EFL Students’ Translation Strategy of Narrative Text of English Language Education Study Program

Lina Anisah*
Universitas Sembilanbelas November Kolaka
Corresponding Author’s Email: lina.anisah@usn.ac.id

La Ode Muhammad Idrus Hamid Basri
Universitas Sembilanbelas November Kolaka
Email: idruslaode.usn@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the translation strategies employed by 5th semester students of the English Language Study Program at Sembilanbelas November Kolaka University when translating narrative texts. The authors sought to understand the students' approaches to translating these texts, as well as identify the errors they made throughout the process. By doing so, the authors hoped to provide valuable insights to students regarding the most effective translation strategies and assist them in recognizing and correcting their translation errors. A qualitative research design was utilized to examine the translation strategies of narrative texts. Data collection involved a translation test taken by 30 students, which served as the foundation for the authors' analysis. Based on the findings, the authors concluded that the students mainly implemented three translation strategies to translate narrative texts. The first strategy was literal translation which was used 84% of the time. Literal translation strategy means that the translators translate texts as is. The second strategy was linguistic amplification. It was used 2.41% of the time. Linguistic amplification is a translation strategy where translators add more details into the TL. The third strategy that was used was generalization at 2.29%. Using this strategy means that the translators decide to use the general term of a word instead of translating it specifically based on the SL. The authors also found out that the most common errors that the students made while translating the texts they were given was incorrect word errors. In other words, the students incorrectly translated the words from the SL to the TL which may cause confusion for the readers. By doing this research it is expected become an insight about language teaching especially on the translation related to translation strategi that used to translate. The appropriate implementation of translation method in translating process will produce accurate translation. The findings of this study underscore the importance of providing targeted instruction on translation strategies for EFL students. By doing so, educators can help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary to produce high-quality translations that effectively convey the meaning and nuances of the source text.

Keywords: EFL Students, Strategy, Translation, Narrative Text
INTRODUCTION
Translation is a technique for conveying ideas, meanings, or messages from one language to another (Baker, 2011). Translation is the process of converting a source text's meaning into a target text and changing the source language's form into the target language, from one language to another (Abdel, 2020). Furthermore, translation is the process of converting a message from a source language to a target language with the goal of clarifying finding meaning in the process and solving the equivalency problem (Fernandez, 2018). The field of translation tracks the development of each source language's and destination language's culture and linguistics in order to provide translations that are accurate, understandable, and natural-sounding or messages of the translation (Laviosa, 2014). Translation is not only the practice of transferring ideas or works from one language to another; it is, in fact, the beginning of the creative process. Translation enables students to make fundamental links between the source and destination languages (Yue et al, 2019). In short, it assists pupils in comprehending material from one language to another. Translating is not a simple task. According to Zanettin (2016), there are several criteria that must be met in order to produce a successful translation, including accuracy, acceptability, and readability.

There are several components of translation that are critical to understand. The message, the audience, the source language, and the target language are only a few of them. The message is in reference to the text's subject. This implies that a competent translation should be better knowledgeable about the subject of the text. The term "audience" refers to the readers' intended audience and their educational level. The terms "source language" and "target language" relate to the context in which the translation occurs or is received. Translator becomes a concepts between two different languages by use of a bridge and rules. Translation is a case in point narrative texts. Narrative text is one of the genres that says the plot. Most students love stories, particularly narrative texts. They will find all kinds of narrative texts that are fascinating to read, such as mysteries, fictions, romances, suspense, tale tales, etc. According to Cameron and Dempsey (2019), narrative text is a text that contains stories to inform, entertain, and amuse the readers. It is organized around the linear evolution of events and centers on a human or a hero. It is typically customized or individualized to say about activities specific to the person or individuals involved. Each text is translated at a distinct level of difficulty. Narrative text is one of the most challenging types of text to translate. A narrative text is a piece of writing that seeks to entertain readers through its stories. Sometimes it's tough to translate narrative text to another language because the message of the original text may not be conveyed precisely the same as the original writer intended it to be.

