

Translation Strategies Used by Student Translators in Solving Equivalence Finding-Related Problems

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Abstract

As the main purpose of translation, finding equivalence often presents problems to translators, especially student translators. Responding to such problems, this paper aims at finding out translation strategies employed by student translators in solving equivalence finding-related problems. This study used a descriptive method taking the English-into-Indonesian translation process done by student translators as the data. The data were collected using keylogging (Translog) and screen recording (Camtasia Studio 8) tools, and were analyzed using translation process technique of data analysis. The results indicate that the five strategies – naturalization, generalization, description, borrowing and deletion – used by the student translators in solving the equivalence finding-related problems are helpful for differently specific equivalence finding-related problems. Thus, it is concluded a certain strategy works better to solve a certain equivalence finding-related problem.

Keywords: *translation strategies, equivalence finding-related problems, English-into-Indonesian translation, student translators*

Introduction

Any translation activity basically aims at reproducing a text in a target language (TL) that fully represents the meaning contained in its source text (ST). However, this goal certainly cannot be achieved without going through a good translation process. Due to the important role of process in producing a good translation product, a structured translation process is one of the indicators of successfully producing quality translation product (Rosa, 2017).

Process-oriented translation studies focus on researching the whole translation process experienced by a translator. In other words, process-oriented translation studies are related to observational studies in the procedure of language transfer from source language (SL) to TL which includes pauses in translation process (Alves & Vale, 2011; Angelone, 2010; Jakobsen, 2011; Kumpulainen, 2015; Rosa, Sinar, Ibrahim-Bell, & Setia, 2018), self-correction or self-revision (Malkiel, 2009; Sofyan & Rosa, 2015; Sofyan & Tarigan, 2017), influences of competence and experience in translation process (Ehrensberger-Dow & Massey, 2013; Shreve, Angelone, & Lacruz, 2018), differences in translation process between professional translators and student translators (Christensen, 2011; Daems, Vandepitte, Hartsuiker, & Macken, 2017; Lörcher, 2005; Rosa, 2017; Sofyan, 2016). As process-oriented translation studies explore what happens during translation process, a number of instruments have been developed and utilized such as think aloud protocols (TAP) (Bernardini, 2001; Rosa, 2017; Smith, 2014; Tanja Pavlović, Jurida, & Jahić, 2013), Translog (Hansen, 2002; Immonen, 2011; Jakobsen, 2011; Rosa, 2019; Sofyan, 2016), and Camtasia (Albir, 2015; Alves & Vale, 2011; Castillo, 2015; Christensen, 2011).

In addition, other studies on process-oriented translation explore problems encountered by translators while doing their tasks (Akan, Karim, & Chowdhury, 2019; Khalifa, 2015; Schwarz, Stiegelbauer, & Husar, 2016) and strategies used to solve translation problems (Arjomandi & Kafipour, 2016; Ibrahim, 2017; Shojaei, 2012). Although a number of studies on translation strategies have been done, other studies on translation strategies are always expected because of different text types. Several studies have been conducted on strategies in translating legal texts (Galdia, 2013; Stepanova, 2017), medical texts (Eszenyi, 2016; Povoroznyuk, 2014), religious texts (Agliz, 2016; Khammyseh, 2015), science and technology texts (Tuan, 2011; Zheng, 2017), and literary translation (Kazakova, 2015; Klimovich, 2016; Suo, 2015). In addition, different translation strategies are also used in different languages due to their different cultures. Therefore, different from those previous studies, this paper aims at finding out translation strategies used by student translators to solve equivalence-related problems in translating a historical recount text from English into bahasa Indonesia.

Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative method to describe the process of English-Indonesian translation carried out by 10 student translators, who were the third year students of English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang taking translation as their elective course. They were asked to translate an English historical recount text entitled “Machu Picchu” (downloaded from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Machu-Picchu>) into bahasa Indonesia, and their translation processes were the data of this study. The data were collected using keylogging (Translog) and screen recording (Camtasia Studio 8) tools. The data were analyzed using an interactive model of data analysis.

