Pursuing a Career in Translation for Indonesian Speakers

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ABSTRACT

Since becoming a translator needs certain skills and qualifications, this article providesdetailed information on the process from starting and developing a career in translation. Based on accessible references and a limited interview with a professional translator, some recommendations are in place. A perspective translator has to go through the following procedures; (1) acquisition and development of language competence, (2) translation competence development, (3) translation market, and (4) career development. Being a successful translator, one should have known how to start, including how to tell people their existence and knowing their skills and abilities in translation; how they manage their personal and financial management, how they deal with customers, and what to do if things go wrong.

Keywords: *Indonesian speaker, translation career, translation management*

INTRODUCTION

Transferring a message through language can be done by any means of communication. The use of language is implemented in some fields such as business, travelling, and education among the nations. However, different countries have different languages. To accommodate the differences, translation is highlyneeded. Hence, the existence of a translator is crucial. Not everybody can be a translator and not every translator can translate a certain document. Translation isnot only a matter of dealing with language mastery but also there are two main other aspects a translator should consider: having a good knowledge on various world matters and understanding translation users' needs. Therefore, becoming a translator, one should ideally possess at least a BA in English or equivalence. Besides, a translator should know their capability and of course they should have a good translation competence.

According to Dodd (2012), if someone wants to become a translator, one should master the native language first. Second, one should have the idea that one language has different letters/alphabet to another language. Third, learn the new language's rules: the verbs, adverbs, adjectives and other aspects. And last, in doing translation one should finish the work as soon as possible yet accurate since some clients want fast translation. To start translation as a career, one can apply as a freelance translator for beginning and later one can start to manage the career development such as by setting up the work schedule.

Based on our interview with the manager of Pemad International Translation, it is considered that translation has some steps. They are translating, editing, and proofreading. Those steps can be done by qualified translators only, either freelancers or translators who work for a translation company. Meanwhile, a translator is different from interpreter. "Although translation and interpreting have a lot in common, they are separate professions requiring different skills and different types of training," (European Commission, 2009, p. 5). If an interpreter deals with spoken word, on the other hand, translator deals with written word. According to European Commission

(2009), translators have to write texts which convey the message and content of the source language accurately and should be grammatically correct and readable in the target language. In contrary, interpreters provide spoken versions which convey the message and intentions of the original speaker into target language. With the existence of *Himpunan Penerjemah Indonesia* (HPI) – a translationorganization in Indonesia which was founded on February 5th, 1974 in Jakarta shows that the need of translator in Indonesia is increased. HPI is a member of FIT (*Fédération internationale des traducteurs*) or International Translator Federation. According to the information from *www.hpi.or.id*, HPI has 55 professional English into Indonesian translators and 22 professional Indonesian into English translators. Both of the categories are for translating general text. For translating legal text, HPI has eight professional English into Indonesian translators and 11 professional Indonesian into English translators. There must be a large number of translators outside HPI as well. With translators' existence, it accommodates Indonesian people to meet their needs of translation from Indonesian into the target language. Therefore, this article describes how to pursue a career as a translator for Indonesian speakers.

BECOMING A TRANSLATOR

People may perceive that becoming a translator is only a matter of mastering source and target languages of the textsthat are going to be translated. Mastering source and target languages perhaps is the most basic requirement one needs in order to be a translator. However, in its practice, a translator should also consider about other important things when he or she has to consider in becoming a translator rather than just focusing on the language mastery. There are two main aspects beside language mastery which should be put into account when one wants to pursue a career as a translator, namely having a good knowledge on various world matters and understanding translation users' needs.

To be a good translator, one should have a wide range of knowledge that existsin the world, whether it is the knowledge about science, philosophy, technology, politics, law, religion, and the other aspects. Robinson (1997) defines translators as, "those who are having a huge appetite for reading and hungry for real-world experience" (p.23). This definition explains that translators are those who have wide horizon in seeing the world. By having wide horizon in seeing the world, translators are expected to be mind-readers which can produce a flawless translation without having to consult theauthor of the original text (Samuelson- Brown, 2010, p.3). Having a good knowledge will surely serve translators the information on various aspects of the world which will lead to positive effects on the translation process and its product.