Consequently, the translator must exercise caution while conveying the text's meaning. When translating this material, the translator should focus on equivalence of meaning, conveying the message, and making the translation understandable to the intended audience (Venuti, 2016). Therefore, translators must know which translation strategy to implement while translating a narrative text. Strategy of When a source language text is converted into a target language, the translator uses this process to offer solutions to problems that a person is experiencing. To do this, the translator must select the best and most relevant approach (House, 2014). This research aimed to find out the translation strategies that 5th semester students of English Language Study Program of Sembilanbelas November Kolaka University applied to translate narrative texts. The reason behind this decision was because The study's objective was to learn the pupils' methods. in translating narrative texts, as well as their errors when doing so. That way, the authors might also give some insights to the students about which translation strategy that they were supposed to use, as well as to help them to spot translation errors that they made.

According to House (2014), a translator's strategy is a method they use to offer solutions to an issue they are facing, and they must select the best and most appropriate strategy possible.
A translator must broaden their understanding of the subject of translation in order to produce work of the highest caliber. Without knowing the context, it can be difficult to translate certain texts accurately. For the purpose of finding the equivalent word in the target language while translating from a foreign culture from another country, a translator must be familiar with the non-verbal language utilized in that civilization. House (2014) explained that A translator's strategy is the method they employ to offer solutions to a challenge they are facing, and they must select the best and most suitable technique. It's crucial for translators to expand their understanding of translating in order to generate translations of the highest quality. 


Common Errors in Translation

Errors are common in everything we do, including in translating texts. Knowing the errors that we make is essential in becoming better at something, therefore we must know where our errors are. According to Vilar et al (2006), there are five categories of translation errors, they are 1). missing word, 2). word order, Battat (2004) stated in languages of relatively restricted word order, the relationship between the components of the sentence (words) relies about each word in the sentence. 3) incorrect words. Matsuzaki, Fujita, Todo and Arai (2015), incorrect words are divided into three categories, namely wrong lexical choice, disambiguation, extra words, incorrect idiom translations and incorrect forms.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the translation strategies utilized by 5th semester students of the English Language Study Program at Sembilanbelas November Kolaka University when translating narrative texts. The authors' motivation for conducting this study was to identify both the students' effective strategies and their common mistakes in translation. By doing so, the authors aim to provide valuable insights for students regarding the most effective translation strategies and to help them recognize and correct common errors.

METHOD

Creswell (2014) states that research designs are the specific procedures involved in the research process: data collection, data analysis, and report writing. In a similar tone, Allen and Bernofsky (2013) said the research design is the authors’ plan of how to process to gain an understanding of some group or some phenomenon in the natural setting. This research implemented qualitative design to carry out the research to find out the translation strategies of narrative texts that are implemented by the 5th semester students of English Language Study Program of Sembilanbelas November Kolaka University. Cook-Sather (2010) mentions that Instead of using numerical or statistical data, descriptive qualitative research uses verbal data. The reason the authors picked this approach is that it will produce results that are not numerical or statistical, which are necessary for this research. Kiraly (2014) added that descriptive research is the research which tries to solve the existing problem based on data including displaying data, analyzing, and making an interpretation. Descriptive research is scientific research that describes event, phenomena, and fact systematically dealing with certain area or population.

The research was conducted in Sembilanbelas November Kolaka University which is in Jl. Pemuda no. 339, Tahoa, Kabupaten Kolaka, Southeast Sulawesi. The total of the subjects was 30. They were chosen because they are in the 5th semester already and were assumed to have enough knowledge of English, especially English texts translations. This meant that the authors chooses the subjects by using purposive sampling. The authors used two instruments to
collect data in this research. The authors used translation test to find out the translation strategies that the students use in translating narrative text. Other than that, the test also aimed to find out the errors that made during the translation of the text. The second one is which may come in form of books, archives, documents, written numbers, and pictures that are used to support research that is being conducted by authors. The documentation that was done in this research was by collecting the result of the students’ translation tests. It was done by following several steps, such as (a) determining the subjects and setting of the research; (b) informing the aim of the translation test; (c) explaining the rules of the test; (d) administering the translation test; (e) collecting the result of the students’ translations.

