THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS’ DIFFICULTIES AND STRATEGIES USED IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION PROCESS

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Abstract

This research is entitled “The Analysis of Students” Difficulties and Strategies Used in English Translation Process”. It can be seen that this is the qualitative research and the aims of this research are to know the methods used, the difficulties faced, and the strategies used by students in translation process. The researcher used two instruments, namely test and interview. The population of this research was the fourth semester students who had taken translation I in the third semester in English Language Education of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University. The sample was unit 1 consisting of 15 students. They were selected by using purposive sampling based on preliminary interview with translation lecturer. From the result of this research, it was found that there were 2 dominant methods that were used by participants in translation process, there are as follows: word-for-word translation and free translation method. In word-for-word translation, there were 9 participants (participant 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14) translated into the target language by single word in most common meaning and did preliminary translation (pre-translation) word for word. On the other hand, there were 6 participants (participant 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15) used free translation. They translated the text more clearly. The students faced many difficulties in religious culture in translation process. The difficulties they got from religious culture were vocabularies and terminologies. Moreover, participants were seldom found the religious vocabularies when they read and learned the common text. To overcome these difficulties in translation process, there were only 2 strategies mostly used by the participants in translation process. They were as follows: translation by a more general word and translation by paraphrase using related word. It was easy to understand the content of the text when they used both of translation strategies.

Keywords: Analysis, students’ difficulties, strategies, English translation.
1. Introduction

Every student of English Language Education at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University must learn translation subject in the third and the fourth semester to increase their ability in understanding and translating whether spoken or written form in English to Bahasa Indonesia or Bahasa Indonesia to English. Students will get very important knowledge during two semesters about translation and sometimes they get confused or difficulties to translate the sentence. Consequently, the difficulties in translation process are likely to have a significant impact for students. When they are difficult to translate, they often fail to understand the meaning of the sentence. Akbari (2013) claims that in translation process, it has transferring meaning from source language to target language without changing the message in the sentence. Moreover, the translator has to understand the sentence before they try to translate it.

The act of translating is not a simple process to change language from the source to the target one. Before translating, the translator should know many aspects in translation process, for instance, the background knowledge, theory, and methods in translation. Mashhady and Noura (2012) identify occasionally the difficulties of translating the poem faced by translator is one of the problem in translation. The difficulty of translation is one of the problems that sometimes students faced in learning process. Students will try many strategies if they get difficulty in learning process.

Previously, there are two previous studies related to this research. These studies can support this research and become consideration to do the further research. A study on English to Indonesia translation methods in the short story “A Blunder” by Anton Cheknov was examined by Nugraha, Nugroho, and Rahman (2017) in Indonesian EFL Journal. They examined an analysis of translation methods in the short story that translated into Indonesian by students as participants of the research. In the process of translation analysis, they use the theory of translation methods based on Newmark Theory. As for knowing equivalent in translation use Baker Theory. In this research, the method used qualitative descriptive method which includes observation and document analysis. The authors, found 6 methods used by participants to create a short story “A Blunder” in to the target language (TL). In addition, they found two types of translations equivalent in translation.

For the second previous study, a study on teachers” and learners” perceptions of applying translation as a method, strategy, or technique in an Iranian EFL setting by Mollaei, Taghinezhad and Sadighi (2017) in International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies (IJELS). They examined that the effects and limitations in employing translation in the classroom for the teachers and learners” perceptions when it is used as a method, strategy or technique. Moreover, they just interviewed the teachers to get accurate information about their students from graduate and ungraduate learners. According to the interview results, some teachers said that translation process needs the learners” proficiency in vocabulary and grammar to
make the effective in translating. On the other hand, some other teachers claimed that translation process needs more time when students cannot get the right meaning. It is difficult to translate in short time for students who have difficulty in translating.

