



An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Translating Argumentative English Text by the Second Grade Students of Private High School

Regina Gresia F Nababan¹, Erika Sinambela², Donna Ria Pasaribu³

^{1,2,3} Universitas HKBP Nommensen, Medan

Corresponding E-Mail: regina.nababan@student.uhn.ac.id

Received: 2024-05-20 Accepted: 2025-08-17

DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v13i2.5068

Abstract

This study aims at analyzing the problems faced by students in translating argumentative texts from English to Indonesia, and the factors that contribute to those problems. A descriptive quantitative method was used in analysis data. A total population of 120 students in four classes and 29 a total sample who made up the student of Private High School comprised the population of this study. The results indicate that where only 12 or 4.13% of students got a score close to the maximum score, the students' difficulties were found from questionnaire in the linguistic factor were 16 students (55%) and the non-linguistic factor 20 students (69%) and the students' difficulties were found from interviewed in the linguistic factor were 18 students (62%) and the non-linguistic factor 20 students (69%). It was concluded that it was found that class XI students at SMAS PGRI 20 Siborong-borong experienced difficulties in translating argumentative texts which were more influenced by non-linguistic factors. Students' difficulties in translating because they had never taken an English course was the most prominent factor that causes students to experience difficulties in translating texts with the highest percentage being 69%. Although the nonlinguistic factors were the most prominent factors that appeared the second-grade students of Private High School in translating argumentative text the linguistic factors also contributed in minor way to the difficulties in the translation that the students encountered especially dealing with difficulties in translating the long text, with the percentage was 62%.

Keywords: Argumentative Text, Translation, Linguistic and Non-Linguistic;

Introduction

Every human being on earth must communicate with other humans, and language is the most crucial component of that communication. In order to

communicate, language is crucial. The main medium of communication is language. It goes without saying that people would find it difficult to communicate with one another without language. Especially in this age of globalization, when speaking with others is essential for exchanging ideas and obtaining a wide range of information.

In addition, there are many languages spoken around the world. English is a language that plays a significant role. English has emerged as the universal language of communication. This, becoming fluent in English becomes a must for everyone who wishes to access current knowledge and scientific advancements across all domains. Since practically all of the most recent publications were published in English, it is simple to understand. The majority of writing in books, magazines, journals, websites, and many other forms is done in English. Because of this, the majority of people need to learn English.

Some people have difficulty in reading in English. This condition plays a major role in the country's educational system. One of the issues that results in Indonesians being unable to comprehend the meaning of information published in English is their lack of access to written English information, particularly for those who live in a nation like Indonesia where English is considered a foreign language. The percentage of people in this nation who can comprehend English, even just in written form, is still extremely low. As such, it can be abandoned.

In this country, English is considered a foreign language, and students in senior high school, such as the one under investigation, are required to study the language. One of the main subjects in senior high school is now English. In a week, it was taught twice. The English teacher often discovers challenges with the students' English study. Some students believe that learning English is difficult. They also think that it can be challenging to translate some English-language text into other languages, comprehend concepts more slowly, and grasp word meanings. Additionally, students will be unable to understand and comprehend the meaning of a text if they are unable to translate every word, sentence, and paragraph in it.

Translation remains one of the most significant practices in the modern world, particularly in Indonesia. As the globalization era approaches, translation plays a major role in the advancement of science and knowledge as well as cross-cultural exchange. Translation provides accurate information to effectively communicate the content of a document in addition to translating one language to another. In this instance, due to their close scientific relationship, foreign literature has a significant influence on Indonesian literature.

Translation is an effort to divert messages from one language to another language. Newmark (1988) describes translation as "a craft consisting of the attempt to replace a written message or statement on one language by the same message or statement in another language. In addition, Bell (1991) the process or result of converting information from one language or language variety into another. The aim is to reproduce as accurately as possible all grammatical and lexical features of the "source language" original by finding equivalents in the

“target language”. At the same time, all factual information contained in the original text must be retained in the translation.

