An Analysis of Problems in Translating Descriptive Text from Indonesian to English Made by Indonesian Students

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Abstract

Translation might be challenging for some people studying English as a second language. In translation process, many students faced some problems. They do not know what factors cause it. Many factors arise during the Indonesian-to-English translation. The goal of this research is to examine the problems faced by students in translating descriptive texts from Indonesian to English, and the factors that contribute to those problems. A descriptive qualitative method was used in analysis data. Students from the English Department who were in their sixth semester participated in this study. The sample was taken by the using cluster random sampling. Data were collected by using translation test and interview. The result shows that, there are five components to the students' problems during the Indonesian to English translation of descriptive text. Word choice, grammatical. rhetorical, pragmatic, and cultural problems are some of them. The result indicates that there five problems in the students' translation test that should be anticipated in translation class.

INTRODUCTION

For some people who are studying English as a second language, translation is a difficult task. The composition and structure are presented in Indonesian will be different when translated into English. Therefore, we need the ability to translate the words or sentences into good one.In fact, good translation not only needs grammar, but we also need many vocabularies and cultural understanding of the target language from the source language.When someone does translation, it means translating the meaning of words and phrases used in the source language in the target language. Because there are theories regarding information rules for them to do the translation that have a good quality, people who conduct translation cannot do what they want. Students, especially majoring in English are expected to have good translation skills. Therefore, both the source language and the target language must be mastered. Besides being able to communicate in English, English students must

also be able to translate a text.The English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang has a translation subject, offered in the fifth and sixth semester. Word choice or diction is important thing in translation. Students have to choose right word in dictionary that suitable with the meaning of the text. If occur wrong choice of words in translating, it will transfer different message to the reader. Beside the problems above, the type of text also has an effect.

According to Shanty (2017) said that the lexical problem is the most significant problems during the translation process, which is consist of single words and confusing word lexical; syntactic problem with omission of noun phrases; tenses and some grammatical problems; and cultural problem consisting of socio-cultural specific words or phrases or proverbs. Zainuddin (2020) found that the students had many problems, such as lexical meaning, contextual meaning and socio-cultural meaning. The most significant problem faced by students is the lexical meaning. Therefore, the other researchers above only focus to the translation problems in translating narrative text. They have not analyzed pragmatic, rhetorical, and cultural problems. Actually, these problems had been researched by other researcher, but no one categorized the problem in translating descriptive text yet. Both the other researcher above also has not analyzed the two factors that caused problem in translating the text. In addition, the researcher in this research also analyzes the translation technique that students used when they doing translation test. Newmark stated that it is impossible to know the meaning of a text without understanding the meaning of the words.

Based on Mathieu, there are five types translation problem. They are word-choice, grammatical, rhetorical, pragmatic and cultural problem. Word-choice problem is related to the usage of word that equivalent to the target language. Grammatical problem is related to the grammatical structure of a translated text when the source text is translated without changing its meaning. Rhetorical problem is related to the figurative words or phrases or sentences that are translated into the target language. Pragmatic problem is related to the process by which the translators translate the meaning of the source language to the target language. Cultural problem is how to translate a text with various cultural terms that must be effectively translated.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative research method to find the translation problems faced by sixth semester of English Department students of UNP. According to Sugiyono (2013: 15), the qualitative research method is a research method based on post-positivist philosophy and is used to investigate naturalistic object conditions with the researcher as the main instrument. Based on the foregoing, the researcher employed qualitative study in order to identify problems that students faced in translating descriptive text from Indonesian to English by students in the sixth semester of English Department UNP. The sample selection was selected through a cluster random sampling pattern.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION.

After collecting the data of translation test, the researcher found that students faced some problems in translating descriptive text from Indonesian to English that caused by some factors. Those problems are word-choice, grammatical, rhetorical, pragmatic and cultural problem.

Word-choice problem

Additionally, word-choice problems can be resolved by consulting the relevant word references for determining the precise importance of each word, understanding collocations and expressions that have meaning without assistance, and determining the synonym or the antonym of each word.

Excerpt 1:

ST: Menara Songket merupakan sebuah <u>menara pandang</u> yang menyajikan indahnya panorama kawasan Saribu Rumah Gadang yang berada disamping Sungai Batang Bangko, Nagari Koto Baru, Kecamatan Sungai Pagu, Kabupaten Solok Selatan, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia.

