

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATING RECOUNT TEXTS BY USING GOOGLE TRANSLATION MACHINE

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Abstract

The research aims to find out the process of translating recount texts by using Google Translation Machine. This study integrated a qualitative phenomenological approach of a group of 18 tenth-grade students at MA Miftahul Jannah, Palangka Raya. Online questionnaires via Google Forms and unstructured follow-up interviews were employed. The 15-question questionnaire, featuring both open-ended and closed-ended formats, explored aspects ranging from general usage of resources, such as Google Translation Machine, to specific processes in translating recount texts. The result of this research showed the students' process in translation began with comprehensively reading the text to gain full understanding. Following this initial step, they mentally process their translation before writing it down. In the translating phase, Google Translate was an essential tool. Some students used it directly, while others employed it as a guide for their translations. The focus here was on the accurate selection of words, phrases, and sentences. Once the translation was complete, the majority of the students cross-checked their work against the original text to maintain fidelity. However, a small number skipped this critical revision step. This highlighted the necessity of reinforcing the importance of evaluation and revision stages in the translation process.

Keywords: analysis, Google Translation Machine, recount text, translation process

Introduction

New technology has changed the world in many aspects, especially in education. The inventions of technology in producing helpful tools facilitate the instructional and learning tasks for students and teachers in particular. Moreover, the tools also help the students make learning more comfortable to learn new things. One of its functions also helps to learn languages better. Therefore, the

influence of modern tools that used to be complicated has been a great help in learning a new language (Nelson et al., 2009).

One of the modern tools that contributed mainly to learning a new language is machine translation, and one is Google Translation Machine. The Google Translation Machine has become an essential tool for learning. Many people use it because it makes learning new languages easier. This tool gives fast translations of words, sentences, or even big pieces of text, which helps to break down the barriers that can make learning a language hard. It is beneficial for students who are trying to gain proficiency in a new language. This tool can help them understand more challenging parts of the language and discover what new words mean (Dash, 2022).

Having to learn a new language could not be separated from translation. Translation refers to the method of transforming text from the source to the intended language. It became a general activity for education practitioners. For instance, teachers have used it to aid teaching and learning since the advent of the Grammar Translation Method (Herlina et al., 2019), while students usually used it for the tasks' needs. The students translated many texts in their classroom, and one of them included a recount text. Recount text became a text that existed gradually from when the students rolled into elementary school to a higher level of education.

Previous studies about translating recount text have shown various results. First, analysis of students' errors in which they often found themselves in a problematic situation of translating a recount text begins by translating the text from English to Indonesian (Shalichah, 2021; Suri, 2023). Second, the result indicated that some students still need to ask their teachers to translate the words they will write in translating Indonesian recount text to English despite using translation tools to translate word by word (Erviona et al., 2019). Linguistic factors also influence the student's ability to translate the recount text. After thoroughly conducting the research, some students go through the translation process, such as analyzing, transferring' and restructuring (Simanjuntak, 2020).

Despite using modern translation tools such as Google Translate, it has been proven that the tool increased the students' vocabulary (Simanungkalit, 2020). Moreover, the students recognized Google Translate can be utilized as an alternate mechanism for translating literary references. They claimed it benefits them when doing the self-learning assisted by the tool (Herlina et al., 2019). When converting procedural and narrative text, the precision of Google Translate is identified to be 79.57% and 86%, which means it is in high regard among students (Sumiati et al., 2022).

Based on the previous studies results, the student's errors and difficulties analysis is shown in the target language's translation product. Suri (2023) stated that students had trouble translating recount materials because they needed more learned vocabulary in English, while Shalichah (2021) indicated that the main cause of the students' inaccuracies in recount text translation was the poor English vocabulary they mastered. However, it only takes one study that discusses the process of translating it and what translation tools the students used to assist their work (Simanjuntak, 2020). Thus, the researchers have taken a strong preference towards further exploring a topic on how the translation process of translating recount text using the Google translate machine as the translation tool.

