# An Analysis of Translation Problems Faced by the Third Year English Department Students of UNP in Translating Historical Recount Text

## Astria Syonia[1] and Rusdi Noor Rosa[2]

[1,2]English Language and Literature Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, UniversitasNegeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia.
Correspondence Email:syonia28@email.com

## Abstract

A translator should be able to convey the intended meaning contained in the source language into the target language. The result of the initial observation is some of the students in translation class tend to translate without reading the whole text that might lead to misunderstanding of source text. There might be some other translation problems faced by the student translators. This study aims at analyzing the problems faced by the student translators in translating a historical recount text from English into bahasa Indonesia. This study used a descriptive method. The participants were the third-year English Department Students who took translation as their elective course. The data were collected using Keylogging (Translog) tools for more representative data. The data were analyzed using a translation process procedure. The results indicate that there are ten problems founds in the students' translation, they are the improper use of generalization technique, improper of borrowing technique, target language structure, meaning deletion, the improper use of literal technique, context misunderstanding, target language interference, meaning addition, inability to find right equivalent, source text misunderstanding. These problems are mainly caused by the students' low translation skills.

## INTRODUCTION

English has important function in the world, especially in human interaction. Someone is required to understand the meaning of the words in English. One of the ways to do it is through translation. Translation has played an important role in human interaction for thousands of years, one of which is in teaching. Translation teaching is one of the ways to improve students' linguistic skills in translation that can be useful to consolidate the construction of foreign languages for active use and monitor the improvement of foreign language understanding. For that reason, translation is one of the ways for students to learn a foreign language.

Larson (1984, p. 3) defines translation as the process of transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language. This implies that translation is an activity of making meaning in a target language (Rosa, Sinar, Ibrahim-Bell, &Setia, 2018, p. 18). Making meaning should not be understood as creating completely new different meaning, but it indicates a process of rewriting a text with the same meaning in another different language. Therefore, translation is a process transferring meaning to convey the intended without changing the ideas contained in the source language.

In translation, translators need broader background knowledge in both languages involved because they cannot rely on dictionaries only. The cultural backgrounds that contribute to the creation of texts must be studied before working on the translation itself. When the translator uses the right method and strategies in translation, it can make a good translation. However, translators sometimes have difficulties in translation. Finding out the right equivalence in translating is a central problem encountered by translators during the translation process (Catford, 1965; Krings, 1986; Panou, 2013; Rosa, Amri, &Zainil, 2020). As the result, the intended meaning of the source language does not conveyed.

Several factors are leading to the problems faced by translators. Lefevere (ed) (2003) state that the factors causing problems in translating are differences of conceptual and textual grids due to a number of differences in languages .This problem is visible when the translation involves two languages with many different cultures.

The translation problems mentioned in the previous paragraphs indicate that translation problems faced by a translator may not be the problems for other translators. Different text types, different translation direction, and different level of translators' skills may lead to different problems faced by translators. Thus, it is always useful to study translation problems in different translation context. This paper particularly aims at finding out the problems faced by the third year students of English Department of Universitas Padang in translating a historical recount text from English into Bahasa Indonesia.

**METHOD**

This study used a descriptive method (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2006)to describe the process of English-Indonesian translation. The data were the problems in the translation process. The participants were 5 third year English Department students of Universitas Negeri Padang who took English-Indonesia translation as one of their elective courses. As they learned translation formally, they are called student translators. The research instrument was a test, and in its implementation, it is supported by another instrument, i.e. Translog. In the translation test, 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 using Translog. The use of Translog in collecting the data was intended to get representative data.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The result of this study show that there are ten translation problems faced by students translator in translating historical recount text from English into Bahasa Indonesia. First, the translation problem is the improper use of generalization. This problem is visible when translators used a more general word in TT and do not convey the intended meaning in ST. The example of improper use of generalization can be seen in Extract 1.

