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DEVELOPING STUDENTS' TRANSLATION COMPETENCE AT TERTIARY EDUCATION LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

Developing students' translation competence is the main concern in translation education context. Translation competence is not simply understood as linguistic competence, in which changing the language from a source text into the target text is considered as the core of translation activity. Indeed, translation competence consists of several interrelated sub competences. This paper is aimed at discussing students' transllation problems in translation and how to develop their translation competencein a tertiary education level context. This is a descriptive qualitative research which is aimed at understanding students' linguistic and cultural problems which reflect their translation competence. The data of this research consists of students' translation work and students' responses to the questionnaires and interviews. Students are asked to translate an English text into Indonesian. A set of questionnaires are also used to assess students' problems during translation and how they dealt with their translation problems. The results show that most of the students have problems with both languages and how to deal with cultural problems. In terms of linguistic level, students' problems varies from lecical problem, grammatical problems and syntactic problems. Furher, students' cultural problems in translation mainly related to difficulties in translating culture related terms from English into Indonesian. The cultural related terms found in the source language text which include food and drink references and relationship terms were not appropriately translated into Indonesian. The students' linguistic and extralinguistic problems show that they may understand that translation is merely a linguistic activity wihtout considering the importance of cultural understanding. These linguistic and extralinguisic problems also indicates that extralinguistic and linguistic problems often go together. These problems also reflect unsatisfying level of students' translation competence which, in turn needs to be addressed in translation curriculum so that students' translation competence willl develop well.
Keywords: *develop, student, translation, competence, education*

INTRODUCTION

In order to translate a source language text into the target language well, a translator needs a certain skill. This is often called 'translation competence'. It is assumed that when a translator

has better translation competence, s/he will be able to perform better translation work. The quality of translation work is often measured by the degree of equivalence between the source text and its translation in the target language.

Establishing equivalence in translation is not an easy matter since translation involves two languages which are different in terms of their linguistic features as well the cultural and social context in where the languages are used. Therefore, a translator's main challenge in translating a text is how to overcome these linguistic and extra-linguistic problems. In translating the English text into Indonesian, students faced problems. These problems generally involved two main types of problems. The first is the problems that relate to the language, that is linguistic problems. Secondly, the translation problem may relate to non-language matters, that is extra-linguistic problems.

The following discussion is about students' problems in translation and includes both linguistic and extra linguistic problems. The discussion is focused on identifying some of the possible causes of these problems in their translation work. It is believed that an understanding of why the students have problems in translating a text will provide a useful way to explain their translation competence. Students' linguistic and extra linguistic problems indicate the level of their translation competence and how they might learn how to translate. Therefore, understanding students' translation problems will be a initial step to understand what they need in order to develop their translation competence.

Linguistic Problems in Translation

The following section discusses some examples of students' linguistic problems in translation. Based on the translation work done by the students, their linguistic problems can be grouped into morphological, syntactic and semantic problems. Morphological problems mainly deal with the students' problems in using of the right word forms in the target language. Syntactic problems relate to students' problems with word order in the sentence of the target language as well as problems in sentence structure. Meanwhile semantic problems relate to the students' problems in identifying the appropriate meaning of the source language terms.

Morphological Problems

The following section discusses some example of the morphological problems the students had in their translation. The morphological problems found in the texts relate to translation of word classes across languages and the grammatical features associated with word class

choice in the target language. This section will examine the sorts of problems the students' have in finding an appropriate word form in the target language.

One of morphological problems in the data relates to inappropriate word formation in the target language. The data show that the students produce inappropriate word formations by misusing of Indonesian affixes in their translation of English words. Students may produce words using affixes that result in words that are not usual in standard Indonesia. Students' problem in misusing affixes in the target language can be found in a number of the texts.

Example 1
ST: They, in turn, have adapted to Australia's **tolerant**, informal and broadly egalitarian society.
TT: Mereka pada telah beradaptasi terhadap **ketoleransian** Australia, ramah tamah, dan masyarakat yang sederajat. (Part 1 unit 6) (6 of 28 students also used *ketoleransian*).