Obviously, there are a few factors to take into account when translating, and one of them is word choice, which is crucial to ensure that the translation is clear to read. One can carry out translation tasks to ascertain the framework for comprehending a foreign language. Translation is a difficult task, particularly for a novice. The majority of senior high school students struggle greatly when translating into another language. While English is a foreign language in this nation, senior high school students are required to study English dictionaries.

As previously explained, students encounter numerous challenges when attempting to translate certain texts in their books. Particularly, as they discovered in their English lessons, there are various types of texts, including argumentative, descriptive, expository, and narrative texts. The teacher at the school that is the focus of this study acknowledged that the students were having trouble learning English, particularly with the translation task. Among the challenges that students encounter is their inability to comprehend the text's meaning, their inability to translate new vocabulary, and so forth. What should be known is about difficulties that students face in translating argumentative text and know what is the causes of the problems.

Argumentative text is a text that contains the writer's opinion which is supported by another supporting argument to strengthen the opinion Surayya & Maini (in Andika 2023). Students could not permit, support or even refuse the writer's opinion if the students are unable to translate the text. But, when the students read and the students have to understand the content of argumentative text, most of the students find the difficulties to translate the meaning of the text.

Finally, by analyzing Students difficulties, people can know what are the difficulties that the students face. So, the researcher tries to find the students difficulties in translating from English to Indonesia and the challenges that students encounter is their inability to comprehend the text's meaning, their inability to translate new vocabulary.

Metode

The method of this research was descriptive method, using quantitative approach. According to Latief (in Ifari 2021) descriptive research is “research that describe a phenomenon, events either using quantitative and qualitative data”. It aimed to give the description about students' difficulties in translating argumentation text at the second grade Private High School when translating argumentative English texts. Frenkel and wallen in Andika (2023) explains a method used to Explain, Analyze, and classify something through various techniques; Interview, Questionnaire, and text. The 120 students in four classes who made up the student of Private High School comprised the population of this study. The sample of this research was one

of the classes at the second-grade students of SMAS 20 PGRI 20 Siborong-borong, that was the students of XI IPA 2, the class consisted of 29 students. This research, the researcher used three (3) Instruments of collecting data; Translation Test, Questionnaire and Interview.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The findings of the research were based on the result of data analysis. The data analysis consisted of three sections: the data analysis of the test, the questionnaire and the interview.

Difficulties in Linguistic Problems

From the results of interviews regarding the difficulties experienced by students in terms of linguistic factors, there were 18 students who had difficulty translating long English, 4 students who had difficulty determining the correct meaning of words with multiple meanings, 5 students who had difficulty translating idioms, and 2 students who had difficulty translating convoluted patterns. From the results of questionnaire regarding the linguistic field where 16 students were in the linguistic field, students have difficulty translating English into English because they have difficulty translating long English sentences.

Difficulties in Non-Linguistic problems

After conducting research, the researcher found that many students had difficulty translating English into Indonesian from a non-linguistic perspective. This could be seen from the data analysis table which stated that there were 20 students who experienced difficulties in the non-linguistic field where the students had difficulty translating English into Indonesian because the students had never taken an English course, The results of the interviews with students who experienced difficulties from non-linguistic factors were 20 students who had difficulty translating because they had never taken an English course, 7 people had difficulty translating because they were living in areas where regional languages were active, 2 students had difficulty translating words related to politics and there are 2 students who had difficulty translating words related to culture.

Factors influencing the Difficulties

From the data obtained by researchers from interviews, it was found that students experienced difficulties translating from a linguistic perspective, namely difficulties in translating long sentences, and difficulties experienced in terms of non-linguistic factors were difficulties in translating English into Indonesian because they had never taken an English course.

To put it simply, the researcher separated the outcome into two categories: linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The first one was related to nonlinguistic factors, where the largest percentage was found. For the most part, the students

had trouble translating because the students had never taken an English course. In the second case, the proportion of students experiencing difficulties in linguistic factors was lower than in nonlinguistic factors. Some students find it challenging to translate long sentences and words that have to do with political, social, or cultural values, etc. The researcher came to the conclusion that students' nonlinguistic difficulties were more significant than their linguistic difficulties.