**Extract 1**
ST    : Machu Picchu, also <u>spelled</u> Machupijchu, site of ancient Inca ruins located about 50 miles northwest of Cuzco, Peru, in the Cordillera de Vilcabamba of the Andes Mountains

Draft  : *Machiu Picchu juga bisa <u>disebut</u> dieja dengan Machupijhu situs bekas reruntuhan kehancuran suku Inca kuno yang berlokasi sekitar 50 mil barat daya dari Cuzco Peru di Cordillera de Vilcabamba of the Andes Muntains.*

TT    : *Machu Picchu, juga bisa <u>dieja</u> dengan Machupijhu, situs reruntuhan suku Inca kuno yang berlokasi sekitar 50 mil barat daya dari Cuzco,Peru, di Cordillera de Vilcabamba of the Andes Muntains.*

The translation in Extract 1 is the first translation draft written by one of the translators based on the data recorded using Translog. It shows the improper use of generalization technique in translating the ST words "spelled". The equivalent of "spelled" used in Extract 1 is "*disebut*", translated by using a generalization technique. Although the word "*disebut*" is widely known by TL readers, its use in this context is not accurate. In the SL culture, "spelled" spelling someone's name is typical because the name spelling is different from its pronunciation. However, such culture is not applicable in TL culture. For that reason, the translator generalizes the meaning of the word "spelled" by writing the TL word "*disebut*" as it equivalence mean "called".

The second problem is the use of improper borrowing technique. The factor causing this problem is the translator's low vocabulary mastery. The example of the improper use of borrowing technique can be seen in Extract 2.

**Extract 2**
ST    : Evidence later <u>associated</u> Vilcabamba with another ruin, Espíritu Pampa, which was also discovered by Bingham.

Draft : *Kemudian bukti <u>mengasosiasikan</u> Vilcabamba dengan reruntuhan yang lain, Espiritu Pampa, yang juga ditemukan oleh Bingham.*

TT    : *Kemudian bukti <u>mengasosiasikan</u> Vilcabamba dengan reruntuhan yang lain, Espiritu Pampa, yang juga ditemukan oleh Bingham.*

The improper of borrowing technique can be seen in Extract 2, the translator uses the word "*mengasosiasikan*" as the equivalent of the ST word "associated". The borrowing technique used by the translator does not convey the intended

meaning to TL readers. This means the right equivalent to the ST word "associated" is "*mengaitkan*" in Bahasa Indonesia.

The third problem is the incorrect target language structure. Sometimes, the structure of phrases, clauses, or sentences in the TT is grammatically incorrect. One of the problems leading to such problem is the translators' lack of knowledge of applicable TL structure. The example can be seen in Extract 3.

**Extract 3**

ST : Machu Picchu, also spelled Machupijchu, site of ancient Inca ruins located about 50 miles northwest of Cuzco, Peru, in the Cordillera de Vilcabamba of the Andes Mountains.

Draft : *Machu Picchu, yang diejaMachupijchu, situsreruntuhan Inca kuno yang terletaksekitar 50 mil baratlautdari Cuzco, Peru di Cordillera de VilcabambadariPegunungan Andes.*

TT : *Machu Picchu, yang diejaMachupijchu, situsreruntuhan Inca kuno yang terletaksekitar 50 mil baratlautdari Cuzco, Peru di Cordillera de VilcabambadariPegunungan Andes.*

The example in Extract 3 is visible when translator translated ST "Machu Picchu, also spelled Machupijchu, site of ancient Inca ruins located about 50 miles northwest of Cuzco," into TT "Machu Picchu, yang dieja Machupijchu, *situs reruntuhan Inca kuno yang terletak sekitar 50 mil barat laut dari Cuzco*". The sentence is grammatically incorrect because it fails to comply with the applicable TL structure. The sentence is not complete because it does not have a predicate.

The fourth problem is meaning deletion. This problem leads to omission of the meaning of the ST in the TT. The example can be seen in Extract 4.

**Extract 4**

ST : Additional discoveries throughout the Cordillera de Vilcabamba have shown that Machu Picchu was one of a series of pucaras (fortified sites), tambos (travelers' barracks, or inns), and signal towers along the extensive Inca foot highway.

Draft : *Penemuan lanjutan melalui the Crdeliordillera de Vilcabamba telah meniunjukan bahwa  Machu Picchu merupakan salah satu bentuk dari pucasaras  (situs berbenteng), tambos (barak pen tempat menginap, atau penginapan), dan menara pemberitahuan sepanjang jalan setapak Inca di jalan setapak suku Inca.*

TT : *Penemuan lanjutan melalui the Cordillera de Vilcabamba telah menunjukan bahwa Machu Picchu merupakan salah satu bentuk dari pucaras (situs berbenteng), tambos (tempat menginap, atau penginapan), dan menara pemberitahuan suku Inca di jalan setapak.*

Using of reduction word of translation technique can be used in translating. However, the technique does not eliminate the meaning in target text. In the example is provided in Extract 4, ST word "along" is not provided in target text. The

translator uses reduce technique that removes information in the source text. Meanwhile, the use of preposition along describes the position of something.

