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ANALYSIS ON CLARITY AND CORRECTNESS OF GOOGLE TRANSLATE IN TRANSLATING AN INDONESIAN ARTICLE INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to analyze the aspects of clarity and correctness in Google Translate's ability in translating an Indonesian article from English into Indonesian. This research refers to qualitative research. Data used in this research is a published Indonesian article which is translated into English by using Google Translate. Based on the analysis, the researcher concludes that Google Translate is a machine translator, but there is always going to be potentially less clarity and correctness at the end of the translation product such as in Indonesian articles into English. Because English grammar is a complicated thing to be learned, people perhaps cannot expect more that machine translator understands every aspect of the way human beings communicate with each other. That is why the answer about the clarity and the correctness of Google Translate is that it still has a way to go before it can consistently, clearly, and correctly translate the language without errors. In the clarity aspect, there is still no clarity in English translation by Google Translate, even it translated the language word-for-word. In the correctness aspect, it refers to the mechanical rule in writing which is related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Some examples of non-correctness are related to grammar and punctuation errors. Machine translators have come a long way in a short amount of time, but some features still lack good translation such as in aspects of grammar and punctuation.

Keywords: Google translate, translation, article, clarity, correctness

Introduction

The idea of using computers in translating human language is almost as old as the computer itself (Trujillo, 2012, p. 4). Machine translations have also increased in complexity and usability in recent years, beyond what we expected. It has increased in recent years because of the increase in English communication between countries in the world (Li et al., 2014). Many people have proposed that an endangered species could be human translators. Currently, several online translator sites can translate every language in the world. Machine translation (MT) is a perfectly appropriate solution to translation, but where there is a lack of

comprehension or unreasonable standards, complications often follow (Calvin, 2017).

Machine translation translates text or voice from one language into another using algorithms. To easily substitute words in one language with words in another, MT uses a machine translation engine but that alone typically does not generate the highest quality translation of a text. (Gubler, 2016) states that machine translation is a machine that uses translation tools to translate written or spoken texts from one language to another, such as a computer, tablet, or smartphone.

Because of its simplicity, Google Translate is one of the most used machine translation services. At present, more than 100 billion words a day are translated (McGuire, 2019). He also adds that the use of automatic machine translation such as statistical machine translation service, Google Translate (GT) was launched in April 2006, using documents from the United Nations and the European Parliament to gather linguistic data. It searched for similarities in these documents during translation to help determine what the correct translation was (Twose, 2019). Google Translate has been the go-to resource for fast, easy foreign language translations on the internet (Sommerlad, 2018). Indeed, millions of people worldwide use this service every day to translate any language (Herlina et al., 2019).

Correctness is about a mechanical rule in writing. It has two points, both factual precision and mechanical correctness (Major, 2008, p. 8). Correctness is also related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling even capitalization. Some examples of correctness are misspelling (or spelling error), punctuation error, agreement of subject and verb, and other common errors (Major, 2008, p. 10). Nordquist (2019) states that the term conciseness (clarity) refers to language that is brief and to the point in speech or writing. Concise writing must convey a simple meaning using an economy of words to be effective. Conciseness or clarity is essential to getting your message across accurately and efficiently. Justesen (2017) states that concise means writing everything that is needed in as few words as possible. In improving the comprehension and understanding of writing, clarity is one of the essential dimensions of good writing. Clear writing communicates best (Harris, 2017). According to Li (2013, p. 189), clarity refers to words or groups of words used to express the intended meaning correctly without ambiguity to the other.