Therefore, seeing how the students use Google Translation Machine as a translation tool in translating recount texts was a phenomenon that underlies this study. Each student might use the tool differently. The previous study stated that the precision of Google Translate in translating procedural and narrative content text shows a high result (Sumiati et al., 2022). It could be because of how well they know English, how good they are with computers or phones, and how well they tell their stories. The different ways they use the translation tool might come from their experiences and skills, creating various results. Therefore, using translation tools also influenced the translation process of the recount text.

This research aims to find out the students' process in translating recount text by using Google Translation Machine. The result of this research is expected to provide valuable insight into the application of technology in the realm of language learning. The insights could lead to identifying and addressing challenges and areas of improvement in students' translation skills, thereby informing the design of better educational resources and instructions.

Translation

Translation is a critical task in linguistics, involving the transition of verbal or textual content from one language to another (Baker & Saldanha, 2009). It acts as a communication facilitator, bridging the gap between different languages and cultures (Al-Sofi & Abouabdulqader, 2019). However, the process of translation extends beyond mere word or sentence substitution. It demands a profound understanding of the structures, nuances, and cultural contexts of both the source and target languages (Venuti, 2004).

The foremost objective of translation is to communicate the same meaning and emotional depth found in the original text (Aguion, 2021). This requires the translator to possess a high level of linguistic expertise, cultural knowledge, and creative skills (Hatim & Munday, 2019). These competencies are particularly important for professional translators whose task extends to improving comprehension and collaboration among various populations, aiding in the distribution of information, and supporting international trade and diplomacy (Bassnett, 2005).

The practice of translation, as described by Munday (2016), involves a comprehensive understanding of the content and the structure of the source language. This is then followed by a careful reconstruction of these elements using appropriate and grammatically accurate structures in the target language. Djelloul and Neddar (2017) also emphasize the need for practical proficiency in the source and target languages, as well as an in-depth understanding of the subject matter being translated. Thus, adequate training and an extensive knowledge base are crucial for translators (Robinson, 2003).

Recount text

Recount text is an English material taught at Junior and Senior high schools in Indonesia, so the second year of Senior high school students is expected to produce this text. Harris et al., (2014) define "recount text" as a narrative that systematically retells past events to describe previously occurred incidents. Similarly, Mustafa (2021) asserts that a recount involves narrating past events to inform or entertain readers about the occurrence and its timing. According to these

theories, a recount typically originates from the author's direct experience but could potentially be inventive or outside their personal experience. Recount text entails the writer narrating their personal experience or other's experiences to the reader. Simply put, a recount text is a narration of past events or experiences.

When composing recount texts, learners must be familiar with the text's general structure and linguistic characteristics. According to Mustafa (2021), the typical organization of recount text comprises orientation, events, and re-orientation. Moreover, Hasanah and Said (2020) state that the recount text's structure consists of an orientation, followed by a series of events, and occasionally concluding with evaluation or re-orientation. Generally, recount texts start with an orientation that establishes and supplies the background information required for guiding readers' comprehension of the succeeding narrative portions.

In addition to the generic structure, students must be aware of the language features associated with recount text. Mustafa (2021) elucidates the language features of recount text, spotlighting key aspects such as a focus on particular participants, the use of material processes (action verbs), references to circumstances of place and time, utilization of past tense, and an emphasis on chronological sequences. Further extending this understanding, Elita et al., (2013) state that the language features of recount texts also include personal recounts, the use of emotive language to describe events, the implementation of action and mental verbs, and the consistent use of past tense. In creating recount texts, writers commonly utilize action verbs expressed in past form.

In addition, Harris et al., (2014) state that there are characteristic language features in recount texts. They employ proper nouns and pronouns to distinguish individuals, creatures, or items. Given their aim to narrate past incidents, these texts are typically composed in past tense. Authors have the liberty to use a variety of action verbs and adjectives to convey feelings. Also, authors should incorporate adverbs and adverbial phrases to sequence events and identify locations. Furthermore, the proper usage of conjunctions to amalgamate clauses and connectives to arrange events is crucial. Concluding various expert perspectives, the language traits unique to recount texts focus on distinct participants, usage of simple past tense, incorporation of action and linking verbs, and application of chronological conjunctions.