Among the 27 students, 6 have problems relating to inappropriate word formation in Indonesian. In the example above, the word 'tolerant' in the source language is an adjective that modifies (Australian) society. In Indonesian there are two words that are connected with the English 'toleran': *toleran* and *toleransi*. In term of word classes, *toleran* is an adjective meanwhile *toleransi* is a noun. In this example, a noun form is used to translate an adjective. In addition, the word 'tolerant' is translated as *ketoleransian*. In Indonesian, the word *toleransi* is not commonly used together with the affixes *ke-an*, and this is not a standard word form.

In above example, it seems that the students have two problems. Firstly, they have translated an adjective into noun. Secondly, the noun in the target language is poorly formed.

The following example shows students' problems resulting from inappropriate use of reduplication. In Indonesian reduplication, which in writing involves repeating a word with a hyphen separating the two words, is a grammatical process that is used for a number of purposes. One of them is to change a single noun into a plural noun, for example *buku* (a book/singular) becomes *buku-buku* (some books/plural). There are some limitations on this process, and reduplication cannot be applied to all Indonesian words.

In the following example, the student uses a reduplication which is inappropriate in the target language.

Example 2
ST: They, in turn, have adapted to Australia's **tolerant**, informal and broadly egalitarian society.

TT: Pada gilirannya, mereka telah disesuaikan dengan **toleransi-toleransi**, informalitas dan secara garis besar egalitarian masyarakat Australia.

In the example 2 above, the student has translated the word 'tolerant' as *toleransi-toleransi*. This is a reduplicated noun which is used to translate an adjective. The word of *toleransi-toleransi* does not exist in Indonesian because it is not generally accepted and used. In the example above, the student appears to have problems in identifying the word class in the source language. This problem leads to an inappropriate translation of the word into Indonesian and the student chose a word that does not exist in the target language. This translation also suggests that the student does not have a good knowledge about Indonesian word formation in general.

Semantic Problems

The following examples show the students' problems dealing with the appropriateness of word choices in their translations from English into Indonesian. This kind of problemsbelong to semantic problems.

Example 3
ST: ...Australian live mainly in **country areas**, the Australian outback or the bush.
TT: ...sebagian besar orang Austalia tinggal di **perkotaan**, pedalaman Australia atau di daerah semak-semak.

In example 3some students translated 'country areas' as *perkotaan, which means* 'city areas'. It is surprising that the students have difficulty in understanding the word 'country', since it is a common and widely used word. This problem may show that the students may not have comprehended the text adequately or may not have been careful in their reading of the text. It seems that they did not consult a dictionary or other resources in carrying out their translation. The example shows that the students use words with the opposite meaning to the word in the source text in their translation.

Another problem related to students' word choice is that sometimes they translate a source language word with an Indonesian word which has no relation in meaning. Students' semantic problems in using words which are different or unrelated in meaning from the words of the source language text can be found in the following examples:

Example 4
ST: Homesick **Australian expatriates** sometimes hanker for Australian food such as...
TT: **Orang-orang yang sudah tidak menjadi warga Negara Australia** terkadang rindu

pada makanan Australia seperti...

In the example above, most of the students have translated 'Australian expatriates' into *orang-orang yang sudahtidakmenjadiwarganegara Australia* (people who no longer hold Australian citizenship). This translation has a different meaning from the source language. In the source text, 'Australian expatriates' means Australian people who are not living in Australia but does not refer to their Australian citizenship. In the target language, this translation refers to people who are no longer Australian citizens. This information in the target language is therefore different from the meaning in the source language.

Syntactic Problems

Another problem found in the students' translations of the English text into Indonesian is syntactic problems. A syntactic problem is a problem related to the sentence structure or to grammatical relations in the Indonesian text.A common syntactic problems in students' translations to using an inappropriate word order in Indonesian to translate the English phrases. An example of students' problem with the word order can be found in the following example:

Example 5
ST: The most watched sports in Australia include **Australian Rules football…**
TT: Olah raga yang paling banyak ditonton di Australia termasuk **Australian Rules sepak bola**…(part 7, unit 3).