TT: *Menara Songket is a <u>tower-building</u> that <u>gives</u> a beautiful view of Saribu Rumah Gadang Area which is located near Batang Bangko river, Koto Baru village, Sungai Pagu Subdisctrict, South Solok regency, West Sumatera, Indonesia.*

From the above TT, the student in this study uses generalizatioon techniques. The student translated the source word "menara pandang" as "tower-building", which is too general of a wording and does not accurately reflect the exact meaning of the source English text. Student should use the word "viewing" that accurately conveys the intended meaning. Moreover, the original Indonesian word "menara pandang" precise's meaning connects the name of the tower. Considering the given context, the words in the Indonesian source language were incomprehensible to the students. Also, the phrase "gives" did not fit the context. This is because the Oxford Dictionary definition of "gives" is cause or permission (of someone or something). The student should use the word "present" as an appropriate word that conveys the intended meaning. Based on the Dictionary definition of "present" is to show or offer something for others to see.

Excerpt 2:

ST: Menara songket terdiri dari enam <u>tingkat</u> yang mana setiap tingkatnya dilengkapi dengan pagar besi berwarna hitam.

TT: *The Songket Tower consists of six <u>levels</u>, each level is equipped with a black iron fence.*

As in the TT above, the student employs generalization technique. Instead of the more specific word "tingkat" from the source language, the student substitutes the word "level," which is too general. The source text's intended meaning was not understood by the translation, even though when used in the source text, the word "tingkat" refers to the tower's number of floors. The word "floor" should be used by

the translator as the equivalent word of "tingkat", because the word "tingkat" means the number of floors of the tower. Whereas, as a noun, the word "level" means a horizontal plane or line with respect to the distance above or below a given point (Oxford Dictionary).

Grammatical problem

The problem of grammatical characteristics of translation cannot be denied by translators. When translating a text, most translators attempt to preserve the sense and purpose of the original text while making grammatical adjustments to the target text. Even if the text was translated into the reader's first language, this technique makes it seem as though the reader enjoyed the original text.

Excerpt 1:

ST: Menara songket akan <u>terlihat</u> memukau karena dihiasi oleh lampu- lampu yang menyala <u>di</u> malam harinya.
TT: *The Songket Tower will <u>look</u> amazing because it is decorated with the lights that turn on <u>in</u> the night.*

As seen in the TT above, the student uses generalization technique which is too general. The student uses the word "will look" as translated word of "akan terlihat", but the translated word did not accurately reflect the meaning of the target language. The word "will look" meaning is "akan melihat" not "akan terlihat". The student should use the word "will be seen" as the translated word of "akan terlihat". A piece of sentence above shows that the translator using incorrect preposition. The translator use preposition "in" to discuss a specific time period. The English target language was also translated from the Indonesian source language "di" as "in", while it is preferable for the translator to use the preposition "at" because the preposition "at" is used to describe very specific or fixed time such as night. For the adverb of location and time can be described with the preposition "in". Also, the preposition "in" can also be used to indicate an adverb of time every day, but there are exceptions. When describing the adverb of time at night, this preposition cannot be used, but must use "at".

Excerpt 2:

ST: Dari menara songket tersebut, <u>terlihat</u> panorama Kabupaten Solok Selatan yang menyajikan pemandangan alam yang indah, mulai dari sawah, lapangan, jembatan, mesjid, puncak – puncak rumah gadang hingga banyaknya pepohonan yang memanjakan mata.
TT: *From that Songket Tower, <u>seen</u> the South Solok Regency view which presents <u>the</u> beautiful natural scenery like ricefields, landfields, bridges, mosques, the peaks of the rumah gadang and many trees that are pleasing to the eye.*

The translated text above shows that is not a good sentence, because a good sentence in consist of Subject + Verb + Object. Whereas, the student did not put the subject in that sentence. Based on Indonesian target language it would be better to translate the sentence into the simple present tense, simply because the textthat they translated is a descriptive text. One aspect of the language of descriptive texts is the use of the simple present tense. The students translated "terlihat" from Indonesian

into "seen" in English as the target language, while "see" is the verb for "seen" in English, because the simple present tense form is Subject+Verb 1+Object+Compliment, it is preferable for the participant to translate it into the target language. The student can put the words "you can see" in the sentence. In addition, there is also incorrect article usage. The student use article "the" in a sentence to modify "scenery", but it is not appropriate. The translator is better to not to put an article in this sentence, because the sentence is uncountable noun.

