



The Analysis of Short Story Translation Errors (A Case Study of Types and Causes)

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Abstract

Translation of short stories as a literary work has become a trend lately because the short story provides entertainment and education for the readers. However, the translation process has been complicated because translators must be able to convey the message without changing the purposes of a source language. The preliminary observation discovered numerous errors made by students when they translate Indonesian short stories into English. Thus, this study aims to analyze the types and causes of translation errors in translating the short story. The descriptive qualitative approach is applied in document analysis. Data collection was carried out through translation tests and interviews. Then, the collected data were classified and analyzed by using Mathieu's translations issues' theory (2003). The results discovered that the types of translation errors were a number of linguistic issues including grammatical issues, lexical choices, rhetorical problems, pragmatic problems, and cultural issues. The errors made were caused by the lack of vocabularies, misinterpretation of an idiomatic expression, figurative language, and implicit meaning, dissimilarities among cultural references and terms, the influence of the first language, and misunderstanding of English structure rules.

Key words: Analysis, Short Story, Translation Errors

Introduction

Translation has an essential role in exchanging information among nations of different languages. It has a key role in sharing data, stories, experience, and, most of all information. The translation process has been challenging because the translators have to be able to transfer the message into the target language without changing the purposes of a source language (Napu & Hasan, 2019). Therefore, the translator is supposed to apply a strategy when they found any difficulties in translating the text. Although the form of translation result might be not similar to what has been written in the text of source language, the purposes of the text must be conveyed (Zainudin & Awal, 2012)

The translation itself can be interpreted as a transfer of meaning. The translation stated by Nida and Taber in the book *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969: 12), translation is re-creating the meaning in the target language which is the natural equivalent of the message in the source language, first in meaning and second in style. From this statement, we know that the most important problem in translation is understanding meaning. Another expert

Newmark (1988) cited in Ayu Prabawati (2015) defines translation as an attempt to restate the meaning at one time in another language the writer wants. Meanwhile, Catford (1969: 20) states that translation is the replacement of the textual meaning of a language (source language) into equivalent textual meaning in another language (target language). Also, Baker & Saldanha (2009) claimed that translation research attempts to understand the behavior, knowledge, ability, and cognitive process of translators or interpreters in translating a text.

In the translation process, that translators should be able to convey the actual meaning written of the source language to the target language without modifying the intent of the source text at all (Napu & Hasan, 2019). Nababan (2008) argued that the meaning of the original text must be preserved so that when the translation is read, the reader does not realize that it is the translated text. It means that in the process of translation, the translator should ensure that the target language must be as accurate as possible and the grammar must be as natural as possible so that when read, readers do not realize that they are reading the translation results.

Many people think that the translation of literary works especially short stories need a qualified translation skill. The translator needs to consider the cultural nuances and feelings because the short story has an artistic, imaginative, and suggestive word set (Ghazala, 2021). In translating short stories, the translator must involve imagination, emotion, and pleasure also pay attention to many linguistic features, such as morphemic word collection, speech figure, and style. In the preliminary observation in the translation class of IAIN Palopo, the researcher found a number of errors in students' translation results. They did errors in translating some idioms and some words which are not familiar with their native language. As the result, the students' translation work in translating short story is unnatural and less accurate

Other studies also that have been conducted regarding the translation problem. Wongranu (2017) in his research found the syntactic, semantic, and miscellaneous errors were the most frequently occur in translation. The causes of these errors were carelessness, low self-confidence, and anxiety. (Arono & Nadrah, 2019) also found the causal of translation errors were unable to identify ellipsis, idiom, and lexical meaning in the target language. Alahmad (2019) also encountered that the lack of vocabulary, difficulty in translating literary works, and grammatical issues became the main effect that influences the quality of translation result.

Mathieu (2003) classified the translation problem into 5 categories. They are Lexical- Semantical problem, Grammatical Problem, Rhetorical Problem, and Cultural Issue.