The fifth problem is improper use of literal technique. Translation by literal technique is allowed in translating ST but it should be accurate and related with the context. The example of improper use of literal technique was found in student translation as can be seen in Extract 5.

**Extract 5**

ST : It is perched above the Urubamba River valley in a narrow saddle between two sharp peaks-Machu Picchu ("Old Peak") and Huayna Picchu ("New Peak")-at an elevation of 7,710 feet.

Draft : *Itu bertengger diatas lembah sungai Urubamba dicelah sempit diantara dua puncak tajam- Machu Picchu (Old Peak) dan Huayna Picchu (New Peak) pada ketinggian 7,710 kaki.*

TT : *Machu Picchu bertengger diatas lembah sungai Urubamba dicelah sempit diantara dua puncak tajam- Machu Picchu ( puncak tua ) dan Huayna Picchu ( puncak baru ) pada ketinggian 7,710 kaki.*

The improper of use literal technique is visible when the translator used ST word "it" (referring to the pronoun) as the equivalent "*itu*" in the first draft. The use of the word "it" as the preparatory, when translated into the TT word "itu", does not indicate the subject of the ST word. Meanwhile the ST word "it" refers to the subject (Machu Pichhu). This problem occurs because of the improper meaning of the TT word is word which is listed in a dictionary. The translator used improper of a word for word technique as it is not explain the subject of the TT.

The sixth problem is context misunderstanding. This problem is visible when the meaning of the ST is not suitable that provided in TT. The example of source misunderstanding can be seen in Extract 6.

**Extract 6**

ST : The reason for the site's <u>abandonment</u> is also unknown, but lack of water may have been a factor.

Draft : *Alasan dari <u>pengabaian</u> terhadap situs ini juga tidak diketahui, tetapi kekurangan air mungkin menjadi faktor penyebabnya.*

TT : *Alasan dari <u>pengabaian</u> terhadap situs ini juga tidak diketahui, tetapi kekurangan air mungkin menjadi faktor penyebabnya.*

The example of context misunderstanding is visible when translator used TT word "*pengabaian*" as the equivalent ST word "abandonment". Using the word is not accurate with the context because it does not convey the intended the meaning. The word "abandonment" should be translated with the word "*terabainya*" in Bahasa Indonesia.

The seventh problem found in the TT is SL interference. This problem occurs because of the habit of the translator use the first language. The example can be seen in Extract 7.

**Extract 7**

ST    : Machu Picchu, also spelled Machupijchu, site of ancient Inca ruins located about 50 miles northwest of Cuzco, Peru, in the Cordillera de Vilcabamba <u>of</u> the Andes Mountains

Draft  : *Machu Picchu yang juga dikena lsebagai Machupijchu merupakan tempat reruntuhan Inca kuno yang berlokasi sekitar 50 mil barat laut dari Cuzco Peru, di Cordilera de Vilcabamba <u>dari</u> Pegunungan Andes.*

TT    : *Machu Picchu, yang juga dikenal sebagai Machupijchu, merupakan tempat reruntuhan Inca kuno yang berlokasi sekitar 50 mil barat laut dari Cuzco, Peru, di Cordilera de Vilcabamba <u>dari</u> Pegunungan Andes.*

The translation in Extract 7 shows the translation problem due to source language interference.The structure of English does not allow two noun phrases suchas "the Cordillera de Vilcabamba" and "the Andes Mountains" to occur adjacently without any preposition. Therefore, in this context, preposition "of" is added. The translator's decision to translate it with "*dari*" in Bahasa Indonesia shows the SL interference. Actually, the preposition "of" does not to be translated because it is only used to complete the English phrase structure "Noun phrase (NP) + Preposition + NP".

The eighth problem is meaning addition problem. The translator adds the meaning in TT even it is not necessary to be provided in target language because of lengthy explanation. The example can be seen in Extract 8.

**Extract 8**

ST    : The dwellings at Machu Picchu <u>were</u> probably built and occupied from the mid-15th to the early or mid-16th century

Draft  : *Tempat tinggal di Machu Picchu mungkin <u>telah</u> dibangun dan dikerjakan sejak pertengahan abad ke-15 sampai awal atau pertengahan abad ke-16.*

TT    : *Tempat tinggal di Machu Picchu mungkin dibangun dan dikerjakan dari pertengahan abad ke-15 sampai awal atau pertengahan abad ke-16.*

The translation in Extract 8 shows the addition meaning that doing by translator. In the draft, the using TT word "*telah*" is added. It refers the ST word "were" as the conjunction between subject and predicate. The word "were" in this context is does not have meaning. Thus, the ST word "were" is not necessary to translate. Therefore, the translator deleted "*telah*" in the first draft.

