

Translation Errors from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English (An Analysis of Meaning Errors in Translation)

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Abstract

The aims of this research were to find out some translation errors from Bahasa Indonesia into English and to describe the causes of translation errors. This was descriptive qualitative research that was conducted at IAIN Langsa. The object of the research was the students of English Department, IAIN Langsa who had taken the subject of Translation III. The total number of the object was 12 students. The researchers used documentation and questionnaire as the research instruments. The documentation was taken from the result of translation exam given by the lecturer. The documentation was used to find out the translation errors made by the students. The researchers also gave a closed questionnaire that consisted of 10 questions to the students. As the result, there were some translation errors made by the students in translating texts from Bahasa Indonesia into English, for example, 'mengikuti' was translated into 'follow'; 'keroyokan' was translated into 'gang up'; 'buah percakapan orang banyak' was translated into 'the fruit of people's conversation'; 'melanggar ketertiban perasaan orang' was translated into 'violate the order of people's feeling'; and 'dibagi menjadi' was translated into 'shared by'. The causes of errors made by the students were: it was difficult to translate texts from Bahasa Indonesia into English; most students did not know how to differentiate between literal and idiomatic translation; most students were not familiar with translation methods; most students did not master English vocabularies well; and the students felt difficult to choose appropriate meaning of words that have various meaning.

Keywords: types of translation, meaning, source and target language

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1. INTRODUCTION

Translation is one of the subjects in the university, especially in a language department, such as in English Department, Arabic Department, etc. In English Department, the students must follow the subject of translation. In the subject, the students will be taught the procedure in translating a text from a source language into a target language. Although it seems to be easy to translate a text, the students have many problems in translating a text. The main problem is to find an appropriate word with an appropriate meaning in translating a text. The students always make errors in using appropriate words in a target language which have appropriate meaning in a source language.

Larson (1984: 15) divides translation into two types. Each type has a different process in translating texts. They are as follows:

1. form-based translation (literal translation)

Form-based translation is also known as literal translation. In form-based translation, a translator must follow the form of the source language (SL). In other words, a translator must translate a source language into a target language word by word. The meaning of words in source language must be equivalent to the meaning of words in target language literally. For example, a sentence '*Saya makan nasi*' in *Bahasa Indonesia* will be translated into 'I eat rice' in English. Literally, '*saya*' is translated into 'I'; '*makan*' is translated into 'eat'; and '*nasi*' is translated into 'rice'.

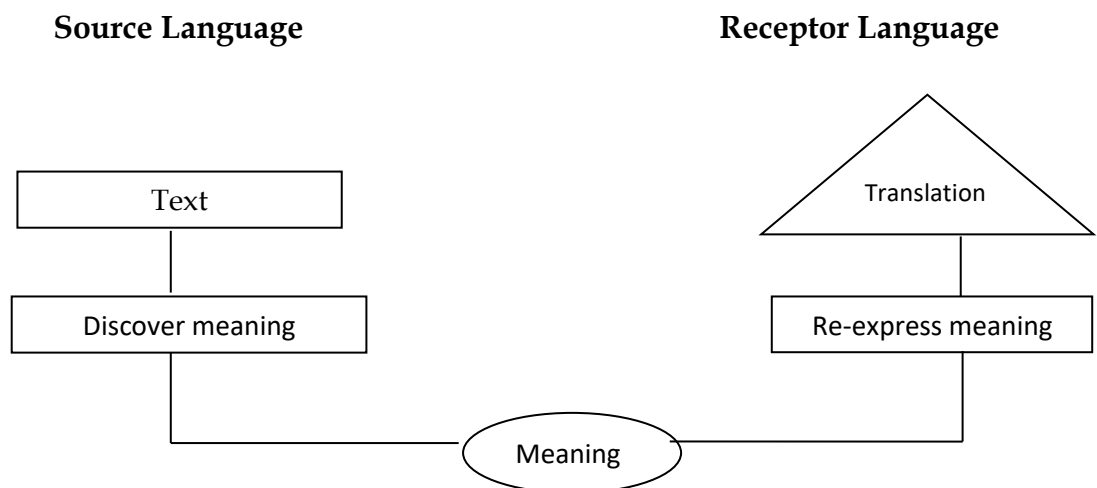
2. meaning-based translation (idiomatic translation).

