



# The Translation Variations and Quality of Wh-Question in Daily Routines Expressions

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## Abstract

This study aims at reporting the translation variations and qualities provided to wh-questions of daily routine expressions. The study employed descriptive qualitative research method to reveal translation methods and accuracy level produced by 10 students in resulting the translation variations of wh-questions in daily routine expressions. 10 data were collected from Anwarsyah's book (2019) consisting of what-question (02), who-question (01), when-question (03), where-question (01), why-question (01), and how-question (02). The findings of study show that most students (06) applied transposition mixed with modulation translation techniques. Meanwhile, the rests (04) used literal and free translation methods. Although they have demonstrated their ability to apply various translation strategies, the quality of their translations remains at a moderate level. This is evidenced by the analysis results, which show that their translations are lacking in accuracy, acceptability, and readability.

**Keywords:** *accuracy; acceptability; readability; wh-question*

## Introduction

Every communication needs a language as a tool of communication. It can be verbal or non-verbal communication (Wahyuni, 2018). In academic setting, she further stated that the verbal communication includes short talk, discussion, jokes, ideas, and so forth. It is of utmost necessary to understand the content of the book, the message of conversation, the delivery of teaching material, etc. The nonverbal communication skills include body language, the use of eye contact, the distance stands with the students, touch, pattern of relationship, and hearing (Saehu, 2018). Both the skills are sometimes happening in the messages of written (translation)

and spoken (interpreting). The fact is that not all students can understand the delivery of content or message of the passage or speech due to the use of English or Arabic or other languages. To help them understand the messages, a translator is required to be a human bridge among them (Durban, 2013). Connecting people communication of what they are reading or hearing means attempting to help them communicate in the languages they prefer (target language), not in foreign languages (source language).

The translation process can be happening directly in the classroom when joining the translation class and indirectly when doing conversation with their lecturers and friends. Indirect translation process means when your friends speak in English, you in your beyond translate the utterances into your native language via English. Jia (2020) illustrates the use of indirect translation into a text. She said if a text in Arabic is translated into Portuguese via English, the result is an indirect translation. This indirect process will convert the utterances into texts by transcribing them then translating them into Indonesian. The direct and indirect communication needs high understanding of the locutors. An informal interview was conducted on July 2023 to some friends to know their understanding of the utterances produced by their classmates. The interview showed that they could not understand some interrogative statements, dictions, and structure of the questions. This condition is interested to be confirmed to the lecturers of structures, translation, and interpreting courses. As an effort to minimize misunderstanding the passages, the English Literature study program of Faculty of Adab and Humanities, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati use English for academic services and instructional processes. Supporting the study program, the Student Association of English Literature (HMJ)—*Himpunan Mahasiswa Jurusan*) conducts a program of English day every Thursday.

The informal interview was also conducted to one of the lecturers teaching consecutive interpreting. He said that the vocabulary size and the mastery of sentence structure affect the students to produce well-meaning sentences. This coincides with the statement by Zhang (2012) that vocabulary and grammatical knowledge contribute to the meaning making of the sentences and text comprehension. The effect of these two factors can be minimized through the learning process in the previous courses like structure, reading, and vocabulary development (Napa, 1991; Kohar, 2022). Another idea of minimizing the effect of lack of vocabulary and mastery of grammar on students' meaning making of the utterances is coming from Saehu (2018) stating that practice is a key point to be successful in getting the meaning of messages. He further stated that practice to listening much to the English words coming out from natives' mouth can help them increase vocabulary size when they attempt to translate the words into Indonesian language.

Translating utterances is not as easy as that of translating the texts. The students should focus more on the words and the sentence structures they are hearing because a word has many meanings and influences the structure of sentences (Helder & Paul, 2020). For example, the word “think” can be heard as “thing” in the interrogative clause “what do you think?” If the students do not have much knowledge about the vocabulary, they will be trapped with the word “thing” becomes “what do you thing?” Those are trapped will come to the following translation of “think and thing.” The former will be translated “*Bagaimana menurut Anda?*” and the latter will be “*Bagaimana sesuatu Anda?*” This can cause no right meanings provided to such interrogative clause.

