THE NATURE OF TRANSLATION
(CASE STUDY ON TRANSLATING COMPUTER TEXT)

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Abstract: Translation is dealing with transferring meaning from source language into target language. In simple cases, it can be translating word by word. While for some cases, such translation may seem awkward or even confusing and funny. It may happen when certain words are translated into inappropriate equivalent words. The translation, then, fails to transfer the meaning from source language. Based on the aim, it is necessary to catch the idea of the text. English as the language of science, including computer, is used widely in many textbooks. In fact, there are many words which have no equivalent words in Indonesian. This study analyzes the process of translating English into Indonesian on computer text. The object of the study is English articles used by Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science of Potensi Utama University. The study shows that there are two things to be paid attention in translating English computer text into Indonesian; finding the appropriate equivalent words, and keeping non-equivalent words as they are.

Keywords: translation, computer text

INTRODUCTION

English students may be familiar with English text, where they always use the text to learn English as their major. Unfortunately, the situation is always different for non-English students, who study another subject as their major instead of English. They may be unfamiliar with English, moreover with English text concerning their main subject. For some of them, comprehending their subject in their L1 may be quite difficult. The difficulty, then, doubled when the subject is presented in English.
For students who major in certain subject, English is secondary in the subject. The language is used as a means of communication, not as the subject itself. It is not the ultimate thing to learn for them. Otherwise, they should understand their specific subject although it is written in English. In this case, they need to translate the text written in English to gain the understanding. Here comes the importance of translation to guide them master the text they read.

The problem they always face is that translation is not as simple as looking for the meaning of all words from dictionary. Whatever dictionary or translation tools used does not always help students to translate a text. Even if all words have been translated into target language, they may face another problem. It is to understand the translation result which always causes inappropriate meaning.

This study was conducted due to the difficulties found by students of Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science of Potensi Utama University to translate English into Indonesian on computer text. The problem occurs when translating English is not the only subject. It is additional to the main subject, which is computer. The subject is called English for Specific Purpose (ESP) Computer. For that reason, this study suggests not to translate word by word, as it is not the aim of the process.

This paper is intended to show that the final result of the process is not the translation itself, but the comprehension of the text. Translating is considered as one way to comprehend their main subject. It is part of their study to know more about computer. Furthermore, the result of the study is expected to ease students to translate English into Indonesian on computer text or any other text of specific subject.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**The Nature of Translation**

Translation is the communication of the meaning of a source-language text by means of an equivalent target-language text (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Translation). Brislin (1976: 1) sees translation as a general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language to another, whether the language is in written or oral form, whether the languages have established orthographies or not; or whether one or both languages is based on signs, as with signs of the deaf.

According to Newmark (1991: 27), translating is the act of transferring meaning of a stretch or a unit of language, the whole or a part, from one language to another. Nida and Taber (1982: 12) define translating as a process of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.

Translation study is an academic interdiscipline dealing with the systematic study of the theory, description and application of translation, interpreting, and localization. As an interdiscipline, translation study borrows much from the various fields of study that support translation. These include comparative literature, computer science, history, linguistics, philology, philosophy, semiotics, and terminology. The term translation study was coined by the Amsterdam-based American scholar James S. Holmes in his paper
The Name and Nature of Translation Studies, which is considered a foundational statement for the discipline (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Translation_studies).

Translation has an important role in connection with comprehending foreign language text. The importance of translation can be illustrated by the ability to gain a wider value or knowledge of something from more authors outside the country. Hosni (2010) concluded in his article that when we take concepts from different disciplines we should clearly define them and clarify their disciplinary origin. It seems to be a general phenomenon that different academic disciplines use the same labels, however, with different meanings.

Translation is not always about translating word by word, but always is about catching the idea of a sentence or a text as a wider discourse. It happens often that the translation which comes from translating word by word becomes confusing or funny. It is confusing because the translation even harder to comprehend than the original one. In the other hand, it is funny because translation does not state the appropriate thing as mentioned in the original text. Hosni (2010) mentioned that Cicero and Horace (first century BC) were the first theorists who distinguished between word-for-word translation and sense-for-sense translation.

There are three types of words in relation to translation; equivalent words, non-equivalent words, and borrowed words. Equivalent words are the words that have equivalence in the target language. It can be found easily in dictionary or another translation tools. Almost there is no problem translating a sentence with this kind of word. In the other hand, non-equivalent words are the words that have no equivalence in the target language. It may happen because the topic is not familiar in the target language. It may also indicate that the topic deals with the source language.

Differ from the previous types, borrowed words are the words that have been used in the target language with some adjustment. It may be changed to adjust language system of the target language. The change always deals with pronunciation and writing system. As in Indonesian, every letter is pronounced as it is written. For that reasons, some words are borrowed without any change in the case of pronunciation and writing system. In the case of translating English into Indonesian, all the three types of words are always found.