In the example 5, the students have translated 'Australian Rules football' as *Australian rules sepak bola*. This word order is unacceptable in Indonesian, since the Indonesian word order is that the constituent that modifies the noun is located after the noun itself. Therefore the phrase could have been translated into *sepak bola Australian rules* in accordance with normal Indonesian grammar. One issue here may be that the students have not understood the reference 'Australian rules football' is a specific cultural reference that may not be well known to the translator. Also, the translator has not translated 'Australian rules' and this may also suggest a problem of understanding. These problems of understanding may have made it difficult for her/him to work out how to translate the term. This shows that the students may have problems in analysing sentence structure and reproducing it in the target language. It also suggests that the students have made a word-to-word translation that does not consider sense groups. It also seems to indicate that the students have not checked their translations for grammatical accuracy in the target language.

The problem with the word order shown in the examples above also indicate that students have used a word-by-word approach to translation, since the students do not treat the words as grouped but rather translates each word as it occurs in the text. It therefore seems that the students did not pay attention to the sentence structure and its relationship to meaning.

Extra Linguistic Problems in Translation

The following examples show students' extra linguistic problems in translation. Extra linguistic problems related to the students' problems in translating culturally bound terms in the source language. The examples of the translation of culturally bound terms discussed in this section food references and relationship terms.

The following example discusses extra linguistic problems the students face in their translation when dealing with food references. In the example 6, the students encounter extra linguistic problems dealing with the translation of another food related idea, green vegetables.

Example 6

ST: In addition,…for exotic foods, including **Asian greens**, nashi pear,…

TT1: Selain itu…untuk makanan eksotis, termasuk **Asian greens**, pirnashi,…(three students)

TT2: Selain itu,…untuk makanan eksotis, termasuk **hijau Asia**, pirnashi,…(four students)

In example above, the source text lists some exotic foods especially fruits and vegetables commonly found in Australia which are called Asian greens. In the Australian context Asian greens refer to green leafy vegetables that originate from Asia such as *gailan* (Chinese broccoli), *gai chow*, *bokchoi* and *kangkong*. In the example above, the students have translated 'Asian greens' in to some different variations. In the first version of the translation, the students have left the words 'Asian greens' untranslated. This translation shows an avoidance strategy used by the students dealing with unfamiliar words. This translation also suggests that the students did not do any mediation for the Indonesian readers. The lack of a translation or other mediating work seems to suggest that the students were not able to solve the problem of translating this cultural reference.

In the second version, the students have translated 'Asian greens' as *hijauasia* (Asia green), in which *greens* is translated as *hijau* (the colour green) and Asian as *Asia*. It seems that the students have a lexical problem in interpreting this reference and they do not realize that greens in this case means green vegetables and is not simply a reference to the colour

green. This shows a literal translation of 'green' as 'colour green' ignoring the morphology that shows the word is a plural noun. In an Indonesian context, *hijau Asia* does not make sense therefore this translation does not give any information to Indonesian readers about any types of food or vegetables commonly sold in Australia. This translation also shows that the students may not consider the context of the text which relates to food in Australia.

The above translations show that the students may have both linguistic and extra linguistic problems in translating cultural references. Their linguistic problems lead them to have extra linguistic problems. They appear to have encountered linguistic problems dealing with the word form 'greens'. Some students were unable to identify this word as a noun, although in fact it has 's' at the end of the word that shows it is a noun because because they have not interpret the function of the word in the source text, they translate it as *hijau* (the colour green). The students also did not use the context provided in the text to help them in dealing with these words as the text clearly mentions 'exotic foods', which indicates that 'Asian greens' belongs to one of these exotic foods

The following example discusses another extra linguistic problem the students have in translating the relationship term 'mate'.