Process of translation

In this context, the translation process signifies a model that seeks to shed light on the inner workings of the human mind when engaging in translation activities. In the past, people interpreted that translation occurred automatically and occurred in one direction. This process is often described in the following picture (Suryawinata & Hariyanto, 2016).



Linear translation process

Suryawinata and Hariyanto (2016) tries to clarify the translation process scheme by borrowing the concept of inner structure and outer structure of Generative Grammar Transformation. Thus, there is a process as follows:

1. Analysis or understanding stage. In this stage, the structure (or existing sentences) is analyzed according to grammatical relationships, according to the meaning of a word or combination of words, textual meaning, and even contextual meaning. This is a reverse transformation process.
2. Transfer stage. In this stage, the material has been analyzed and the meaning was understood, the translator processed it in his mind and moved from SL to TL. It has not yet been produced at this stage series of words; everything only happens in the mind of the translator.
3. Restructuring. In this stage, the translator tries to find equivalent appropriate words, expressions, and sentence structures in the TL so that the content, meaning, and message in the SL text can be conveyed completely in TL.
4. Evaluation and revision. After getting the translation results in TL, the results are evaluated or re-matched with the original text. If you feel it is still not suitable, then a revision is carried out.

Use of Google Translation machine in education

Machine Translation (MT) represents the endeavor to computerize the task of translating text or voice from one language into another, and today, it occupies a prominent position in the sphere of information technology. As the demand for learning a new language becomes the need to face the change in how the world goes on, the need for translation has increased tremendously. Google Translate is currently a widely favored machine translation service that is used by people from around the world. Its functions for education then generate the better idea of assisting the students to translate the new language especially its quick process in translating the text. However, the result of translating paragraphs using Google Translate was not in favor of the students regarding its accuracy (Khotimah et al., 2021).

Google Translate facilitates user input of the source language through multiple avenues, such as virtual keyboards, voice recognition, handwriting, whole documents, or uploaded files. Moreover, students can translate text featured in images or photographs. These features greatly affected the students' process while translating and learning the new language in particular. As education is growing significantly by fusing technology, Google Translate as a tool in the teaching-learning process met the conditions for it. Several research concluded that students have a positive perspective toward the machine (Khotimah et al., 2021; Pham et al., 2022). However, the omnipresence of Google Translate as a machine translation raised concerns among the teachers. According to Merschel and Munné (2022), since students prefer to use it often within the learning process, it results in unhealthy dependency. It affected the pedagogical implications such as moral issues, motivation, and academic growth.

Method

Research design

The researchers used a Qualitative method; specifically, the Phenomenological approach to explore the processes the tenth-grade students at one of the high schools in Palangka Raya utilized Google Translation Machine for their recount text work. The Phenomenological approach was chosen as it is particularly effective at revealing specific personal experiences (Castro, 2023), making it suitable to explore the process or steps students undertake in translation. This approach provides rich, detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences (Smith et al., 2010), enabling researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of how students did the translation by employing Google Translation Machine on their assignment.

Research subject

The participants of this study were the tenth-grade students consisting of only one study group of 18 students at one of the high schools in Palangka Raya who relied on Google Translate for their recount text assignments. These participants were selectively chosen as they can directly provide the necessary information to fulfill the research objectives.

Research setting

The location of this study was at MA Miftahul Jannah in Palangka Raya, exactly at Pantai Cemara Labat 1 Street, Pahandut Seberang district, Palangka Raya City, Central Borneo, Indonesia. The school is located on the bank of the Kahayan River, where the majority of the people who live there are the Banjar tribe (South Borneo). Thus, the students mostly use the Banjar language in daily conversations but use Indonesian or English in classroom learning.

Data collecting technique

For this research, two primary methods of data collection were employed; they were questionnaires and unstructured interviews. The questionnaire aimed to identify and understand the process students followed when using Google Translate for their assignments. In contrast, the unstructured interview was utilized for more in-depth explorations of the subject under study. An unstructured interview, as described by Nuriyati et al., (2022), involves open-ended conversations without a strict interview guide. Instead, it relies on an outline highlighting key discussion topics, promoting flexibility and adaptability during the interview process.