The data of the translation test was analysed by implementing steps provided by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). The steps are reducing the data into two parts: relevant and irrelevant. The second is by displaying the data, and then the last is by concluding the findings of the data. The authors chose to implement this method because it was considered simpler while also still being effective to analyse the translation test of the students.

1. Data Reduction
   
   Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written field notes or transcription. It basically means that all of the data that were obtained are reduced to make sure that the final result of the data will be relevant to the aims of the research. There are several steps that the authors will take in this phase, such as (a) the authors reduced the data by focusing only on the relevant ideas, namely the translation techniques and errors; and (b) the authors sorted the data in two categories, namely the translation techniques and errors. By the end of this step, it is hoped that the final data is ready to be displayed. The authors also coded the data based on two categories, namely strategies of translation, and translation errors.

2. Data Display

3. Drawing Conclusion/Verification

   In addition, the authors also wanted to find out the usage frequency of the translation strategies that was used by the students. There were several steps that the authors took to do this which can be seen as follows.

   1. The authors coded each sentence based on the strategies that were used.
   2. The authors counted how many times each strategy occurred and tabulated the result. The authors did this for all the students.
   3. The authors summed up how many times each strategy occurred as a whole. The authors also summed up the total of sentences that were present.
   4. The authors then used the following formula to find out the usage frequency percentage of each type of strategy.

      \[ P = \frac{NS}{TS} \times 100 \]

   Note:
   
   \[ P = \text{Percentage} \]
   \[ NS = \text{Number of strategy} \]
   \[ TS = \text{Total sentences} \]
   
   5. The authors made a chart to depict the frequency of the strategies. This was done to help readers to find out the occurrences of each type of strategy easier.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings 1: Translation Strategies

The authors found out that the students implemented several strategies, namely literal translation, generalization, and linguistic amplification. The table below shows the
frequency of the usage of the translation strategies. The most used translation strategy was literal translation at 84%. The second most used strategy was linguistic amplification at 2.41%. Finally, the least used strategy was generalization at 2.29%. The frequency can be seen on the figure below.

Figure 1. Frequency of Translation Strategy Usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of completeness</th>
<th>Literal translation</th>
<th>Generalization</th>
<th>Linguistic amplification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>2.29%</td>
<td>2.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Literal Translation**

In this method, the grammatical structures of the source language are converted to their closest target language equivalents, which means that instead of employing lexical words, which is the same as word for word translation, the words are translated singly. An experienced translator will normally begin by translating the source language text, such as by using the "word for word" technique, and will later modify it according the grammatical structures of the target language. The following examples are several examples of the usage of literal translation strategy.

**AHA/P9/T1**

SL: Yes. I agree with you.
TL: Ya. Saya setuju denganmu.

On the example above, AHA used literal translation to translate “Yes. I agree with you.” into “Ya. Saya setuju denganmu”. The TL is simple yet understandable. The student was able to translate the sentence from the source language to the target language efficiently and accurately.

**RAA/P5/T1**

SL: Ok… I’ll go with you.
TL: Ok… Aku akan pergi dengannya.

The student above, RAA, also used literal translation to translate “Ok… I’ll go with you” into “Ok… Aku akan pergi dengannya”. This is an accurate example of literal translation strategy as RAA simply translated the words in its literal meaning in which the writer intended.

**Generalization**

In this method, generalization occurs when a word or phrase in the source text is translated into a broader and more general term in the target text. In other words, specific words from SL are translated into more general terms of the TL.

**RAA/P6/S13/T9**

SL: Soon, they pulled the boat to the coast and loaded the monkey’s luggage and food on the boat.
TL: Segera, mereka mendorong kapal ke pantai dan mengangkat bagasi monyet dan makanan di atas kapal.