Results and Discussion

The results of data analysis show that the students applied several strategies to solve certain equivalence-related problems they encountered in the translation process, one of which was naturalization. This strategy was used particularly to solve the equivalence problem related to the incorrect use of borrowing technique. One of the examples is provided in (1).

(1) ST : In 1964 Espiritu Pampa was **extensively** excavated under the **direction** of the American explorer Gene Savoy.

TT : *Di tahun 1964 Espiritu Pampa digali secara **ekstensif** di bawah **direksi** seorang penjelajah asal Amerika yang bernama Gene Savoy.*

The translation in (1) is the first translation draft written by one of the student translators based on the data recorded using Translog. It shows the incorrect use of borrowing technique in translating the ST words “extensively” and “direction”. The equivalent of “extensively” used in (1) is “*ekstensif*”, translated by using a borrowing technique. Although the word “*ekstensif*” is widely known by TL readers, its use in this context is not accurate. In the TL, “*ekstensif*” has various meanings depending on the context where it is used. It might mean “frequent”, “continuous”, or “wide” (see the online Indonesian Monolingual Dictionary at <https://kbbi.web.id/>). Based on the context in (1), the right equivalent for the ST word “extensively” is “widely”. Based on the data recorded from Translog (see Figure 1), the student translator revised the first draft by writing “*secara luas*”. The same strategy is also applied in revising the equivalent of the ST word “direction” which was translated “*direksi*” in the first draft. The word “*direksi*” is then naturalized into “*arahan*” which gives better understanding to TL readers. The process of applying this naturalization strategy by the use of Translog can be seen in Figure 1.

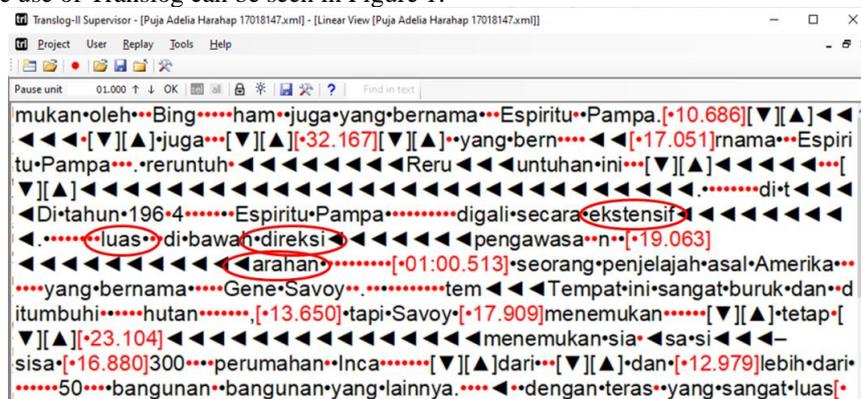


Figure 1. Naturalization of words “*ekstensif*” and “*direksi*”

As shown in Figure 1, the word “*ekstensif*” is the diction selected in the first draft before it is deleted and substituted with the word “*luas*” in the final draft. Furthermore, Figure 1 also shows the word “*direksi*” used in the first draft is substituted with the word “*pengawasan*” in the second draft and “*arahan*” in the final draft. Therefore, the final draft of the translation in (1) is written as in (1a)

(1a) *Di tahun 1964 Espiritu Pampa digali secara **luas** di bawah **arahan** seorang penjelajah asal Amerika yang bernama Gene Savoy.*

Another translation strategy used by the student translators is generalization, providing an equivalent with a broader meaning. This strategy is particularly used by the student translators to solve the equivalence problem related to local culture specific terminology. Study the translation in (2).

- (2) ST : It is perched above the Urubamba River valley in a narrow **saddle** between two sharp peaks.
 TT : Bertengger di atas lembah Sungai Urubamba tepatnya di atas sebuah **punggung bukit sempit** di antara dua puncak tajam.

The generalization strategy applied by the student translator in the translation in (2) is using the phrase “*punggung bukit*” as the equivalent of the ST word “saddle”. Earlier in the first draft, the student translator wrote the word “*pelana*” as the equivalent of the word “saddle” as can be seen in Figure 2.

