Element of Translation Analysis

Result of translation should be carefully observed since it should transmit the right vocabulary, well-structured and contextual meaning. The followings are representing some of students work viewed from the three elements of the translation as the focus of the study.

1. Translating English to Indonesian

Part of material to be translated:

“A language such as English contains a very large number of lexical item (i.e. words and idioms-see p. 179), and it is the function of a dictionary to list these items, and to give any necessary information (phonological, syntactic, semantic, stylistic, etc.) about the way they fit into the language system.”

From the result of Mid-term Test done by the students randomly taken from the students' answer sheets, There are several variation of translation. Among them are as follows:

Student A:

“Sebuah bahasa seperti bahasa Inggris berisi jumlah bagian yang sangat besar (misalnya kata-kata dan idioms-lihat hal 179) dan fungsi dari kamus untuk daftar bagian ini, dan untuk memberikan informasi yang diperlukan (ilmu suara, ilmu bentuk kalimat, semantic, gaya pengarang yang baik dsb) tentang cara mereka masuk ke sistem bahasa.”

Student B:

“Sebuah bahasa seperti bahasa Inggris terdiri dari sejumlah hal-hal leksikal/yang berhubungan dengan bahasa (yaitu kata-kata dan langgam suara-lihat halaman 179), dan itu adalah fungsi dari sebuah kamus untuk mendaftar hal-hal ini, dan memberikan kebutuhan informasi (yang bersifat fonologi, sintaktik, semantik, stylistik/ilmu yang berhubungan dengan gaya bahasa, dll.) tentang cara mereka menyesuaikan dengan tepat kepada susunan/sitem bahasa.”

Student C:

“Suatu bahasa seperti bahasa Inggris mengandung pokok-pokok yang berhubungan dengan bahasa yang jumlahnya sangat besar (contohnya kata-kata dan ungkapan-ungkapan-lihat pada halaman 179), dan itu merupakan fungsi dari sebuah kamus untuk mendaftar pokok-pokok ini, dan untuk memberikan kebutuhan informasi apa saja (fonologi, syntak, semantik, gaya bahasa, dan sebagainya) tentang bagaimana cara mereka sesuai dalam sistim bahasa.”

Student D:

“Bahasa sebagaimana bahasa Inggris berisi nomer sangat besar yang berharga dengan artikel kamus (i.e kata-kata dan corak-corak khas-lihat halaman 179), dan fungsi dari kamus untuk daftar-daftar artikel ini, dan untuk memberikan kebutuhan informasi lainnya (fonologi, sintaksis, ilmu semantic, ilmu gaya bahasa) tentang jalan mereka yang cocok ke dalam sistem bahasa.”

a. Vocabulary aspect

At this level, translation is seen from the number of the use of terms that posses similar meaning. The students use variety of words that are synonymy.

Vocabulary used	
SL	TL
Contains	<i>berisi, terdiri, mengandung</i>
a very large number	<i>jumlah bagian yang sangat besar, sejumlah hal-hal, jumlahnya sangat besar, nomer sangat besar yang berharga,</i>
lexical item	<i>pokok-pokok yang berhubungan dengan bahasa, leksikal, yang berharga</i>
i.e.	<i>misalnya, yaitu, contohnya, i.e</i>

Words	<i>kata-kata</i>
Idioms	<i>idioms, langgam suara, ungkapan-ungkapan, corak khas</i>
it is the function of	<i>dan fungsi dari, dan itu adalah fungsi dari, dan itu merupakan fungsi dari</i>
to list	<i>untuk daftar, untuk mendaftar, untuk daftar-daftar</i>
these items	<i>bagian ini, hal-hal ini, pokok-pokok ini, artikel ini</i>
about the way	<i>tentang cara, tentang bagaimana cara,</i>
they fit	<i>mereka masuk, mereka menyesuaikan dengan tepat, tentang jalan mereka yang cocok</i>
into the language system	<i>ke sistem bahasa, kepada susunan/sistem bahasa</i>

Students interpreted the words, phrases or sentence to the closest meaning of the TL. To get this, students add some words in such a way to strengthen in generating the closest message of SL i.e. ‘they fit’ into ‘*mereka menyesuaikan (dengan tepat)*’ or ‘about the way’ into ‘*tentang (bagaimana) cara*’. Adding some words to the stem may mislead the original message.

Students find difficulty to find the equal terms in TL when they translate ‘idioms’ into more than one kind of terms such as idioms, *langgam suara, ungkapan-ungkapan, corak khas*. Overall, the results of student translation from English to Indonesian not too deviated from the message needs to be delivered in the target language.

b. Grammatical aspect

From the table shown that the sentences follow the rule of grammar in which the sentence is trying to be transmitted from the source into the target language. As seen from the sentences that have been generated by the students, they shows an understanding of the grammar of the two languages, namely English and Indonesian language is sufficient. It can be seen from the translation at the above examples.

The meaning in the whole sentences In general, grammar problem faced by the students in translating text typically ranging from grammatical unit i.e. the part of speech, word order, to be, auxiliary, etc. Meaning emitted in the translation of phrases as a whole is still approached significance although there are a few additional words that somewhat obscures the true meaning of the source language.