The English interrogative clause is quite different from Indonesian interrogative clause in terms of the grammatical structure. To express Indonesian version of “what do you think?” can be in different ways. It can be “*Apa yang Anda pikirkan? Bagaimana menurut Anda? Menurut Anda? or Apa pendapat Anda?*” The translation result can be various among students. The sentence is the example of Wh-Question, characterized by the presence of expression ‘what.’ The students translated the sentence with various techniques. Some use literal translation, faithful translation, modulation, and transposition techniques. Even, the students delete some words (e.g. *Bagaimana atau Apa, pikirkan*) when translating the sentence into “*Menurut Anda?*” This will lead to the lack of translation quality.

Research on the translation quality assessment has been conducted previously by several researchers. The first researcher was Dewi, mardjohan & Santosa (2018) entitled *The Naturalness of Translation in Translating Short Story Entitled “Drupadi” from Indonesian into English*. In this research, she aimed at analyzing the naturalness of translation and finding the percentage of the naturalness of translation in translating short story entitled “Drupadi” from Indonesian into English. The subjects of this study were two native speakers which are come from the native area. Meanwhile, the object of this study was a short story entitled “Drupadi” especially the sentences in both Indonesian and English version.

The second was Safei (2018) entitled *The Naturalness and Accuracy of English Short Story Translation into Indonesian*. In this thesis, she found out the naturalness and accuracy of English short story translation into Indonesian. This research employed descriptive qualitative research design which conducted at the second-year students of MTsN 1 Makassar in academic years 2017/2018. The third was Sutantohadi (2017). He focused on analysing the quality of media articles written by D-3 English department students of Madiun Politeknik. He identified and described the translation technics used by the students of D-3 programe of English Department of State Polytechnics of Madiun in translating the articles from The Jakarta Post daily newspaper. His research also analised the quality of translation result and its relationship with the students’ competence in translation.

The fourth previous research was conducted on interrogative clause by Tarigan, Aritonang, & Tampone (2022). Their research took a novel as the research object. She has conducted research on the analysis of interrogative sentences found in the novel. The result of the research showed that the translation of the novel privilege of the youth is qualified. It also concluded that there are three types of interrogative clauses found in the novel. One thing not studied by them was the translation quality levels. Another research conducted on the interrogative clause has been made by Noni Dwi Novita Sari (2013) in the novel Valentine Sang Puteri. Like Mayangsari's work, but Noni only focuses on sentence containing wh-question. She also tried to find out the types of the wh-question and the quality of the translation of sentence containing wh-question. It is concluded that the sentence containing Wh-question in the novel is qualified. It is also proven by the percentage of translation in scale of accuracy, acceptability, and readability.

Anyhow, although this present research has the same concern about interrogative questions and their translation quality, this research has important consideration to the object, which is not taken from newspaper, novel, short story, or others. The object of the current research is taken from daily routine expressions used in daily life conversations among students when they asked activities starting from waking up in the morning to sleeping in the night. The translation possibilities of "what" illustrated above will lead to other possibilities to "How, Who, Where, When, and Why."

Therefore, the researcher is interested in researching how the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester English literature of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati students translate the wh-questions concerning daily routines. After knowing the methods or techniques the students translate, their translation will be measured for the quality, in terms of accuracy. The researcher proposes the title of the study *The Translation Variations and Quality of Wh-Question in Daily Routines Expressions*. Theoretically, this researcher contributes to the development of translation theories in terms of translation methods and techniques application. Practically, this research is useful for those interested in translation field in broadening their knowledge about translating interrogative clause and stimulating other researchers to conduct a further study related to it.

## **Method**

In doing the research, the researcher employs descriptive qualitative method. This means the researcher conducts investigation by analyzing selected data without proposing hypothesis. Based on Cresswell (2018), the descriptive qualitative method explain situation, events, or phenomena. Thus, the researcher only gathers, arranges analyzes the data, and draws conclusion based on interpretation after investigating data analysis. In this case, this research describes variation of Wh-

question word translation in the source language and studies about the quality of the Wh-question word translation.

