THINKING ALOUD PROTOCOL FOR SMART TRANSLATION

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Abstract:
A language is an important tool in communication. To produce a smooth relationship between countries that have different languages, the English language functions as Lingua Franca. To understand the information in English, a good understanding is needed. Being able to translate English texts is one of the basic forms of understanding itself. Unfortunately, numerous English language learners; from junior high schools to university levels, are still experiencing problems in this translation. This study aims to uncover the strategies of students in translating English texts into Indonesian by using the Thinking Aloud Protocol method. The subjects of this study were students in semester V (five) who had gone through Structure I to Structure IV subjects. This research was conducted in the scope of the University of Muhammadiyah Palu. From this research, the most widely used translation strategy is done by students as well as the prototype of the translation process to produce good translations.

Keywords: Thinking Aloud Protocol, Translation, Smart Translation.

INTRODUCTION

English is a lingua franca that is used by most countries in the world to communicate. In Indonesia, it becomes a compulsory subject to be learned in the non-English study program in the form of English for Specific Purposes to reach the understanding of English are based on each field of study. While in the English/English Education study program, the focus of learning is four skills, namely listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, writing skill. These four skills are then addressed to the comprehension of English.
Language comprehension, especially English, is closely related to the ability to translate, both from English to Bahasa or *vise versa*. Silversius (as cited in Supriyadi, 2012) states that comprehension is indicated by three, namely: (1) translating, (2) interpreting, and (3) extrapolating. Translating is the very basic part of comprehending a language. A good translation will lead people to good comprehension.

The translation course is one of the required subjects in the curriculum structure of the English Education study program in Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Universitas Muhammadiyah Palu. This subject is given to junior or the fifth-semester students with an expectation that the students in this semester can translate a text in Bahasa to English and from a text in English to Bahasa. This consideration is applied since they have passed all the subjects needed (Structure I to Structure IV) in the previous semester. However, it is vice versa. There are many translation errors found in the students’ work.

There is much research related to the errors made by students in translation. Such as the research conducted by (Dewi, 2012) about Error Made by Fifth Semester Students in Translating Indonesian into English Text, or research by (Agustina, 2016) entitled Error Analysis in Writing Recount Text, also (Mappewali, 2017) about Investigating Muhammadiyah University EFL Learners’ Grammar Error in Writing Descriptive Paragraphs. A similar study focus on making errors in translation was also done by Turmudi (2019) despite limited to investigate Indonesian-English abstracts. The results of this research show that, generally, there are some errors made by students such as; error in word order, word equivalence, failure in recognizing idioms, word omission, etc.

The following picture shows how the process of translation occurs.
The picture indicates that a good translating process results in an understandable translation. While an inappropriate translation process produces a translation product that cannot be understood by readers. This is fatal a case because a translation error leads to a misconception where the results of the translation are not exactly what the original text intended.

Junior students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Universitas Muhamamdiyah Palu posses a various level of translating skill. In the same class, there are good translation products and also 'hard to understand' translation products found. One of the examples of student's translation is shown next:

**Original Text:**

Before you read this chapter, think about what you, as a teacher, can gain from re-examining examples of classroom talk. Think back on interactions in your classrooms (either as a teacher or as a student) and recall a moment that made you uncomfortable or indicated some underlying tension. What do you think caused that discomfort and tension?

-Rhymes (2008)-

Translation products:

**Translation 1:**

Sebelum kamu membaca chapter ini, pikirkan tentang apa kamu, sebagai seorang guru, dapat datatkan dari menguji kembali contoh-contoh dari kelas.

**Translation 2:**

Sebelum kamu membaca bab ini, pikirkan tentang apa yang kamu, sebagai seorang guru, dapatkan dari menguji kembali contoh-contoh pembicaraan kelas. Pikirkan kembali interaksi-interaksi di kelasmu sendiri (baik sebagai guru atau sebagai siswa) dan ingat saat yang membuatmu tidak nyaman atau menunjukkan beberapa ketegangan yang mendasarinya. Menurutmu apa yang menyebabkan ketidaknyamanan dan ketegangan itu?

