

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS' TRANSLATION PRACTICES: QUALITIES AND HINDRANCES IN TRANSLATING INDONESIAN-ENGLISH TEXTS

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Abstract

In English language education program, translation is one of the subjects provided to the students in three credits or two and half hour lengths for sixteen meetings, aimed to simply facilitate them in mastering basic concepts, principles, methods of translation, and preparing them to be skillful in translation practices and producing translation studies from Indonesia-English and English-Indonesia. In relation to the students' performances in taking and following all processes during the translation class, the researcher is encouraged to present the students' translation qualities and hindrances in their translation tasks. It is expected to provide meaningful information, particularly for the students who joining the class and also presents a reference for the readers in relation to translation study. This research worked on both qualitative and quantitative data, called embedded research design by involving thirty five students at the sixth semester of English Education Program at Universitas Islam Riau. To collect the data, the students were assigned to translate from Bahasa Indonesia to English. Afterwards, open-ended interview was administered to explore the students' hindrances in their translation tasks. The study found that overall of the students' translations just stayed in level two for their accurateness, acceptability, and readability. The level two means that the students need to keep improving their mastery of the target language by concerning on the language components, such vocabulary mastery, better understanding about the grammar of the language, natural expressions to produce the best quality of translation

Keywords: translation, quality, hindrances

Introduction

In the last one decade, translation phenomena in Indonesia has been more concerned since there have been wide range of translation practices, seminars, training, study programs, and associations. In other words, the phenomena indicate that translation has significant roles for this country.

As developing country, translation in Indonesia is required as one of the efforts to develop the country because Indonesian people need to learn numerous things from the other countries that had developed ahead, such as America or English. Translation can be an effective way to transfer information because the products of translation can give benefits for many people, for example; when one technology book is translated from English into Bahasa Indonesia, there will be more Indonesian people have opportunity to read the book and get its advantages. On the other hand, when the book is not translated into Bahasa Indonesia, there will be only limited numbers of people who can enhance their knowledge from the book because there are still many Indonesia people that have poorness in English.

Then, through translation, Indonesia can actively participate in global community as a way to build up relationship to the other countries and promote Indonesia worldwide. It means that translation is not only used as an effort to develop the country, but also makes Indonesian people to know about the other countries better. In addition, Indonesia can also introduce its fascinating land, cultures and sources to the others.

As a bridge to connect people, translation needs to be done from one language into other languages. However, English-Indonesia or Indonesia- English translations are highly requested in Indonesia because English is one of the most popular foreign languages in Indonesia and all over the world as well. Besides that, there have been numerous good books written in English that can provide rich information for the people. The last, but not least, not all of Indonesian people are good in English even though they had learnt the language for at least a couple of years. In this case, the translation is highly required.

In English language education program, translation is one of the subjects provided to the students in three credits or two and half our lengths for sixteen meetings, aimed to simply facilitate them in mastering basic concepts, principles, methods of translation, and preparing them to be skilful in translation practices and producing translation studies from Indonesia-English and English-Indonesia. In other words, the students are expected to have good translation skill that will be beneficial for the students' future life.

To be skilful in translation needs some qualifications, such as having good proficiency in source language (SL) and target language (TL), and also better understanding about the languages and their cultures. In this case, someone does not only need to master the languages, but also have to have good knowledge about the languages, including the cultures because each of them is integrated.

Through observation in introducing translation subject at the first meeting of the sixth semester students from four classes, researcher found that the students showed their willingness to know further how to be a translator and what should be done to produce the best translation products. Then, in a few meetings during the course, the students looked enjoying their translation classes, and participated actively in discussion session about some concepts of translation. Furthermore, they were very eager to show their translation products when they were assigned to translate some simple paragraphs from Indoneisa-English

In relation to the students' performances in taking and following all processes during the translation class, the researcher is encouraged to present the students' translation qualities and hindrances in their translation practices. It is expected to provide meaningful information, particularly for the students who joining the class and also presents a reference for the readers in relation to translation study.