This research is also called as a case study, because the researcher employs questionnaires and interviews to informants (raters and informants) which make the researcher get involved in the field to gather more complete and valid data toward the assessment of the accuracy, the acceptability and the readability of wh-Question words translation in the daily routines expressions. Meanwhile, based on its orientation, this research is included in translation studies oriented in product.

### ***Data and Source of Data***

Sutopo (2002:58) mention that data in qualitative research consist of various kind: they can be people, events, place, or location goods, and documents or archive. Therefore, the source of data in this research are:

#### ***Document***

Document in this study is some Wh-questions in daily routines expressions that is easily found in internet sources. One of which is jimcontent/com

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjxhMi8zKBAXVibmwGHdohCXcQFnoECBwQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fs3d938e6c51e3c0f9.jimcontent.com%2Fdownload%2Fversion%2F1444910709%2Fmodule%2F10108659483%2Fname%2FDaily%2520routine-1510.pdf&usg=AOvVaw01\\_CucYseTUTodlqFEJtcP&opi=89978449](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjxhMi8zKBAXVibmwGHdohCXcQFnoECBwQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fs3d938e6c51e3c0f9.jimcontent.com%2Fdownload%2Fversion%2F1444910709%2Fmodule%2F10108659483%2Fname%2FDaily%2520routine-1510.pdf&usg=AOvVaw01_CucYseTUTodlqFEJtcP&opi=89978449)

Document is a written source of data. By this source of data, the researcher gets the Why-Questions in English and need to be translated into Indonesian by the respondents of the study.

#### ***Informants***

This research involved 13 informants who are divided into two groups: ratters and informants. Three raters involved in this research will provide assessments toward the translation quality based on the aspect of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, while ten informants are asked to translate the Wh-Questions of daily routine expression into Indonesian. Meanwhile, the criteria for information involved in this research are commonly: 1) the students who got A score in the courses of Structure; 2) the students who are recommended by the lecturer of Translation course to join to the research participants.

### ***Sampling Technique***

In qualitative research, the sampling is selective, using purposive sampling or criterion-based sampling. This technique is used to establish criteria for selecting informants (raters and informants), which are the data sources for the research.

The basic criteria of determination for rater are as follows:

1. Having or joining translation studies background.
2. Mastering English and Bahasa Indonesia
3. Having competency and experience in translation
4. Willing to participate in this research

The basic criteria of determination for informants are as follows:

1. Having or joining translation studies background.
2. Mastering Bahasa Indonesia.
3. Love to speak in English
4. The age range is between 18-30 years old.
5. Willing to participate in this research.

### ***Data Collection Method***

The research specifically employs three methods of data collection. They are content analysis, questionnaires, and interviews.

#### ***Content Analysis***

The followings are steps employed by the researcher in content analysis:

- Searching the websites by focusing on the interrogative clause of WH in daily routines.
- Downloading the original Wh-Question in daily routines expressions from internet.
- Reading and underlining the English clause of interrogative be used as the data.
- Making note and collecting the Wh-Question words
- Arranging the collected data in tables that later be put in questionnaires

### Questionnaires

The questionnaire is used to collect data about the quality of the translation consisted of two aspects: accuracy and naturalness. Tables below show the scale and description of each indicator in the translation quality assessment.

**Table 1. Accuracy Assessment Scale**

Scale	Indicator	Description
3	<b>Accurate</b>	The message in the source language is perfectly conveyed to the target language. The translation is appropriate based on the context of situation.
2	<b>Less Accurate</b>	Most of the message in the source language is conveyed in the target language. However, there are some words that are not translated; thus, the message is not perfectly conveyed or, the translation is inappropriate since it is not based on the context of situation.
1	<b>Inaccurate</b>	The message in the source language is not conveyed at all in the target language. The source text is not translated.