Discussion

The Meaning of the Result

The researcher would like to discuss the data analysis results in this section with the previously discussed research scope. The goal of this conversation was to explain the students' challenges with translating argumentative texts. The researcher would like to discuss the findings from two different types of instruments used in this study: a questionnaire and a translation test.

Based on previous results, students' argumentative text translation results were still below the maximum score, namely there were around 29 students who did not meet the minimum standards. Only a small number of students completed the translation test with a standard score that was still below the maximum score, where only 12 or 4.13% of students got a score close to the maximum score.

Apart from that, the researcher concluded from these scores that students had difficulty doing it. After the data analysis, two factors were identified as contributing to students' difficulties translating argumentation texts: linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The researcher discovered that, in general, the students had more trouble with the language aspects. According to the percentages between the two factors, which were confirmed by the data analysis, the students' difficulties were found in the linguistic factor 16 students (55% of the students' difficulties) and the non- linguistic factor 20 students (69% of the students' difficulties).

based from the previous to findings, the examination of students' challenges in translating argumentation texts were based on linguistic and non- linguistic factors revealed that, overall, linguistic factors posed the greatest challenge, followed by non-linguistic factors.

Differences In Research Results with Previous Research

This research was in contrast to previous research where in previous research conducted by Hutahaeen et al. (2023) this research showed that the result of the translation ability was that students were generally very good at translating while this research showed that students were still poor at translating.

Conclusion

Following the completion of the study and data analysis, the researcher came to the following three conclusions:

1. The students' translation scores for argumentative texts are still low, there are around 29 students who have not gotten the maximum score, still less than the maximum.
2. It was found that class II students at Private High School experienced difficulties in translating argumentative texts which were more influenced by non-linguistic factors. Students' difficulties in translating because they had never taken an English course was the most prominent factor that causes students to experience difficulties in translating texts with the highest percentage being 69%.
3. Although the nonlinguistic factors were the most prominent factors that appeared the second-grade students of Private High School in translating argumentation text the linguistic factors also contributed in minor way to the difficulties in the translation that the students encountered especially dealing with difficulties in translating the long text, with the percentage was 55%.

References

- Aprianti, Y., & Ardi, H. (2023). *Journal of English Language Teaching An Analysis of Problems in Translating Descriptive Text from Indonesian to English Made by Indonesian Students*. 12(3), 727-737. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v12i3.124418>
- Arono, A., & Nadrah, N. (2019). Students' Difficulties in Translating English Text. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics & Literature)*, 4(1), 88-99. <https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v4i1.7384>
- Bell, Roger T. (1991). *Translation and Translating. Theory and Practice*, Londres/New York, Longman, coll. Applied Linguistic and Language Study, 298 p. *Meta: Journal Des Traducteurs*, 38(3), 537. <https://doi.org/10.7202/002801ar>
- Catford in Lumban Batu, S. I., Sinambela, E., & Pakpahan, C. (2014). An Analysis Of Ambiguity In English Text Translations Into Bahasa Indonesia Made By Commercial Translators.
- Choliludin Martini. (2019). The Analysis of Accuracy in Translating Abstract Journal by The Students of English Education Universitas Negeri Makassar. *Artikel Ilmiah Nurul*, 3(2), 40-46.
- Hadrus, M. S. (2017). the Analysis of Students Difficuties in Translating. *Repository UIN Alauddin*, 20400113114. <http://repositori.uin-alauddin.ac.id>
- Hutahaeen, R. I., Saragih, R. A., Gea, E. C. Y., & Lubis, H. T. (2023). An Analysis on English Students' Ability in Translating from English Into Indonesian. *Journal on Education*, 5(4), 14424-14431. <https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v5i4.2496>
- Ibnu, & Ma'mur, I. (2004). Konsep Dasar Penerjemahan. *Alqalam*, 21(102), 431. <https://doi.org/10.32678/alqalam.v21i102.1643>
- Ismayanti, D., Said, Y. R., Usman, N., & Nur, M. I. (2024). The Students Ability in Translating Newspaper Headlines into English A Case Study. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 12(1), 108-131.
- Latief in Ifari, E. R. (2021). Student's Analysis of Perception Teachers Bilingual