Meaning-based translation is also called idiomatic translation. Larson (1984: 16) says that idiomatic translations use the natural forms of the receptor language (target language) both in the grammatical constructions and in the choices of lexical items. A truly idiomatic translation does not sound like a translation. It sounds like

it was written originally in the receptor language. In meaning-based translation, a translator must find an appropriate word that is equivalent in meaning. For example, a sentence '*Kerjaannya hanya berpangku tangan saja*' in *Bahasa Indonesia* will be translated into 'He is lazy' in English. In that sentence, we cannot translate it literally. We cannot translate the sentence word by word. So, we must find the meaning of the sentence, then we translate it into the target language. The meaning of the sentence '*Kerjaannya hanya berpangku tangan saja*' is '*Dia malas*'. Therefore, we translate the meaning '*Dia malas*' into a sentence 'He is lazy' in target language.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Larson (1984: 17) says that when translating a text, the translator's goal is an idiomatic translation which makes every effort to communicate their meaning of the source language text into the natural forms of the receptor language. He adds that translation is concerned with a study of the lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context of the source language text, which is analyzed in order to determine its meaning. He also presents the diagram of the translation process as follows:



From the diagram above, it can be described that when we have a text in source language that wants to be translated, we have to find the meaning of the text. Then, after we get the meaning, we translate it into the target language. We express the meaning in the form of target language. In short, the main goal in translation is to translate the meaning from source language into target language.

Catford (1965: 21) also makes categories of translation in terms of extent, levels, and ranks of translation.

2.1. Based on extent of translation, translation is divided into:

a. full translation

In a full translation, the entire text is submitted to the translation process, that is, every part of the source language text is replaced by text material.

b. partial translation

In a partial translation, some parts of the source language text are left untranslated. They are simply transferred to the target language text.

2.2. Based on levels of translation, translation is divided into:

a. total translation

A total translation means replacement of source language grammar and lexis by equivalent target language grammar and lexis with consequential replacement of source language phonology/graphology by non equivalent target language phonology/graphology.

b. restricted translation

A restricted translation means replacement of source language textual material by equivalent target language textual material at only one level, that is, translation performed only at the

phonological or at the graphological level, or at only one of the two levels of grammar and lexis.

2.3. Based on ranks of translation, translation is divided into:

a. rank bound translation

Rank bound translation is a translation in which the selection of target language equivalents is deliberately confined to one rank or a few ranks in the hierarchy of grammatical units, usually at word or morpheme rank, that is, setting up word to word or morpheme to morpheme equivalence.

b. unbounded translation

Unbounded translation is a normal translation in which the equivalence shifts freely up and down the rank scale. Sometimes it tends to be at the higher ranks, sometimes between larger units than the sentences.

Brislin (1976: 3-4) also categorizes translation based on purposes, kinds of texts to be translated, and translator's method. Based on purposes, translation is divided into four types. They are as follows:

1. pragmatic translation

Pragmatic translation refers to the translation of a message with an interest in accuracy of the information that was meant to be conveyed in the source language form and it is not concerned with other aspects of the original language version, for example, the translation of the information about repairing a machine.

2. aesthetic-poetic translation

Aesthetic-poetic translation refers to a translation in which the translator takes into account the affect, emotion, and feelings of an original agnate version, the aesthetic form used by the original author, as well as any information in the message, for example, the

translation of poetry, sonnet, rhyme, heroic couplet, dramatic dialogue, and novel.

3. ethnographic translation

The purpose of ethnographic translation is to explicate the cultural context of the source and target language versions. Translators must be sensitive to the way words are used and must know how the words fits into cultures, for example, the use of the word 'yes' versus 'yea' in America.

4. linguistic translation

Linguistic translation is concerned with equivalent meanings of the constituent morphemes of the source language and grammatical form, for example, language in a computer program and machine translation.

Based on the kinds of texts to be translated, translation is divided into two types, namely factual and literary translation. Factual translation refers to translating to convey information with precision, without involving the emotions or feelings of the translator but only based on the real facts, such as translating scientific fields, reports, newspapers, etc. Meanwhile, literary translation refers to the translation of art works. In this translation, the translator involves his/her emotion or feeling and it tends to be subjective, for example, the translation of poems, drama, novels, etc.

Based on the translator's method, translation is divided into two types, namely bounded and unbounded translation. Bounded translation is a translation in which the translator translates in one rank usually in an interlinear way without changing the form of the original text. It is done to keep the original style of the source text. Meanwhile, unbounded translation is the translation in which the translator is free to move from one

form to another. It is done since it is only information needed in the translation and there is no important of the form.