Example 7
ST: They are also seen as people who believe in the principle of giving people a fair go and standing up for their **mates**, the disadvantaged and the underdog.
TT1:   Mereka juga terlihat sebagai orang yang memiliki keyakinan pada prinsip memberi yang adil untuk menciptakan **teman**, tidak ada yang dirugikan atau diunggulkan
TT2:   Mereka juga dianggap sebagai orang yang percaya pada prinsip memberi orang keadilan dan berdiri untuk **pasangan** mereka yang kurang beruntung dan tertindas. (nine students)

As shown in the example above, the source text mentions the Australia relationship term of 'mate' which is usually used to mean 'friend'. The students have translated mate into two different ways in Indonesian. In the first version, the students translated 'mate, as *teman* (friend) and in the second version it is translated as *pasangan* (spouse).

In the first version of the translation, the students translated 'mate' as *teman* (friend). This translation shows a good attempt that the students made to translate 'mate' into Indonesian. Translating 'mate' as *teman* (friend) captures the idea of the relationship although the concepts of 'mate' and 'friend' are slightly different in Australian English and friend does not simply mean the same as 'mate', although both words are close synonyms. Overall, students' translation of 'mate' as 'friend' may be the best attempt they can do in

dealing with this term.

In the second version of the translation, the students translated 'mate' as *pasangan* (spouse). This translation captures the idea of 'mate' as a biological reference as it seems to refer to the idea of 'mates' as a breeding partner of animals, which is then applied to people. This is a literal translation of 'mate' which makes sense in context when translated as '*pasangan*', but does not reflect the Australian English meaning.

The discussion about 'mate' above suggest that basically the students have identified a relationship meaning reflected by the word 'mate', however some of them have taken a more general meaning of 'mate' as *pasangan* (spouse). Some of them have translated the term as a literal, standard language one rather than as a cultural reference therefore the meaning of 'mate' is not fully conveyed in the target language as only partial of the sense of 'mate' captured in students' translation.

How to Develop Students' Translation Competence
The discussion about students' both linguistic and extralinguistic above shows that students' translation competence have not been developed well. One of the possible reasons is that the teaching of translation at tertiary education level does not address translation as a complex activity which consists of some interrelated sub competences. Translation is still considered as a merely language activity as reflected in students' answer to the questionnaires and in the interviews.

This fact draws an awareness on how students' translation competence can be develop well so that the students have all the skills the need to translate. In order to develop students translation competence to its best level the following things should be addressed carefully.

1. Understanding the nature of translation
   Translation should not be understood as merely a linguistic activity. It is important to understand that translation is a complex cognitive activities that involved some interrelated aspects to consider before, during and after the process of the translation.
2. Understanding the elements of translation competence
   As translation is not merely related to linguistic matter, language or linguistic competence is only one elements of translation competence as a whole. Thereore translation competence should be understood as consists of:
   - Linguistic competence'
   - Extra linguistic competence

- Instrumental competence
- Transfer competence
- Strategic competence
- Psychophysiological competence.

3. Empowering both students declarative and procedural knowledge

Developing students' translation competence needs to be done equally in terms of developing students declarative and procedural knowledge. Students' declarative knowledge relates to their understanding of the notion of translation and other translation theories.

4. Translation teaching should be designed in order to meet students' need to in developing their translation competence.

Translation teaching at the tertiary education level, first should identify what the problems the students have and what they need in order to solve their problem as the first way to develop their translation competence. A teaching curriculum, therefore should be aimed at developing all the competencies need by the students in order to translate appropriately.

CONCLUSION

Students' translation problems suggest that they do not have the level of translation competence they need to translate well. These problems show that the students rely on their own knowledge to solve the problems in their translation and that they do not have 'cultural solition' in translating cultural bound terms in their translation appropriately.

Further, students translation problems suggests how they learn and develop their translation competence. Related to this matter, the process of translation teaching and learning in education context plays an important role to provide students with good translation competence. Translation competence should be understood as a set of skills related to language and non-language matters in order to perform a translation work well.

Translation competence includes some interrelated sub-competences, they are: linguistic competence, extralinguistic competence, instrumental competence, psychophisiological competence and strategic competence. Translation teaching at tertiary education leveltherefore should be done in such a way to meets students' needs related to their language and non-language skills development. Attention is also needed in relation to students' translation competence, factors influencing these competences, as well as the effort

to develop translation teaching material and design needed to increase students' translation competence.

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