The ninth problem is inability to find right equivalent. This problem is often faced by student translator. Finding out the right equivalent is difficult because the translator have to understand with the context of the ST. The example of inability to find right equivalent can be seen in Extract 9.

2302-3198

JELT Vol 9 No. 4 December 2020.

**Extract 9**

ST : Several dozen skeletons were excavated there in 1912, and, because most of those were initially identified as female, Bingham <u>suggested</u> that Machu Picchu was a sanctuary for the Virgins of the Sun (the Chosen Women), an elite Inca group.

Draft : *Beberapa lusin kerangka digali disana pada tahun 1912 karena sebagian besar dari mereka diidenfikasi sebagai perempuan, Bingham <u>mengatakan</u> bahwa Machu Picchu adalah tempat perlindungan bagi Perawan Matahari (Para perempuan terpilih), sebuah grup elit Inka.*

TT : *Beberapa lusin kerangka digali disana pada tahun 1912 karena sebagian besar dari mereka diidenfikasi sebagai perempuan, Bingham <u>menyarankan</u> bahwa Machu Picchu adalah tempat perlindungan bagi Perawan Matahari (Para perempuan terpilih), sebuah grup elit Inka.*

The underlined word in the draft indicates the translation problem of inability to right equivalent. The problem is visible when translator using TT word "*mengatakan*" as the equivalent the ST word "suggest". The use word "*mengatakan*" in the draft is not accurate to convey the intended meaning. Therefore, the word "suggest" should be translated "*menyarankan*" in Bahasa Indonesia.

The last translation problem is ST misunderstanding. The example can be seen in Extract 10.

**Extract 10**

ST : He cited evidence from his <u>1912 excavations</u> at Machu Picchu, which were sponsored by Yale University and the National Geographic Society, in his labeling of the site as Vilcabamba; however, that interpretation is no longer widely accepted.

Draft : *Dia menyebutkan fakta dari <u>1912 galiannya</u> di Machu Picchu yang didukung oleh Universitas Yale dan National Geographic and Society dalam pemberian nama tempat itu sebagai Vilcambamba, di mana penafsiran itu tidak diterima secara luas.*

TT : *Dia mengutip bukti dari <u>1912 galiannya</u> di Machu Picchu yang didukung oleh Universitas Yale dan National Geographic and Society dalam pemberian nama tempat itu sebagai Vilcambamba, namun penafsiran itu tidak diterima secara luas.*

The ST misunderstanding in Extract 26 is visible when the translator used "*1912 galiannya*" in the draft as the equivalent of the ST phrase "1912 excavations". The meaning of 1912 in the ST does not show the number of his excavations, but it indicates the year of doing the excavations. Meanwhile, the draft written by the translators indicate that there are 1912 excavations done by Bingham. Thus, the meaning in the student's draft is different from the meaning intended to be conveyed by the ST.

## Research Finding

Based on the data analysis on the historical recount text translation done by the third year English Department students, it was found that they encountered 10 translation problems. The problems and their frequency in the students' translation can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Percentage of translation problems

| No | Problems | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Source language interference | 20 | 17% |
| **2** | Inability to find right equivalent | 19 | 16% |
| **3** | The Improper of use borrowing technique | 15 | 13% |
| **4** | The Improper of use general technique | 12 | 10% |
| **5** | Meaning deletion | 11 | 10% |
| 6 | Target language structure | 10 | 9% |
| **7** | Context misunderstanding | 10 | 9% |
| **8** | The improper of use literal technique | 9 | 8% |
| **9** | Source text misunderstanding | 7 | 6% |
| **10** | Meaning addition | 2 | 2% |
| **Total** | | 116 | 100% |

Based on the findings displayed in Table 1, it is concluded that the dominant translation problems faced by the students translator are source language interference which appears in 20 times of words or phrases or clause or 17% and 16% of them are inability to find right equivalent. Moreover, 13% of them are improper of use borrowing technique, 10% of them are improper of use general technique and meaning deletion, 9% of them are target language structure and context misunderstanding, 8 % of them are improper of use literal technique, 6 % of them are source text misunderstanding and 2% of them are meaning addition.