In the two translations above, there is a noticeable difference in the meaning obtained from the original text. In translation (1), the students in word order, word omission, and word equivalence. He translates ‘classroom talk’ into kelas berbicara (a talking class), does not translate the word ‘either’, and matches the word ‘back’ in the phrase 'think back’ as belakang (back as a place). This error causes the results of translation cannot be fully understood and there is zero comprehension or failure of understanding. While in translation (2), the student
can overcome translation problems that are usually created due to differences in the structure of Bahasa and English. As a result, the translation can be understood well. This situation leads researchers to the desire to know the translation process that occurs in the students’ minds. To detect the translation process, Thinking Aloud Protocol (TAP) is used.

TAP is a technique that directs the subject to verbally express all activities in his mind, in this case when translating a text. Tirkkonen-Condit (Khoshsaligheh, 2018) elaborates that the TAP technique helps raise the possibility of describing translation processes. Through this TAP application, the researchers hope to find strategies done or not carried out by students as also stated by Tirkkonen-Condit that the strategies revealed from TAP research can be used as models for effective translation. The researchers will select several students with good translation results and students with poor translation results. It is intended for the researchers to find the right translation strategy model to overcome translation errors in the future.

A translation error is a fatal mistake that leads readers to a wrong understanding. So through this study, researchers formulated the following research questions: What strategies are used by junior students of the English Education Study Program Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Muhammadiyah Palu in translating English texts?

This study aims at determining the strategies used by the junior students of the English Education Study Program Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Muhammadiyah Palu in translating English texts through Thinking Aloud Protocol. The output target to be obtained from this research is a prototype of the translation scheme towards Smart Translation.

**METHOD**

*Design*

This research engages descriptive-qualitative design. The design aims at analyzing and describing the students' strategies in translating English text into Bahasa by using Thinking Aloud Protocol (TAP). The method was applied to reveal good procedures produced by the sample.
This research results in a translation procedure (prototype) that considers will produce a translation product understandable by readers. Techniques of the data collection are performed using Thinking Aloud Protocol and a text.

**Participant**

This research took place in the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muhammadiyah University of Palu. The researchers used a language laboratory as an observatory. The sample of this research is relatively small. Based on (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008) argument, qualitative research should likely be based on samples that are predominantly small and nonrandom. This research involved the sixth-semester students of the English Department at FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Palu with the consideration they have passed advanced writing and structure IV as a prerequisite of translation and interpretation course. Ten students consisting of two males and eight females voluntarily took part in this research.

**Instrument and data**

The data was gathered using two instruments, namely TAP as a qualitative instrument and a text entitled “Odd Man Out” that adapted from the same title text provide by Beare (2019).

**Data Collecting Technique**

The researchers told the participant to do the test by following the instrument of the study which was a text to translate into English. The text was intentionally modified in some parts to decrease idioms used in almost every sentence of the original text. Using these instruments, students’ translation products and the recording of the process of translating were obtained as the main data of the research. The recordings are the source of translation strategies data, while the translation products are the source of good or bad translation data.

**Data Analysis Technique**

The data was analyzed by conducting several steps as follow:

- Checking the students’ translation product.
- Classifying the results of translation products as *smart* and *bad*.
- Noting the students' steps in resulting in bad translation results through recorded data.
- Noting the students' steps in resulting in smart translation results through recorded data.
- Comparing the results of the two groups.
- Formulating the strategies or procedures of the smart group.
- Elaborating the translation model strategies.
- Formulating a translation prototype.

Having these steps, the researchers then reach the result aimed, the strategies conducted by students, and the prototype of the translation process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Preliminary data were obtained through the lecturers namely the students’ grades in the Translation and Interpretation Course. These data were taken to be the basic information of the students' skills in translating. These students’ grades are listed in the following table.