There are some previous studies relating to this research. The first, research is written by Nadhianti (2016) entitled "An Analysis of Accuracy Level of Google Translate In English-Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Indonesia-English Translations". The goal of this study is to find the accuracy level of Google Translate in English-Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Indonesia-English Translations. The second research is written by Ulfah (2015) entitled "An Accuracy Analysis in Indonesian-English Translation Using "Google Translate" Machine Translation". The goal of this study is to figure out the effectiveness of "Google Translate" in translating English sentences into Indonesian sentences. There are difference and similarity both two previous studies focus on the accuracy and this research. The two previous studies above focus on the accuracy level of Google Translate, and they also have the same purpose of the research to find the accuracy level or the effectiveness of translation. While, this study, also

focuses on Google Translate, but this research wants to know the aspect of clarity and correctness of the translation result.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher wants to study Google Translate. Therefore, the researcher writes the title “Analysis of Google Translate in Translating Article from Indonesian into English: Clarity and Correctness”. The objectives of this study are to analyze the aspects of clarity and correctness in Google Translate’s ability in translating Indonesian articles from English into Indonesian.

Method

This research refers to qualitative research. According to Watzlawik & Born (2007, p. 59), qualitative research is a research approach that leads to a comprehensive understanding of the perception, explanation, and analysis of reality. The principle is focusing on a single case. The technique of collecting data used is document analysis. As stated by Patton (2002, p. 4) that qualitative data findings consist of three kinds of data collection, such as in-depth or open-ended interviews, observation (direct), and written documents. So that, the document used in this research is taken from an Indonesian article written by Fitria (2018b) entitled “Implementasi Program Kegiatan "English Club" Sebagai Salah Satu Kegiatan Mahasiswa di STIE AAS Surakarta”. Then, this article is translated into English. The translations can be found in various writing both non-academic writing and academic writing, such as article journals (Fitria, 2018a). Document content is important because such content may be studied during the research (Silverman, 2004, p. 77). The technique of analyzing data in this research uses three flows of steps, such as 1) data condensation or data reduction, 2) data display, and 3) drawing conclusions or verification (Miles et al., 2014, p. 12).

Findings and Discussion

Some findings related to this research show the aspects of clarity and correctness in Google Translate’s ability in translating Indonesian articles from English into Indonesian. There are some examples of clarity and correctness in translation result by using Google Translate as follow:

Clarity

Clarity refers to words or groups of words used to express the intended meaning correctly without ambiguity to the other. For example:

- Indonesian article : ...perlombaan bahasa Inggris yang diikuti mahasiswa **sejumlah** anggota English Club, ...
Google Translation : ...English Language Competition which is participated by **a number of** English Club members, ...

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “sejumlah” is translated to be “a number of”. The phrase may be wordy so that it is considering changing the other wording which cannot influence the meaning in the context. So, the better English translation is “some”, “several”, or “many”.

Indonesian article : ...agar mahasiswa **mampu** berkomunikasi dan berwacana dalam bahasa Inggris.

Google Translation : ...skills so that students **are able to** communicate and speak in English.

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “mampu” is translated to be “are able to” or “to be + able to”. The phrase may be wordy so that it is considering changing the other wording which cannot influence the meaning in the context. So, the better English translation is “can”.

Indonesian article : **Ada beberapa kegiatan** yang bisa dilakukan pada kegiatan English Club, ...

Google Translation : **There are several activities** that can be carried out in English Club activities, ...

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “Ada beberapa kegiatan” is translated to be “There are several activities”. The meaning is similar to the Indonesian meaning, but Google Translate translates it word-by-word. The English translation can be changed into “several activities” only by removing “there are” because it cannot influence the meaning in the context. So, a better English translation is “several activities”.

Indonesian article : ... apa yang mereka lihat **atas dasar** minat mereka, latar belakang, pengalaman, dan sikap.

Google Translation : ...what they see **on the basis of** their interests, backgrounds, experiences, and attitudes.

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “atas dasar” is translated to be “on the basis of”. The phrase may be wordy so that it is considering changing the other wording which cannot influence the meaning in the context. So, a better English translation is “based on”.

Indonesian article : maka peneliti **mengambil kesimpulan** bahwa...

Google Translation : the researcher **draws the conclusion** that...

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “mengambil kesimpulan” is translated to be “draws the conclusion”. The meaning is the same as the Indonesian meaning, but Google Translate translates it word-by-word. The English translation can be changed into

“draws the conclusion” only because it cannot influence the meaning in the context. Then, the phrase “conduct research in” maybe unnecessarily wordy. It is considered to replace the noun with a corresponding verb. So, a better English translation is “conclude”.