Based on the previous studies, the researcher gets a problem that can be examined in this research. The similarity between both previous studies and this research is the translation process for EFL learners. Moreover, Nugraha, Nugroho, and Rahman research, also explored the methods and equivalent of students in translation process. On the contrary, the difference between previous studies and this research is their previous research perception focus on the teachers’ toward the learners’ perception in translation process. Furthermore, the teacher gave the test to know the students’ difficulties in translation and the teachers applied the methods to teach them after getting the result. As a result, the researcher only focuses on the students who learn the translation subject and their strategies in translation process.

Based on preliminary interview from one of the lecturers translation subject of English Language Education at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, the researcher found that the information that the students got difficult in translation subject and they did not have self confidence in translating English text. For this reason, the researcher wants to investigate the methods and strategies used by students’ ability while they got difficult in English translation process. In this case, the researcher only focused on students’ ability in translating English into Indonesian. Based on the explanation above, the researcher formulated the research questions as follows: (1) What are the methods used by students in English translation process?, (2) What are the difficulties students faced in translation process?, and (3) What are the strategies used by students in English translation process?

2. Literature Review

In general, the process of translating, it deals with source language (SL) and target language (TL). Translating is a complicated skill that a translator needs to understand the source text and put it into the target language, keeping the style when translating, and need to be a competent translator in both foreign languages and mother tongue. Basically translation means reproducing the message in the source language with the most reasonable and closest equivalent in the target language, either from the meaning or from style in translating. A translator should first aim to re-imagine the contents of the message that contained in the text. However, to reproduce the message, inevitably, grammatical and lexical adjustments are required.

Zainudin and Awal (2012) claim that translation is an activity changing the meaning from source language into target language, therefore a translator to be aware of the methods is used in translating. The purposes of transfer language process to change of a written source language text into an equivalent target language text, and need syntax, the systematic and pragmatic understanding in analyze the processing from the source language. Moreover, Siregar (2016) suggest that the contents of translation is about to imitate the message from the source language into the target
language in the term of meaning and style. The product of translation should make it easily to understand the massage from the text to the target readers and use a good structure in translating into target language.

Yaqub (2014) claims that translation is a process changing the meaning from one language (source language) into another language (target language) with many medium such as, spoken, written, or signaled and pay attention with the equivalent from the grammatical in the target language. The process change meaning of textual material from source language into target language by equivalent grammatical. Translation is expressing something in another language (or target language) to what has been expressed in a language (source language) by maintaining the semantic equivalent and linguistic style (Sharififar, 2009). Based on several definitions of translation mentioned above, there is an agreement that translation is a part related to the relationship between two languages which transfer of meaning from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) with the accuracy of the message.

Translation methods are more likely to be in a way that translators use in the translation process for their purposes. The method of translation greatly influences the translation. It means that the translation of the text is largely determined by the method of translation chosen by the translator because the purpose and the desire translator will affect the overall result of the text translation. Molina and Albir (2002) claim that the method of translation refers to the way in which is a particular translation process is performed for the purpose of the translator, the global option that affects the whole text. So the method of translation greatly influences the translation. It means that the translation of the text is largely determined by the method of translation used by the translator because the purpose will affect a whole of the result in the textual translation.

Translation involves two different languages. Therefore, the difference between the system and the structure between source language and target language becomes the main obstacle in translation (Wu, 2008). In translation process, translators were not doing translation without difficulties. A translator would face many kinds of difficulties in their work, for instance in difficulties related to the meaning, problems of ambiguity meaning, variance, equivalence, contextual or situation meaning, and grammatical meaning.

Translation strategy is a procedure used by translators in solving translation difficulties. Therefore, the translation strategy starts from the realization of difficulties by the translator and solving the problem. Baker (1992) suggests there are five strategies can be used by translator in translation process:

1) **Translation by a more general word (Superordinate)**

This strategy refers to the use of the common word (superordinate) to overcome the lack of specificity in the target language to compare the source language. For example:

SL: Shampoo your hair!
TL: Cuci rambutmu!