Tabel 1. Students’ grades recapitulation

| No. | Range nilai | Jumlah Mahasiswa |
|-----|-------------|-----------------|
| 1   | Excellent   | 3               |
| 2   | Good        | 3               |
| 3   | Sufficient  | 6               |
| 4   | Poor        | 10              |

Total 22

From the raw data obtained (student scores during the exam before being accumulated with other grades) there were 3 students with excellent grades (> 85), 3 students with good grades (80 < grades <85), six students with sufficient grades (70 < grades < 80) and the remaining 10 students with poor grades (less than 70). This data is then used as a comparison with the results of translation tests given directly by researchers to students.

The first translation test was conducted to determine if the students' ability in translating English texts into Indonesian. Of the 22 students targeted, only 15 students are willing to participate with the following results:

Tabel 2. Results of the First Test

| No. | Initial Student of test-takers | Summary of errors |
|-----|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1.  | Dor                            | 1                 |
| 2.  | Feb                            | 2                 |
| 3.  | Nuri                           | 5                 |
| 4.  | Susr                           | 6                 |
Table 2 shows that of the 15 test participants, there were only five students who made less than or equals to 10 translation errors and there was a student who made more than 25 translation errors. Then the researchers separated 5 students who made less than or equals to 10 translation errors and 5 students who made more than 10 errors. The ten selected students were taken on a translation test using Thinking Aloud Protocol.

**Translating using Thinking Aloud Protocol**

The second test is translating tests using Thinking Aloud Protocol. The text used is a short English text consisting of 11 sentences. This test was not conducted in one time for the same class, but it was performed separately. This is to avoid noise interference on the participants’ test records so that there can only be one participant in the Lab room each time the test is carried out. Of the 10 samples that did the test, two samples’ test results could not be used because the records obtained did not comply with the TAP procedure. So that only eight samples were eligible to be used as the data to be investigated.

From observations through Thinking Aloud Protocol, the researchers obtained translation strategies used by the students that they resulted in good translation products. The strategies are as follows:

a. Using Dictionary

Sample (1)

| No. | Initial Student of test-takers | Summary of errors |
|-----|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 5.  | Din                            | 8                 |
| 6.  | Nur                            | 10                |
| 7.  | Niw                            | 12                |
| 8.  | Cic                            | 12                |
| 9.  | Ind                            | 13                |
| 10. | Lis                            | 16                |
| 11. | Ind                            | 18                |
| 12. | Mer                            | 19                |
| 13. | Sus                            | 21                |
| 14. | Ris                            | 24                |
| 15. | Ani                            | 26                |

... for over twenty years for a corporation.  

... selama lebih dari 20 tahun untuk sebuah perusahaan.

Opening the dictionary  
Finding the meaning of ‘corporation’  
Realizing that there is another word having the similar meaning (company)  
Correct
Sample (4)

| Sentence parts                        | Translation                     | Strategy of translation                        | result |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------|
| ... a documentary called Odd Man Out   | ... sebuah dokumentari yang disebut Orang Aneh | Reading repetitively Opening dictionary Finding the meaning of Odd Fitting the sentence context | Correct |

Sample (5)

| Sentence parts                                                                 | Translation                                       | Strategy of translation                  | result |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------|
| In any case, Bob had been working for over twenty years for a corporation.  | Dalam beberapa kasus, Bob bekerja selama 20 tahun di ladang hukum. | Inserting meaning of the word into the sentence Translating the word based on guesses | Wrong  |

From samples' recordings and translations, several samples (see Sample 1 and 4) found to open their dictionary to ascertain the meaning of a particular word, produce a translation that was mostly true or understandable. Whereas sample (5) that did not open the dictionary when she was in doubt about the meaning of a word ends with an incorrect translation result.

b. Reading Repeatedly

Sample (4)

| Sentence parts                        | Translation                                      | Strategy of the translation                  | result  |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------|
| ... could not be made on the spur of moment. | ... tidak bisa dibuat secara mendadak.          | • Inserting the meaning of words into the sentence  
• Adjusting the context  
• **Reading repeatedly**  
• Opening the dictionary to find the meaning of the phrase ‘spur of the moment’  
• Rereading and matching meanings in the context of the sentence | Correct |