Besides having a good knowledge, one needs to understand the translation clients' needs. This is simply because the translator does his/her job in order to satisfy the clients' needs. Clients are those who use translators' service to help them deal with texts in other languages for any use necessary. Robinson (1997) states that"The primary characteristics of a good translator are similar to the expectations translation users have for the ideal translation: a good translator is reliable andfast, and will work for the going rate" (p.24). Therefore, translators should take a good care on translation users' thoughtsand expectations in order to meet the users' satisfaction. In addition, a good communication between translator and translation's users is necessary. The importance of the communication is to make sure that both the translator and the client have similar understanding and expectation for the translation. Samuelson-

Brown (2010) states that "it is important that there be a clear and unambiguous with the translation service provider at all times during the translation process" (p.41).Thus, in order to meet the translation users' need, translator should maintain clear communication with the user during the translation process.

Being a translator might be recognized simply as a job of transferring texts from the source language into the target language which practically deals with language mastery, both the source and target language. However, there are also other aspects that one should take into account when becoming a translator, namely having a wide knowledge on various disciplines and having a good communication skill. Having both requirements mentioned above, a possibility in related to any kind of texts from various disciplines will surely be guaranteed and clients' expectations willbe accommodated clearly.

HOW TO START

Pursuing a career in translation might be difficult for those who have no related experiences. Therefore, in this part of the article, the writers provide information on how to start the job. In addition to starting the job, the readers are expected to understand what a translator is.

What is a Translator?

Before one decides to be a translator, it is better to know what a translator is. Catford (1965) defines translation as "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language (TL) (p. 20)". Translation is the outcome of translator's work. Therefore, translators are humans whose job is to transfer written works from source language (SL) to target language (TL). They have to be fluent in two ormore languages. According to McKay (2006), "the product of translators' works, most of the time, are in the translators' native language (p.17)".

Being a translator is a promising yet challenging career. It is challengingbecause there are a lot of things which need to be mastered before one is considered a translator. According to McKay (2006), "being a translator is not necessarily mastering more than a language but one needs to experience the languages in their very own environments"(p. 18). Aside from that, McKay (2006) adds that "being a professional translator, consistency in the usage of terminology referencing materials is important but one should put in mind that having the consistency will not give immediate effect for the translation" (p.19). Therefore, finding a suitable terminology for a word is not a simple job. To clarify various translation aspects, Brown (2010) suggests several important skills to be considered in becoming a translator, which can be clustered as follows:

Table 1. Translation Skills (Brown, 2010).

No.	Translation Skills	
1.	Cultural Understanding	- Understanding aspects which influence the development of the source language. - Understanding the national characteristics where language is natively spoken. - Understanding the danger of stereotyping
2.	Information Technology	- Utilizing hardware and software in translation production. - Managing files electronically. - Trading the service using the internet (e-commerce).
3.	Making Decisions	- Consulting the stakeholders about the translation.

No.	Translation Skills	
		- Reflecting on the translation process and product - Analyzing and evaluating the process product - Establishing facts relating to the translation - Making judgments on the process and product.
4.	Communication	- Showing clarity of expression. - Establishing rapport. - Giving and processing feedback. - Listening and questioning. - Observing and checking understanding
5.	Language and Literacy	- Understanding of the source language. - Writing skills in the target language. - Proofreading and editing.
6.	Project Management	- Resource coordination. - Terminology research. - Administration. - Quality Control

The aspects above are practically needed by translation. Each of the sub skill above might overlap any other sub-skills depending on how a personal translator manages his or her way to manage his or her translation skill during the translation work according to his or her preference. However, all of the skills mentioned above cannot be acquired instantly. One needs time to sharpen each of the skills.

Translating English-Indonesian and Indonesian-English

Doing a translation from English into Indonesian is one of the services that might be served by Indonesian translators. However, before starting to do the English-Indonesian translation, first the translator needs to have sufficient language competence in both of the languages. The second important thing is that the translators need to be good in understanding the culture where the sourcetext is spoken and written. By understanding the culture, altogether with its sub-skills that has mentioned above, translator will be able to produce comprehensive translation. The third important aspect is that the translator should understand similar aspects of the source language in the target language which is Indonesian. It helps the work, particularly when the translator is dealing with the case of localization. The fourth aspect is that the translators need to know the standard rate for an English-Indonesian translation. Most of the time, the rate set by most translation agencies depends on several aspects of the source text. They are type of materials translated. For instance, novels, books, manuals (and subtitles), the field of the text translated for examples, medicine, law, general, engineering, the quantity of work in a project, and the difficulty of the given project. The translator qualifications might also be the consideration for clients when they are deciding how much they are going to pay for the translation.