**Table 2. Acceptability Assessment Scale**

Scale	Indicator	Description
3	<b>Acceptable</b>	Every word in the target text sounds natural and is in accordance with the target language linguistic principle.
2	<b>Less Acceptable</b>	Every word in the target text generally sounds natural, but there are one or two words that are inappropriate in the target language linguistic principle.
1	<b>Unacceptable</b>	Most of words in a target text sound unnatural or feel like a translation work.

**Table 3. Readability Assessment Scale**

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>High Level</b>	Words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences or translated texts can be easily understood by readers.
<b>2</b>	<b>Moderate Level</b>	In general the translation can be understood by the reader however there are certain passages that must be read more than once to understand the translation.
<b>1</b>	<b>Low Level</b>	Translation is difficult for readers to be understood.

### ***Interview***

The activity of an in-depth interview is needed to obtain the form data which has been previously obtained by the technique of content analysis and questionnaire. This interview involves the researcher and the informants to gain detailed information about the level of accuracy and naturalness of the interrogative clause translation in daily routines expressions. To dig information, the researcher will ask for opinions, comments and suggestion from both raters and respondents.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

The data analysis will use some steps taken from Sprandley's four steps of analysis (in Su & Li, 2023), consisting of domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis and cultural theme analysis.

### ***Domain Analysis***

According to Su & Li, 2023, a domain is a structure composed of cultural elements interconnected within it. In domain analysis, the researcher distinguishes between relevant data and non-relevant data. The focus is on collecting interrogative clauses (wh-questions), disregarding other clause or sentence types. Additionally, the researcher classifies the data based on domain types, which is useful for identifying classifications in taxonomy analysis.



### ***Taxonomy analysis***

Su & Li (2023) explains that taxonomy analysis is intended to condense extensive data into groups according to the natural categories of the research object's reality. This research categorized wh-questions into groups considering the quality of translation, focusing on accuracy, acceptability, and readability.

### ***Componential Analysis***

Componential analysis essentially links elements or aspects identified in taxonomy analysis (Su & Li, 2023). Through this method, data categorized by the type of wh-questions are associated with another classification: the level of translation quality.

### ***Cultural Theme Analysis***

The cultural theme analysis aims to develop a "theory" grounded in the conducted research. Typically, this involves identifying relational patterns from componential analysis and situating them within the context of linguistic use. This process is iterative, reflecting on existing theories and secondary research data. The analysis ultimately describes the relationship between the type of interrogative clause and the quality of the translation.

## **Results and Discussions**

### ***Translation Variations and Qualities of Wh-Questions in Daily Routines Expressions***

The researcher found some daily expressions using Wh-question which was translated into Bahasa by the students variously. However, the researcher only took some representative data in analysing the wh-questions.

Data 1: When do you usually wake up and get up?

The first daily expression asked to the students was "When do you usually wake up and get up?" Facing this question, seven students translated it into "jam berapa biasanya kamu bangun tidur?" and three students translated it into "kapan kamu biasanya bangun?" The ways the students translated the wh-expression show significant differences. Most students applied addition translation method as found in the word "jam berapa and tidur". The other students translated it literally into "kapan and bangun." According to Baker (2018) and House (2014), addition

technique refers to a method where the translator includes extra information that is not present in the original text.

Having identified the translation technique, the researcher sent the translation product to three raters to examine the level of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. Table 4 shows the result of translation quality assessment.

Table 4 The Translation Quality of Data 1

Raters	SL	TL	Score			Reason
			Accuracy	Acceptability	Readability	
SA			1	2	2	Words deleted, not specific, think much to understand
IN	When do you usually wake up and get up?	Kapan kamu biasanya bangun?	1	2	2	Words remain not translated, confusing word
DB			2	2	3	Ambiguous meaning to the word "bangun", can be understood after rereading it
Total:			4	6	7	
Average Score:			4 : 3 = 1.3	2	2.3	
SA	When do you usually wake	Jam berapa biasanya kamu	2	2	2	Words deleted
IN			2	2	3	Words remain not translated

DB	up and get up?	bangun tidur?	2	2	3	No translation of get-up
Total:			6	6	8	
Average Score:			$6 : 3 = 2$	2	2.7	

The first and second raters, SA and IN gave some various scores to the accuracy of the translation. They thought that there is a word “get up” remains not translated into Bahasa. This affects the accuracy of meaning, even they evaluated that the translation is inaccurate. The same scores were also provided by them in assessing the acceptability and readability. In relation to the readability, they did not find specific information about the meaning of “bangun—wake up” as the word “get up” left untranslated. Since the raters found no specific information from the meaning, the level of readability was moderate. However, the third rater shows different score for accuracy and readability. Although she found an ambiguous meaning to the word “bangun”, she said that the whole meaning is understandable.

