An Ability in Translating Recount Text by Using Translating Strategies

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Abstract

This research is focused on the ability of the students in translating a recount text by using translating strategies at the first grade students of SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Keluarga (YPK) Pematangsiantar. This study tries to find out: 1) The translation strategy that are used by the students in the translating of a recount text; 2) The translation strategy that is mostly used by the students in the translating of a recount text; 3) The students’ perception towards the translating tasks as an alternative task to enhance their reading habit and vocabulary. From the data analysis it can be concluded that: 1) In translating the recount text entitled Borobudur, especially in dealing with certain words, the students employ ten translation strategy. These strategies are taken from the Newmarks’ translation strategy (1988: 81-93). The strategies which are applied by the students in this study are the transference strategy, the naturalization strategy, the cultural equivalent strategy, the shift or transposition strategy, the modulation strategy, the recognized translation strategy, the compensation strategy, the expansion strategy, the couplets strategy, and the triplets strategy; 2) The cultural equivalent strategy is the one which is mostly used by the students in translating the text. Based on Newmark (1988: 82-83), this strategy is commonly found in translating popular fiction texts; 3) The students’ perception towards the translating tasks which are given by their teacher is that the translating tasks can help them enhance their reading habit and increase their vocabulary. The reason behind this perception is because they admit that they even do not read English texts unless their teacher has them do so. In this case, it is obviously seen that the students agree that the translating task is an alternative task to make them read English texts. Although in the reality translating task is neglected by many educators, since it is included into one of the characteristics of the Grammar Translation method which is assumed only to focus on knowing grammar rules, remember vocabularies, and produce a good translation of target language.

I. Introduction

Translation has been used in many fields of human life, ranging from business world to educational field. In the educational world, translation plays an important role since in the information era. There is much relevant information that comes from other languages, and English probably is the source language that most widely translated in the world (Baker, 1992) because it is the international language which is spoken by most of people among
countries. In accordance with Baker, Brown (2001) also confirms that English plays an important role in people’s life.

“English has become a tool for international communication in transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, technology, diplomacy, and scientific research.” (Brown, 2001: 118).

As the result there are so many source books or information that is written in English. This phenomenon, therefore, encourage students to have sufficient mastery of English to access some important information in order to enrich their knowledge and to support their learning progress. The access to the information cannot be optimal if the students face some barriers. For example the students do not understand the text they read because the lack of vocabularies or even grammar. Here, translation process plays the role. In dealing with the text, the students can simply translate the text they read. In fact, many people think that translation is complicated and challenging because they need to understand kinds of the text and cultural aspects within the text (Orbudari, 2007). Besides, it is hard to find the equivalent word from the source language to the target language, since to get a comprehensive meaning a translator has to know the context of the text and concern the other words existing together in the sentence (Effendi, 2008). Although, this study is not aimed to reveal the students’ proficiency in translation or to measure the quality of the students’ translation, yet this study is merely to reveal the students strategies in translating the text. It is also to know the students’ perception towards the translating tasks as an alternative task to help them enhance their reading habit and increase their vocabulary.

In translating a text, the students surely employ certain strategies. As a study conducted by Effendi (2008) revealed, the undergraduate students at one of state university in Bandung use some methods and strategies to translate a Jakarta Post’s newspaper to cope with some problems they face when translating that article. On the other side, generally for senior high school students in Indonesia, translation is something that can be taken for granted, since it is not taught and included in school curriculum. They also think that translation is not as important as other subjects in English, for example grammar, since they do not get direct advantages from it. In the other word, they underestimate translation because whether they have or do not have ability in translation it will not be graded with score by their teacher. Although translation is not taught in senior high school level, the translation cannot be separated from the English learning. It is an integrated skill which is strongly related to the other English skills, especially reading skill. Reading is a skill that comes through habit. Therefore, the students must be encouraged to read from the early stage. In relation with the translating task, it may be said that the more the students are given the translating tasks, the more they read the texts.