Sample (5)

| Sentence parts                        | Translation                                      | Strategy of translation                  | result |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------|
| ...if he tried and learn again and again. | ...jika dia berusaha dan belajar lagi dan lagi. | • Inserting meaning of the words into a sentence  
• **Reading repeatedly** | Correct |

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| Sentence parts | Translation | Strategy of translation | result |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------|
| ... and earned money and saved while he had the opportunity, ... | ... dan menghasilkan uang serta menabung ketika ia memiliki kesempatan | • Inserting meaning of the words one by one into the sentence  
• Reading repeatedly  
• Matching meanings in the context of the sentence | Correct |

It can be seen that sample (4), (5) and sample (10) do this strategy in their translating process. The samples read the sentences in the source language over and over again to make sure they do not get the wrong understanding. By conducting this strategy, they can be minimalized errors.

c. Suspecting a phrase as an idiom

Sample (1)

| Sentence parts | Translation | Strategy of translation | result |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------|
| ... a decision couldn’t be made on the spur of moment. | ... keputusan tidak dapat dibuat secara mendadak atau tanpa persiapan. | • Suspecting a phrase as and idiom  
• Matching the meaning found in the context of the sentence | Correct |

Sample (10)

| Sentence parts | Translation | Strategy of the translation | result |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------|
| ... who decided to live out of his suitcase. | Yang memutuskan untuk tinggal di suatu tempat dengan barang bawaan terbatas | • Suspecting that ‘live out’ as an idiom but not including the word ‘suitcase’  
• Opening dictionary finding the meaning of ‘suitcase’  
• Inserting the meaning into a sentence  
• Reading the sentence repeatedly  
• Adjusting the meaning  
• Opening Idiom dictionary  
• Rereading the translated sentence  
• Adjusting the meaning to the context | Understandable |
Suspecting the existence of an idiom is successfully applied by sample (1) and sample (10). The suspicion helps a translator to understand the sentences she is translating deeply. It leads to a good translation result.

d. Reading a sentence previous and after the translated sentence to find coherence.

Sample (6)

| Sentence parts | Translation | Strategy of translation | result |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------|
| In any case, Bob had been working for over twenty years for a corporation. | Di sisi lain, Bob sudah bekerja selama 20 tahun sebagai badan hukum negara. | • Inserting meaning of the word in the sentence  
• Adjusting to the context  
• Reading repeatedly the translated sentences  
• Using a dictionary to find the meaning of the word 'corporation'  
• Leaving this sentence for a while and continuing to the next sentence to find meaning connectivity.  
• Adjusting to the context | Understandable |

Sample (8)

| Sentence parts | Translation | Strategy of translation | result |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------|
| I recently watched a documentary called ... | Saya akhir-akhir ini mengamati sebuah dokumen yaitu Odd Man Out | • Using the dictionary to find the meaning of the word 'recently'  
• Inserting the meaning found to the sentence  
• Hopping for the next sentence to find meaning connectivity  
• Adjusting to the context | Understandable |

When having difficulty translating a sentence, Sample (6) and (8) go back to the previous sentence or look at the sentence afterward to look for meaningful relationships. As a result, it is easier for the Sample to understand the meaning of the sentence or even improve the previous sentence and find understanding in the next sentence.

e. Proofreading the translated sentence

Sample (4)
... could not be made on the spur of moment.

... tidak bisa dibuat secara mendadak.

- Inserting meaning a word into the sentence
  Adjusting to the context
- Reading the sentence repeatedly
- Using a dictionary to find the meaning of the phrase "spur of moment"
- " Adjusting the meaning to the context and proofreading the translated sentence

Correct

| Sentence parts          | Translation                                      | Strategy of translation                                      | result |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| "I mean," he said to himself... | “Maksud saya,” dia mengatakkan untuk dirinya sendiri... | • Inserting meaning a word into the translated sentence  
  • proofreading the translated sentence | Correct |

Sample (6)

The tables show that sample (4) and (6) conduct this strategy. They read the sentence they have translated again after translating the whole sentence. By performing this strategy, they minimize sentences that are not in context.

f. Reading the whole text in the beginning and at the end of the translating process
   Reading the text that will be translated at the beginning of the translation process and reading the text that has been translated at the end of the translation process is one of the strategies that is rarely done by translators, in this case, the students. Sample (4) and (5) carry out this strategy.