On the example above, RAA translated “coast” into “pantai (beach)” which means that RAA generalized “coast” as “pantai (beach)” because “coast” is a part of “pantai (beach)”.

AYA translated “new green land (daratan hijau baru)” into “lingkungan baru (new environment)” which means that AYA perceived green land as new environment which was justifiable because a green land is also an environment.

**Linguistic Amplification**

Linguistic amplification had a role especially the addition of information. The phenomena occurred when the detail information did not contain in the SL and the translator must be sensitive by putting the necessary information in TL. Linguistic amplification is used to introduce details that are not formulated in the SL.

**AYA/P1/S3/T11**

SL: He was lazy and greedy.

TL: Dia sangat malas dan serakah.

On the example above, AYA added “sangat (very)” to the TL to amplify the sentence. In other words, AYA wanted to emphasize that the monkey was lazy and greedy, therefore he added the word “very” before the adjectives.

**AHA/P6/S13/T11**

SL: …they pulled the boat to the coast and loaded the monkey’s luggage and food on the boat.

TL: … mereka mendorong perahu di pesisir dan menyimpan barang-barang dan makanan di tempat penyimpanan di atas perahu.

AHA also used linguistic amplification on the excerpt above. The source text only stated that the luggage and food were loaded on the boat whereas the target text amplified the sentence by adding more details about where the luggage and food were loaded on the boat.

**AHA/P1/S5/T11**

SL: Even though he had food, he still did it and kept the stolen food in a secret place so nobody could see it.

TL: Meskipun dia mempunyai makanan, dia tetap melakukan dan tetap mencuri dan menyembunyikan makanannya di tempat tersembunyi.

The example above shows that AHA added “…dan tetap mencuri…(... and keeps stealing…)” on the TL even though it did not exist on the SL text. AHA probably did this to emphasize that the monkey loved to steal foods from other animals in the island it lived in.

**Findings 2: Translation Errors**

The authors analysed the students’ translation tests to find out their errors in translating narrative text. After analyzing the students’ translation tests, the authors found out that the students’ errors were only incorrect words. This type of error occurs when the translator incorrectly translates words from SL to TL. Some words might have different meanings which depends on the context. For example, the word “like” in English can mean having the same characteristics with something, or simply liking something. If translators translate words incorrectly, it will cause misunderstanding on readers. Translators need to translate the correct translation of each words from the SL to avoid confusion between readers which may cause further problems such as readers misinterpreting the original message of the SL that the original writer intended. The researcher read the students’ translation tests to find out three categories of error, namely missing words, wrong word order, and incorrect words. However, the only type of error that the students made was incorrect words which was made 11.8% of the time. It meant
that the students translated several words from the SL to the TL incorrectly. The frequency can be seen on the figure below.

![Figure 2 Frequency of Translation Errors Occurrence](image)

**Incorrect words**
This type of error occurs when the translator incorrectly translates words from SL to TL. This may confusion because the readers may not understand the text. The following example depict this kind of error.

**AYA/P1/S6/E3**
SL: I must **add** a little more so that I have a lot of food to eat
TL: *Aku harus menyimpan* setidaknya sedikit makanan agar aku tetap mempunyai makanan untuk dimakan.
AYA translated “add” into “menyimpan (saving)”. AYA failed to inform readers that the monkey had the intention to add more food by stealing other animals’ foods. The correct translation of “add” should be “menambah”.

**AYA/P2/S7/E3**
SL: The food in the **island**...
TL: *Makanan yang ia punyai di tanah…*
On the error example above, AYA made a huge mistake of translation which made the result of the translation. Readers might be confused and misunderstood after reading it. AYA translated “island” into “tanah (soil)” which made the TL sounds absurd and unclear. AYA failed to tell the readers that the foods were getting scarcer on the island where the monkey lived. This may cause confusion among readers.