The researchers had observed the students of English Department who had taken the subject of Translation III. In the subject of Translation III, the students were expected to have abilities in translating texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English or from English into *Bahasa Indonesia* without having errors because they had passed Translation I and Translation II. So, they should not have problem in translating texts because they had been taught about the theory of translation and the process of translating texts. However, the fact was that they still had problems in translating texts, especially translating texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English. Therefore, in this research, the researchers will find out some translation errors from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English made by English Department student and the researchers will also describe the causes of translation errors made by the English Department students.

3. METHODS

This research was a descriptive qualitative research that was conducted at IAIN Langsa. The object of the research was the students of English Department, IAIN Langsa who had taken the subject of Translation III. The total number of the object was 12 students. The researchers used documentation and questionnaire as the research instruments. The documentation was taken from the result of translation exam given by the lecturer of translation. The documentation was used to find out the translation errors made by the students. The researchers also gave a closed questionnaire that consisted of 10 questions to the students. In questionnaire, the students only chose two answers, 'yes' or 'no'. The questionnaire was given in a google form. From the answers of questionnaire, the causes of translation errors would be found out. The

researchers did some steps in analyzing the data, namely data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation. In data collection, the researchers took the data from documentation and questionnaire. Then, the data from documentation and questionnaire were sorted out. After the data were sorted out, the researchers analyzed the data. The researchers analyzed the result of translation exam by taking the examples of translation errors made by the students. The researchers also analyzed the questionnaire in order to find the causes of translation errors made by the English Department students. The last step was data interpretation. In this step, the researchers explained the translation errors made by the students and the researchers also provided the right answer for the errors. The researchers also interpreted the students' answers in the questionnaire. So, the researchers could explain the causes of translation made by the students.

4. RESULT

To find out the translation errors, the researchers analyzed the documentation of translation exam given by the lecturer. The documentation contained the students' translation work. The lecturer of translation gave some texts that must be translated by the students. The students must translate the texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* (source language) into English (target language). The researchers found some translation errors made by the students as follows:

4.1. First Text

Source Language	Target Language
<i>Antusiasme warga Kota Banda Aceh untuk mengikuti vaksinasi massal mulai terlihat meningkat pada tahap penyuntikan dosis kedua.</i>	The enthusiasm of Banda Aceh City residents to follow the mass vaccination began to increase at the second dose injection stage.

The students translated the word *'mengikuti'* into 'follow'. In the target language context, the word 'follow' has different meaning with the word *'mengikuti'*. Based on English Dictionary, the word 'follow' means 'to come or go after or behind somebody'. Meanwhile, based on the context, the word meaning is 'involving in an event'. So, the appropriate word for the word *'mengikuti'* in the target language should be 'participate'. The translation should be 'The enthusiasm of Banda Aceh City residents to **participate** the mass vaccination began to increase at the second dose injection stage'.

4.2. Second Text

Source Language	Target Language
<i>Dengan menggunakan sistem keroyokan (gotong royong), pahlawan ekonomi keluarga ini berhasil naik dengan menembus pasar di salah satu mal di Surabaya, Jawa Timur.</i>	By gang up on system (cooperation), the family's economic hero successfully increased through the market at one of the shopping malls in Surabaya, East Java

The students translated the word *'keroyokan'* into 'gang up'. In the target language context, the phrase 'gang up' has different meaning with the word *'keroyokan'*. Based on English Dictionary, the phrase 'gang up' means 'together to hurt or frighten'. The phrase 'gang up' is assumed as negative action that is done together. So, the using of 'gang up' is out of the context. The appropriate word for the word *'keroyokan'* in the target language should be 'working together'. The translation should be 'By **working together**, the family's economic

hero successfully increased through the market at one of the shopping malls in Surabaya, East Java’.

4.3. Third Text

Source Language	Target Language
<i>Semakin menjadi buah percakapan orang banyak, semakin besar nilai beritanya.</i>	The more the fruit of people’s conversation , the greater the value of the news.

The students translated the phrase ‘*buah percakapan orang banyak*’ into ‘the fruit of people’s conversation’. In the text, the students translated ‘*buah percakapan orang banyak*’ literally word by word into ‘fruit’ (*buah*), ‘conversation’ (*percakapan*), and ‘people’ (*orang banyak*). They combined the words into ‘the fruit of people’s conversation’. It is not appropriate in the target language context. The translation should be ‘The more **people say**, the greater the value of the news is’.

