

TRANSLATION IN STUDENTS LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE IN UDAYANA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

To the second language learner, translation has serves an important role as the initial point to their language comprehension. Language levels and unit cannot be separated from the comprehension towards language meaning. Therefore, during classroom activities; when the students were asked to provide swift language expression to their opinion or answer, they will focus on generating equivalencies of both languages. This translation method can be seen from the generation of lexical level, comprehending meaning, and forming text.

Keywords: language comprehension, classroom activities, equivalencies

I INTRODUCTION

Knowing language competence and performance of the learners in language teaching can provide comparison and early hypothesis of language proficiency level. Any results provided on both competence and performance can imply better strategies, which may be applied in other classroom activities. On translation, equivalency as a main converging line of translation, has focused on each source and target language to preserve its characteristics and properties; thus their meaning as much as possible. Student efforts in dealing with second language acquisition have been the focus of language teaching, which also serves as a clear example to translation process.

Nowadays, university student should already achieve language comprehension on text level. This has also applied in Udayana University, where its students were tasked to broaden their knowledge on international competition of scientific and literary review; as Udayana University itself is trying to aim towards World Class University. Since students are also required to submit their research in various journals, language comprehension has also become one of the prerequisite of gaining their degree.

Amongst the four language skills, writing has been emphasized to take an important role of student form of expression in their language competence. Most of the student assignment has taken on grammar assessment and error analysis, which eventually led the students to assume that language performance; especially English language will depend on its accuracy. This thought will affect other performances in their passive skills; even in writing itself in hindering their ability to fully express any message in the language.

II MATERIALS AND METHOD

In the study of language teaching, student centered approach is mostly applied in order to realize the effective teaching method in classroom activities. The application of this approach is done by focusing on student interaction in the class through the activity of group discussion, presentation, and other method that will enhance the student self-expression in their language performance. This approach can fully utilized with consideration of participant cultural nature in the class. For example, students in Indonesia; especially Bali, will not prefer standing in front of the class while explaining their answer. These students will show their utmost performance through the chance of explaining on a blank answer sheet. Therefore, in order to comprehend the nature of translation and its relation to language teaching application, participant cultural background and context has to be considered.

2.1 TRANSLATION

It is plausible that no translation, however good it may be, can have any significance as regards to the original (Benjamin in Venuti, 2000:16). Hence, any form of translation has to focus and emphasize on the message rather than textual meaning. From the textual source point of view, classification of translation to be considered are the loss and gain of information, the source or target oriented translation, rhetorical effect of words, and double effect of the reader (Eco, 2003:104, 114). Referring to the concept, the major factor in deciding translation quality based on transference from target language (L1) to the source language (L2) are equivalency and acceptability of the reader.

In translation process, there is a possibility of an expanding or increasing equivalence in the meaning, since both languages does not share the same cultural expression (Gorlee, 1994: 180). This concept suggests that during the translation process of the participants, they tend to reflect equivalencies based on their cultural background. Apart from occurrences of idioms, common problem in translation refers to collocational meaning, which creates unique meaning different from the sum of meanings of its individual elements (Baker, 1991: 53). This occurrence mostly appears in the students nowadays given the necessary language competence and classroom situation.

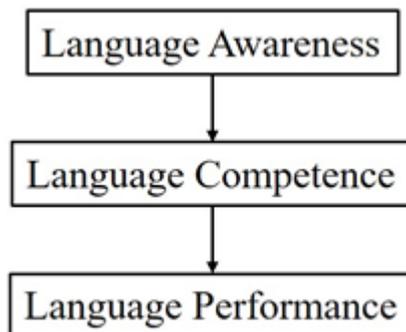
Tzu-yi Lee in the case study of *Incorporating Translation into the Language Classroom and its Potential Impacts upon L2 Learners* suggest that by looking at the student translation, it may elucidate how these students understand the text and at the same time; suggest us the teaching implication to enhance it. The finding points out that English major student tend to make mistakes in answering text based question of word or sentence meaning, while non-English major tend to make mistakes in inferring based question of guessing exact word or sentence based on context. While this case study stressed the point of view on reading comprehension, its findings on analyzing classroom and student tendency remains true. It is clear that students in Udayana University also deal with the same difficulty in comprehending context due to their lack of exposure to L2.