Mathieu (2003) described the translation problem as followed :

- 1) Lexical-Semantic problems occur when a translator makes a mistake in choosing the right word so that the meaning is obvious.
- 2) Grammatical problems are caused by differences in the structure of the language between the source language and the target language which are not understood by the translator.

- 3) Rhetorical Problem deals with the inability of the translator to understand the meaning of figurative language and idioms.
- 4) Pragmatic problem is caused by misinterpretation of the translator to transfer the intended meaning of the source language into the target language.
- 5) The cultural issue deals with differences in cultural backgrounds between countries, including values and ideological views.

To understand this issue clearly, the analysis of translation errors must be conducted to determine the types of translation errors in translation from Indonesia into English and what causes them. It becomes the background of this study to find out the deficiencies of students in translation class. By knowing these deficiencies, students will be given the right treatment to correct their translation mistakes. Among literary genres, the researcher chooses short story because it is practical in their length and have a variety of choice for different interests.

Method

This research applied a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the types of translation errors and the causal of them in translation class. Chesterman (2002) argued that after the source text is translated into the target language, the qualitative translation analysis is used to examine the various aspects of translation problems that occur. He noted that translation research sometimes deals more with text analysis either in the source text or in the target text.

There were 5 students from the English education department of IAIN Palopo as the subject of the research. The instruments of the research were translation tests and interview questions. The researchers applied a translation test to identify types of translation errors. Furthermore, the interview was used to identify the causal factor of students' errors in doing the translation. The data were taken from all of the sentences in the short story as the document analysis.

The data collected through the test was started by giving respondents two short stories. The first short story entitled "*Buruk Sangka*" consisted of 7 paragraphs. The second one entitled "*Sang Pemburu*" consisted of 5 Paragraphs. Both short stories were translated by the students directly without translator application but they are allowed to use a dictionary. The texts were translated from Indonesian as the source language to English as the target language. The time given to translate both of the texts was 90 minutes. On the other hand, the data collected through interviews were carried out by offering students open-ended questions. After translating, students were interviewed by asking some questions related to the difficulties encountered during the translation process.

The collected data were analyzed through a qualitative approach. The process was conducted by (1) reading the translation text result, (2) listing the translation error, and (3) analyzing the sentences to find out the translation errors. The translation errors found in translation text were classified based on the theory of translation problem proposed by Mathieu (2003). Then, the classified errors were analyzing, interpreting, and drawing a conclusion. Moreover, the data from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed qualitatively by following the

procedures of Miles & Huberman (1994) that were collected, reduced, and displayed descriptively.

Result

In this study, the students as the respondents had translated a short story under the titles "*Buruk Sangka*" and "*Sang Pemburu*". Each respondent of this study was coded into P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 for example, respondent P1 means respondent one. Error analysis of both texts was classified and sorted based on the translation problems of Mathieu (2003). There were five problems found in their translation works, i.e., lexical choices, grammatical errors, rhetorical errors, pragmatic errors, and cultural issues. The data is displayed in table 1:

Table 1: The frequency of translation errors in translating the short story

Respondent	The frequency of Translation Errors				
	Grammatical	Lexical Choice	Rhetorical	Pragmatic	Cultural
R1	4	0	5	3	1
R2	7	4	3	3	1
R3	1	0	4	2	1
R4	4	2	4	2	1
R5	4	1	4	1	1
Total	20	7	18	9	5

Table 1 displayed the classification of translation problems in the first short story; "*Buruk Sangka*". Most translation errors were found in grammatical with 20 cases. Likewise, the second most problem is the lexical choice with 18 errors. The rhetorical problem was the third with 9 errors followed by the pragmatics problem with 7 errors. Meanwhile. The cultural issue was a little less common with 5 errors.

Table 2: The frequency of translation problem on the second short story

Respondent	The frequency of Translation Errors				
	Grammatical	Lexical Choice	Rhetorical	Pragmatic	Cultural
R1	2	2	1	3	1
R2	2	3	2	3	1
R3	3	2	1	2	1
R4	3	2	1	2	1
R5	0	2	1	1	1
Total	10	10	6	11	5

Table 2 displayed the translation errors found in the second short story entitled "*Sang Pemburu*". Conversely with Table 1, the number of translation errors is less than the first short story. Pragmatic problem was the most common with 11 errors. It was followed by grammatical errors and lexical choices with 10 errors. The third was rhetorical with 6 errors and cultural issues were the lowest with 5 errors.