Rhetorical problem

It is referred to as a rhetorical challenge in translation when the translator is unable to translate the figurative language in the source-language text. It results in the translation of figurative language. The figurative words and sentences are therefore lost when they are translated into the target language.

Excerpt 1:

ST: Dari menara songket tersebut, terlihat panorama Kabupaten Solok Selatan yang menyajikan pemandangan alam yang indah, mulai dari sawah, lapangan, jembatan, mesjid, puncak – puncak rumah gadang hingga banyaknya pepohonan yang <u>memanjakan</u> mata.

TT$_1$: *From that Songket Tower, seen the South Solok Regency view which presents thebeautiful natural scenery like ricefields, landfields, bridges, mosques, the peaks of the rumah gadang and many trees that are <u>pleasing</u> to the eye.*

TT$_2$: *From the tower, natural view of Solok Selatan District such as rice fields, public fields, bridges, mosques, roofs of multiple Rumah Gadang and tons of trees that <u>please</u> our eyes can be seen.*

The source text's intended meaning was not at all translated into either of the two previously mentioned translated sentences. Also, The literal English translation of the Indonesian source language term "memanjakan" into the target language "pleasing" and "please". Meanwhile, in accordance with the Oxford Dictionary's definition of "please" refers to a polite way of asking for something or telling to do something. In Cambridge Dictionary definition as a verb of "please" means to do what is wanted (by a person) or to give pleasure or satisfaction to. However, the context of the source text, "memanjakan" is meant to mean "trees that are beautiful to look at or trees that will make us relax," but because the translator was unable to grasp the figurative word's intended meaning in the Indonesian source language, "memanjakan," they translated it literally instead of interpreting it into the meaning of the source text.The student is better to translate the word "memanjakan" into "beauty or relax", because based on the context in the ST "memanjakan mata" means beautiful to look at.

Pragmatic problem

When the translators are unable to convey the intended meaning of the source language text into the target language, pragmatic issues arise.

Excerpt 1:

> ST: Menara Songket merupakan sebuah menara pandang yang menyajikan <u>indahnya</u> panorama kawasan Saribu Rumah Gadang yang berada disamping Sungai Batang Bangko, Nagari Koto Baru, Kecamatan Sungai Pagu, Kabupaten Solok Selatan, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia.
>
> TT: *Songket tower is a tower that serves the <u>magnificent</u> views of kawasan saribu rumah gadang located beside sungai batang bangko, Koto Baru, Sungai Pagu, South Solok Regency, West Sumatera, Indonesia.*

Whether or not the intended meaning of the source text is transmitted depends on pragmatic challenges in translating meaning. Related to the case in the TT, the student tries to use adaptation technique, but it still did not convey the intended meaning. Additionally, the student interpreted the Indonesian source language word "indahnya" as "magnificent," yet according to the Oxford Dictionary, "magnificent" denotes "very attractive and impressive or deserves admiration." However, given the context or intended meaning of the Indonesian term "indahnya," which originally meant "adjective," it is preferable to translate the word "indahnya" as "beautiful" because it describes the panorama of South Solok.

Excerpt 2:
> ST: Disepanjang jalan di menara songket dihiasi oleh lampu – lampu jalan yang <u>unik</u> menyerupai miniatur rumah gadang.
>
> TT: *The Songket Tower is adorned with <u>unusual</u> street lamps along the way that resemble miniatures of rumah gadang.*

As in the TT above, the student tries to use adaptation technique, but it still did not convey the precise meaning given in the context. The student uses the word "unusual" as the translated word of "unik". However, "unusual" based on the Oxford Dictionary means "different from what is usual or normal". However, the word "unik" in the Indonesian original language signified adjective in terms of its context or intended meaning. The student is better to say "unique" as the translated word of"unik", because it has been written in ST that the lamp is unique which resembles a miniature of rumah gadang.