Indonesian article : ...**sebagaimana yang nyata** terjadi dalam arti temuan fakta

Google Translation : ...it **actually** occurs in the sense of fact finding...

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “sebagaimana yang nyata” is translated to be “actually”. The phrase “conduct research in” maybe unnecessarily in this sentence. It is considered to replace or remove it. So, a better English translation is “some members”.

Indonesian article : ... English Club **untuk melakukan penelitian** dalam kelompok English Club...

Google Translation : ...English Club group **to conduct research** in the English Club

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “untuk melakukan penelitian” is translated to be “to conduct research”. The meaning is the same as the Indonesian meaning, but Google Translate translated it word-by-word. The English translation can be changed into “research” only by removing “to conduct” because it cannot influence the meaning in the context. Then, the phrase “conduct research in” maybe unnecessarily wordy. It is considered to replace the noun with a corresponding verb. So, a better English translation is “some members”.

Indonesian article : Data hasil observasi tersebut kemudian dibandingkan apakah **sesuai dengan data** hasil wawancara.

Google Translation : The observational data is then compared whether it is **in accordance with** the interview data.

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “sesuai dengan hasil data” is translated to be “in accordance with”. The phrase may be wordy so that it is considering changing the other wording which cannot influence the meaning in the context. So, the better English translation is “by, following, under”.

Indonesian article : ..., dimana mahasiswa duduk **dengan cara melingkar**...

Google Translation : ..., where students sit **in a circular way** and...

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English

translation. In Indonesian, “dengan cara melingkar” is translated to be “In a circular way”. The meaning is similar to the Indonesian meaning, but Google Translate translates translated it word-by-word. The English translation can be changed into “circularly” which refers to an adverb. As we know that in English, the adverb of manner is formed by Adjective + ly. While Indonesian adverb is formed by ‘dengan + adjective’. This adverb also cannot influence the meaning in the context. So, a better English translation is “circularly”.

Indonesian article : ..., apalagi **ada beberapa anggota** English Club yang merupakan mahasiswa olimpiade.

Google Translation : ,..., especially **there are some members of** the English Club who are Olympic students.

The example above shows that the Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it is seen that there is no clarity in English translation. In Indonesian, “Ada beberapa anggota” is translated to be “There are some members of”. The meaning is similar to the Indonesian meaning, but Google Translate translates translated it word-by-word. The English translation can be changed into “some members” only by removing “there are” because it cannot influence the meaning in the context. So, a better English translation is “some members”.

Correctness

Correctness is a mechanical rule in writing both factual precision and mechanical. It is also related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling even capitalization. Some examples of correctness are misspelling (or spelling error), punctuation error, agreement of subject and verb, and other common errors. For example:

Grammar

Grammar is the set of rules that describes how words or word groups can be arranged to form a sentence in a particular language (Cowan, 2008, p. 3). Fitria (2018a) states that grammar is the system of a language or sometimes it can be said as "rules" of a language. Without grammar, we cannot make a good language and the language we produce will not be understood by others (Fitria, 2020a).

Indonesian article : mengungkapkan persepsi pada **hakikatnya**...

Google Translation : states that perception is **essentially**

The example above shows that the bold phrase is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show that the correctness in English translation. In Indonesian, “hakikatnya” is translated to be “essentially”. The word shows grammar errors. It appears that the adverb “essentially” should be an adjective based on the sentence structure. It should be replaced by an adjective. So, the correct word is “essential”.

Indonesian article : English Club banyak ditemui dekat kedutaan Inggris lalu merambah ke lembaga pendidikan sebagai ekskul yang cukup diminati.

Google Translation : English Club is often found near British embassies and then spread to educational institutions as extracurricular that **is** quite in demand.