Research instrument

In this research study, the researchers utilized a combination of data collection strategies, including online questionnaires and unstructured interviews to gain a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of students' translation processes. The first part of the data collection took place on 14 November 2023 and used an online questionnaire, which consisted of 15 questions disseminated via Google Forms. These questionnaires featured a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions, catering to different response styles. Closed-ended questions offered predefined answers for students to select, allowing for quick and direct responses. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, required students to elaborate on their perspectives and function as short essay prompts to yield more

informative answers. Each question within the questionnaire addressed a particular topic that the researchers aimed to explore, ranging from the general use of tools like the Google Translation Machine to more specific questions about students' process in translating recount texts.

After the analysis of questionnaire responses, unstructured follow-up interviews were conducted on 22 November 2023 to delve deeper into specific areas indicated by the initial questionnaire results. This approach provided a natural conversational flow and led to in-depth feedback, allowing the researchers to gain insight into the students' perspectives on their translation processes. By integrating the aforementioned methods, the researchers could adopt a multifaceted approach to their investigation. This, in turn, solidified a comprehensive understanding of the students' translation process, contributing valuable insights to the field of study.

Data analysis

The data collected underwent a systematic analysis, employing a series of methodical methods to ensure accurate and reliable outcomes. Chavan and Desai (2022) assert that the analytical procedures encompass two key stages: data condensation and conclusion drawing/verification. During the condensation stage, the gathered data is broken down into a process of translation that aligns with the translation theories outlined in the framework. The data are thereafter subjected to thorough examination and integration to answer the research question. During the final phase of analysis, a definitive conclusion was derived, accompanied by the provision of supporting information. The analysis additionally examines the extent to which the students adhered to the notion of the translation process.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

Analysis Stage

In this stage, insights were gathered from 18 students by the researchers. It has been observed that all students initiated their translation process by examining the whole text. This establishes the importance of understanding the entire content before commencing the translation. Additionally, the researchers investigated what particular sections of the text students paid more attention to. The findings are as follows:

Grammar

16 students emphasized that, initially, their primary concern was the grammar utilized within the text. In essence, these students examined the text based on sentence structure, verb usage, and the tense for recount texts, which is typically past simple (verb 2). They also considered the inclusion of adverbs of time.

Word combinations

For 15 students, their focus was on the way words were combined or arranged to form phrases in the text. This involved understanding basic and sophisticated word pairings, colloquial expressions, idioms, and how they

contribute to the overall meaning of the text. This approach is particularly beneficial in retaining the essence of the original text when translated.

Textual meaning

Textual meaning refers to the literal interpretation of the text. According to 15 students, their main objective was to comprehend the explicit meaning of every word, sentence, and paragraph. In doing so, they ensure that the context and intention of the original author are maintained throughout the translation process.

Contextual meaning

14 students opted for contextual meaning. They focused on how to convey their emotions and nuances through their writing, thus exploring the text's various layers of meaning beyond its literal interpretation.

In conclusion, most of the students adopt a comprehensive analytical approach, fulfilling Suryawinata and Hariyanto's (2016) translation theories that emphasize a thorough understanding of the source text before proceeding with the translation.

Transfer stage

The majority of students, specifically 18 out of the total surveyed, indicated that they actively engage in mental translation during the "Transfer Stage" of the recount text translation process. It means they will think about the translation text in their head before they write it on paper. This high proportion of affirmative responses reinforces the assertion that mental processing is a significant and common practice among students before they write down their translations. The emphasis on mental processing within the "Transfer Stage" suggests that it forms a crucial part of the overall translation process, aiding students in structuring their translation work.

In seeking further details about students' mental translation process, most responses centered on reviewing their work - rereading or rechecking their text - as a fundamental component. This practice suggests that the act of mental translation carries an inherent emphasis on diligence and accuracy, requiring students to review their work systematically before writing it down. The prevalence of this self-checking system among students underscores its importance in mitigating potential errors, ensuring alignment with the original text, and enhancing overall translation quality within the "Transfer Stage."

