

Students' Ability in Translating Narrative Text from Indonesia into English

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Abstract

Mastering translation skill gives more career opportunities beyond academics domain for English learner especially English department students in Indonesia. The purpose of this study was to analyze English Department students' ability in translating a narrative text into English. The study was focused on accuracy, readability, and acceptability of the translation product. The subject was students of English Department at Universitas Eka Sakti Padang. The result showed that the ability of the students in translating Indonesian text into English is in medium or average level. The improvement is needed in translation studies in order to create more job opportunities beyond academics area for the students in the future.

Keywords: *translation, narrative text, accuracy, readability, acceptability*

Introduction

Many second and or foreign language learners including English learners in Indonesia do not learn the language to be a teacher (Ash, 2015). Learning English can widen someone's knowledge as many books, journals, articles, advertisements, and technologies are written in English. Moreover, some of them learn English to open chances to continue their study abroad and many of them are ended as a translator. Being a translator brings benefits due to its flexibility of time, independent work as well as its high payment. It is committed as a promising job as words mean money. Many words you translate, many you earn.

A translator is required a good translation skill. Translation is another important skill that has to be mastered by English learners in addition to the other basic four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. It plays an important role in communication between two different languages. Translation involves activity of translating complex system to produce results that is in accordance with the original information. The result of translation must be transferring the meaning of the source language clearly and accurately. In order to make it clear and accurate (Sofyan & Tarigan, 2019), it is expected that the meaning of target language can be understood by the TL readers.

For this reason, English department curriculum in university in Indonesia includes Indonesian- English Translation as a subject for students. In this subject, students are not only provided with material in academic domain but also in others. In academic, the material can be translating journals, scientific articles, books, etc. In others it can be advertisement, announcement, pamphlet, brochure, subtitle, company profile, voice over, etc.

Many researches are conducted to study about translating text that is not in academic domain. Horbacauskiene, Kasperaviciene, and Petroniene (2016) suited about issues of cultural specific item in translating English subtitles into Lithuanian. They found that not all culture specific items are appropriately rendered into the target language, which is a significant factor in the evaluation of translation quality. In other case, Kocote and Smirnova (2016) discussed some misconceptions associated with translation of military and military-related texts, to analyze specific competences a translator of these texts. Translating military and military-related texts, translators should develop not only advanced linguistic, but also comprehensive thematic competence to be able to deal with translation problems. The result found that competence in translation of military-related texts may become a competitive advantage for student translators specializing in various fields of language for special purposes. Similarly, Ardi (2017) reported the subtitle of military register however it is not conducted by student translators.

Another study has done by Ornia (2015). The researcher analyzed the text genre of medical brochures that have been translated into English and published in Spain. The result showed that the influence of Spanish brochures on translated brochures is format-related, whilst English brochures have influenced them from a more linguistic perspective. In economics, Mirzoyeva (2014) studied about metaphorical terms in the sphere of economics, in the context of translation difficulties lying in the base of their different perception in English and in Russian. The researcher found that conclusion that in most of cases, figurativeness of metaphoric economic terms in source language is remained in translation. Another study by Yousofi (2014)

analyzed the translations products and highlighted the parts seemed problematic done by Iranian graduates and undergraduates who were seeking job as English translators. The findings showed that the translators' had committed errors in linguistic, cultural and stylistic areas.

Other studies on translation have been conducted in academic settings. They focused their studies on translation involving different text types, such as translating recount texts (Rosa, 2019; Rosa, Sofyan, & Tarigan, 2019), narrative texts (Wahyono & Yuliasri, 2019), news item texts (Sofyan & Tarigan, 2018), descriptive text (Surahman), taking students as their participants.

Many translation researches has done in the others domain besides academic including business area but none of them studied narrative text like voice over script of a company promotion. Some companies in Indonesia intend to spread their network abroad. In order to do that, they have to promote their company in English as a global language. The purpose of this study was to analyze English Department students' ability in translating an Indonesian voice over script in the written form into English. The study was focused on accuracy, readability, and acceptability of the translation product done by the students.