## Discussion

As mentioned in the findings, the researcher found that they encountered 10 translation problems: the improper of use generalization, the improper of borrowing technique, TL structure, meaning deletion, the improper of use literal technique, context misunderstanding, SL interference, meaning addition, inability to find right equivalent, and ST misunderstanding. It is similar with the result of the research doing by Rosa et al. (2020).They found that several equivalence problems including translating SL interference, SL culture, improper use of borrowing technique, meaning omission and insufficient TL competence. The similarity with this study causes by some factors. The first factor is the student of English Department as participant of both studies. The second factor is translation from English into Indonesia.

However, the findings of this research are different from the study by Widiyanto (2014) andBasuki (2014). They found that the dominant translation problems are difficulties of finding out the right equivalent and grammatical problems in translating the source language to target language. The grammatical problem leads to the target language structure problem. Meanwhile, the result of this

research shows that the dominant translation problem is source language interference. It caused by translation from mother language into second language is different.

The other different study about analyze translation problem is from the study by Aulia (2012) entitled "The Application of Translation Strategies to Cope with Equivalence Problems in Translating Texts". This study analyzes about the equivalence problems in translating text. Therefore, the main translation problem is the equivalence problems that lead inability to find right equivalent. However, the most problem faced by student is source language interference. The difference in the results of this study is caused by differences in participants.

## CONCLUSION

After conducting this research and doing analysis, there are several conclusions are presented. There are 10 translation problems faced by the third year of English Department English in translating English into Bahasa Indonesia. The translation problems and the number, i.e. the improper of use generalization (10%), improper of borrowing technique (13%), TL structure (9%), meaning deletion (10%), the improper of use literal technique (8%), context misunderstanding (9%), SL interference (17%), meaning addition (2%), inability to find right equivalent (16%), and ST misunderstanding (6%). In order, to solve the translation problems, the students used several strategies. They are translation by specific term, translation by a more neutral words, translation by paraphrase using related word, translation by more general words, and translation by omission.

## REFERENCES

Anita, N. (2015). *An error analysis on using simple past tense in recount text by the first grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Salatiga in the academic year of 2014/2015* (Unpublished Thesis). Salatiga: IAIN Salatiga.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., & Sorensen, C. (2006). *Introduction to research in education*.8th Edition. Belmont, CA: Nelson Education, Ltd.

Aulia, D. (2012). The application of translation strategies to cope with equivalence problems in translating texts. Journal Polingua : Scientific Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Education, 1(1), 1-7.

Baker, M. (1992)..*In other words: A course book on tranlsation*. London: Routledge.

Basuki. (2014). *Investigating students difficulties in translating Indonesian textinto English in the fifth semester students of English Education Programof Muhammadiyah University at Purworejo in the academic year of2013/2014* (Unpublished Thesis). Purworejo:Universitas Muhammadiyah Purworejo.

Catford, J.C. (1965). *A linguistic theory of translation*. London: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, L. (1996). *Research methods in education*. New York: Routledge

Chesterman, A. (1997). *Memes of translation*.Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Krings, H. (1986). Translation problems and translation strategies of advanced German learners of French.In J. House & S. Blum-Kulka (eds.), *Interlingual and intercultural communication*. Tubingen: GuntenNarr.

Larson, M. L. (1984). *Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence*. Lanham Md: University Press of America.

Lefevere, A. (ed.). (2003). *Translation/history/culture: A source book*. New York: Routledge.

Ordudari, M. (2007).Translation procedures, stategies, and methods. *Translation Journal*, 11(3). Retrieved on April 26, 2020 fromhttp://www.translationjournal.net/journal/41culture.htm

Owji, Z. (2013). Translation strategies: A review and comparisons of theories.*Translation Journal*.  Retrieved  on March 20, 2020 from https://translationjournal.net/Featured-Article/translation-strategies-a-review-and-comparison-of-theories.html

Panou, D. (2013). Equivalence in translation theories: A criticalevaluation. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 3*(1), 1-6.

Poe, E. A. (1996). *Tales of mystery and terror*.New York: Ballantine Hunson& Co.

Rosa, R. N., Sinar, T. S., Ibrahim-Bell, Z., & Setia, E. (2018). Pauses by student and professional translators in translation process. *International Journal of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies, 6*(1), 18-28.

Rosa, R. N., Amri, Z., & Zainil, Y. (2020). Translation strategies used by student translators in solving equivalence finding-related problems. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, 411*, 394-401.

Widiyanto. (2014). *Translation strategies of non- equivalence at word level in Morris and Hartog van Banda comic Lucky Luke Ghost Hunt* (Unpublished Thesis). Semarang: Universitas Dian Nuswantoro.