The translating tasks also may assist the students in the vocabulary learning if they make glossary while the process of reading and translating a text (Luppescu and Day, 1993). Through this study it is hoped to know the students’ perception towards the translating tasks as an alternative task to enhance their reading habit and vocabulary. According to Noie (2018) translation is transferring the meaning from one language into another in the written form because translation also increase interaction and understanding (Siregar, 2019). If the language was only a series of concepts that are common or universal then it will be very easy to translate from the source language to the target language (Pulungan, 2019).
II. Review of Literatures

2.1 Definition of Translation
According to Oxford Dictionary, the word “translate” means put something written or spoken into a different language. It can be simply said that translation is the expression in another language (target language) of what has been expressed in another (source language) (Bell, 1991). In addition, many experts of translation have proposed some definitions of translation. Newmark (1988: 5) for instance, claims that translation is a process of rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text. While Larson (1984) confirms that translation, basically, is a process of transferring the meaning from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) by changing the form of the target language. Since translation is a process of transferring the meaning, he underlines that the meaning of the SL cannot be changed, only the form of the TL which can be changed (p. 3).

Moreover, Darma (2003) assumes that equivalent is the key in the translation process; “The important thing is we find the equivalent translation in a target language” (p. 369). “Translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language.” (Catford, 1965:20, cited in Darma 2003:369).

2.2 Process of Translation
The process of translation is steps of act of translating in order to produce translation product (text in target language). It is translator’s efforts to transfer textual material of source language into textual material of target language by using his knowledge, ability, and skill. These efforts are to find equivalent textual material in the target language. Katharine Barnwell (cited in Darma 2003: 370) points out two steps in translating. First, a translator has to analyze the meanings of the source language. Then he restructures naturally those meanings as equivalent as possible in the target language.

In line with Barnwell, Bell (1991) proposes a translation process in an extremely simplified form. He explains that translating begun with the analysis of a source language text then synthesizes it into a target language text (p. 20). While Newmark (1988) says that in translating a text a translator may choose two kinds of approach. He may either start with translating sentence by sentence or read the whole text two or three times then feel the intention and find the difficult words and then start translating (p. 21).

Translation as a product is a written text in a target language as the end result of a translation process for a source-language text. The translator is mainly a “message conveyor.” Thus a translation may be understood as the process whereby a message which is expressed in a particular source language is linguistically transformed in order to be understood by readers of the target language. Actually, the translator is conveying the meaning expressed by the original writer so the end reader gets a translated text that is faithful to the source text in meaning.

2.3 Methods and Strategies of Translating
Both methods and strategies of translating seems have same meaning by which those are dealing with a translator’s way in translating his works. However, Newmark (1988) points out that both of them are different. While translating methods are applied for whole text, translation strategy are used for sentences and smaller units of language (p. 81).
Newmark goes on to refer to the following methods of translation:

1. **Word-for-word translation**: in which the SL (Source Language) word order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context.

2. **Literal translation**: in which the SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL (Target Language) equivalents, but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context.

3. **Faithful translation**: it attempts to produce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the TL grammatical structures.

4. **Semantic translation**: which differs from 'faithful translation' only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value of the SL text.

5. **Adaptation**: which is the first form of translation, and is used mainly for plays (comedies) and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture is converted to the TL culture and the text is rewritten.

6. **Free translation**: it produces the TL text without the style, form, or content of the original.

7. **Idiomatic translation**: it reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

8. **Communicative translation**: it attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership (1988: 45-47).

Besides, he also proposes the translating strategies as follows:

1. **Transference** (loan word, transcription) is the process of transferring a source language word to a target language text. For example: *(Source Language/SL):* He is eating hot dog. *(Target Language/TL):* Dia sedang makan hot dog.

2. **Naturalisation** is the process of transferring and adapting the source language word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology (word-forms) of the target language. For example: *(Source Language/SL):* United Nations is an international organization. *(Target Language/TL):* Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa adalah sebuah organisasi internasional.

3. **Cultural equivalent**: a source language word is translated by a target language cultural word. For example: *(Source Language/SL):* The family held thanksgiving for their new house. *(Target Language/TL):* Keluarga itu mengadakan syukuran untuk rumah baru mereka.

4. **Functional equivalent**: the process of translation by which requires the use of a culture-free word and sometimes adds a new specific term.

5. **Descriptive equivalent**: giving description for certain source language words. For example: *(Source Language/SL):* Fossil is protected by polyurethane foam (www.readersdigest.com, cited in Mandasari, 2007) *(Target Language/TL):* Fosil dilindungi oleh gabus sintesis yang sangat keras yang sering digunakan untuk menyekat rumah.

6. **Synonymy**: it is used when a precise equivalent word in the target language may or may not exist.