- Language Use in Speaking Classroom at MTs AL -Amin Malang. *Journal of Education*, 2, 6.
- Lorscher in Sinambela, E., Manik, S., Siregar, R., Manurung, L. W., & Saragi, C. N. (2023). An Analysis of Translation Strategies Used by Students in Translating Idioms at the Second Grade of SMA Kalam Kudus. *International Journal of Membrane Science and Technology*, 10(2), 550–557. <https://doi.org/10.15379/ijmst.v10i2.1265>
- Masruddin, M., & Nasriandi, N. (2022). Lexical and Syntactical Errors Performed by Junior High School Student in Writing Descriptive Text. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 10(1), 1094-1100.
- Molina, L., & Albir, A. H. (2002). Translation techniques revisited: A dynamic and functionalist approach. *Meta*, 47(4), 498–512. <https://doi.org/10.7202/008033ar>
- Nida and Taber in Murwantono, D. (2012). *Applying Translation Theory and Practice in Teaching*. 73–85.
- Naser, J. A. (2019). The Difficulties in Translating Culture-Specific Expressions from Arabic into English. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 10(9), 78–82. <https://doi.org/10.7176/jep/10-9-09>
- Newmark. (1988). Introduction to Translations. In *Curator* (Vol. 65, Issue 2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/cura.12479>
- Nurlaila. (2012). Translation Procedures Applied by Students in Translating Indonesian Specific Terms into English. *Conference Proceedings-ARICIS I*, 07(01), 464–476. <https://jurnal.ar-rainry.ac.id/index.php/aricis/article/view/966>
- Nababan in Rahmawati, R. (2019). An Analysis on Students' Indonesian-English Translation Errors (A Case Study at 7 th Semester Students of English Department UIN Mataram). *Thesis, UIN Mataram*.
- Opan in Agustin, V., & Oktavia, W. (2023). *Journal of English Language Teaching Students ' Difficulties in Translating Texts from English to Indonesian and Their Causes*. 12(3), 813–824. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v12i3.122076>
- R.Taber, E. A. N. and C. (1916). *The Theory and Translation* (Fourth, Vol. 13).
- Sinambela E.,Manik,S.,Siregar,Manurung,L.W.,& Saragi,C. N. (2023). An Analysis of Translation Strategies Used by Students in Translating Idioms at the Second Grade of SMA Kalam Kudus. *International International Journal of Membrane Science and Technology*, 10(2), 550–557. <https://doi.org/10.15379/ijmst.v10i2.1265>
- Surraya and Maini in Andika, N. H. & A. (2023). The Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Translating Text for the English Major Students at Umnu Kebumen. *English Education and Literature Journal (E-Jou)*, 3(01), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.53863/ejou.v3i01.247>

- Surayya, S. A., & Maini, M. (2023). a Depth Inspection on Informal School Students' Dilemma in Translating English Argumentative Text To Indonesia. *Journal of Research on Language Education*, 4(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.33365/jorle.v4i1.2384>
- Syonia, A., & Rosa, R. N. (2020). An Analysis of Translation Problems Faced by the Third Year English Department Students of UNP in Translating Historical Recount Text. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 9(4), 682–691. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v9i4.110248>
- Taber, N. and. (1947). The Theory and Practice of Thick Translation. In *Translation Quarterly* (Issue 73, pp. 58–72). <http://proxy.libraries.smu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cms&AN=97196979&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Widyamartay in Lumban Batu, S. I., Sinambela, E., & Pakpahan, C. (2014). *An Analysis Of Ambiguity In English Text Translations Into Bahasa Indonesia Made By Commercial Translators*.
- Yessy, G., & Sinambela, E. (2018). An Analysis of Students' Ability In Translating The Analytical Exposition Text In Eleventh Grade Of SMK N 11 Medan. *The Episteme Journal of English Literature and Linguistics*, 4(2), 1–31. uhn.ac.id