The classification of translation errors was further analyzed by using Mathieu's translation concept analysis. The five translation errors will be further elaborated by comparing the source text in Indonesia to the target text in English. In analyzing the errors, the researcher used the codes ST (Source text), TT (Target text), and CS (Correct Sentence).

The Analysis of Translation Errors

1. Grammatical errors

The grammatical errors were discovered in the use of auxiliary verbs, pronouns, plurality, gerund, adverb, and tenses. It analyzed and described one by one as followed:

a. The use of main verb and auxiliary verb

Case 1:

ST : Dia baik diluar tapi sebenarnya hatinya jahat.

TT: She kind outside but actually bad-hearted.

CS: She is kind outside but bad-hearted

Case 2:

ST: *Mengapa kamu berkata begitu, Sinta?*

TT: Why you say like that, Sinta?

CS: Why do you say that?

Referring to this case, it noticed immediately that the sentence is missing a verb. In case 1, "dia baik" is translated to "she kind". This sentence is incorrect because it needed a linking verb "is" between the subject (she) and the complement of the subject (kind). Similar to case 2, it needed the auxiliary verb "do" to complete the sentence.

Regarding to this case, the most common type of problem encountered in translation is the use of auxiliary verb (am / is / are / do / does / have / has). Both of the examples clearly showed that the respondent translates text literally because of the lack of WH question understanding and the function of the verb in the sentence.

b. The use of Pronoun

Pronouns are words such as he, she or it, that take the place of a noun. In translation process, it needs to check that it agrees with the noun replacing. The pronoun problem found in the mistakes of pronoun reference agreement as followed:

Case 1 :

ST: Dia (Pr) sedang menunggumu diluar

TT: He is waiting for you outside

CS: She is waiting for you outside

Case 2:

ST: *Sahut Inah pada majikan kecilnya yang berbaring di dipan*

TT: Replied Inah to his little mistress which is laying on the bench

CS: Replied Inah to her little mistress who is laying on the bench

Clearly, in the first case, the word "*dia*" (female) was translated to "he" (male) as the English subject pronoun. The correct one must be "She" because it refers to the female. Another problem in case 2, the translator used an inappropriate relative pronoun. The word "which" refers to things. It must be replaced by "who" because it refers to the person "the little employer".

It is apparent from both cases that pronoun translation errors occur frequently because in Indonesian rules there is no gender separation for males and females. All gender used the word "Dia" for both male and female.

c. *Gerund*

The gerund is the verb which has a function as a noun by adding -ing such as running, speaking, writing, etc. It can be used as the subject, object, and object of the preposition in the sentences. The problem of using gerund was found in translation text as the following sentence:

ST: *Berburu monyet di hutan untuk dijinakkan menjadi rutinitasnya.*

TT: Hunt monkey in the forest to be tamed is his routine.

CS: Hunting monkey in the forest to be tamed is his routine.

Related to the sentence above, the correct translated word must be "hunting" because the verb at the beginning of the sentence is the gerund. The function of the gerund in that sentence is as the subject. Looking at this case, the problem of gerund frequently occurs because the translator thinks "verb-ing" is only for the present participle.

d. *The use of Adjective and adverb*

Adverbs of manner are formed by adding -ly to the adjective such as slow-ly, beautiful-ly, recent-ly, etc. Some mistakes always occur in translating the adverb of manner into Indonesian. It was also found in the following sentence:

ST: *Indah membuka pintu dengan perlahan*

TT: Indah opened the door with slow

CS: Indah opened the door slowly

Of the sentence above, the word "*dengan perlahan*" was translated literally without paying attention to the rule of the adverb. In Indonesian context, the word "dengan" is translated into "with" in English. However, it is not available in English context. The correct one must be "slowly" because the adjective "slow" adding with -ly described the manner of a noun (subject). According to this case, the translation error is influenced by the source language.

e. *Tenses*

Tenses deals with the time when the event occurs. The use of verbs changes according to the time of an event. Each tense is distinguished based on the use of verbs. The use of verb frequently errors in translations such as the following case:

ST: *Dia menjaga dan merawat bayi kera dirumahnya.*

TT: She keep and looks after the baby monkey at home.