Method

The aim of the study was to investigate the students' ability in translating written text from Indonesian into English. This research is descriptive research. This research conducted at Eka Sakti University Padang. The subject was 15 students of English Department. The sample was taken by using random sampling; it was taken from all students who have taken translation subject. The test instrument employed in this study was a narrative text in the format of voice over script of Ashta Asiti Company profile. It is a garment and apparels company in Bandung, Indonesia. The text consists of 10 short paragraphs; each paragraph consists of 2-3 sentences. Voice over is presented orally but the narrator usually read a text. This text was used as the instrument of this study.

The text was not delivered during the teaching learning process. The student was given 3 days to complete the translation and brought it home. The result was submitted by sending a photo of the paper of the translation product by using what's App application in Smartphone. The photo was printed then analyzed by using a scoring rubric of accuracy, readability, and acceptability of the product. The result was analyzed by categorizing the translation product based on table 1 below

Table 1. Table of Accuracy, Readability, and Acceptability

	Definition	Indication
Accuracy	Accurate	The meaning of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences in the source text is conveyed accurately in the target text. There are no distortions in meaning.
	Less Accurate	The meaning of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences in the source text is mostly conveyed accurately in the target text.
	Inaccurate	The meaning of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences in the source text is not conveyed accurately in the target text.
Readability	Readable	The translation is very easy to understand.
	Less Readable	The translation is quite easy to understand; the readers need to read some parts more than once in order to understand the translation.
	Unreadable	The translation is difficult to understand.
Acceptability	Acceptable	The translation sounds natural; the words, phrases, clauses, and sentences of the source text are appropriate with the target language's principles.
	Less Acceptable	The translation sounds natural; but there are still problems with the dictions or grammar.
	Unacceptable	The translation sounds unnatural; the words, phrases, clauses, and sentences used are inappropriate with the target language's principles.

Adapted from Nababan, 2010

Results and Discussion

Table 2 displays the result of accuracy, readability, and accuracy analysis of translation product made by students of English Department of Eka Sakti University Padang.

Table 2. Result of Accuracy, Readability, and Acceptability Analysis

Subject	Accuracy	Readability	Acceptability	Overall
1	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
2	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
3	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
4	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
5	Inaccurate	Less Readable	Unacceptable	Not Good
6	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
7	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
8	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
9	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
10	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
11	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
12	Inaccurate	Less Readable	Unacceptable	Not Good
13	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
14	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good
15	Less Accurate	Less Readable	Less Acceptable	Less Good

The result showed that 13 of 15 students get less good result (86%) and 2 of 15 students get not good (14%) in the ability of translating the text from Bahasa Indonesia into English. It indicates that the translation product made is less accurate, less readable, and less acceptable. It may affect by some factors such as culture, less of practices, and interference of Indonesian language.

In accuracy, 13 of 15 students get less accurate (86%) and 2 of 15 students get inaccurate (14%). It indicates that the accuracy of translation product made by the students is still less accurate in some aspects. It can be shown on example below:

SL: *Saat ini kami mampu memproduksi pakaian dengan jumlah yang sangat besar//puluhan ribu pakaian dengan berbagai jenis telah kami hasilkan dengan baik.*

TP: At present we are able to produce very large quantities, many ways with various types we have produce well.

SL: source language text

TP: translation product made by students

In readability, 15 of 15 students get less readable (100%). It indicates that the readability of translation product made by the students is readable but in some aspect it is quite easy to understand.. It can be shown on example below

SL: *Koordinasi tiap-tiap divisi/ selalu terjaga sehingga setiap pekerjaan yang dilakukan/ senantiasa sistematis dan terorganisir.*

TP: Every coordination-every division, always carried out every work carried out, always systematic and organized.

SL: source language text

TP: translation product made by students

In acceptability, 13 of 15 students get less acceptable (86%) and 2 of 15 students get unacceptable (14%). It indicates that the translation product made by the students can be accepted but it sound too Indonesian. Here is an example

SL: *Berawal pada tahun 2014 yang lalu/ ashta asiti kini menjadi salah satu perusahaan ternama/ yang mampu melayani berbagai kebutuhan konsumen khususnya dibidang industry pakaian//*

TP: Starting in 2014 ago, ashta asiti has now become one of the famous clothing industry companies, capable of serving various needs of consumers, especially in the clothing industry.