Translating Indonesian into English is quite challenging since Indonesian and English have many differences in words, including technical terms. According to Arifin (2009) “Source Language SL and Target Language TL rarely have the same meaning (p. 37)”. Therefore, the translator needs to keep in mind that translation is a job of transferring messages. Sometimes, translating using the word by word technique is not required. Newmark (1988) as cited in Arifin (2009) suggests some procedures of translating Indonesian into

English. The procedures are "(1) Textual level, (2) Referential level, the translator looks at some general references like dictionaries, encyclopedias, glossaries, books, internet, magazines, and newspapers. (3) Cohesive Level (4)Natural Level. In textual level, a translator will have to understand the types of texts that are translated especially in terms of words and sentences." Following the procedures, translator can do the job easier with reliable result of the translation.

The Steps of Pursuing Translation Career

In this section, the writers provide detailed information on the steps of pursuing a translation career. The steps are based on several theories, an interview with a manager of a translation company, and personal experience of the writers. Thesteps are described as follows:

Language Competence Acquisition and Development

After considering the basic general aspects mentioned above, the next thing to do is setting up and developing self as a translator. This is the time when a translator start to think about how and where to begin putting him or herself in translation business as a translator. There are two main things to look at when setting up and developing self as a translator, namely (1) showing his or her existence and (2) developing business skills.

As a starting point, a translator should be able to reveal his or herself to those who need the service. Nowadays, theexistence of internet has helped human being in many aspects of life including promoting and advertising. If a translator is interested in revealing his or herself to those who need translation service, he or she can use the internet as a self promoting media. One of the websites that might be useful for a freelance translator is www.proz.com. One of the benefits of joining as *proZ* member is the opportunity to receive assignments in interpreting and translation jobs. It is suitable for a translator who works for a translator agency or direct clients. According to McKay (2006), "the translator only needsto write strong resume that will help attract potential clients who will give translation job (p.44)". In addition, Brown (2010) says that "besides finding clients through *proZ,* there is also a chance to work as a junior ortrainee staff especially for beginner translators who have not got experience required by translation agency (p.18)". By doing such thing, one would have an opportunity to learn more from those who are experienced in a translation job.

The next step is developing business skills. Developing business skills means there are several aspects of business that one needs to develop once he or she decides to be a translator. This is because being a translator, especially for those who are working with direct clients or those who are planning to have his or her own translation agency, needs to master business skills as a mean to help them in dealing with business aspects of managing service. McKay (2006) proposes 6 skills needed by individual freelance translatoror agency in managing their business such as "marketing, communicating, accounting, using technology, billing and collection, and dealing with ups and downs (pp. 61-63)". Marketing skill is needed when a translator is promoting his or her service using various techniques and strategies in order to attract possible clients, as described on the following table:

Table 2. The Steps of Pursuing Translation Career

No	Aspects	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step ….
4	Career Development	Set work schedule timelines	Translation management		
3	Translation market Association	Apply as a beginning freelance translator	Join a translation organization	Set the rates	Find the clients
2	Translation competence development	Translate a short text manually	Considering the readers.	Compare with CA Translation	Familiarity with the software.
1	Language competence. acquisition and development	Learn the native language.	The concept: Translation is a job of transferring message.	BA English or equivalent	

Communicating skill is related to communication performed by translator in order to persuading deals, having deal, and finalizing contract with translation agencies. It is practically needed for majority of successful deal with clients which usually have direct effect on translator/translation agency's income. Accounting skill is needed in order to keep eye on income record which will have account on decision making on financial policy. Using technology is considered important for the role of technology in making the job easier than working with pens and books. Beside, technology also served simpler operation on various managerial jobs aside from translatingitself. Billing and collection skill deal with billing clients. This skill is practically needed because the skill a translator/translation agency will learn how to deal with a disagreement on quality of the translation and time that is allotted during the translation process from clients.