“Shampooing” can be seen as a type of “wash” because it is more limited use. We can wash a lot of things but shampoo we just wash for hairs.

2) **Translation by more neutral / less expressive word**

This strategy is used if a word has no direct similarity in the target language, or the target language has no meaning of the word. This is also used when the translator feels that expressive word translation will heard impolite to the target reader, for instance:

SL: She is a fussy girl.
TL: Dia adalah gadis yang ramah.

The word “fussy” refers to people who like to talk too much. This term has negative meaning than “ramah”. The translator prefers to translate “fussy” into the word “ramah” that contain less expressive meaning.

3) **Translation by cultural substitution**

This strategy involves the replacement of culturally specific items or expressions with target language items that do not have the same propositional meaning but likely to have a similar impact on the target reader. The main advantage of using this strategy is to give the reader a concept by which he can recognize something familiar and interesting. For instance:

SL: Tomorrow will be halloween party.
TL: Besok akan diadakan pesta topeng.

“Halloween party” is held in every October 31 by Europeans, most of whom celebrate use of certain masks and costumes. Once upon a time, this party was used to scare ghosts, but today it is done just for the fun party. The Indonesian translator replaced it with “pesta topeng” to give the reader a concept by which he can identify, something familiar and interesting.

4) **Translation by paraphrase using related word**

This strategy tends to be used when the concept expressed by the source item is pronounced in the target language but in a different form. For example:

SL: Obama is an Afro-American man.
TL: Presiden Obama berdarah campuran Afrika-Amerika.

5) **Translation by illustration**

This is a strategy in which the possibility of translating words in target language with long explanations and explain what the meaning from a word. It is also to overcome the lack of equivalence in target language. For instance:

SL: Batik
TL: A cloth that has been drawn using wax and canting as a material and a tool to make it. This originally comes from Indonesia.
3. Research Method

The researcher used qualitative descriptive method to know the kinds of methods and strategies used by students in English translation process. In the qualitative descriptive method, the researcher described the methods and strategies used by students in English translation process based on the result of students’ translation. Meanwhile, the result of students’ translation is the document in this research. The document then analyzed based on Newmark’s and Baker’s theories. Finally, she investigated the methods and strategies used in translation process of the fourth semester of English Language Education of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University.

Hartas (2010) defines population as a group of individuals or organization that share the same characteristic that is of interest to the study. In the other words, a population is the group to which the researcher wants to generalize the findings obtained for the sample. In this study, the population was the fourth semester students who had done translation I in the third semester in English Language Education of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University.

Once the population is defined, a sample is selected. Hartas (2010) claims that the researcher starts selecting a few individuals who meet the criteria for inclusion in a certain study. In this study, the researcher used purposive sampling as her sampling procedure. Hartas (2010) claims that the researcher chose respondents that fit to the purpose of specific study. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique with a purpose. In this research, the researcher chose unit 1 consisting of 15 students as her sample based on preliminary interview with translation lecturer, Dr. Syarwan Ahmad, M.Lis. Based on a preliminary interview result, most students have problems with translation process, such as variance, equivalence, and grammatical problem. Indeed, it showed that most of the students in unit 1 had difficulties in translating English text into Indonesian. After that, the researcher analyzed the students’ difficulties and strategies used in translation process.

In this study, the data of this research were collected by using the test and interview. The test was quite simple to administer. The researcher came into the class room and explained the purpose of the translation test and also gave clear direction to ease students’ comprehension in completing the test. The participants were allowed to look up the dictionary to search the difficult word. The administration of the test took 30-40 minutes. The researcher used translation test to know the way students translating English – Indonesia. The test is only once to translate an Islamic short story about Umar bin Khattab. It was to know the methods used in translation process.