7. **Through-Translation**: the literal translation of common collocations, names of organizations, and so forth. Through-translations should be used only when they are already recognized terms. The most obvious examples of through-translation are the names of international organizations: *(Source Language/SL):* United Nations *(Target Language/TL):* Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa
8. Shifts or Transpositions: a translation procedure involving a change in the grammar from source language to target language. For example: *(Source Language/SL): The adventures of Sherlock Holmes (Mandasari, 2007) (Target Language/TL): Petualangan Sherlock Holmes.*

2.4 Reading Skill and Translation

“Reading is a process of constructing or developing meaning from printed text and it is primarily cognitive process” (Cooper, et al, 1988:3; Eskey, 1983:2. Cited in Rosmalina, 2004).

“Reading is a skill that comes through habit. That is why from early stages, the students should be shown that reading is important, interesting, and enjoyable. This effort is to enhance the students’ reading habit. In this way, reading will become a developmental behavior especially if it is gradually and habitually practiced” (Rosmalina, 2004).

Reynolds (1992: 52, cited in Rosmalina, 2004) claims “that the ability to read affects students success in school. The poor reading ability may be seen in many ways”. One parameter which may be used to measure the students’ reading ability is through the translating tasks.

“Translation is related to reading skill. Yet many English as second language students do not choose to read, even though reading is now recognized as an important source of input for second language acquisition” (Gee 1999: 3). This phenomenon is related to the students’ motivation in reading. The students need a will to read. When they want to read, by giving them some rewards or even punishment, they do so more often and with more effort. They become engaged in reading. In this case, translation plays its role. It can be used as “a bridge” to make the students to be used to read. By giving them a task to translate certain texts and to make the glossaries, day by day they will have a will to read, even though this is derived from the “force” from their teacher. In order to make students willing to do the translation task and to cultivate their reading habit, a teacher may motivate the students through reward or punishment and insist the importance of the translating task in increasing their reading habit.

III. Research Methods

3.1 Research Methods

This study employs qualitative study by using descriptive method. Sugiyono (2007: 7) puts forward that qualitative study just interprets the gained data. Meanwhile, the descriptive method tries to explain, analyze, and classify something through various techniques are survey, interview, questionnaire, and test.

In this method, the aims of the researcher are to interpret the meaning from the data gained. Descriptive method is appropriate for this study because the goal of this study is to describe and to interpret systematically, factually and accurately the fact and characteristics of the researched elements.

This study is a case study because the researcher tries to find out the translation strategy which are applied by the first grade students of SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Keluarga (YPK) Pematangsiantar in the translation of a recount text entitled The Myth of Malin Kundang, to reveal the translating strategy which is commonly used by them, and to know the students’ perception towards the translating tasks as an alternative task to help them enhance their reading habit and vocabulary.

In addition, the researcher does not aim to generalize that the case which happens in this context will be exactly the same to other contexts, for the nature of a case study is it can not be presumed to be representative of entire populations. That is to say that this
study is a case study because it is aimed to study a selected case in one place and it does not represent to all cases in other places.

3.2 Instruments of the Study

According to Creswell (cited in Insani, 2002:30), “qualitative data can be collected through document analysis or visual material”. Thus, in line with that statement, this study uses a text entitled Malin Kundang as the instrument to collect the data. The text is in English (as the source language) and has to be translated by the students into Indonesian (as the target language).

Besides, the researcher distributes the questionnaires in order to know the benefits of the translating tasks for the students, i.e. whether the translating may be applied to enhance the students’ reading habit and vocabulary. The questionnaires consist of 5 yes/no questions as follows:
1. Does the translation assignment that you have received help in increasing the number of your English vocabulary?
2. Did the translation assignment help improve your reading habit?
3. If you are given a task to translate, do you like to make glossary too?
4. Does the glossary make it easier for you to remember new words that you don't know the meaning of? The question number 1 to 3 is accompanied by the reason. In addition, the questionnaire is written in Indonesian (Bahasa) in order to make the students understand the aim of the question easily.

3.3 Data Collection

There are ten first grade students of SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Keluarga (YPK) Pematangsiantar who are the subject of this study. Therefore, in order to gain the data, the students were commanded to translate the Borobudur text. They used dictionaries to assist them in translating the text. They translated the text with no limitation in time, for this study does not aim to reveal the students’ speed in translating the text. The students were asked to answer the questionnaires as well. The data collection was held on June 2012 at SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Keluarga (YPK) Pematangsiantar.

3.4 Data Analysis

After the data was collected, the researcher then analyzes it to answer the research questions. The data is analyzed through the theory of translating strategies which is proposed by Peter Newmark (1988: 81-93). He argues that in translating a source text, a translator may employ certain strategies.