Excerpt 3:
> ST: Menara ini mempunyai keunikan yaitu <u>puncaknya</u> yang menyerupai gonjong rumah gadang yang terbuat dari besi yang dipenuhi dengan ukiran.
>
> TT: *This tower is unique, namely its <u>peak</u> which resembles a gonjong rumah gadang made of iron filled with carvings.*

According to the excerpt above, the translator is rendering the term "puncaknya" from the source language text into "peak" in the target language of English. Related to the case, the student uses generalization technique. Meanwhile, based on the Oxford Dictionary definition of "peak" means the point when somebody / something is best, most successful, strongest, etc or the highest value

reached by some quantity in a time period. However, as the definition of "top" is the highest part or point, it is preferable to use the word "top" as the translation of the word "puncaknya". The incorrect word choice made by the translator also affected the meaning of the source text when it was translated into the English target language, or, to put it another way, the intended meaning of the source text was not conveyed because the translator was unable to comprehend the context of the Indonesian source language word.

Cultural problem

The culture of a society is certainly different from other societies. Mu'in explained that people are guided by culture in their lives. Moreover, the differences between a person, a group or a country can be seen in many ways, and one of the most distinguishing characteristics is culture. Without culture, we cannot understand people's motivations and lives. Newmark said that there are several categories of cultural problems, one of them is material culture (artefacts). For example, the term of houses and towns. Many language communities have typical house that are not translated for general purposes, such as Palazzo (big house); hotel (big house), ^chalet, 'bungalow', pension, which have no corresponding English translation.

Excerpt:

ST$_1$: Dari menara songket tersebut, terlihat panorama Kabupaten Solok Selatan yang menyajikan pemandangan alam yang indah, mulai dari sawah, lapangan, jembatan, mesjid, puncak – puncak <u>rumah gadang</u> hingga banyaknya pepohonan yang memanjakan mata.

ST$_2$: Menara ini mempunyai keunikan yaitu puncaknya yang menyerupai gonjong <u>rumah gadang</u> yang terbuat dari besi yang dipenuhi dengan ukiran.

TT$_1$: *From the songket tower, you can see a panoramic view of South Solok Regency which presents beautiful natural scenery, ranging from rice fields, fields, bridges, mosques, the tops of <u>gadang houses</u> to the many trees that spoil the eye.*

TT$_2$: *The tower has uniqueness, which is its top similar to gonjong rumah gadang or the top of <u>big houses</u> made of iron which full with fretwork.*

Referring to the situation where "rumah gadang" was translated above as "gadang houses or big house," the translator failed to express the precise meaning of the target language. The translator tried to find out the closest meaning of "rumah gadang" in English culture. Related to the case of the TT above, students use amplification technique. So, the researcher introduces details that not found in the TT. Furthermore, "Rumah gadang" is a traditional building originating from West Sumatera whose shape resembles a buffalo horn, and it is also called the rumah bagonjong by the local community. The student should not translate "rumah gadang" into "gadang houses or big house" if the countries have no equivalence object for "rumah gadang". As a result, if the translator can translate it into the close equivalent of the target readers, they will understand it.

Research Finding

The researcher discovered several conclusions after analyzing the data. This information was gathered from twenty students who translated Descriptive Text from Indonesian to English. The researcher discovered five translation problems as a result of the data analysis: word choice, grammatical, rhetorical, pragmatic, and cultural issues. The table below shows how many translation problems there are:

No	Translation problem	Amount
1	Word-choice problem	53
2	Grammatical problem	52
3	Rhetorical problem	5
4	Pragmatic problem	62
5	Cultural problem	27
Total		199

According to the data above, it can be inferred that pragmatic translation problems, which appear 62 times and the most frequent problems faced by translators are those that arise from their inability to comprehend the intended meaning of the source text. 53 of these involve word choices where the translator is unable to locate an acceptable or equivalent word in the target language. Moreover, in translating descriptive text from Indonesian to English, grammatical errors occur 52 times, choosing the appropriate words or phrases while translating text from the source language to the target language. Other problem is cultural problem which appear 27 times, when a text has multiple cultural words that must be precisely translated, the translators find it challenging to shift the meaning of the source text into the target text. The last problem is rhetorical which appears 5 times. Based on their translation result, translators frequently fail to discover an exact equivalent of figurative words or sentences, and occasionally their translation of these words and sentences is inappropriate for expressing the true meaning of the source language.