CS: She kept and looked after the baby monkey at home.

Actually, the grammatical features of the narrative text have to use the past tense. The fact showed that the translator used the present tense in translating the text.

The translated word "keep and looks after" was better to translated into the past action verb "kept and looked after" because the event happened in the past.

The fact showed that the verb form in English structure is different in Indonesian context. In Indonesian context, there is no change in the form of the verb even the time changed. Related to this case, the translator should identify the form of the verb carefully based on when the event occurs.

2. Lexical-Choice Problem

The lexical choice is one of the essential problems in the translation process. Not all words from the source language have an equivalent word in the target language. It can be seen in the following case:

ST : *Di halamannya tumbuh pohon yang tinggi*

TT: On its page grew tall tree

CS : In the yard, there is a tall tree

Looking at this case, the respondents translated the word literally without checking the meaning of the word. In Indonesian context, the word "*halaman*" is a homonym. A homonym is each of two or more words having the same spelling or pronunciation but different meaning and origins. In KBI (Indonesian dictionary) "*halaman*" has two meanings. The first means house yard, school, etc. Another meaning is the cover page of a book, magazine, or newspaper. The word, "*halaman*" in this case refers to the "house yard. Therefore, the word "page" is incorrect because it has a different meaning. The lexical choice is always ambiguous because one word has a possibility of multiple meanings (Mathieu, 2003). For example, the word "home" has a similar meaning to "house" in Indonesian context which means "rumah". However, both of the words have a different meaning in English context. Therefore, the choice of words is very vital to ensure a qualified translation without changing the meaning of the source language.

3. Rhetorical Problem

The rhetorical problem of translation is a translator's error in understanding the meaning of figurative language in the source-language text. Valentino et al., (2017) in their research argued that the rhetorical problem occurs in translation when the absence of equivalent figurative words in the target language text. Translators often misinterpret the meaning of figurative words so that they translate word by word. As a result, the translation results are messy and difficult to understand. It can be seen in the following cases:

Case 1:

ST: *Dia baik luarnya tapi hatinya busuk.*

TT: She is kind outside but her heart is rotten.

Case 2:

ST: *Mama menimpali dengan kepala dingin*

TT: Mom replied with a cold head

The first case showed the figurative words "*hatinya busuk*". In Indonesian context, it means bad-hearted. However, the respondent translated it literally into "rotten hearted" even though the meaning does not match. The word "*buruk*" in this case is

just a figurative word that refers to something that is not good. In English context, the words "bad-hearted" is more equivalence.

Meanwhile, other figurative words were found in the second case. "Kepala *dingin*" in Indonesian context means calm or patient. The respondents failed to interpret the meaning and just translate it literally into "cold head". Thus, the intended meaning of a figurative word is not conveyed. It is better to translate "cold head" to "calmly / patiently" which is suitable to the English contextual meaning.

4. Pragmatic Problem

Napu & Hasan (2019) stated that to find out the pragmatic meaning in translation, the contextual meaning is manipulated and examined to discover the "real" meaning. The pragmatic problem occurs when the interpreter has failed to answer and decode the intended context from the source language into the target language as in the case below:

ST: *Keburukan orang dicerita dibelakang*!" kata Indah pada mamanya

TT: Ugly people are told in the back"! said Indah to her mother.

CS: people badness are told in the back"! said Indah to her mother

Related to this case, the pragmatic problem is found in "*keburukan orang*" which is translated into "ugly people". In Oxford dictionary, ugly means "unpleasant to look at" which refers to the personal appearance. Hence, it is better to use "badness" as the translated phrase of the ugliness of people. The word "badness or ugliness" refers to bad behavior.