2.2 LANGUAGE TEACHING

Compared to audio-lingual methodology, communicative language teaching (CLT), and task based learning (TBL); grammar-translation is the oldest and the most common method that students will apply in the classroom (Harmer, 2001: 84). The grammar-translation in lexical level has also urge the students to discover vocabulary equivalence in both SL and TL as much as possible. As a result, any task chosen in the class will try to focus on lexical level rather than text comprehension.

The way second language learners behave towards activities in the classroom, refers to learning style (Harmer, 2001: 92). This learner style is classified into convergers that are self-confident and independent, conformist that prefers learning about rather than how to use the language, concrete that has additional social aspect to conformist, and communicative that is more interested in the social interaction (Harmer, 2013: 43). Due to the cultural aspect in Bali, most students in Udayana University can actually be classified into the communicative learner style. There are several occurrences in classroom activities, where students are much more interested in study cases of language use rather than explanation of grammar. These classroom phenomenons can be solved through using a concept of need analysis. The need analysis can well describe any English learning that students have to take; whether it is English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), or Business English (Harmer, 2001: 94).

It is quite obvious that by using translation, learners are choosing to use lexical approach in the language teaching methodology on their own. A lexical approach can also generate a positive effect to steer the learners away from concentration of syntax or tenses; but only with the use words in combination of a typical utterances (Harmer, 2013: 92). The common problem that may appear when using translation in language learning is how equivalencies provided may appear in several choices; therefore, has to be highly considerable in the context of language use (Harmer, 2013: 168). Therefore, language learning can be applied optimally through these three main concepts:



Picture 1: Concepts Relationship

Prior to the performance to be assessed, classroom participants have to be able to generate sufficient awareness to the language, which may be related to the present state of Balinese economy and community. This awareness will eventually raise participant competence by providing further motive to support the language acquisition. Afterwards, the two options to be considered in language performance, is whether the learner allowed to finish the task within a time limit and whether the learner may access the input data during performing a task (Ellis, 2003: 250).

2.3 ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE CLASSROOM

Significant differences occur to classroom in the faculty of Arts, due to student awareness in the language course, along with the preferred competence along any other courses. English language course in other faculties does not yield the same result to the students, since most of them viewed it as a rather noncompulsory course, which presumably can be completed through the help of basic practice of translation and their colleague aid. Based on direct class observation to three different faculties, interaction in the classroom; whether to the teacher or amongst the students, can be affected through the number of classroom participants. In the faculty of Arts, classroom participants are limited to a maximum tolerable number of around 20 students or less, which is suitable for any language course application. This number gives the participants a chance to maintain classroom interaction by fully focusing on the subject matter without any other methods of diverting their attention. Apart from the consideration of their colleague aid as a form of classroom interaction, there are several other factors that can affect the student language awareness, to competence, and their performance in English language course; they are:

2.3.1 OVER RELIANCE ON ELECTRONIC TOOLS

Technology development has taken a toll to student performance during classroom activities. This phenomenon started commonly through the use of cellphone, tablets, or any other gadgets to assist student language comprehension. Any tools in their gadgets will point out translation as the easiest method in dealing with language obstacle. One of the most common tools that students prefer is Google translation.

Google translation will provide translation of any text level; though accuracy will decrease as the level increase further. For example, translation of a single noun phrase will result in mostly accurate TL compared to translation of a full paragraph. These problems have been discussed and classified into three factors; they are frequency matching database, graphology matching database, and contextual matching database (Sena, 2014: 57). Since Google translation is using database matching process, vocabulary appearance in the internet serves to decide TL, to leave the TL untranslated, or to relate it to any contextual effect by other unit in its level.

Further negative impact that appears through the use of electronic tools is the expanding time of translation process. Internet connection, device specification, and precise input to the tool are several factors that will affect student translation process. This time postpone will eventually hinder student concentration, since equivalency will be forgotten due to the reliance on translation tool.