After giving the test, the researcher used interview to get the accurate the data about the difficulties, the methods and strategies used by students in translation process. She prepared around 11 questions about translation process and also recorded the participants’ response. After recording, the researcher transcribed and analyzed the interview result. Interview is a systematic research instrument in the
form of verbal communication and it is aimed to get information from a conversation (Kyale, 1996, as cited in Alshenqeeti, 2014). In this study, the researcher interviewed the students about the difficulties, methods, and the strategies used by students in English translation process. She used open-ended questions. There were 11 questions about difficulties, methods and strategies used by students in translation process.

For data analysis of the test, the data were analyzed based on Newmark’s and Baker’s theories. There are eight methods of translation based on Newmark; word-for-word, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation, and communicative translation. While, there are 4 difficulties of translation by Newmark; ecological problem, material culture, social culture, and religious culture. Moreover, there are 5 strategies of translation by Baker; translation by a more general word (Superordinate), translation by more neutral/less expressive word, translation by cultural substitution, translation by paraphrase using related word, and translation by illustration. While, the data from the interview were explained descriptively.

4. Results and Discussion

The researcher gave the test to know the method used by student in translating. The test used the Islamic short story about “Hijrah to Madinah” and The participants were allowed to open the dictionary in translation process. Newmark (1988) stated that there are eight methods of translation, namely word for word translation, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation, and communicative translation. As result, the researcher found 2 methods which the participants dominant used in translating. The findings of the test can be seen the following table.

| Students of Unit 1 | Method Used                |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Participant 1     | Word for word translation |
| Participant 2     | Word for word translation |
| Participant 3     | Free translation          |
| Participant 4     | Word for word translation |
| Participant 5     | Free translation          |
| Participant 6     | Free translation          |
| Participant 7     | Free translation          |
| Participant 8     | Word for word translation |
| Participant 9     | Word for word translation |
| Participant 10    | Word for word translation |
| Participant 11    | Word for word translation |
| Participant 12    | Free translation          |
| Participant 13    | Word for word translation |
| Participant 14    | Word for word translation |
| Participant 15    | Free translation          |
The table above shows that there are two methods used by the participants such as word for word translation and free translation. It can be seen that the most dominant method used is word for word translation with 9 participants. The second one is free translation with 6 participants. Here, the researcher would like to describe the sample of data that the participants produced in translating the text based on Newmark’s theory.

1. Word-for-word translation

Newmark (1988, p.46) states that “the main use of word-for-word translation is either to understand the mechanics of the source language or construe a difficult text as a pre translation.” A translator uses word-for-word translation method to make it easily to translate from the source language into the target language. The example of word-for-word translation based on the participant’s translation:

**Participant 1**: (SL) Then he went to the circles of people, one by one, and said to them
(TL) Kemudian dia pergi kelingkaran orang, satu demi satu, dan berkata kepada mereka

**Participant 2**: (SL) He put on his sword
(TL) Dia meletakkan pedangnya

**Participant 4**: (SL) When he decided to migrate
(TL) Ketika dia memutuskan untuk bermigrasi

**Participant 8**: (SL) Whoever wants his mother to be bereft of him and his children to become orphans and his wife to become a widow
(TL) Siapapun yang ingin ibunya kehilangan atas dirinya dan anaknya menjadi yatim piatu dan istrinya menjadi seorang janda

**Participant 9**: (SL) And circumambulated the House seven times
(TL) Dan dikelilingi oleh rumah tujuh waktu

**Participant 10**: (SL) Then he went to the Maqam and prayed tranquilly
(TL) Kemudian dia pergi ke Maqam dan berdo’a tenang

**Participant 11**: (SL) He taught them and told them about Islam
(TL) Dia mengajarkan mereka dan menyampaikan kepada mereka tentang Islam