Review of Related Literature

Basic Principals in Translation

Budiman, et. al.(2016) said that basic principals in translation refer to basic standards that needs to be concerned in producing translation product. Larson (1984) in Said (2007) identifies three basic principals in translation; accurate, readable, and acceptable. Accurate means information or meaning stated in the source language is presented adequately in the target language. There is no any single information in the translation product that was omitted, added, and even changed. Hence, the translator needs to carefully understand the information in the source language in order to provide accurate translation product. Then, readability means information in the translation product can be easily understood by the readers. To make the translation product readable, the translator is required to simply express the idea or meaning. The last, but not least, the translation products have to be acceptable which means that the readers can accept the translation because it has been naturally translated. In addition, to produce acceptable translation, the other two principals must previously be the main concerned because the acceptability, accurateness, and readability are integrated.

Nida (1982) in Wang (2016) also stated some principals in translation:

1. He must know the original language well. Just being able to understand the main idea in the original text or understanding the text with help of dictionaries is far from enough. A good translator must be clear about the subtle difference between words, the emotional colors of words and stylistic characteristics that determine the specific style of texts.
2. He must be proficient with the target language, which is even more important than the first point In translation practice, translators could understand the original texts through dictionaries, notes or some specific technical literature, but nothing could replace his proficiency in target language, while usually the most severe mistakes in translation occur when translators do not have good command of target language.
3. Proficiency with a language is different from proficiency with professional knowledge in some specific field. To translate some technical literature, general knowledge in languages is insufficient, which means translators should be enough familiar with the translation material.
4. He must be able to understand the original writer's intent between the lines, and express this intent out in target texts.

Furthermore Savory (1968) in Budiman (2016) addressed some principals in translation;(1) translator must be able to find out the equivalent words based on the source language, (2) translator must represent the ideas of the original author, (3) translation can be easily understood by the readers, (4) translation should reflect the text styles of the original author, (5) translator should represent independent style in translating. To become good translator cannot be simply by mastering more than one languages, but it consists of some qualifications. According to Nida (1982) in his book The Theory and Practice of Translation, translators need to fulfill the criteria ;mastering the source language, proficiency in the target language, familiar with the translation materials, and being able to understand meaning between the lines.

Assessing Translation Quality

To assess the quality of translation closely connect to the principals in translation; accurate, readable, and acceptable. According to Nababan (2014), there are some strategies to assess the quality of translation; close technique, reading-aloud technique, knowledge test, performance test, back-translation, and equivalence-based approach.

Furthermore, Nababab (2014) recommended three instruments to assess the translation products. The instruments were constructed in holistic model of assessment by categorizing them into three parts; (1) rubric for assessing accurateness, (2) rubric for assessing acceptability, and (3) rubric for assessing readability.

Table 1: Rubric for Assessing Accurateness of Translation

| Categories | Scores | Qualitative Parameters |
|---------------|--------|---|
| Accurate | 3 | Words, technical terms, phrases, clauses or sentences from source language can be transferred into the target language accurately, without distorting the meaning. |
| Less Accurate | 2 | Most of words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, and sentences from the source language were transferred accurately into the target language, but some distorted meanings, or double translations, or omitted meaning could be founded that make the translation cannot be transferred accurately. |
| Not Accurate | 1 | Words, technical terms, phrases, clauses or sentences from source language cannot be translated accurately into the target language. |

Table 2: Rubric for Assessing Acceptability of Translation

| Categories | Scores | Qualitative Parameters |
|-----------------|--------|--|
| Acceptable | 3 | The translation is natural; familiar use of technical terms; the use of phrases, clauses, and sentences refer to Indonesian grammatical rules. |
| Less Acceptable | 2 | Overall, the translation is natural, but there are few problems about the use of technical terms, and grammatical errors. |
| Not Acceptable | 1 | The translation is not natural; unfamiliar terms are found; significant grammatical errors in the phrases, clauses, and sentences. |