When students were asked what they preferred to do after reading the whole text – 1) think carefully in their head, or 2) start writing their translation right away – all students said they preferred to think carefully in their head. This shows that thinking about the translation before starting to write is an important part of their process. Every student choosing to think first before writing indicates that this step helps them do a better job at translating, understand the text more deeply, and ensure their work is accurate.

Restructuring stage

The "Restructuring Stage" represents the central part of the translation process in this study, where, according to the theory of Suryawinata and Hariyanto (2016), translators need to search for suitable meanings in the target language instead of solely relying on machine translations. In this stage, students use Google Translate to help them translate their recount texts. However, the responses indicate that not all students adhere to the recommended process from the theory. Of the total respondents, 8 students confirmed that they simply write what Google Translate displays, bypassing the crucial step of searching for a suitable meaning themselves. Based on the interview results, they gave a few reasons for skipping this stage. 2 students said they believed Google Translate was good enough and did not need to be checked. 3 students said that they were in a rush and wanted to finish their work quickly, so they did not take extra time to look for better words themselves. Others did not feel sure they could pick better words than what Google Translate gave them. These responses suggest a significant undervaluation of the 'Restructuring Stage', where students should seek more suitable translations rather than simply accepting Google Translate's suggestions. Ignoring this crucial step potentially lowers the quality of their translations, as they miss the chance to apply their understanding and interpretation of the source text.

Delving deeper into the translating process during the "Restructuring Stage," the researchers presented the remaining 10 students with a choice to identify which aspects they concentrate on when scribing the translation into their target language. They could select from four criteria: appropriate words, expressions, sentence structures, or all of them. A majority indicated 'all of them,' showing that they find each criterion crucial for yielding a precise translation. However, a couple of students leaned toward 'appropriate words and sentence structures,' marking their focus areas in the translation process. These responses underscore that students employ different strategies, with some focusing on specific linguistic features while others adopt a comprehensive approach, considering all components.

Evaluation and revision stage

Within the Evaluation and Revision Stage, it was found that a majority of students (13 out of 18) reported undertaking an evaluation process after translating their texts, demonstrating their understanding of the criticality of this phase. They appreciate the need to align their translated outputs with the original texts to ensure accuracy, as suggested by Suryawinata and Hariyanto (2016). Conversely, a subset of students (5 out of 18) acknowledged skipping this critical evaluation phase. From interviews, 1 student stated that she believed that her initial translation was accurate and did not require further evaluation. 3 students said that they prioritize speed over accuracy, wishing to complete their translations as quickly as possible, and the other felt a lack of confidence in his ability to make meaningful revisions to the translation. This deviation from the recommended process signals a potential risk of inaccuracies in their translations and underscores the need for strengthened emphasis on the importance and role of the Evaluation and Revision Stage in translation exercises.

To gain insight into the evaluation strategies employed by the 13 students who adhered to the Evaluation and Revision Stage, they were asked about their

specific methods. The analysis revealed that their techniques included reading the translated texts word by word, thoroughly rechecking their work, and verifying the textual meaning. By implementing these approaches, the students are actively adhering to the guidelines proposed by Suryawinata and Hariyanto (2016). This careful examination of their translations signifies that the majority of students understand the importance of a disciplined evaluation process. However, the fact that 5 students opted to bypass this crucial step indicates an opportunity for improvement in educating students about the significance of this stage in achieving accurate translations.

Discussion

The results of this study revealed that the students' translation process in translating recount text by using Google Translate goes through all the processes that have been stated based on the theory of Suryawinata and Hariyanto (2016). However, each stage contained various students' opinions on how they passed each stage. For instance, the results showed what particular sections of the text students paid more attention to in the analyzing stage were grammar, word combination, textual, and contextual meanings. They inferred that translating the recount text began by analyzing the whole text. This case was also found in the research conducted by Shalichah (2021) in which the students had difficulties with different language structures due to the lack of vocabulary after analyzing the text. The importance of the Pre-translation Text Analysis as a part of the translation process is supported by many works of Russian scholars as stated in Ayupova (2014). They suggest that PTA should consist of mainly the following activities: 1) considering factors external to the linguistic text; 2) establishing the style and genre of the text; and 3) designating the type of information represented in the text.