**Participant 13**: (SL) May your faces become ugly!
(TL) Semoga wajahmu menjadi jelek!

2. Free translation

Newmark (1988, p.46) says that “free translation is part of TL emphasis which reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original.” In this method the meaning in the target language usually is longer than the original text, intended to make the content or message from the text more acceptable to the reader of target language. Here are the examples of free translation based on the participant’s translation:
Participant 3: (SL) Then he went to the circles of people, one by one, and said to them
(TL) Lalu dia pergi ketempat segerombolan orang-orang, satu persatu, dan berkata kepada mereka semua

Participant 5: (SL) When Umar decided migrate to Madinah, he insisted on doing so openly
(TL) Ketika Umar memutuskan untuk hijrah ke Madinah, beliau bersikeras untuk melakukan hal itu secara terang-terangan

Participant 6: (SL) I do not know of any of the migrants who did not migrate in secret, except Umar ibn Al-Khattab
(TL) Aku tidak mengetahui jumlah imigran yang tidak berhijrah secara tersembunyi, kecuali Umar ibn Al-Khattab

Participant 7: (SL) No one followed him except a few of those who were weak and oppressed
(TL) Tidak ada satu orang pun yang mengikutinya kecuali beberapa orang dari mereka yang lemah dan tertindas

Participant 12: (SL) And circumambulated the House seven times
(TL) Dan mengelilingi rumah sebanyak tujuh kali dengan santai

The researcher interviewed the participants to know the difficulties and strategies used by students in translating. Then, the interview was done with 10 students. Based on the result of the interview, the researcher found some information about the difficulties and strategies used in translation process. When the researcher asked the participants opinion about the test that had been done, from 10 participants that had been interviewed there were 9 participants thought that the test was difficult and there was only 1 participant (participant 5) thought that the test was a little bit easy. Participant 5 said that she thought that the test was a bit easy but she also got difficult in translation process. Furthermore, there were 3 participants that ever translated the Islamic story from English into Indonesian while 2 other participants said that they had sometimes translated it. The others 5 participants said that they never translated the Islamic story from English into Indonesian.

In addition, there were 9 participants that got difficult in translating religious story. Most of them said that the reason why they got difficult in translating religious story was because the vocabulary in religious story were seldom heard and found in the common text. Participant 2 said that she got difficult in translating religious story was due to many terminologies needed to be explained the story that she cannot translated it one by one. In contrast, participant 5 said that translating the religious story was a bit easy, but she also got difficult in translation process if she found some unfamiliar vocabulary. To understand the content of the story, she opened the dictionary.

Because they got difficult in translating religious story, the researcher asked them how they do the test when they got difficult in translating. Most of them
answered that would look at the dictionary and tried to translate it until their translation were understood. On the other hand, participant 6 said that before he found the meaning in the dictionary, firstly he guessed the meaning. When he guessed the meaning and it is not connected with the content of the story, he would look for the meaning in the dictionary. Then, the researcher asked them how they translate English text into Indonesian, most of them said that they used word-for-word translation. Only participant 3, 6, and 7 said that they used explaining the meaning. In the translation method it means they used free translation.

Moreover, from 10 participants they ever used the strategy in translation process based on Baker’s theory. In Baker’s theory that has 5 strategies in translating, there are translation by a more general word, translation by more neutral / less expressive word, translation by cultural substitution, translation by paraphrasing using related word, and translation by illustration. After the researcher interviewed all of the participants, only 2 strategies they have used in translation process such as translation by a more general word and translation by paraphrasing using related word. From 10 participants that have been interviewed, there were only 4 participants (participant 3, 5, 6, and 7) said that they used translation by paraphrasing using related word strategy. While the others participants said that they used translation by a more general word strategy.

Afterward, the reason why they (participant 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, and 10) used translation by a more general word strategy was it made them easy in translating and more understanding in translation process. The reason from the participant 3, 5, 6, and 7 who used translation by paraphrase using related word strategy was to make more understand the content of the text when they were translating.