**AYA/P6/S13/E3**
SL: Soon, they **pulled** the boat to the coast and loaded the monkey’s **luggage** and food on the boat.
TL: *Kemudian, mereka berlayar bersama-sama memakai perahu dengan dayung ke arah pantai dan mengisi bagasi makanan ke dalam perahu.*
The TL translation above was totally inaccurate. In the TL, AYA completely misinformed the readers that the monkey and the bird sailed to the sea. This was clearly wrong because the SL simply meant that the monkey and the bird only pulled the boat to the coast and then filled the boat with foods.

**RAA/P6/S13/E3**
SL: Soon, they **pulled** the boat to the coast and loaded the monkey’s **luggage** and food on the boat.

TL: **Segera, mereka mendorong** kapal ke pantai dan mengangkat **bagasi** monyet dan makanan di atas kapal.

The example above shows that RAA made several incorrect word errors. The following list shows the words that were incorrectly translated.

1. “Pulled” was translated into “mendorong (pushing)”. The correct TL translation should be “menarik”.
2. “Luggage” was translated into “bagasi (trunk)” which should had been translated as “barang bawaan”.

**AHA/P9/S14/E3**

SL: The one who rows the boat is allowed to eat…

TL: **Salah satu di antara kita yang bisa mendayung** perahu akan diberikan makanan…

The SL sentence above was incorrectly translated. The wording of the TL was complicated. The correct translation should be “Yang mendayung perahu diperbolehkan untuk makan...”.

**ASA/P9/S14/E3**

SL: … because it is a **heavy-duty job** to do…

TL: … karena itu adalah **kewajiban yang berat** untuk dilakukan…

ASA translated “heavy-duty job” into “kewajiban yang berat”. This was considered wrong because the job was not a must. The correct translation should be “**pekerjaan yang berat**”.

**I/P10/S17/E3**

SL: The bird was not able to **row**.

TL: **Burung tidak bisa mengayuh**…

This sentence simply did not make any sense. Therefore, it was considered wrong. The correct translation should be “mengayuh”.

**Discussion**

The students implemented three strategies, namely literal translation, generalization, and linguistic amplification. Among those strategies, literal translation was the most used strategy. It is the fastest type of translation service, decreasing turn around time for translation projects. It makes content understandable in the target language while remaining easy and straightforward. It ensures that no important information is excluded from the source content. It was used 84% of the time by the students. Literal translation, direct translation, or word-for-word translation is the rendering of text from one language to another one word at a time with or without conveying the sense of the original whole (Munday and Hatim, 2019). One of the students who implemented literal translation was AHA. The student translated “Yes, I agree with you” into “**Ya. Saya setuju denganmu**.”. In this example, the students showed that the SL sentence could be translated literally into the TL sentence.

The second most used strategy was linguistic amplification. In basic terms, the definition of amplification is the process of emphasizing a part of text. In literature, amplification means the writer is adding more information to a sentence. The hope is that the sentence will become more clear and concise. The usage frequency of this strategy was only 2.41%. According to Munday and Hatim (2019), this translation technique adds new linguistic elements in the target text. There are two purposes of this: (a) to add more details about the text; and (b) simply to make the readers understand a certain word or sentence on the TL translation. Some students used this strategy to amplify or to emphasize the sentences from the story. For example, AYA translated “He was lazy and greedy” into “**Dia sangat malas dan serakah**”. AYA added the word “**sangat** (very)” which does not exist in the TL to emphasize that the monkey was, in fact, a very lazy and greedy animal.
The least used strategy was generalization at 2.29%. Translation of a word or phrase from the source text into a larger and more generic term in the target text is referred to as generalization in translation. In other words, particular words from the SL are translated into more generic terms from the TL to make the translation result more general. For example, RAA translated “coast” into “pantai (beach)”. The authors classified this as generalization strategy because coast means “pinggir pantai” in the TL, and it is also a part of a beach although more specific. Most people must have known what “beach” means, but they are probably not familiar with the word “coast”.