5. Cultural Issue

Dissimilarities among cultural references, such as food names, festivals, and cultural connotations in general, can be a cultural issue. Ginter (2002) stated that in the translation process, the translator proposes new interpretations and modifying prior personal views of cultural issues through language localization. However, the language localization sometimes gets mistakes to adapt the translation to the culture targeted correctly. It can be seen as in the case below:

ST: *Sang pemburu membawa sumpitan untuk membidik monyet buruannya.*

TT: The hunter brought a chopstick to target the monkey.

It is clearly seen that the respondent translate the word "*sumpitan*" into "chopsticks". For the information, "*sumpitan*" is a traditional weapon of the Minangkabau tribe in the form of an inflatable pipe used for hunting. In contrast, "chopsticks" is a pair of small thin wood which used as eating utensils. The word "*sumpitan*" certainly sounds strange to the target language reader. Thus, the cultural term would be better if it provided additional explanations about the object in the target language text. This will be very useful for readers to understand the meaning of "*Sumpitan*" and at the same time, they can be introduced to new terms.

Interview results

To complete the data from translation text analysis, the researcher conducted interviews with 5 respondents. The semi-structural interview is conducted by

giving open-ended questions to the respondent. Respond to the question about the causal of errors in translating the short story, the respondent (R3) answered the question as follows:

R3 : "We don't have a lot of vocabulary, so we can't translate it well without assisted by a dictionary. Besides that, I don't understand the grammar rules so there are a lot of grammar mistakes"

the statement is supported by three of five respondents. They argued that the main difficulty was due to their limited vocabulary. In the translation process, they must be assisted by a dictionary. Moreover, they are still confused to choose the appropriate word because several words have the same meaning in Indonesian but their usage is different in the English context.

Continued to other causal errors in translating the short story, four of five respondents agreed that translating figurative language is the most difficult thing. It was illustrated from the comment of one respondent below:

R1 : "The most difficult to translate is figurative words or idioms because we don't know their original meaning. We have to interpret the meaning of figurative language by ourselves, but it doesn't mean that it is acceptable to the target language"

the argument is in line with research results which found many translation errors in rhetorical issues. The respondents were a misinterpretation of idiomatic expression and figurative language Hence, in translating figurative and idiomatic expressions, the translator must find the meaning not based on the basic meaning of the words but imaginative meaning.

The next causal was argued by two respondents. Their statement showed that dissimilarities among cultural references and terms were one of the causes of translation errors. They have difficulty translating vocabulary related to cultural terms as the following statement:

R2 : "There are some vocabularies that do not have an equivalent in English, for example, Bubungan, sumpitan, or other cultural terms. Sometimes we translate, sometimes we don't."

The last cause of the error is the misunderstanding of English structure rules. This is clearly illustrated by the following respondent's statement:

R4 : "English grammar is difficult. There are many grammar rules that we don't understand, such as tenses."

From this statement, it can be concluded that the respondent translates according to the rules of Indonesian as the first Language without paying attention to English grammar.

Discussion

The analysis of translation errors was classified into 5 categories based on Mathieu's theory (2003). The highest frequency was found in grammatical errors. The problem discovered was the use of auxiliary verbs, pronoun, plurality, gerund, adverb, and tenses. Commonly, it is caused by the differences between the English structure and Indonesia structure which can be seen in the form of the verb which refers to the time aspect. Consequently, The respondents tend to use the Indonesian structure to translate the English text. It is supported by Koman et al., (2019), who argued that the grammatical error was caused by the influence of the

first language. Also, in line with Novita (2014) which stated that the interlingual factor affected the translator to transfer the linguistics input. The second language learners were confused to apply the grammatical rules because they are affected by their first language. To reduce the grammatical errors, the teachers should give the students prior knowledge regarding the function of the language used and how to construct the sentences meaningfully.