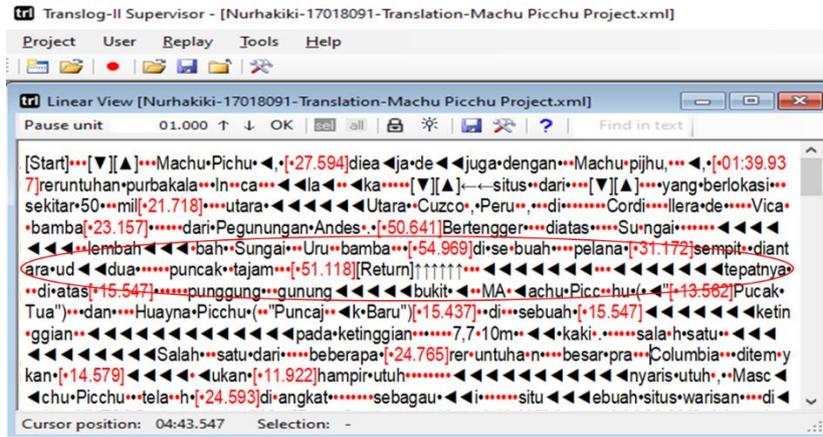


Figure 2. Generalization in finding the equivalent of the ST word “saddle”

As shown in Figure 2, the word “*pelana*” is used as the equivalent of the ST word “saddle” in the student translator’s first draft, which is the result of literal translation. However, she decided to replace it with the phrase “*punggung bukit*”. Although the phrase might not be the exact equivalent the ST word “saddle” as generally understood by the local people in Peru, the meaning contained in the phrase provides a general description to the TL readers about the meaning of the word “saddle”. This strategy is called generalization. The use of generalization strategy in this context is motivated by the use of external (online) resources. Based on data obtained from the screen recording tool (Camtasia Studio 8), she searched for the equivalent of “saddle” through Google Image Search as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Generalizing the meaning of “saddle” through an image

The process of finding the meaning equivalence of the ST word “saddle” in the TT through the image in Figure 3 can be illustrated as in Figure 4.



Figure 4. The process of finding the equivalent of “saddle” by generalization

By looking at the illustration of applying generalization strategy in finding the meaning equivalence of the word “saddle” presented in Figure 4, the student translator gets direct experience with the meaning of the word “saddle”. It turns out that the word “saddle” can mean a space that lies between two sharp peaks (shown by a red double ended arrow). Thus, she concluded that the meaning of “saddle” shares some similarities with the meaning of “ridge”, and finally decided to write “*punggung bukit* (ridge)” as the equivalent of the word “saddle”.

The next strategy used by the student translator is description, which is used to solve the equivalence problem related to inappropriate use of borrowing techniques and target culture (TC). One of the examples of applying a description strategy can be seen in (3).

- (3) ST: Additional discoveries throughout the Cordillera de Vilcabamba have shown that Machu Picchu was one of a series of pucaras, **tambos**, and signal towers along the extensive Inca foot highway.
- TT: *Penemuan lainnya di seluruh Cordillera de Vilcabamba menunjukkan bahwa Machu Picchu merupakan salah satu dari serangkaian pusara, tambo (barak wisatawan atau penginapan), dan menara sinyal disepanjang jalan raya kaki Inca yang luas.*

As shown in (3), the student translator uses a borrowing technique by keeping the word “tambo” in the TT. Considering that the word is not widely known by TL readers, she provides a short description of what tambo is. Based on data obtained from Translog (see Figure 5), in the first draft, she only writes “tambo” without any description of the word.