4.4. Fourth Text

Source Language	Target Language
<i>Asalkan tidak melanggar ketertiban perasaan orang dan undang-undang penghinaan</i>	As long as it does not violate the order of people’s feelings and the law of humiliation

The students translated the phrase ‘*melanggar ketertiban perasaan orang*’ into ‘violate the order of people’s feeling’. In the text, the students translated the phrase literally word by word. The word ‘*melanggar*’ was translated into ‘violate’; the word ‘*ketertiban*’ was translated into ‘order’; and the phrase ‘*perasaan orang*’ was translated into ‘people’s feeling’. They combined the words into ‘violate the order of people’s feeling’. It is not appropriate in the target language

context. The translation should be ‘as long as it does not **offend people** and the law of humiliation.

4.5. Fifth Text

Source Language	Target Language
<i>Dengan bimbingan intens yang dibagi menjadi beberapa kelas, akhirnya mereka bisa menempati mal.</i>	With the intense guidance shared by several classes, they could finally occupy the mall

The students translated the phrasal verb ‘*dibagi menjadi*’ into ‘shared by’. The word ‘share’ means giving something to others. It is not appropriate in the context. The translation should be ‘With the intense guidance **divided into** several classes, they could finally occupy the mall’.

After the researchers found some semantic translation errors, the researchers wanted to know the reasons why the students made the errors in translating the texts. The researchers gave a closed questionnaire to 12 students that consisted of 10 questions. Closed questionnaire is a questionnaire contained an answer that has been determined by a researcher and the respondents must choose only one answer. In each question, the students must answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’. The students must fill the questionnaire in the google form. The results of questionnaire were as follows:

1. You will find it difficult to start translating.

Seven students answered ‘yes’ and five students answered ‘no’.

2. You are familiar with all translation methods.

Five students answered ‘yes’ and seven students answered ‘no’.

3. You find it difficult to distinguish between types of translation, such as literal translation, and idiomatic translation.

Eight students answered 'yes' and four students answered 'no'.

4. You understand using translation methods.

Six students answered 'yes' and six students answered 'no'.

5. You find it more difficult to translate *Bahasa Indonesia* into English.

Eight students answered 'yes' and four students answered 'no'.

6. You feel you are still lacking in the mastery of vocabulary in English.

Eleven students answered 'yes' and one student answered 'no'.

7. You always translate a text by using dictionary when you find difficult vocabularies.

All students answered 'yes'.

8. You have difficulty in determining the appropriate meaning of words that have various meanings.

Eight students answered 'yes' and four students answered 'no'.

9. You have difficulty in assembling sentences in English, resulting in ambiguous sentences and readers are difficult to understand.

Nine students answered 'yes' and three students answered 'no'.

10. You are less familiar with borrowing words from foreign languages.

Six students answered 'yes' and six students answered 'no'.

After collecting the students' answer from the questionnaire, the researchers can describe some causes of errors made by the students in translating texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English. The causes were as follows:

1. Translation is difficult, especially the translation of text from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English. The students felt easier when they translated a text from English into *Bahasa Indonesia* because the meaning of word and the syntactic structure of sentence in *Bahasa Indonesia* are

not too complicated. So, it is easier to translate texts from English into *Bahasa Indonesia*. Meanwhile, the translation of texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English is difficult because the students must find a word that has equivalent meaning in the English language context, and the syntactic structure of English sentence is more complicated.

2. Most students did not know how to differentiate between literal and idiomatic translation. From the errors made by students, it could be seen that most students translated the texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English literally. They were not able to use idiomatic translation method.
3. Most students were not familiar with translation methods. In doing translation, they just open dictionary and find out the word with has similar meaning without considering whether the words were appropriate or not in the target language context. They assumed that translation was only the process of changing words from source language into target language without using the method of translation.
4. Most students did not master English vocabularies well. They could not choose the appropriate words in translating texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English.
5. When translating texts, the students felt difficult to choose appropriate meaning of words that have various meaning. Some words in English have various meaning. The students felt difficult in determining the word that has equivalent meaning in the target language context.

5. CLONCLUSION

After conducting the research, the researchers draw some conclusion as follows:

1. There were some translation errors made by the students in translating texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English, for example, 'mengikuti' was translated into 'follow'; 'keroyokan' was translated into 'gang up'; 'buah percakapan orang banyak' was translated into 'the fruit of people's conversation'; 'melanggar ketertiban perasaan orang' was translated into 'violate the order of people's feeling'; and 'dibagi menjadi' was translated into 'shared by'.
2. The causes of errors made by the students were: it was difficult to translate texts from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English; most students did not know how to differentiate between literal and idiomatic translation; most students were not familiar with translation methods; most students did not master English vocabularies well; and the students felt difficult to choose appropriate meaning of words that have various meaning.

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