Table 3: Rubric for Assessing Readability of Translation

| Categories | Score | Qualitative Parameters |
|---------------|-------|---|
| Readable | 3 | Words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, and sentences can be well understood by the readers. |
| Less Readable | 2 | For overall, the translation can be understood by the readers, but some parts of the translation need to be reread to fully understand the ideas. |
| Not Readable | 1 | The translation can be understood well by the readers. |

Research Method

This research worked on embeded research design intended to describe the quality of translation products of the students in translating the texts form Indonesia-English and also identify the hindrances of the students in translating the texts. According Cresswell (2012), embeded research design is used to present both qualitative and quantitative data in order to provide better understanding about the research problem. Then, Creswell (2012) also added that this method can be applied when one research method is not enough to answer the research question.

Two research instruments used in this study; Translation Test (TT) and Interview. In TT, the participants were asked to translate from Bahasa Indonesia- English. The test was conducted for 35 minutes by involving 16 students to do the translation test and interview was conducted at the end of the TT session by inviting some representative students to share their experiences and hindrances in completing the task.

The text that had to be translated is presented below:

Pendidikan di perguruan tinggi yang menanamkan kultur pendidikan internasional tidak cukup hanya bertumpu pada kecakapan akademik, tapi sangat memberi penekanan pada pengembangan keterampilan anak didik. Sebuah pendidikan tinggi harus bisa merancang bermacam program yang akan dibutuhkan lulusannya, selain juga menggandeng kemitraan dengan dunia industri, serta bisa menjadi wadah bagi mahasiswanya untuk memiliki keterampilan siap pakai untuk kebutuhan industri. Hal itulah yang ditekankan Dr R Theyvendran, Sekretaris Jenderal The Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS), dalam siaran pers open house Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS) yang akan digelar di Kampus MDIS di Singapura, Sabtu (3/3/2018) pekan ini. Artikel ini telah tayang di *Kompas.com* dengan judul "Mencontoh Singapura untuk Melibatkan Industri dalam Kurikulum",

<https://edukasi.kompas.com/read/2018/03/02/10572251/mencontoh-singapura-untuk-melibatkan-industri-dalam-kurikulum>. Penulis : Latief, Editor : Latief

The students' translation papers were analysed and quantitatively scored by using translation scoring rubric, adopted from Nababan (2014). The rubrics can be seen in the table 1, 2, and 3 above. Then, the results of interview were analysed qualitatively by applying some procedures of analyzing qualitative data, adopted from Cresswell (2012).

Findings

After collecting and analysing the products of the students' translation, the quality of the translation products can be seen in the following figures:

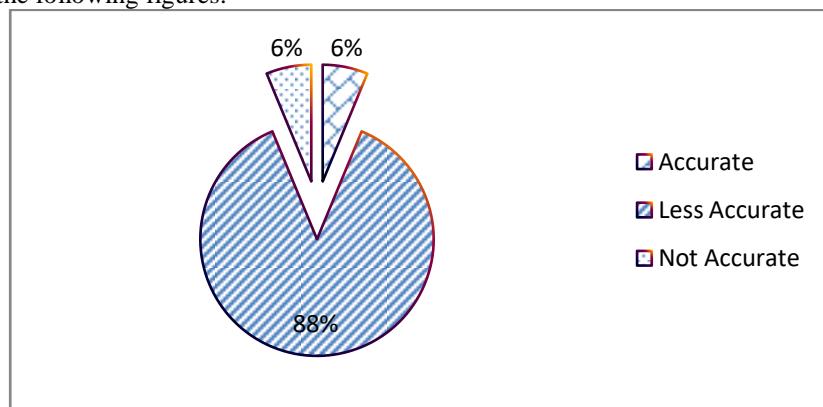


Figure 1. Accurateness of Students' Translation

The chart above depicts the accurateness of the students' translation classified into three categories; accurate, less accurate, and not accurate. Among those categories, most of the students were in less accurate category with almost 90%, while the other two categories were only placed by 6 % for each. In other words, inaccurate information in terms of distorted meaning, double translation, and omitted meaning were still found in most of the students' translation.