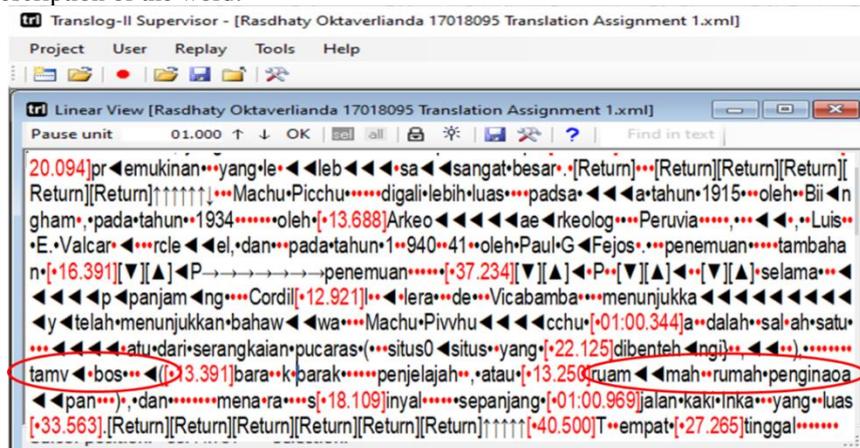


Figure 5. Description strategy in finding the equivalent of “tambos”

As shown in Figure 5.6, the student translator borrows the word “tambos” in the first draft of his translation, but subsequently he deletes the letter “s” realizing that “s” is the plural marker and is not necessarily included in the TT. Then in the final draft, she adds the description of the word “tambo” by writing it in brackets, resulting in “*tambo (barak wisatawan atau penginapan)*”. The use of such description

strategy is very appropriate because the description makes TL readers better understand the meaning of the word “tambo”.

Next, based on data obtained from the screen recording, the student translator’s decision to use the description strategy is based on her efforts to get the equivalent through the utilization of online resources. She searched for the word “Tambos in Peru” on Google Search which was then followed by a search for “Image” and found an image as can be seen in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Image of modernized tambos

The image in Figure 6 is a building that looks like an inn or a hostelry located on the ridge. Based on this picture, she decides to use the word “barak” or “penginapan” as the description of the word “tambo” in her TT. Furthermore, because the inn is located near the tourist attraction, she added the word “wisatawan” to complete the description.

The next strategy used by the student translators is “borrowing”. Although borrowing can sometimes cause certain translation problem, it can also be used as one of the right strategies to solve a problem in translation, especially in finding the right equivalent for local cultural terms. One of the examples of using a borrowing strategy in the translation of the student translator can be seen in 4.

- (4) ST: Although the **site** escaped detection by the Spaniards, it may have been visited by the German adventurer Augusto Berns in 1867.
- TT: *Meskipun situs tersebut luput dari perhatian orang-orang Spanyol, kemungkinan besar tempat ini telah dikunjungi oleh petualang Jerman, Augusto Berns pada tahun 1867.*

The use of the word “situs” as the equivalent of the ST word “site” in (4) is motivated by a borrowing strategy. In the first draft, the student translator uses the word “tempat” as the equivalent of the word “site” (See Figure 7).

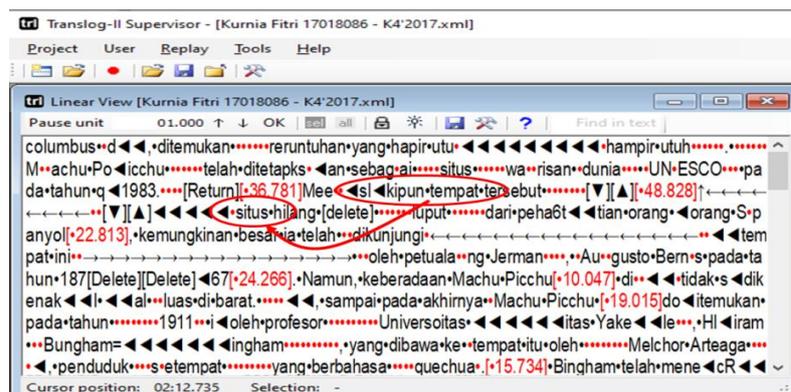


Figure 7. Using borrowing strategy to get the equivalent of the ST word “site”

The image in Figure 7 shows that the word “tempat” is used as the equivalent of the ST word “site” in the first draft. However, after taking a pause of about 48 seconds, she decides to use a borrowing strategy by substituting the word “tempat” with the word “situs”. This is called borrowing through adaptation process. The choice of the word “situs” is motivated by the context (i.e. historic building) exposed in the ST. In the TL, the word “situs” is more commonly used in to describe places located around historic buildings. The

pause of 48 seconds taken by the student translator does not indicate her lack of fluency in the translation process, but rather indicates the occurrence of cognitive process, and the longer the pauses are taken, the heavier the cognitive process load that is happening (Rosa et al., 2018).