SL: source language text

TP: translation product made by students

A good translation skill of students can measure from the quality of translation product made. The quality of translation product can be identified by measuring accuracy, readability, and acceptability. A good translation must be accurate, readable, and acceptable in the form of target language. The findings show that the translation product made by students is less accurate, less readable, and less acceptable. There are problems found in some aspects. It cannot be published in global because for English speaking country

people it sounds strange and whole the message do not delivered well. The product sound too Indonesian. It is similar to Horbacauskiene, Kasperaviciene, and Petroniene (2016) finding that specific item culture still affects the translation production.

Accuracy in translation refers to in which a translation has same meaning with its original. It means that there is no ambiguity of meaning between source and target language. The findings show that there is ambiguity found in the translation made by the students. At the end of first clause, students only write *quantities* and *types* in the second clause. It is similar to some issues related to the Accuracy of translation according to Specia and Shah (2014). Terminology, mistranslation, omission, addition are some issues related to the accuracy of translation. If the meaning delivered has different ideas than the original text, the text would be considered as less or not accurate. The example shows that the translation product made is less accurate. The information in target language does not reach the meaning of source language. Here is a suggested good translation for the sentence

SL: *Saat ini kami mampu memproduksi pakaian dengan jumlah yang sangat besar//puluhan ribu pakaian dengan berbagai jenis telah kami hasilkan dengan baik.*

GT: We are able to produce clothes with a very large amount // currently thousands of clothing with various types have been produced well //

SL: source language text

GT: example of good translation

Readability in translation refers to whether the translation product is easy or not to be understood by the reader. The findings show that the readability of translation product made by the students is less readable. It is quite easy to understand in some aspects. According to Ciobanu, Dinu, and Pepelea (2015), readability features do not have enough discriminative power to obtain high performance on distinguishing original texts from translations. The translation product made by students shows that the use of repetition *every* in first clause, *carried out* in second clause confuse the reader. The example shows that students had mistake in transferring meaning from Bahasa Indonesia into English. Here is an example of the good translation of that sentence.

SL: *Koordinasi tiap-tiap divisi/ selalu terjaga sehingga setiap pekerjaan yang dilakukan/ senantiasa sistematis dan terorganisir.*

GT: Coordination of each division / is managed well in order to make the job done / systematically and organized //

SL: source language text

GT: example of good translation

Acceptability in translation refers to the naturalness of translation made in the form of target language. Some translation may sound strange or sounds like the source language. The findings show that the translation product made by the students sounds too Indonesian. It may be caused by the lack of students' experience and practice in translating the text on this genre. Students may not revise their translation product and compare it to another text in some genre. It is similar to Castillo's (2015) findings. There is a relationship between the proportion of the total translation duration devoted to each of the translation process phases and acceptable translations, with a special emphasis on the proportion of the total translation duration spent on the revision phase. The use word *starting* can be accepted as Ashta Ashiti is a company, so the acceptable word can be *established*. The example shows that the translation product is not natural. It is sounding too Indonesian. Here is an example of good translation of that sentence

SL: *Berawal pada tahun 2014 yang lalu/ astha asiti kini menjadi salah satu perusahaan ternama/ yang mampu melayani berbagai kebutuhan konsumen khususnya dibidang industry pakaian//*

GT: Established in 2014 / Astha Asiti has grown into one of the leading companies in the garment industry in Indonesia / which is able to serve a variety of consumer needs, especially in the garment industry //

SL: source language text

GT: example of good translation

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the translation product made by the students cannot be said a good or a bad translation because that result is between those level. It can be concluded that the ability of the students in translating Indonesian text into English is in medium or average level. Some of the students done the translation works with good but not excellent grade, while the rest done the translation with fair result,

neither good nor bad. Although the grades of students in accuracy and acceptability of translation are lower but the readability aspect are good.

There are still weaknesses on this study, such as the limitation of the subject studied and the text was translated only in one genre. For the future research, it is suggested to conduct a deeper research about the students' ability in translating Indonesian text into English. This study is hoped to be considered result for a better translation teaching and learning in university.

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