The researcher then elaborates the texts which have been translated by the students into sentences. These sentences are analyzed one by one in order to reveal the strategies of translating that are used by the students. As Newmark (1988: 81) says “that the translation strategy deal with the sentences, phrases, or words of the text”. Then, the researcher puts the discussion below the sentence.

The analysis for the other sentences, therefore, uses the same approach as in the above example. Meanwhile, to determine the translating strategy that is mostly applied by the students in translating the text, the researcher adopts the Multihajz's formula (cited in Muslimah, 2005). The formula is used to measure the percentage of the use of the each translating strategy. Multihajz’s, then, formulates the formula as follow:

\[
f \quad P = \frac{x}{n} \times 100\%
\]
P = the percentage of the use of the translating strategy  
f = the frequency of the use of the translating strategy  
n = the number of the translated sentences

Then, to answer the third research question, the researcher analyzes the data which is gained from the questionnaires.

3.5 Procedures of the Study

The researcher conducts some procedures in this study. These procedures are arranged in order to make the study run smoothly.

The procedures are:
1. Determine the problems that would be answered through this study.
2. Seek for the related theories. These theories, then, are used as the foundation of the study.
3. Decide the instruments to gain the data.
4. Conduct the research toward the first grade students at SMA YPK Pematangsiantar. It is aimed to collect the data.
5. Analyze the data through the theory of translation strategy which is proposed by Peter Newmark (1988) in order to know the translating strategies which are applied by the students.
6. Determine the translating strategy that is mostly used by the students through the Multihajz’s formula.
7. Analyze the questionnaire results in order to reveal the students’ perception towards the translating tasks as an alternative task to help them enhance their reading habit and vocabulary.
8. Discuss the findings to get some conclusions.
9. Provide suggestions for related further studies.

IV. Discussions

Based on the data, the researcher tries to elaborate the findings into three sections. Each section, then, represents the answer of one research question. This study tries to work out three research questions, therefore the section is also divided into three. As the review, this research aims to reveal the translating strategies that are used by the students in the translation of the recount text, the translating strategy that is mostly used by the students, and the students’ perception towards the translating tasks as an alternative task to help them enhance their reading habit and vocabulary.

The following explanation is the findings which are directly accompanied by the discussions. The findings are based on the ten target texts which are resulted through the translation process by the ten students.

4.1 The Translation Strategy that are Used by the Students in the Translation of the Recount Text

To see the findings more clearly and to answer the first research question, the researcher elaborates the text into some sentences. Then the certain words are categorized properly into the representative translating strategy which is based on the Newmark’s theory of translation strategy. The categorization, then, is accompanied by the discussion to give more clear explanation or reason behinds that categorization.
4.2 Findings

To deal with the last research question which tries to reveal the students’ perception towards the translating tasks as an alternative task to help them enhance their reading habit and vocabulary, the researcher distributes the questionnaires toward the ten students.

The questionnaire has five yes/no questions which three of them are accompanied by the reason. The description about the questionnaire can be seen in the table 1. In addition, the five questions in the questionnaire are written in easily.

| Table 1. The Description of the Questionnaire |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| No | The Question in the Questionaire | The Description |
|----|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1  | Apakah tugas penerjemahan yang selama ini kamu dapatkan membantu dalam menambah kosa kata bahasa inggris | The question number one in the questionnaire is aimed to know whether teh translating task may cultivate teh students vocabulary or not |
| 2  | Apakah kamu suka membaca jika tidak ada tugas penerjemahan? | This question is an “opening” question which will be followed up by the question number 3. |
| 3  | Apakah tugas penerjemahan membantu meningkatkan kebiasaan membacamu? | This question to reveal whther the translating task may help to increase the students’ reading habit or not. |
| 4  | Jika diberi tugas untuk menterjemahkan apakah kamu suka membuat glossay saja? | This question is an “opening” question for teh question no.5 |
| 5  | Apakah glossary itu lebih memudahkanmu mengingat kata-kata baru yang belum kamu artinya? | This question is to reveal whther the glossary assists teh studnets in boosting their vocabulary or not |

Then the result of the questionnaire is as shown in the table below:

| Table 2. The Result of the Questionaire |
|----------------------------------------|
| No of Students | No 1 | No 2 | No 3 | No 4 | No 5 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1              | YES  | YES  | NO   | NO   | YES  |
| 2              | YES  | NO   | YES  | NO   | NO   |
| 3              | YES  | NO   | YES  | YES  | YES  |
| 4              | YES  | YES  | YES  | YES  | YES  |
| 5              | YES  | YES  | YES  | NO   | YES  |
| 6              | YES  | NO   | YES  | YES  | YES  |
| 7              | YES  | NO   | YES  | YES  | YES  |
| 8              | YES  | NO   | YES  | YES  | YES  |
| 9              | YES  | NO   | YES  | NO   | YES  |
| 10             | YES  | NO   | YES  | YES  | YES  |