Translation Competence Development

The special thing about working as a freelance translator is that he or she can work at home by using available equipment without needing to have office like equipment. According to McKay (2006), regarding equipment, it is always better to start with the simplest equipment but keep it looks as a professional (p.64). The most important equipment to be made available by a single freelance translator is computer. McKay (2006) suggests that, if necessary, a translator prepares an ergonomic keyboard in order to avoid any injuries that might occur during the work (p.64). Internet access is another important aspect which is practically needed since it serves various benefits in terms of communication (e-mail, blogging, networking, etc.) and terminology references (online dictionaries). Those are the primary equipment needed when one is starting his or her career as a translator. There might be more equipment needed to help the job of the translator, but better to put them as long-term plan which will be fulfilled once the translator have more demanding jobs from the clients.

In helping a translator to deal with massive and great number of consistent terminology, a tool is practically needed. However, many people may expect that the tool should have to be able to do the translation under the perception that computer can help make things easier by doing the job for human. There are some software/application that can serve that

kind of expectation. However, translation produced by the applications might not as perfect as what is expected by clients or even the translator. According to McKay (2006),

> "Translation memory software doesn't do the translation for you; rather it helps human translators work faster and more accurately by recycling material that has already been translated and suggesting a match between the old translation and the current one (p.80)".

Therefore, one needs to differ *translation memory software* from *machine translator software* in order to make the most out of each.

Translation Market Association

For this step, the writers provide a brief summary in a figure. The four steps are taken to achieve the goals dealing with the translation market association.

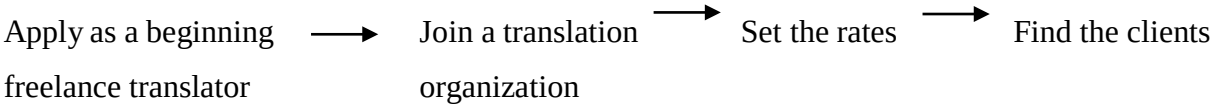


Figure 1. Translation Market Association Steps

Career Development

This step enables the translators to develop their career by setting the work schedule timeline and managing the job. After following previous steps, translators need to improve their skills and professionalism. The translation management itself consists of two aspects; personal and financial management.

Setting the Work Schedule Timeline

Translators need to set up the work schedule timeline to assist them to dealwith the job. If the job is well-organized, they can have fewer problems by followingthe timeline. Moreover, they can target their job since they have set the plans. Therefore, the translation job is moremanageable.

Translation Management

After starting the career, the translators need to deal with clients. It is not the matter of how many clients they can get to keep working. Besides, they need to control their quality and strategy to keep the relationship going well. Based on the interview on November 3rd, 2015 with Pemad translators, they have the quality control of the business. They have the terms and conditions when they will deal with the clients. The terms and conditions can be a good way to avoid having misunderstanding with the clients, giving the payment late, and problems dealing with deadlines. Working as a translator might be time consuming. It deals with deadlines, complicated payment, promotion, and editing. Therefore, the translators should spend several days to have holiday. When they are having their holiday, make sure that they have notified their clients so that there will be no misunderstanding of the jobs.

Controlling the financial management is the next concern. Financial is a serious case to think about. When the translators do mistakes related to financial especially when dealing with clients, it will affect their work quality. The translator need to consider how the clients should pay, how if the clients pay late, and how if they do not pay. The translators also need to consider the standard of the payment which is

changing by the time. Based on the interview with Pemad translators, they have the rule in the financial matter. In charging the work, Pemad is following the fee standard offered by the freelancer. The higher the profile, the higher the rate will be. The highest rate is usually for translator for technical: translating industrial machine, medical, and engineering; and legal work because the material is difficult and not every translator can do that. The payment is done by delivering the invoice to the clients. The invoice is made based on purchase order from the clients.

CONCLUSION

Pursuing a career as a translator for Indonesian speakers is promising yet challenging. The job is challenging when the translator has to deal with uncommon terms that they should find the suitable meaning in the target language. The job is promising regarding the salary that translators will get. To pursue a career as a translator, especially for Indonesian speakers, he or she needs to master the source language – English, for example,and target languages of the texts. Moreover, the translator needs to have a good knowledge on various world matters and understand translation users' needs. After acquiring the knowledge, he or she can start pursuing the job by setting up anddeveloping self as a translator. The translator needs to consider how and whereto get the job. Showing our existence in theinternet will help him a lot to promote himself as a translator. After showing our existence, he or she can start developing the business. Developing the business can be done by joining a translation organization to improve his or hertranslation skills.

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