Based on the result of interview, there were 9 participants thought that the test was difficult and 1 participant thought that the test is a bit easy. From 10 participants were interviewed and they claimed that the process of translation for the religious story was difficult. This is along with Newmark’s theory which is stated that one of difficulty faced by participants is religious culture. Moreover, based on Baker’s theory about strategies translation process, there were two strategies that mostly used by the participants. It can be seen that the mostly strategy used by 10 participants was translation by a more general word and translation by paraphrase using related word.

In order to give clear answer to the research questions, the researcher explained it one by one below.

The first research question was “what are the methods used by students in English translation process?” From the translation test using Islamic short story about “Hijrah to Madinah” adopted from Umar Ibn Khattab. Based on the result of the participants translation, it was found that the methods used by participants in translating based on Newmark’s theory there were 2 dominant methods that used by participants in translation process, as follows: word-for-word translation and free translation method.
In word-for-word translation, 9 participants (participant 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14) translated into the target language by single word in most common meaning and did preliminary translation (pre-translation) word for word, then reconstructed into a translation of appropriate expression. On the other hand, there were 6 participants (participant 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15) used free translation; it had longer translation than original text. They translated the text more clearly and paraphrased in order to the message of the original text delivered understandably.

The previous research examined by Nugraha, Nugroho, and Rahman (2017) also analyzed the data by using Newmark’s Theory in translation method. Both of dominant methods used by students in this research were same as the previous research, such as word-for-word translation and free translation method.

The second research question was about “what are the difficulties students faced in translation process?” From the interview result, it was found that there were many difficulties faced by participants in translation process. 10 participants had the difficulties in vocabularies and terminologies meaning when they translated the original text due to lack of vocabularies and terminologies meaning in religious story. Moreover, participants seldom found the religious vocabularies when they read and learned the common text. They claimed that translating religious story was more difficult than translating the fable or the other stories. As a result, they were confused in translation process and could not translate it directly from the dictionary. Finally, they must translate indirectly or implicitly based on the message of original text.

On the contrary, the difficulty faced by participants from previous research examined by Mollaei and Sadighi (2017) was different from this research. The main participants’ difficulty was about the time. They needed more time in translation process to get the appropriate meaning based on the original text. It concluded that they were difficult to translate the original text well in short time.

The last research question asked “what are the strategies used by students in English translation process?” After interviewing the participants, the researcher also got the information about their strategies used in translation process. Based on Baker’s theory, there were only 2 strategies mostly used by the participants in translation process, as follows: translation by a more general word and translation by paraphrase using related word. It was easy for them to understand the content of the text when they used both of translation strategies.

On the other hand, there were 3 strategies not used in translation process in this research, such as translation by more neutral / less expressive word, translation by cultural substitution and translation by illustration because they used the strategies in translation depended on the topic of the text. 3 strategies (translation by more neutral / less expressive word, translation by cultural substitution and translation by illustration) could not be used in Hijrah to Madinah story. Moreover, the other previous research was about material cultural terms translated from English into Indonesian examined by Rimari (2010) and it was different from the topic and translation strategies of this research. It showed that Rimari’s data used all of
strategies based on Baker’s Theory, but there were only 2 strategies dominantly used from the data that she got, as follows: translation by paraphrase using related word and translation by illustration because the topic of the text was kind of woven fabric pattern (Tenun Ikat). The data mostly used a picture or illustration in the material cultural translation. As a result, she claimed that it was easier in translation by illustration process followed by the picture or illustration.

5. Conclusions

There were 2 methods used by students of English Language Education of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University who translated Islamic short story. The methods are, word-for-word translation and free translation method. The students faced many difficulties in religious culture text translation process. The difficulties they got from religious culture were vocabularies and terminologies meaning when they translated the original text because they were lack of vocabularies and terminologies meaning in religious story. Moreover, participants seldom found the religious vocabularies when they read and learned the common text. To overcome these difficulties in translation process, there were only 2 strategies used by the participants in translation process, as follows: translation by a more general word and translation by paraphrase using related word. It was easy to understand the content of the text when they used both of translation strategies.

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