Based on the questionnaire result of the ten students above, it is revealed that the students’ perception towards the translating tasks which are given by their teacher is positive. The ten students perceive that the translating task help them in cultivating their vocabulary. The reason for this is they have to look in dictionary to deal with some new words that they have known yet the meaning of those words. Therefore, there are, at least, few new words that are taken into their mind. This finding is in accordance with the study that was conducted by some researchers (i.e. Wittrock, Marks and Doctorow, 1975; Anderson
and Freebody, 1981; and Perfetti, 1985). The researchers highlight the importance of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension (Luppescu and Day, 1993: 263-264).

In addition, the six students are used to making glossary in order to assist them listing and remembering the new words. Meanwhile, the rest students do not make glossary in the translating tasks. They just write down the meaning of the new words on the upper or the lower of those words. Although, somehow, these two strategies (i.e. either making glossary or writing down the meaning directly near the new words) are useful for the students in increasing their vocabulary. Jacobs and Dufon (1990) study the effectiveness of glosses in vocabulary learning while reading. They find a significant effect for the use of glosses in the target language (Luppescu and Day, 1993: 265).

Translation of texts and memorization of vocabulary are two of the characteristics of the Grammar Translation Method (Brown, 2001: 18). In relation to this study, the translating task is applied as one of the strategies to increase the students’ vocabulary.

From the questionnaire result, it is also revealed that not all of the ten students like reading any kinds of English text unless it is a task from their teacher. Only four of the ten students who like reading English texts, for instance reading English song lyrics, comics, and any kinds of informative texts which can increase their knowledge.

Therefore, nine of the ten students agree that the translating tasks help them in cultivating their reading habit. Since, they confess that they do not have a good reading habit, so the translating tasks are useful to motivate them to read, in this case, English texts. On the other side, only one student who admits that her reading habit is not influenced by the translating tasks, for either there is a translating task or not she always read. That is to say, because of her reading hobby, her reading habit is not impacted by the translating tasks.

Brown (2001) claims that translating task is one of the characteristics of the Grammar Translation Method. In addition, he also argues that the Grammar Translation Method gives more attention to make students gain reading ability in a foreign language (p. 18). Officially, reading ability is as equivalent as reading habit (reading frequency). As a study which conducted by Amalia (2008) reveals that there is a high relationship between the ranks of the students’ reading frequency and their reading ability. That is to say that the higher the students’ are reading frequency, the higher their reading ability. Amalia claims that the reading frequency helps to improve the students’ reading ability.

To sum up, the students’ perception towards the translating tasks which are given by their teacher is positive. They perceive that the tasks are helpful to enhance their reading habit and to increase their vocabulary.

V. Conclusion

1. In translating the recount text entitled Borobudur, especially in dealing with certain words, the students employ ten translation strategy. These strategies are taken from the Newmarks’ translation strategy (1988: 81-93). The strategies which are applied by the students in this study are the transference strategy, the naturalization strategy, the cultural equivalent strategy, the shift or transposition strategy, the modulation strategy, the recognized translation strategy, the compensation strategy, the expansion strategy, the couplets strategy, and the triplets strategy.

2. The cultural equivalent strategy is the one which is mostly used by the students in translating the text. This strategy is applied, especially, in translating the cultural words, this strategy is commonly found in translating popular fiction texts.

3. The students’ perception towards the translating tasks which are given by their teacher is that the translating tasks can help them enhance their reading habit and
increase their vocabulary. The reason behind this perception is because they admit that they even do not read English texts unless their teacher has them do so. In this case, it is obviously seen that the students agree that the translating task is an alternative task to make them read English texts. Although in the reality translating task is neglected by many educators, since it is included into one of the characteristics of the Grammar Translation method which is assumed only to focus on knowing grammar rules, remember vocabularies, and produce a good translation of target language.

4. Through the translating tasks, the students confess they are encouraged to read and to learn the vocabularies by using dictionary and making glossary. In conclusion, the translating tasks are still relevant to be applied by the teacher, since the students’ have positive perception towards that tasks; they perceive the tasks are useful in helping them cultivate their reading habit and vocabulary.

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