Furthermore, another strategy used by the student translators is deletion. This strategy is usually employed in translation process not only by student translators but also professional translators for the purpose of producing a natural translated text. The example of the data indicating the use of deletion strategy is provided in (5).

(5) ST : Although the site escaped detection by the Spaniards, it may have been visited by the German adventurer Augusto Berns in 1867.

TT : *Meskipun lolos dari deteksi orang Spanyol, situs ini mungkin telah dikunjungi oleh penjelajah Jerman yang bernama Augusto Berns di tahun 1867.*

By looking only at the ST and the TT in (5), the use of deletion strategy is not visible. Such deletion strategy can only be seen through the data obtained from Translog as presented in Figure 8.

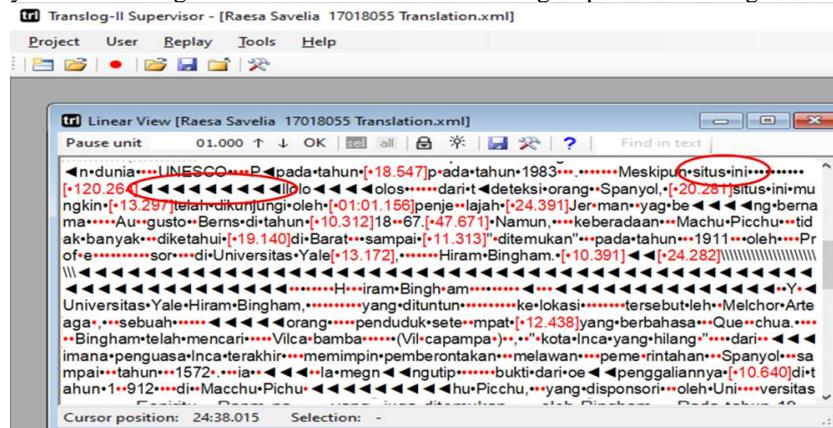


Figure 8. Deleting strategy applied by the student translator

Looking at the image in Figure 8, the student translators uses the phrase “*situs ini*” in her first draft as the equivalent of the ST phrase “the site”. However, the differences in structure and language style between the SL and the TL make him decide to delete the phrase “*situs ini*” in her final draft. In the TL, the use of a third-person singular neuter (it) is commonly used, but in the TL, it is not. Such case, in the TL, is usually represented by the repetition of the same word. Trying to avoid such repetition, she deletes the phrase “*situs ini*” which is used in her first draft.

The results of data analysis indicate that the student translators use five strategies – naturalization, generalization, description, borrowing and deletion – to solve the equivalence finding-related problems in translating the historical recount text from English into bahasa Indonesia. In addition, it is also found that the five strategies are used to solve different problems; in other words, certain strategy works well in solving certain translation problem. The strategies and the equivalence finding-related problems to which the strategies work well are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Translation strategies used by the student translators

No.	Translation strategy	Equivalence finding-related problems
1	Naturalization	Inappropriate use of borrowing technique SL interference
2	Generalization	Local culture specific terminology
3	Description	Inappropriate use of borrowing technique Local culture specific terminology
4	Borrowing	Local culture specific terminology
5	Deletion	SL interference

The findings displayed in Table 1 indicate that most of the strategies are applied to solve the problem related to local culture specific terminology. This is mainly influenced by the text type translated by the student translators – i.e. historical recount text – in which local terms are commonly found. The findings also indicate that borrowing is one of the applicable strategies in translation, but very frequent borrowings might result in its inappropriate use.

Conclusions

Translating a historical recount text provides certain difficulties leading to different choices of translation strategies. The five strategies used by the student translators – naturalization, generalization, description, borrowing and deletion – are much influenced by the characteristics of a historical recount text. Therefore, it would be very useful for other researchers to study translation strategies in other text types. Such studies will contribute a lot to translation practices as translators will be involved in the translation of various text types. In addition, this study only focuses on the translation strategies used by student translators who do not have much experience on translation; therefore, it is recommended to explore how professional translators apply strategies in translating other text types.

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