2.3.2 SUDDEN SITUATION AND SUBJECTIVE MATERIALS

Another factor that can change student language performance is any evaluation in form of test, quiz, or even drilling that taken abruptly during classroom session. For example, a class that is given a quiz suddenly during several last minutes of the class period will tend to provide more natural result, which appear in their assessment. Through conducting this example, students will try to take a lot more effort in comprehending SL and the process of equivalence in producing sufficient answer during the time limit.

Through selecting subjective materials in the exercise, students will also try to produce their own answer, which left their question only in related equivalence or grammar. Any hints on vocabularies or sentence structure can be shown or provided during the process; which support scaffolding in language teaching. This scaffolding refers to the learning process where student comprehension in TL and their mind mapping of TL will be improved by individual task and teacher assistance as a role model (Richards, 2001: 32).

2.3.3 CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Attitude in the classroom participant is highly affected by their cultural exchange, whether how well they adapt to other participants, or how well they can share experiences with each other. In classroom activities, participant interaction also depends on the environment; which include seating, facilities, or even student attire. Therefore, environment that refers to the situation during learning process will also depend on the participant number in the classroom. An optimal classroom during language teaching process is participated by not more than 20 students. This number is based upon the role of a single teacher and Balinese cultural views.



Picture 2: Classroom situation in Faculty of Arts

The example above shows how students in the Faculty of Arts that took English language and literature program attending their class. The picture is taken during a quiz of Prose Analysis. Due to the small number of participants and relatively spacious seating, most of these students are fully aware of each other competence and the teacher attention to the whole class. Therefore, they can; and must concentrate on the task at hand before relying on other participant or any other tools to obtain answers.



Picture 3: Classroom situation in Faculty of Economy and Business

In the Faculty of Economy and Business, another quiz conducted in Business English 1 class. As seen in the picture above, the number of students overwhelmed similar classroom size, which resulted in a very narrow seating. The number of almost 50 students leaves each participant to wonder other competence and hint it to consult the answer over. There are three students in total that is discussing the answer with other students. Furthermore, this environment suggests these students to assume that teacher attention will not reach the whole class. It is seen that two students on the far back of right and left side of the class discussing with ease. Even the front line of right side seat dares to turn and ask question to his friend at his back. This situation will also leave every participant to depend and rely on others, rather than improving their own performance. One student on the middle line of right side that is looking at her cellphone also shows that student will also rely on any tools available.



Picture 4: Classroom situation in Faculty of Marine and Fisheries

Classroom participants in the Faculty of Marine and Fisheries are not much different to the Faculty of Arts with a number of around 30 participants. Even with acceptable number of participants, this class is done in a very spacious conference room that has around 100 seats available and especially designed for participants comfort in seating. Therefore, during the same activity of a quiz, students are tempted to lax in the process and use any means necessary to acquire answer; as seen on the far right side of the picture, both students are consulting their answer and some students casually use their cellphone.

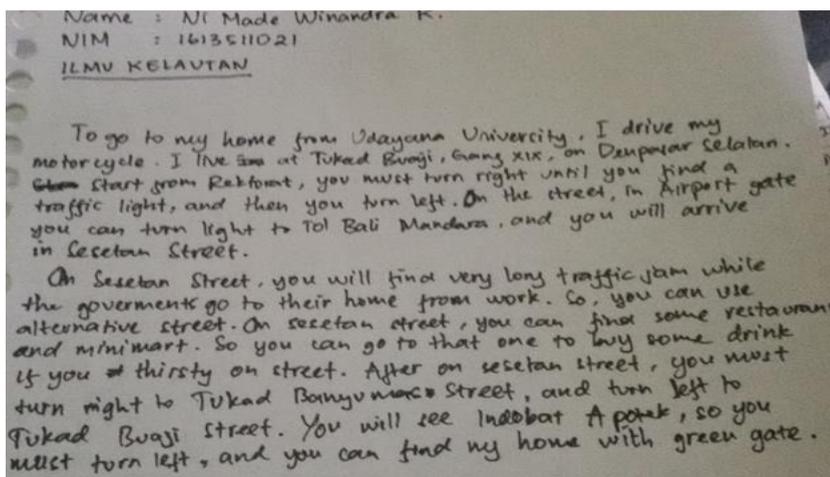
Through class observation method, the data acquired from some students quiz results of three different Faculties in Udayana University. The data are analyzed qualitatively based on purposive sampling of how translation can support and measure student performance in an appropriate classroom environment. Putting aside the same or similar answers that these students made due to the variable of classroom environment provided above, the act of translating also occur in align with the frequency of those similar answers.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through the occurrence of translation process, there are three major points that can be seen to assess the student performance; they are any lexical item generated in the answer sheet, the meaning comprehension of any textual unit, and the text construction of every single level from phrase, clause, sentences, or paragraph. These three points can be analyzed further in its equivalency to Indonesian language (SL).