According to the above translation problems, there were several factorss that caused it difficult to translate the description text from Indonesian to English. The linguistic and non-linguistic factors of this can be separated into two categories. According to the interview findings, when translating descriptive text from Indonesian to English, linguistic factors are the primary causes of problem. This shows that it is challenging for translators to discover words that are similar to or equivalent to those in the target language. Students also said they were unaware of the grammatical structure of descriptive texts that currently focus on the use of simple present tenses. Then, translator claimed that it was difficult to translate the meaning of the source language into the target language. The lack of vocabulary led to this situation.

Discussion

This study is to identified several problems that faced by students in the English department encountered during their sixth semester and identify the contributing factor to their inability to accurately translate descriptive texts from Indonesian to English. The problem related to pragmatic, word-choice and

grammatical problems were the three main translation problems that students encountered when translating descriptive text. To answer the question about factor that caused problem in translating descriptive text, an interview was done by the researcher. The researcher employs a few questions during the interview that are connected to the translation issues of the student translation results, asking about factor that caused the problems in their translation result. The two factors that had the biggest impact on translation problems were a lack of vocabulary and a failure to convey the source language's meaning in the target language. Meanwhile, sixth semester English Department of UNP students had few problems with cultural problem. The students found it challenging to select the right word because it had two possible meanings, making it difficult to know which one was accurate.

In this study, it was found that the most common problem found was pragmatic problem and due to a lack of vocabulary. It demonstrates that more must be added., because "vocabulary is the foundation of English language instruction because without it, students cannot comprehend others or express their own thoughts, "claims Cluston (cited in Lailaturrahmi, 2018).This is different from Redicha's findings which stated that the most common problem faced by students was grammar (67.4%). Vocabulary was the second most typical issue that students were able to handle (21.4%). Incomplete sentences (4.1%) are the third issue. The fourth problem (3.2%) concerns with word order. The sixth problem (2.3%) is addition. The last problem (1.6%) is messages not being delivered. In conclusion, not mastering grammar was the main issue that students encountered. Baker (2011) also emphasizes the importance of grammar in her book, by proposing different level of grammatical equivalent. It shows that grammar plays a central role in expressing or translating sentences.

The most common problem found in this study is pragmatic problem caused by the lack of vocabulary. However, the difference results in this research are caused by different in participant. This study's finding same with Nurul which also stated that the main problem faced by students is because of the lack of vocabulary. According to Alqahtani (cited in Lailaturrami, 2018), "successful communication is hampered by a restricted vocabulary in a second language; hence vocabulary knowledge is frequently regarded as a crucial skill for second language learners.""while very little can be expressed without grammar, nothing can be conveyed without vocabulary, therefore being able to create grammatical sentences is not much use if one does not have the vocabulary needed to clarify what one wants to say."Moreover, according to Rivers and Nunan (cited in Alqahtani, 2015), having a substantial vocabulary is essential for effectively utilizing a second language since without it, we will not be able to employ any grammar rules or other techniques we may have acquired for clear communication.

The translation problems found in the translation result of this study are word-choice, grammatical, rhetorical, pragmatic, and cultural problem. The most significant problem is pragmatic problem. This finding is different with Sujatmiko's research. Sujatmiko shows that the problems are dictionary, tense, or equivalent translation. He has not studied about word-choice or diction. Choosing the appropriate word is one of the most challenging problems a translator faces while translating a text, according to Al-Saeed (cited in Lailaturrahmi, 2018). When

translating, it can be challenging to select the right word and its closest meaning from the dictionary. Further research is also necessary since if the wrong words are used in translation, the meaning will be altered. Only word-by-word translation strategies were employed by study participants. The participants in this research are same, but the translation techniques used are different.

CONCLUSION

Following the analysis of the data and discussion of the findings in the previous chapter, the following conclusions are presented: The sixth semester English Department students encountered five translation problems when translating descriptive text from Indonesian to English. They are word-choice (53 times), grammatical (52 times), rhetorical (5 times), pragmatic (62 times) and cultural (27 times). The dominant translation problems found by student translator are pragmatic, word-choice, and grammatical problem. Linguistic and non-linguistic factors were the two causes of the problems with translating descriptive text.The researcher discovered that linguistic aspects were more influential. Due to a lack of vocabulary and the inability to accurately translate the meaning of the source language into the target language, students are having difficulty translating texts into the target language from the source language. The students' difficulties with translation were also somewhat influenced by nonlinguistic factors, particularly when it came to problems with texts that had cultural significance.

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