The result of accurateness analysis of the students' translation products reveal that most of the students had written wrong words and phrases in stating some ideas in the source text to the target text. The examples of the problems can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. Wrong Word Choices

| No. | Number of Data | Data | Categories | Analysis |
|-----|----------------|---|--------------|---|
| 1. | 1 | Fill | Accurateness | The use of the word "fill" is not really appropriate in the context because the student tried to translate the word "menanamkan" in the source text into "fill", while "fill" itself can be defined as <i>to put substance into an empty space</i> . |
| 2. | 43 | The education of university which cover | Accurateness | Distorted meaning of the word "cover", in the source text, the information is written, "pendidikan di perguruan tinggi yang menanamkan kultur pendidikan internasional....". |

Based on the information above, the students got problem to transfer the meaning “menanamkan” in the context of “....**menanamkan** kultur pendidikan internasional”, this matter affected by the students’ limited vocabulary mastery, stated by an interviewed student. Even though the students were allowed to consult their dictionaries when working on the text, unfortunately, the students could not optimize the uses of the dictionaries due to limited time in completing the task.

Furthermore, the students also failed to transfer some phrases in the text that lead to distorted meanings. The detail information is presented below:

Table 5. Wrong Phrases

| | | | | |
|----|----|--|--------------|---|
| 1. | 9 | Partnenng | Accurateness | The student wrote “partnenng” to translate “menggandeng kemitraan”. The word use is inappropriate and wrong in spelling. |
| 2. | 12 | Coordinate with partnership | Accurateness | Wrong phrase, the students tried to translate “menggandeng kemitraan”, by stating “coordinate with partnership”. The student seems literally translate the information. |
| 3. | 17 | Cooperating partnership | Accurateness | Wrong phrase, the student state “cooperating partnership” to convey meaning about “menjalin kemitraan” |
| 4. | 18 | Partnership with the industrial world. | Accurateness | Wrong word choice, the student stated “partnership” to state “menggandeng kemitraan”. |
| 5. | 46 | ...The education at university must to create a variety program who will need and use to their graduation. Otherwise have to relation with industrial worlds. | Accurateness | Word choice, menjalin kemitraan is translated to be have to relation |

Based on the table above, more students got problem to transfer the information about “... **menggandeng kemitraan** dengan dunia industry...”. One of the interviewed students shared that she was stuck when she had to translate the phrase, although she had turned over the pages of her dictionary many times to find the appropriate phrases, but unfortunately they failed. Some other students stated that they just wrote the word that they suddenly had in their minds because they were worried about the limited time.

From all of the students’ translation about “menggandeng kemitraan”, the students showed that they did not think over about the phrases that they had to write in the target text. At glance, the words; partnership, cooperating, coordinate, relation connect to “kemitraan”, but each of the words was placed inappropriate context that lead to less accurate of translation.

Then, the following figure presents the acceptability of the students’ translation, focused on naturalness of the translation which is based on the familiar use of technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences by referring to the English grammatical structure.