In terms of errors, the students only made a type of error, namely incorrect words translation. This type of error occurs when the translator incorrectly translates words from SL to TL (Matsuzaki et al. 2015). This type of error occurs when the translator incorrectly translates words from SL to TL. Some words might have different meanings which depends on the context. For example, the word “like” in English can mean having the same characteristics with something, or simply liking something.

Some students made this type of errors. The first is AYA who translated “add” into “menyimpan (save)” which should have been translated into “menambahkan”. This is a fatal mistake because the meaning of the sentence in the TL has a totally different meaning. AYA also made another mistake by translating “island” into “tanah (soil)” which should have been translated into “pulau”. This error may cause confusion because the word “tanah (soil)” in this did make any sense at all.

Discussion

Based on the findings of the results, it can be seen that the high frequency of literal translation and paraphrasing strategies among the participants suggests that EFL students may rely heavily on these approaches due to their perceived simplicity and ease of application. However, previous research has highlighted the potential drawbacks of these strategies, particularly when dealing with culturally specific expressions or complex narrative structures.

For example, Munday (2012) argues that literal translation can sometimes result in translations that are "slavishly faithful" to the source text, but fail to capture the nuances and idiomatic expressions of the target language. Similarly, Al-Khresheh (2013) notes that paraphrasing can sometimes lead to loss of meaning or ambiguity in the translated text, particularly when dealing with complex sentence structures or literary devices.

To address these challenges, several authors have proposed alternative translation strategies that prioritize a deeper understanding and appreciation of the source text's meaning and context. For example, Hatim and Mason (1997) propose the use of "cultural equivalent" translation, which involves finding culturally appropriate equivalents for expressions or idioms that may not have direct translations in the target language. Similarly, Baker (1992) suggests the use of "compensation" strategies, which involve making changes in one part of the text to compensate for losses or omissions in another part.

Moreover, it is important to note that the difficulties faced by EFL students during the translation process are not limited to linguistic challenges alone. Cultural differences between the source and target languages can also pose significant obstacles, particularly when dealing with narrative texts that are heavily imbued with cultural references and symbolism.

For example, in a study conducted by Wang (2014), Chinese EFL students were found to face significant difficulties in translating cultural expressions and idiomatic phrases in English narrative texts. Similarly, Peng and Wang (2013) note that EFL students may struggle to accurately convey the cultural nuances and symbolism of literary texts due to their limited exposure to the target culture.

Overall, the findings of this study highlight the need for more targeted training in translation strategies that promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of the source text's
meaning and context. By equipping EFL students with a diverse repertoire of translation strategies and techniques, educators can help them develop the skills necessary to produce high-quality translations that effectively convey the meaning and nuances of the source text.

CONCLUSION

Many researches talk about translation, this study addresses a gap in students’ translation strategy in translating narrative text. Also, the authors believe that not many related studies talked about this. Meanwhile, a lot of research, talking about students’ translation, but not focused on narrative text. The study findings provide valuable insights into the translation strategies used by EFL students when translating narrative texts and the difficulties they face during the process. The high frequency of literal translation and paraphrasing strategies among the participants highlights the need for more targeted training in translation strategies that promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of the source text’s meaning and context. This is particularly important for EFL students enrolled in English Language Education Study Programs, who may be required to translate various types of texts, including narrative texts, as part of their coursework.

Educators can help EFL students develop the skills necessary to produce high-quality translations that effectively convey the meaning and nuances of the source text by equipping them with a diverse repertoire of translation strategies and techniques (Abduh et al, 2022; Samad et al, 2022). For example, cultural equivalent translation or compensation strategies can be used to address the challenges posed by culturally specific expressions or complex narrative structures. Additionally, educators can provide more exposure to the target culture through activities such as reading literature in the target language or watching films and TV shows.

Overall, the findings of this study underscore the importance of providing targeted instruction on translation strategies for EFL students. By doing so, educators can help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary to produce high-quality translations that effectively convey the meaning and nuances of the source text. This, in turn, can help students achieve their academic and professional goals, while also contributing to cross-cultural communication and understanding.

REFERENCES