The researcher then tried to find the total score of the raters’ evaluation to the students’ translation quality. As mentioned earlier, the weighting for accuracy is 3, acceptability is 2, and readability is 1. It means the total weighting of the translation quality is 6. The average score of the literal translation of “When do you usually wake up and get up?” is in order 1.3, 2, and 2.3 which has improvement average score of addition translation technique, namely in order 2, 2, and 2.7. to find the final score of the translation quality in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, the average score of each will be multiplied with the weighting of the translation quality indicators. So, the average score of accuracy is multiplied with its weighting ( $1.3 \times 3 = 3.9$ ), acceptability ( $2 \times 2 = 4$ ), and readability ( $2.3 \times 1 = 2.3$ ). The total of the score is  $3.9 + 4 + 2.3 = 10.2$ . The total is then divided into the total of the translation quality indicator weighting ( $10.6 : 6 = 1.7$ ). It indicates that the literal translation quality of the first wh-question is inaccurate, unacceptable, and not understandable. Meanwhile, the addition translation technique quality of the first wh-question has an increase in the score. It is sequentially  $2 \times 3 = 6$ ;  $2 \times 2 = 4$ ; and  $2.7 \times 1 = 2.7$ . The total is  $12.7 : 6 = 2.1$ . It means that the addition translation technique quality of the first wh-question is less accurate, less acceptable, and less understandable.

## Data 2: Where do you have lunch?

This second wh-question is derived from daily routine expressions, asking “Where do you have lunch?” dealing with this source language, the students were mostly trapped by translating it into target language literally because it seems very easy to translate into “Dimana kamu makan siang?” One of the five students translating literally said:

“Because I think this question expression is a common knowledge and everyone uses it in daily routine activity, so I directly translate it easily.”

However, interestingly, other five students translated the expression differently. Two of them (R#5 & R#9) translated it into “Ketika siang hari, kamu makan dimana?” and the rests translated it into “kita makan siang dimana?” Although the researcher found the variations of the translation “where do you have lunch?”, the meaning refers to the same idea, which is asking about the place of having lunch. Being eager to know the ideas of translating variously, interviews were conducted to the participants.

The use of diction “Ketika siang hari” in the target language by R#5 was inspired by the noon condition. She said:

“Having lunch must be in the afternoon. I was trying to present an alternative to translate the expression. I think the use of *ketika siang hari* sounds better as having lunch is happening in the noon condition.”

Looking at the translation done by R#5 and R#9, the expression was successfully translated into the target language by using modulation technique. The reason the R#5 used in the interview session shows that she has her own point of view in translating the wh-expression. This finding coincides with the Wardoyo’s statement (2016: 385) that modulation is applied as a translation technique to clarify accurate meanings based on the translator’s perspective.

Meanwhile, R#1, R#3, and R#8 chose “Kita” rather than “Kamu” to translate personal pronoun “You” in the wh-expression “Where do you have lunch?” The use of “Kita” looks like students’ point of view. Point of view usually happens together with the transposition technique, which transposes the position of the word from the end of the sentence into the first, or from noun into verb like “He smokes heavily” which is translated into “Dia perokok berat”. The “smokes” is a verb phrase, but it is translated into “perokok,” a noun phrase. It is different from “You” becomes “Kita.” It is not about the modulation or transposition. It is something else.