The other problem is translating the idiomatic expression and figurative language. Richards (2001) stated that an idiom is an expression that functions as a single unit and its meaning cannot be broken down. In this research, this problem was caused by the difficulty of translators finding meanings from idioms and figurative language. Some idioms and figurative languages contained in the text are only translated literally but the real meaning is inappropriate. Baker & Saldanha (2009) opined that the factor influencing the translation of idiomatic and figurative language is the lack of equivalence in the target language. The translation of some words is not acceptable because linguistics features are different. If the idiomatic speech is taken literally, the meaning will be mediocre. It requires intelligence and experience to find the right equivalent because idiomatic speech is sometimes unreasonable and difficult to understand.

Another problem found was the pragmatic errors. In this research, the main factor is caused by misinterpretation of the implicit meaning of the source language. Commonly, the translator makes some errors to grasp the pragmatic meaning in translation because of a lack of pragmatic knowledge. To find the pragmatic meaning of a sentence, the translator must identify the implicit meaning of the text. According to Eryani, translators should strive to find inter-cultural differences and the lexical and semantic barriers between TL and SL languages to be able to understand the implicit meaning before translating. The translator must be able to know what the intent and purpose of the author are, why he prefers the form of the structure used, and must be able to restate the implied meaning or meaning in BSA. It is supported by (Annisa, 2014) who stated that pragmatic knowledge and sensitivity can sharpen the skills of a translator.

Continued to the lexical-choice errors, it occurs because one word has a thousand meanings. It is in line with Larson (1998) which states that the word choice or lexical ambiguity creates the possibility of multiple meanings. Word choice is the aspect that influences whether or not a translation product makes sense (Jackson, 2005). When students lack vocabulary, they used the dictionary for guidance, which may result in inappropriate sentences when they translate word by word. The translators are expected to choose between two words that have the closest meaning. At the same time, the translator must maintain the original document's meaning as much as possible, rather than simply substituting one word for another when it's not appropriate. Often, to enhance the elegance of the translation, translators will substitute one word for another but they should maintain the original meaning as much as possible without losing aesthetics.

The last is cultural issues which were not easy for the students to translate into the target language. The cultural-specific expressions are somehow difficult to translate, even professional translators find it difficult to deal with them. Furthermore, the cultural context is too vague. It represents the world view of a society, its beliefs, emotions, and values. So, any lexical item can't be understood

apart from the culture of which is a symbol that belongs to. Andrews & Maksimova (2020) said that the translator should be an 'intercultural mediator'. Translating between cultures' means that 'other' meanings are transferred to the contexts of its institutions, traditions, and history. Jumharia & Rusni, (2018) stated that interpreting other people's cultures cannot be understood easily by formal context. However, it can be explored by repeating interactions or watching how other people act and behave in their everyday lives. Thus, a creative translator should be always mindful of the best solution available.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, the analysis of translation errors encountered during the translation was classified into five categories. By examining two short stories with Mathieu's theory, the errors found were grammatical, lexical-choice, rhetorical, pragmatic, and cultural issues. The grammatical errors as the major are discovered in the use of verb, adverb, adjective, pronoun, gerund, and tenses. On the other hand, the errors of lexical choice are found in choosing one word which has a possibility of multiple meanings. Besides, the misinterpretation of idiomatic expression and figurative language is the most errors in rhetorical translation. Another is a pragmatic problem is caused by misinterpretation of implicit meaning. At last, dissimilarities among cultural references and terms are caused the errors in the cultural issue. The causal factors of translation errors were the lack of vocabularies, misinterpretation of an idiomatic expression, figurative language, and implicit meaning, dissimilarities among cultural references and terms, the influence of the first language, and misunderstanding of English structure rules. Consequently, the intended meaning of the source language was not revealed to the target language.

By knowing these deficiencies in translation, the students will be given appropriate treatment to correct translation errors. It is recommended that students understand the contextual meaning first and understand the structure of the target language before translating. Also, the researcher hopes that this research can become a reference for teachers in teaching language material, especially strategies in translation. In other words, the problems in translation will help the translator to find the right strategy to clarify the intended meaning or the message of the translation.

Acknowledgement

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