The example above shows that Indonesian is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show the correctness in English translation especially in to be because Indonesian does not use 'to be' like in English. If we see the 'to be' is written "is" refers to the singular. The 'to be' here shows grammar errors. It appears that the verb 'is' does not agree with the subject. It should be changed by the other verb form. So, the correct verb 'to be' is "are" with appropriate with plural subject "British embassies" and "educational institutions".

Indonesian article : Penelitian ini **menggunakan** pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif.

Google Translation : This research **use** descriptive qualitative approach.

The example above shows that the bold phrase is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show that the correctness in English translation. The example above shows that the Indonesian word "menggunakan" is translated into "use" in English. Here, the plural verb 'use' does not appear to agree with the singular subject "this research". It should be changed by the other verb form. So, the correct verb is "uses". Therefore, it shows that Google translate cannot translate the word correctly based on the rule of subject-verb agreement in English grammar.

Indonesian article : ...sebagai salah satu variabel campur tangan (intervening variable), **bergantung** pada faktor-faktor perangsang, ...

Google Translation : ...as one of the intervening variables, **depending** on stimulating factors, ...

The example above shows that the bold phrase is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show that the correctness in English translation. The example above shows that the Indonesian word "bergantung" is translated into "depending" in English. Here, the verb 'depending' does not appear to agree with the plural subject "intervening variables". It should be changed by the other verb form. So, the correct verb is "depend". Therefore, it shows that Google translate cannot translate the word correctly based on the rule of subject-verb agreement in English grammar.

Indonesian article : Kedua, Wall Magazine atau majalah dinding yang diadakan setiap sebulan sekali.

Google Translation : Second, **the** Wall Magazine which is held once a

month.

The example above shows that Indonesian is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show the correctness in English translation especially in grammar. In Indonesian, there is not found a determiner or kata sandang, but the result of its English translation appears determiner/article “the” which is unnecessary in this context. It should remove it.

Indonesian article : Jadi hambatan utama mereka adalah waktu yang harus **dibagi-bagi dengan** kegiatan lain...
Google Translation : So their main obstacle is the time that must be **divided with** other activities...

The example above shows that Indonesian is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show the correctness in English translation especially in grammar. In Indonesian, the passive form “dibagi-bagi” is translated into English passive form “divided with” or V3 (by using past participle). Google translate translated into word-for-word, “dibagi dengan” into “divided with”. But, there is a grammar error of “divided with”. It appears that preposition use may be incorrect here. Google translate does not follow the rule of English grammar about Phrase + Prepositions. It should be changed into “divided into”.

Punctuation

Punctuation is the music of language. Without punctuation, the writing can be ambiguous and misinterpretation (A'Morelli, 2017).

Indonesian article : ...peristiwa yang nyata terjadi dalam arti **temuan fakta**.
Google Translation : ...event that occurs in the sense of the **fact finding**.

The example above shows that the bold phrase is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show that the correctness in English translation. In Indonesian, “temuan fakta” is translated to be “fact finding”. The meaning is the same as the Indonesian meaning, Google can translate translated it correctly. But, it shows a punctuation error. It appears that “fact finding” is missing a hyphen. It should be added by a hyphen. So, better writing is “fact-finding”.

In the aspect of clarity, it refers to the language that is brief and to the point. It means that the use of words or groups of words used to express the intended meaning correctly without ambiguity to the other. Indonesian article is translated into English by using Google Translate, but it shows that there is no clarity in English translation. For example 1) In Indonesian, “sejumlah” is translated to be “a number of”. The phrase may be wordy, it should be changed into other words. 2) In Indonesian, “mampu” is translated to be “are able to” or “to be + able to”. it should be changed into “can”. 3) In Indonesian, “Ada beberapa kegiatan” is translated to be “There are several activities”. Google Translate translates it word-by-word. it should be changed into “several activities”. 4) In Indonesian, “atas dasar” is translated to be “on the basis of”. it should be changed into “based on”. 5) In Indonesian, “mengambil kesimpulan” is translated to be “draws the