3.1 GENERATING LEXICAL ITEMS

Even through the process of translation, students cannot understand the appropriate equivalence of several lexical items due to their lack of experience and nature of TL. Several vocabularies used in the sentence are generated either through the most common vocabularies chosen or through language competence of SL; which is memorized in Indonesian language.

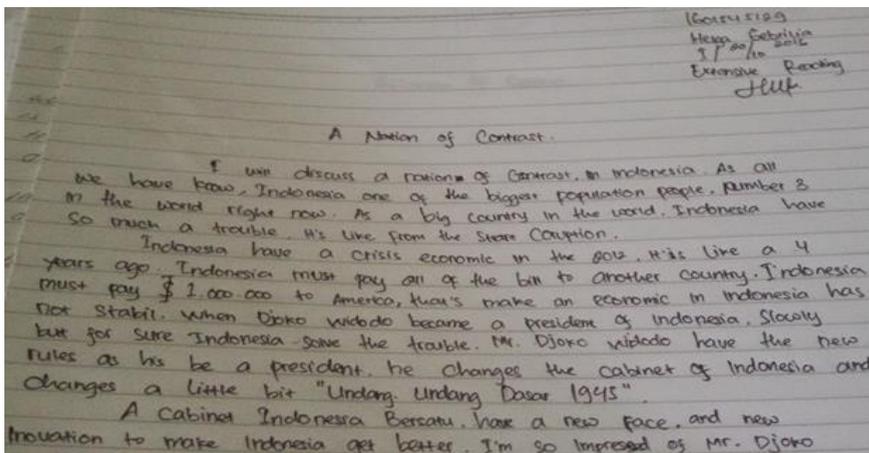


The example above is a result taken from a quiz in the class, where the students are asked to personally create sentences in English language to provide direction to their own respective address. Several findings from this result are: *Rektorat* that supposed to be translated into *Rector Office* (line 3), *Tol* that should be *Highway* and placed at the back (line 5), *goverments* into *public service officers* (line 8), and *Apotek* into *Pharmacy* (line 13). These mistakes occur due to the student lack of competence in TL, which drove him to assume that these vocabularies are taken account as cultural terms that supposed to be left untranslated.

Moreover, through the result of this quiz that emphasized on the comprehension of preposition, there are some other grammatical findings such as *on the street* (line 4) and *after* (line 11) that can be erased, *on Sesian street* (line 9 and 11) that should be replaced with *after that*, and *with* into *by* (line 14). Those answer are written, since students are trying to find meaning equivalence of each preposition and its translation in TL, by using the nature of SL. Most of these findings occur due to student frequent reliance on translation that will mislead the boundaries of SL and TL through equivalency.

3.2 COMPREHENDING MEANING

Students cannot acquire meaning on their own, since they are not familiar with the TL. Whenever the translation process done based on its SL and TL meaning equivalence, the product will not appear naturally, since it will still be seen as a product. By paraphrasing, students are encouraged to memorize the whole text messages and produce TL that arranged through these messages. Through this process, students will generate meaning impulsively based on their language competence.