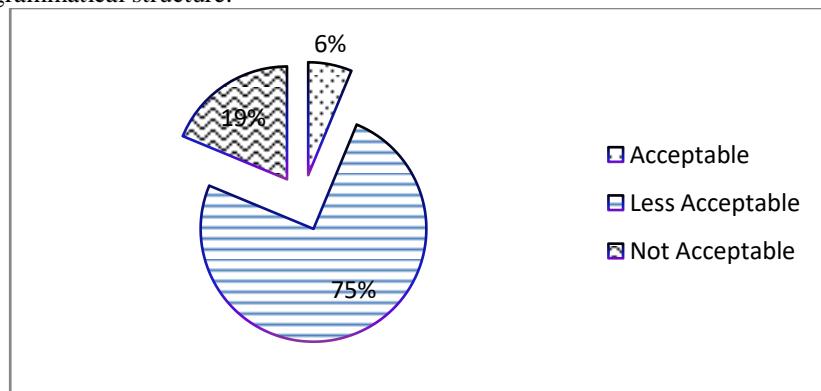


Figure 2. Acceptability of Students’ Translation

As can be seen from the chart, in term of acceptability, the quality of the students' translation product mostly stayed in less acceptable category that indicates there had been a few problems found about the use of technical terms and grammatical errors. Then, 19% of the students produced unacceptable translation papers due to significant grammatical errors and unnatural translation. However, there are still 6% of the students who could write acceptable translation.

In relation to acceptability of the students' translation, grammatical problems affect the acceptability level of the students' translation. Some grammatical issues were found in the students' translation, such as in term of tenses, subject-verb agreement, suffix, plural nouns, and the use of an. The following table presents the detail description:

Table 6: Wrong Tenses

| No. | Number of Data | Data | Categories | Analysis |
|-----|----------------|---|---------------|--|
| 1. | 4 |the international education culture did not enough with rest on to academic skills,.... | Acceptability | Grammatical problem, the information should not be written in past form, just in simple present tense. |
| 2. | 35. | Educational high school which is teach about international culture education is not enough if only carry on academic activity. | Acceptability | Wrong grammar, wrong use of to be "is" |

In a few translation products of the students, wrong use of tenses were still found, but the number of the issue was not really significant in which overall of the translation had been mostly written by the students in simple present tense. Based on interview with the students who wrote the translation, they claimed that they did not realize that they had written in wrong tenses because they just concerned how to complete the task. However, when the researcher asked the students to identify their problem in their translation, they could identify their mistakes. In this condition, the students had already had better understanding about the use of tenses, but they did not carefully apply their understanding in their translation practices.

Besides making mistakes in tenses, more students seemed ignoring the rule of "subject-verb agreement", the mistakes in this part were very simple, but more number of the students wrote in the same matter. The table below presents a few examples of the problems in the students' translation:

Table 7: Wrong Subject-Verb Agreement

| | | | | |
|----|-----|---|---------------|--|
| 1. | 6 |it really give emphasis in students skill development.... | Acceptability | Grammatical problem, subject verb agreement because the word "give" requires suffix "s" since the subject of the sentence is "it" |
| 2. | 15. | Education in college that instills culture international education it is not enough to resting on academic skils, but give the emphasis on expansion students skills. | Acceptability | Significant grammatical wrong, such as the use of "it" that causes "repeated subject". Then subject verb agreement, the word "give" should have suffix "s" because the subject of the sentence is one singular noun. |
| 3. | 44 | Education in college that instill the international education.... | Acceptability | Grammatical problem, subject verb agreement. |

Furthermore, a problem about the use of plural nouns were also found in a few papers of the students' translation, as presented in the table below in data number 8 and 39, the students did not write "s" at the end of the word program, while the noun should be written in plural. Based on the interview with two students who did the same problem, they were forget to add the suffix "s", they said. However, in this case, the

researcher assumed that the students had not been very familiar with the use of suffix “s” at the end of plural nouns, they probably had already understood about the concept, but more practices and awareness to apply the rules are required.