The translation of “you” into “kita” is the application of discursive translation technique because it is influenced by the cultural and contextual consideration aspects in translation. Baker (2006) stated that the importance of considering the cultural and contextual aspects of translation is used discursively within social to convey meaning. In this case the cultural aspect can be seen from the politeness of the speaker to the hearer. R#1 and R#3 said that:

“I used “kita” to keep the heart not broken because when I said “Dimana kamu makan siang?” I felt interrogating someone. So, I chose “kita” to keep someone’s heart is not hurted.”

It is different from R#8 who saw the case from the context. He tried to imagine the context then translated into “Dimana kita makan siang?” The use of context in translating the pronoun can meet the purpose of the translator in translating it (Saehu, et al. 2020). R#8 said:

“The reason I used “kita” is my visualization to the condition. Let say, my friend is driving a car and I said “Kamu mau makan dimana?” It would be better if I use “Kita mau makan dimana nih” because the context is between close friends, not a boss for my friend who is driving my car.”

To assess whether the diction of “kita” is appropriate with the culture and context aspects, the researcher delivered the translation into three raters.

The first and three raters provided 2 for accuracy, 2 for acceptability, and 3 for readability. The second rater provided 3 for accuracy, 2 for acceptability, and 3 for readability. The following is the detail information of the score.

Table 5. The Translation Quality of Data 2

Raters	Accuracy	Acceptability	Readability	Total
SA	2	2	3	
IN	2	2	3	
DB	3	2	3	
Quantification	7	6	9	
	$7 : 3 = 2.3$	$6 : 3 = 2$	$9 : 3 = 3$	
	$2.3 \times 3 = 6.9$	$2 \times 2 = 4$	$3 \times 1 = 3$	$6.9 + 4 + 3 = 13.9$
Average				$13.9 : 6 = 2.3$

Based on Table 2, it is identified that the average score of the translation quality assessment in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability is 2.3. It means that the translation of “Where do you have lunch?” into “Kita makan siang dimana?” is less accurate, less acceptable, and less readable although seen from the cultural and contextual aspects, the application of discursive translation technique is allowed.

Due to limited space in this article, the researcher presents the variation of the wh-question translation, including strategies and assessment, and quantification in the Table 6.

Table 6. The Stocktaking of Translation Qualities and Strategies

Data	SL	TL	Translation Strategies	Average score of TQA
3.	What do you have for breakfast?	Kapan kamu berangkat ke sekolah?	Literal	2
		Jam berapa kamu berangkat ke sekolah?	Modulation	2
4	How do you go to school?	Kamu pergi ke sekolah pakai apa?	Modulation	3
		bagaimana kamu berangkat ke sekolah?	Literal	2
		Menggunakan apa kamu berangkat ke sekolah?	Free	3
5	How many lessons do you usually have a day?	Berapa banyak mata pelajaran yang biasanya kamu ikuti dalam sehari?	Literal	2
		Dalam sehari, biasanya kamu mengikuti berapa mata pelajaran?	Modulation	2

Table 6 shows that although the translation strategies were applied variously for different wh-questions, the translation quality didn't show any significant difference. Their quality was in the second position of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. It means that their level of translation competence is enough—less accurate, less acceptable, and in moderate level of readability.

## Conclusion

In a nutshell, the research elicits the translation strategies applied by the students in translating the Wh-Questions used in daily expressions were literal, free, and modulation translation strategies. One of which, modulation, was the most frequent use. In relation to the quality of their translation, the raters assessed that their level of translation's accuracy, acceptability, and readability were enough—less accurate, less acceptable, and less readable. However, although there were in a moderate level of translation quality, they showed that the translation strategies they applied were various. It means that they played their roles in minimizing the use of machine translations which more potential to use literal or even word for word translation method.

Looking at the result of the study, it is recommended to those teaching translations to develop and disseminate best practices and guidelines for high-quality translation. These should cover various aspects, from initial text analysis to final quality checks. It is also recommended for the future research to integrate Multidimensional Quality Metrics that encompass a broad range of quality metrics, including accuracy, fluency, coherence, cultural appropriateness, and adherence to genre-specific conventions. Utilize frameworks like the Dynamic Quality Framework (DQF) or Multidimensional Quality Metrics (MQM) to ensure a comprehensive assessment.

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