A prototype of Smart Translating

In addition to finding a translation strategy, the researchers also develop a prototype of a translation process scheme. This prototype is expected to ease translators in translation or to translate lecturers in helping students to do the steps of translation.
As shown in picture 2, a good translation scheme is carried out as follows:

1. **Skimming**
   Skimming is the first step done in translating a text. This is the stage where a translator reads the entire text quickly to find the core/topic discussed in the text. Then after doing skimming for the whole text, skimming is also done at the sentence level as the translation process begins. This is prioritized so that the translator does not run away from the context of the conversation/topic of the text/sentence.

2. **Translating**
   The next step is to start the translation process. The translation is done starting from words, or phrases per phrase and then up to sentence by sentence. At this stage, the dictionary becomes important to be utilized by the translator to help him/her find words that cannot be understood or find a more appropriate equivalent for translating words, phrases, or sentences.

3. **Verifying I**
   After translating a sentence, the translator needs to verify the results of the translation. Rereading a translated sentence will help the translator realize mistakes. Errors that might occur are word order, word equivalent, failure to recognize idioms, word omission, etc.

4. **Solving Problem**
   Being aware of problems at the first verification stage is very helpful at the problem-solving stage. If the translator sees an error in word order, he can immediately rearrange the phrase by checking the sentence from which the translation came. If the translator is aware of the inaccuracy in word equivalent, the translator can open the dictionary to retrieve other equivalents that would be more appropriate for the sentence. In the first verification stage, the translator needs to ensure that there are no important words in the original text lost and reducing the meaning of the sentence. If so, then the verification is done not only on reading
the translated text, but also on the original sentence to overcome the error of words. What is important that the translators understand the errors he/she made, it will ease the problem to be solved.

5. Verifying II

After the whole translation process, the translator once again needs to verify the results of the translation. This second verification is done by re-reading every sentence that has been translated to ensure there is no synchronization between sentences and ensuring the coherence of each sentence or paragraph with each other.

6. Comparing

The final stage is the comparing stage. This is done mainly for short texts. Comparing the results of the translation with the original text helps the translator not to lose the spirit of the original author's writing. Thus every message that is tried to be conveyed in the native language can be delivered properly through the language of translation.

Discussion

A strategy is important to achieve a target. As has been stated by Zulfian, Sahril, & Omolu, (2018), the strategy has a vital role in accomplishing a particular target. Studies finding out translation strategies have been done by many researchers and each of them has their idea about what strategy is. According to Owji (2013) states, “In translation studies, many theorists have used the term translation strategies widely but with some considerable differences in the meaning and the perspective from which they look at it.” She also talks about translation strategy where a translator uses a strategy when s/he encounters a problem while translating a text. To see this statement, this study also gives the same understanding of strategy. When a translator, in this case, a student translator, faces a problem in translating and s(he) finds out the best way to solve the problem, then it is called a strategy. Thus, in this research, how students solved the problem they encountered is assumed as a strategy.

The first strategy conducted by students was using a dictionary strategy. This strategy is important to do considering so many students translating based only on their memory of word meaning. (Thawabteh, 2013) states that dictionary consultations are important for student translators and may be deemed as a virtuous circle in the course of translation, but excessive use of dictionaries unknowing what to look up is viewed as stumbling-block rather than merit - a vicious circle, as it were. Therefore, students need this strategy, but it should not be done
when it is necessary like when they want to make sure or to find other equivalent meanings of a word.