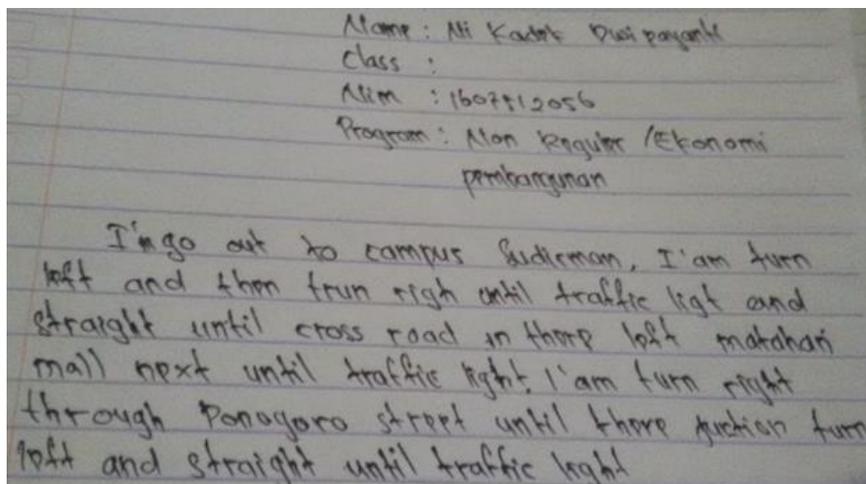


From the example above, there are several vocabularies and sentence meaning, where its translation equivalence does not acceptable. Students are tasked to memorize a short article and rewrote it on their own. The phrase *biggest population people* (line 2) due to the word meaning of *people* that

should be erased, the word *trouble* (line 4) that has similar meaning to problem in less negative semantic properties, *start* (line 4) that should be *beginning* due to whole phrase meaning with *corruption*, several use of articles of *a* (line 5) and *an* (line 7) must be erased, *a* (line 8) should be *the*, *the* (line 9) should be *a*, along with other vocabularies such as *stabil* (line 8), *undang-undang* (line 11) and *cabinet* (line 12). Though there are several other mistakes on the text, examples above have shown that vocabularies and articles meaning generated consecutively will result in whole meaning disarray. Since there are several cases of homonym and homograph between SL and TL, students frequently assume that their competence suffices to generate equivalence without any translation tool aid.

3.3 FORMING TEXT

Text that students made are still in the nature of Indonesian language; where common lexical items are duplicated to emphasize meaning. Memorizing short messages and recreating the text will drove the students to use back translation after the writing finished. Further exposure to the TL will drove the students to form text in closer nature to the SL. Therefore, sentence structure and grammatical form of TL can affect translation result, which fail to create sufficient meaning equivalence. Furthermore, due to the development of SL, some of the text punctuations have even neglected.



From the example above, students are tasked with the same quiz of giving direction. Most parts of the text above have neglected the use of full stop or any comma to separate sentences or clauses. Apart from punctuation, there are obvious mistakes of several vocabularies writing such as *turn* into *trun* (line 2), *right* into *righ* (line 2), *light* into *ligt* (line 2), *crossroad* into *cross road* (line 3), *junction* into *juction* (line 5), and the use of *I* that is written by *I'm* or even *I'am*. Both punctuations and vocabularies can be stated as a part of student competence that also stimulated by sudden situation and time limit of

the task. From using back translation, the nature of SL seen in several examples, such as

- a) Line 2: turn right until traffic light in Indonesian language is *belok kanan sampai lampu merah*; missing the subject and verb in TL that supposed to be written *turn right until I see traffic light*.
- b) Line 3: *in there left Matahari mall* in Indonesian language is *disana di sebelah kiri Matahari mal*; aside from the missing pronoun and auxiliary, preposition is placed and inputted aligned to SL that renders the TL in disarray. The sentence written should be *there on my left is Matahari mall*.
- c) Line 5: *until there junction* in Indonesian language is *sampai disana persimpangan*; another example of missing auxiliary of *is* and article *a* to emphasize the noun that should have change the sentence into *until there is a junction*. This TL occurs due to further exposure to SL that drove the student competence in SL into a less formal form of the sentence *sampai disana ada persimpangan*. Further example that supports this finding is in the last line, where *until traffic light* is the only phrase written even without the word *there* anymore.

IV CONCLUSION

Based on previous discussion, the three major points can be used to optimize language teaching method, which refers to the language assessment done in these classrooms, Apart from the significance of classroom situation that can greatly alter suitable method to be applied, by looking at the lexical choices, comprehending the meaning, and observing the text properties, language performance can be assessed in unbiased manner. By using these three points, results can be defined as natural language performance or as a result of a mere translation product.

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