Table 8: Plural Noun

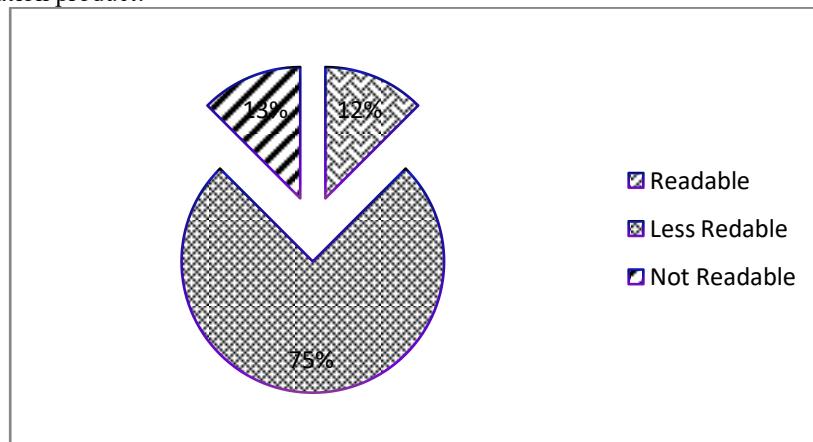
| | | | | |
|----|----|--|---------------|---|
| 1. | 8 | A higher level of education should be designed various program... | Acceptability | Grammatical problem, plurality, the word “program” in the target text requires suffix “s” since it is preceded by the word “various” that should be followed by noun singular plural forms. |
| 2. | 39 | Various program | Acceptability | The word program should be written in past form. |

Other than tenses, subject-verb agreement, and plurality matters, another simple problem in the use of “article” was also found in the student’s translation. However, the case just happened in one of the students’ translation. The student shared that they did the mistake because she put more serious attention to complete the translation very soon, hence she forgot to carefully checked what she had written. When the student was asked about the rule of using article, “an and a”, she could clearly explained the procedure of using the articles. In other words, the student was only careless in writing their translation. She should allocate their time to do personal review or edit the translation that she had completed. The detail example about the student’s problem can be seen in the following table:

Table 9 : The Use of Article

| 7. | 20. | An college education should be able to design the various programs that will it takes graduates. | Acceptability | Inappropriate use of article “an”. |
|----|-----|--|---------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | | |

The last but not least, the following figure presents another component to depict the quality of the students’ translation product:


Figure 3. Readability of Students’ Translation

In term of readability, most of the students could produce less readable translation, showing that the translation products can be understood by the reader, but some parts of the translation need to be reread to fully understand the ideas. Furthermore, there was not significant different of percentage between the students who could produce readable and not readable translation products, 12% and 13% respectively. The following table presents some parts of the students’ translations which cannot be understood well:

Table 10 : Unclear Idea

| No. | Number of Data | Data | Categories | Analysis |
|-----|----------------|--|-------------|---|
| 1. | 5 |the international education culture did not enough with rest on to academic skills,.... | Readability | The translation cannot be understood well. In the source text, the information is “.... Kultur pendidikan internasional tidak cukup hanya bertumpu pada kecakapan akademik,....” |
| 2. | 11 |In addition to partnenng with the industry and can be coordinate for students to have ready to skill for industry needs.... | Readability | The phrase is also confusing, it cannot be well understood. |
| 3. | 16 | Education in college that instills culture international education it is not enough to resting on academic skiils, but give the emphasis on expansion students skills. | Readability | It is not easy to understand the information. |

Based on the lists above, overall of the students translation were constructed in wrong structure that lead to confusion to the readers. Besides that, the students acknowledge that they did not fully understand with text that they translated. Hence, they just consulted their dictionary to find out some words that represent the meaning of words in the source text. In other words, the students did not really concern on equivalence of the words that affect unclear information from their translation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, good quality of translation is characterised based on three criteria; accurateness, acceptability, and readability. It means that mastering both source and target languages are essential, then having better understanding of the culture of the languages will be influential to produce accurate, acceptable and readable translation. However, in this study, the quality of most of the students' translations just stayed in level two for their accurateness, acceptability, and readability. The level two means that the students need to keep improving their mastery of the target language by concerning on the language components, such vocabulary mastery, better understanding about the grammar of the language, natural expressions to produce the best quality of translation.

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