The second stage named the transferring process resulted in all the participants' students saying that they actively engaged in mental translation during that time. They stated that thinking the translation from source to target language carefully in their head before writing it. This aspect shares common ground with Kern's research, emphasizing mental translation's significant role in enhancing foreign language text comprehension. Interestingly, Falla-Wood (2018) further points out diminished dependency on mental translation with increased reading proficiency. Contrastingly, Sofyan and Tarigan (2019) adopt a holistic view, proposing a model encompassing minute problem-solving steps to the extensive landscape of translation strategies. On a different note, Yau (2011) underscores the importance of usage patterns during the "Transfer" and "Analysis Phase" to reduce the idiosyncrasy-induced ambiguities. Although each study recognizes specific strategies' crucial roles or aspects, their perception and interpretation vary. The initial study and Kern's (1994) work view mental translation as a facilitator for understanding and accuracy, while Lørscher (2005) treats strategies as initial solutions leading to either problem resolution or acceptance of its current insolubility. In contrast, Røvik (2016) places usage patterns as prime components to curb ambiguities. In terms of demographic focus, the initial study, Kern's (1994) and Lørscher's (2005) research primarily concentrate on student experiences, with Lørscher (2005) extending to professional translators. Røvik's (2016) research eschews a specific demographic, opting for a broader, more technical view of the translation process. Collectively,

these studies not only shed light on the intricate mechanics of translation but also emphasize its layered nature, suggesting a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of this complex cognitive activity.

After thoroughly analyzing and transferring the translated text, the students represented the restructuring process as a central part of the translation process in translating the recount text. In this stage, the majority of students were assisted by Google Translate as a translation tool. However, the phenomenon of unhealthy dependency of using the machine translation resulted in the student immediately writing what the machine translation displays without thinking of restructuring the translated sentences. Merschel and Munné (2022) indicated that machine translation has advantages from a practical perspective but learners should realize that even when words seem to have a direct correspondence between languages, the cultural ideas, products, customs, beliefs, and values they transmit are not necessarily identical. Nevertheless, other students stated that they also identify the aspects when scribing the translation into their target language such as the appropriate words, the expressions, and the sentence structures of the target language. In another case, the studies conducted by Wardani et al., (2019) discussed the student's ability in constructing paragraphs of recount text. They emphasize that students must be familiar with grammar to do well in the construction process. These responses underscore that students employ different strategies when it comes to the restructuring stage in the translation process. In addition, Google Translate as a translation tool plays a big role in translating the recount text for the student as they believe that machine translation has high accuracy in interpreting from source to target language (Faridah et al., 2023).

The last stage of the translation process, evaluation, and revision, contained various responses from the participant's students. The majority of the students felt the need to evaluate their translation output. They stated their techniques in revision included reading the translated texts word by word, thoroughly rechecking their work, and verifying the textual meaning. A study conducted by Lee (2022) concluded that the impact of machine translation positively influenced students' writing strategies during revision. By revising, students could avoid errors when translating the recount text. Several studies have researched the student's errors when translating the recount text (Padhila, 2021; Shalichah, 2021; Sari et al., 2021).

Conclusion

The study provides crucial insights into students' processes and strategies when translating recount texts using Google Translate. Students were found to engage in a thorough translation process, primarily focusing on deep analysis of the source text, mental translation, and rigorous evaluation and revision process to ensure accuracy. During the analysis stage, students placed great emphasis on elements such as grammar, word combinations, and differentials between textual and contextual meanings. This indicates the need for students to possess a comprehensive understanding of the original text before commencing translation. The transfer stage showed a uniform preference among students for mental translation, confirming that students typically premeditate translations in their minds before penning them down. This solidifies the claim that mental translation is a crucial component of the translation process. However, the restructuring stage

highlighted a concern. Though students utilized Google Translate to assist with their translation, some showed an overreliance on the tool and skipped the critical step of finding suitable meanings in the target language themselves. During the evaluation and revision stage, a majority of students were found to perform thorough checks and corrections on their work. This illustrates the importance of careful review in the translation process to ensure the high quality and accuracy of the translated text.

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