2. Translating Indonesian to English

From the result of Final Test done by the students randomly taken from the students’ answer sheets. Since it was taken from newspaper, part of material translated in a paragraph length. The variation made by students are more in numbers than from English to Indonesian. Among them are as follows:

Part of material to be translated:

“Kepala Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Suryamin di Jakarta, Senin (2/7), mengatakan selama Maret 2011-Maret 2012, penduduk miskin di perkotaan berkurang 399.500 orang dan di pedesaan berkurang 487.000 orang. Dasar perhitungannya adalah garis kemiskinan selama periode ini.”

The variation made by students are more in numbers than from English to Indonesian. Among them are as follows:

Student E

“Suryamin as the head of BPS in Jakarta on Monday (2/7) said during March 2011-2012, the poor society decreased to 399.500 people in the city and 487.000 in the village. The main calculation is the poverty line during that periode.”

Student F

“The head of Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Suryamin in Jakarta, Monday (2/7) said that, during March 2011-March 2012, the society poor in urban affairs decrease 399.500 person and in a village decrease 487.000 person. The base calculation is poverty line during that period.”

Student G

“The chief of Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Suryamin in Jakarta, Monday (2/7) said in March 2011 and March 2012 period, a poor citizen in town decrease until 399.500 people and in village decrease until 487.000 people. The basic of account is a poverty line during that period.”

Student H

“The head of Statistic Central Committee (BPS) Suryamin in Jakarta, Monday (2/7), said that since March 2011-March 2012, the poor resident in urban areas had decreased 399.500 people and in pertaining to villager had decreased 487.000 people. The base of counting was the poverty line during that periods.”

Student I

“The dean of statistics centre staff (BPS) Suryamin in Jakarta, Monday (2/7), He said for March 2011-2012, poor societies in the city decreases 399.500 persons and in the village decreases 487.000 persons. Base of accounting is the length of poorness period.”

Student J

“The chief executive of Statistic Central Corporation (BPS) Suryamin in Jakarta, Monday (2/7), tells during March 2011-March 2012, poor inhabitant in the city is decreasing on 487.000 persons. The amount base is line of poor period at that time.”

a. Vocabulary aspect

At this level students try to find the closest terms in TL.

Vocabulary used	
SL	TL
Kepala	head, chief, dean

<i>Badan Pusat Statistik</i>	BPS, Badan Pusat Statistik, Statistic Central Committee, statistics centre staff, Statistic Central Corporation
<i>penduduk miskin</i>	poor society, society poor, poor citizen, poor resident
<i>perkotaan</i>	city, town, urban affairs, urban areas, urban inhabitant
<i>pedesaan</i>	village, villager
<i>dasar perhitungan</i>	main calculation, base calculation, basic of account, base of counting, base of accounting, amount base
<i>garis kemiskinan</i>	poverty line, length of poorness, line of poor

The problems of transferring Indonesian to English are mostly found from the terminologies that mainly due to the problem of finding the equivalent words in the target language for words only created in the original language such as '*Badan Pusat Statistik*' translated into '*Statistic Central Committee*', '*Statistics Centre Staff*', or '*Statistic Central Corporation*'. They try to align the meaning of each term they encountered only in the original language. Actually this is the problem. Terms that can only be found in the original language can not be translated directly but must be sought that have a corresponding word meaning not deviate but still understandable by foreign readers. But in the following phrase '*dasar perhitungan*' which is translated into '*main calculation*', '*base calculation*', '*basic of account*', '*base of counting*', '*base of accounting*', or '*amount base*' are actually can be found in the target language, but students have different perceptions in translating it.

b. Grammatical aspect

At this aspect, grammatical elements that affect student outcomes in translating Indonesian into English are structure order, auxiliary, preposition, and tenses. Students still do not fully understand the use of tenses in the types of text such as reports text, to mention one.

DISCUSSIONS

From the analysis that has been done earlier, the result of translation of the two groups of students upon which teaching translation from English into Indonesian is applied at the beginning of the semester and is changed in the opposite at the end of the semester as well as of the value of the final test results for each translation period can be summed up as follows:

a. Scoring performance

The group who received instruction at the beginning of the semester translating Indonesian into English and then proceed to translating English into Indonesian obtained an average score lower compared to the group who received instruction translation on the other way around. This is because at the beginning of the semester many students still lack in comprehending the words, phrases, clauses, or sentences

that will be transferred from the source language (Indonesian) to the target language (English).

b. Vocabulary and grammatical review

ESL in this context through what is called the 'literal translation' because they are still in the early stages of improving translation skills. At this stage the most influential aspect is the mastery of vocabulary and grammar. This will affect the ability to interpret the meaning in each text. The less vocabularies that are comprehended increasingly distanced the translation results with its closest meaning.

CONCLUSION

Problems in translation by student of ESL can be found in both ways of teaching translation whether students translate from English to Indonesian or the other way around. For them, basic problem of translation mostly arise from aspects of translation among others are the terms used, grammatical aspect and translating meaning. From the result of the study reveals that teaching student translation from English (TL) to Indonesian (SL) gains more on the aspects of translation. Students are exposed to the TL which require them to know better of the TL. Then, when they are required to translate what the market needs, the knowledge of the TL is already lingered to be implemented.

SUGGESTIONS

It is suggested that at the beginning of translation teaching students first introduced to the aspects in the target language so that students have the knowledge of the target language. ESL learners that can understand more vocabulary of Indonesian language in an equal English-language gets better scores.

Finally, through constant practice and exercise students will build the skill of translating the text to an equivalent message of the TL.

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