conclusion”. Google Translate translated it word-by-word. it should be changed into “conclude”. 6) In Indonesian, “sebagaimana yang nyata” is translated to be “actually”. it should be changed into other words. 7) In Indonesian, “untuk melakukan penelitian” is translated to be “to conduct research”. Google translate it word-by-word. it should be changed into “to research”. 8) In Indonesian, “sesuai dengan hasil data” is translated to be “in accordance with”. The phrase is maybe wordy. It should be changed into “by, following, under”. 9) In Indonesian, “dengan cara melingkar” is translated to be “In a circular way”. Google Translate translates it word-by-word. The English translation can be changed into “circularly” which refers to the adverb. It should be changed into “circulary”. Then, 10) In Indonesian, “Ada beberapa anggota” is translated to be “There are some members of”. The meaning is similar to the Indonesian meaning, but Google Translate translates it word-by-word. It should be changed into “Some members”.

In the aspect of correctness, it refers to the mechanical rule in writing both factual precision and mechanical correctness. Correctness is also related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling even capitalization. Some examples of correctness are misspelling (or spelling error), punctuation error, agreement of subject and verb, and other common errors. In grammar, for example: translated into English by using Google Translate, but it does not show that the correctness in English translation. 1) In Indonesian, “hakikatnya” is translated to be “essentially”. It appears that the adverb “essentially” should be an adjective based on the sentence structure. It should be replaced by the adjective. So, the correct word is “essential”. 2) In English translation especially to be because Indonesian does not use ‘to be’ like in English. If we see the ‘to be’ is written “is” refers to the singular. It appears that the verb ‘is’ does not agree with the subject. It should be changed by the other verb form. The correct verb ‘to be’ is “are” suitable with plural subject “British embassies” and “educational institutions”. 3) In Indonesian, “menggunakan” is translated into “use” in English. The plural verb ‘use’ does not appear to agree with the singular subject “this research”. It should be changed by the other verb form into “uses”. It shows that Google Translate cannot translate the word correctly based on the rule of subject-verb agreement in English grammar. 4) In Indonesian, “bergantung” is translated into “depending” in English. The verb ‘depending’ does not appear to agree with the plural subject “intervening variables”. It should be changed by the other verb form into “depend”. 5) In Indonesian, there is not found a determiner or kata sandang, but the result of the English translation, appears determiner/article “the” which is unnecessary in this context. It should remove it. 6) In Indonesian, the passive form “dibagi-bagi” is translated into English passive form “divided with” or V3 (past participle). The Google Translate translates it word-for-word, “dibagi dengan” into “divided with”. It shows the grammar error of “divided with”. The preposition is incorrect. Google translate does not follow the rule of English grammar about Verb + Preposition. It should be changed into “divided into”. It is still difficult to consult grammar books without considerable knowledge of grammar (Fitria, 2019). grammar is an important part of the English language that can make the language clear. In punctuation, for example: In Indonesian, “temuan fakta” is translated to be “fact finding”. Google Translate can translate translated it correctly (Fitria, 2020b). But, it shows a punctuation error. It appears that “fact finding” is missing a hyphen. It should be added by a hyphen into “fact-finding”.

Google Translate is a machine translator, but there is always going to be potentially less clarity and correctness at the end of the translation product. Because language is a complicated thing, people perhaps cannot expect more that machine translator understands every aspect of the way human beings communicate with each other by writing. That is why the answer about the clarity and the correctness of Google Translate is that it still has a ways to go before it can consistently, clearly, and correctly translate without errors. Machine translators have come a long way in a short period, but they are still lacking in certain aspects of good writing and translation such as in grammar and spelling. Google translate often makes this mistake. Rather understandable because the translator is a machine.

Conclusion

Google translate (trying to) can translate to and from many other languages. Even Google translate has been able to recognize the source language that is typed or pasted in the input column. Google Translate has a fairly good ability to translate various languages, such as English. But if the translation involves a fairly long context, grammar and has specific content, both referring to nuances in the language contained, Google Translate translation results often even become increasingly difficult to understand. There are some elements of language identification that are still missing understood by a computer/machine translator and can only be understood and assessed by human translators.

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