The second strategy is reading repeatedly. This is not similar to the strategy in reading, namely repeated reading. The goal of repeated reading is to let students practice until they reach fluency. But this strategy, on the other hand, if it is conducted more, will increase comprehension. This is also stated by (Cox, 2019), “repeated reading benefits students whose reading is accurate but choppy by helping them develop automaticity, or the ability to read quickly and accurately. With this automaticity comes increased comprehension and higher success in reading in general.” Although the main purpose of repeated reading is fluency, at some point, it may too increase the comprehension of a student on the sentence they read. For a student translator, this will help them to translate better after having a good comprehension. The third strategy, suspecting a phrase as an idiom should introduce to students’ translators. Translating words or sentences literally will lead us to some phrase that cannot be understood. Having this part, student translators should suspect this might be an idiom. According to (Waldo, 2017), a translator will know that s/he has found an idiom when the phrase s/he translating does not make sense. Conducting this strategy helps student translators to understand the text they are trying to translate.

Next is reading a sentence previous and after the translated sentence to find coherence. Sometimes, to understand a sentence in a text, we have to know the context. It means, we cannot only see the meaning of one sentence but also to see another sentence, especially before and after the translated sentence. (Hadla, 2015) describes that coherence can be found by understanding the links in the text in which can be established by repetition of a key term, synonyms, pronouns, transitional words, and sentence patterns. This means that students as a translator cannot only pay attention to the sentence they are translating, but they need to connect it with other sentences in the text to gain coherence.

Reading the translated sentence repeatedly is the fifth strategy used by student translators. This is more like self-proofreading conducted by student translators to not only to check whether their translation is acceptable or not but also to minimize mistakes in punctuations or misspelling, etc. (Vasylenko, 2018) states that misspellings and typos might seem minor and unimportant, but they can make a negative impression on the readers, who may subconsciously lose confidence in the content of the work. These kinds of mistakes will somehow disturb readers' joy and may decrease their understanding of a text. Thus, this strategy
should not only be conducted when a translator has finished translating the whole text, but it is better to do proofreading every after translating a sentence to minimize errors made.

The last strategy that was conducted by student translators is reading the whole text in the beginning and at the end of the translating process. Reading the whole text (source text) at the beginning of the translation process is intended to make the translator get the general theme of what is discussed in the text. It is stated that nobody can translate a text that he or she has not read (Wilson, 2016). Before in a study, (Macizo & Bajo, 2004) report that when participants of their study were reading in the source language and they received instruction for later translation, some properties of the target language (e.g. cognate status of the words), had effects. This means that reading the source text before the translating process is important and it will give much information needed by a translator and of course it will help them to improve their translation product. Meanwhile, reading the whole text (Target text) at the end of the translation process is to see if the whole text is acceptable pragmatically and the point in the source text can be delivered or not. In some translation process explained by many translators, this step is called a proofreading step.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

From the research on the translation process carried out using Thinking Aloud Protocol, six strategies were applied by the sample in translating. These strategies are: 1) opening a dictionary, 2) reading repeatedly, 3) suspecting a phrase is an idiom, 4) reading a sentence before and after to look for connectivity meaning, 5) reading repetitively translated sentence, and 6) reading the whole text at the beginning and the end of the translation process. These strategies help to solve problems in translating so that a good translation is obtained.

In addition to the translation strategy, a translating prototype, which a translator should do to produce Smart Translation, is obtained. A translation process should be carried out through six steps namely; Skimming, Translating, Verifying I, Problem Solving, Verifying II, Comparing. Ensuring that each of these steps has been taken will minimize frequent translation errors.

Suggestion

From the results of this study, suggestions are addressed to lecturers of Basic English
courses or other language courses. It is better if they introduce techniques to translate simple phrases or sentences earlier and introduce idiomatic features so that they are easily recognized when reading a text. This is important because many errors are found due to the weakness of translators who fail to recognize idioms in a sentence.

In addition, in the process of collecting data for this type of research, the researcher must ensure that the sample is not in a rush. Haste in working on the translation can reduce the quality of the translation. Sufficient time needs to be prepared by researchers and research samples so that the data obtained are truly maximum and can be the basis for making conclusions.

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BIO-PROFILE

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