El-Shafey (2012) mentioned ten types of translation, namely administrative translation, commercial translation, computer translation, economic translation, financial translation, general translation, legal translation, literary translation, medical translation, and technical translation. She states that computer translation is the translation of anything to do with computers such as software, manuals, help files, etc. while a technical translation refers to certain fields such as IT or manufacturing and deals with texts such as manuals and instructions.

Translating Computer Text

English for Specific Purpose (ESP) has been a subject in learning English. Actually, it is more to use English to master the main subject than to master the language itself. In this case, English is used as additional for the main subject to gain more and more materials presented in English. ESP subject always comes after basic English subject,
where students are in the next level in relating to English. Since English is additional to the main subject, the learning is quite different from learning English as the main subject.

Particularly for students of Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science of Potensi Utama University, ESP subject is related to their main subject, which is computer. To have good comprehension, translating English computer text into Indonesian is needed to be done in three ways. The ways are finding appropriate equivalent words, keeping non-equivalent words as they are, and analyzing borrowed words from the text. Finally, the nature of translation is catching the idea of the text as a whole. Here are the examples of the text taken from their textbook on ESP Computer.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Text 1. Getting to Know the Operating System

Getting to Know the Operating System

The screen that you see when your computer has finished starting up is called the desktop. Depending on what kind of operating system you have, the desktop will look different, but it generally consists of menus at the bottom, top, and/or sides of the screen, with the rest of the screen containing a desktop background (or wallpaper). The desktop background area can also contain any files, applications, or shortcuts that you want to have quick access to.

Text 2. Adjusting Your Computer’s Settings

Adjusting Your Computer’s Settings

From time to time, you’ll need to adjust your computer’s settings. This can range from simple tasks such as changing your desktop background, to more advanced tasks like adjusting your security or network settings. On PCs, the Control Panel is used to adjust settings. On Macs, you’ll use System Preferences.

By default, if you click the power button icon in Vista, your computer will go to Sleep instead of shutting down. Sleep turns off most of your computer’s processes, but it remembers which applications and files are open. This allows your computer to start up more quickly, since you don’t have to wait for the operating system and applications to load.
Text 3. Hardware Needed: Router

**Hardware Needed: Router**

A router is a hardware device that allows you to connect several computers and other devices to a single internet connection, which is known as a home network. Many routers are wireless, allowing you to easily create a wireless network.

You don’t necessarily need to buy a router to connect to the internet. It’s possible to connect your computer directly to your modem using an Ethernet cable. Also, many modems now include a built-in router, so you have the option of creating a network without having to buy more hardware.

Most routers also act as a hardware firewall, which helps prevent people from gaining access to your computer through the internet.

Text 4. Hardware Needed: Network Card

**Hardware Needed: Network Card**

A network card is a piece of hardware that allows computers to communicate over a computer network. Most newer computers have a network card built into the motherboard, so it probably is not something you will need to purchase. The network card will either have an Ethernet port, a wireless connection, or both.

If you have a laptop with a wireless connection, you can access the internet at any place that offers a Wi-Fi connection. Many restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, hotels and other businesses offer free Wi-Fi. In addition, many cities provide free Wi-Fi in public areas such as parks and downtown areas.

Text 5. Safeguarding Against Malware

**Safeguarding Against Malware**

Malware is any type of software that is designed to damage your computer or gain unauthorized access to your personal information. It includes viruses, worms, Trojan horses, spyware, and other types. Most malware is distributed over the internet, often bundled with other software.

The best way to guard against malware is to install antivirus software such as BitDefender, Norton, or Kaspersky. Antivirus software helps to prevent malware from being installed, and it can also remove malware from your computer. New malware is being created all the time, so it’s important to update your antivirus software frequently. Most antivirus programs can do this
automatically, but you’ll need to make sure that this feature is enabled.

It’s also important to stay smart when you’re browsing the web or using email. If a website or email attachment looks suspicious, trust your instincts. Keep in mind that your antivirus program may not catch everything, so it’s best to avoid downloading anything that might contain malware.

Discussion

As mentioned before, translation is not about transferring the meaning of word by word. Some words from the source language have equivalence in the target language. In the contrary, many words from the source language have no equivalence in the target language. Some words of the source language even have been borrowed by the target language. In that case, the words may be similar with the source language because it came from the language.

Translating computer text as the main subject is difficult for non-English students. They may be familiar with the subject, but unfamiliar with the language used. Understanding the text, then, becomes problem for them. To solve the problem, there are three things to consider dealing with words. First, finding appropriate equivalent words. Since an English word may have many meanings, we have to decide the right one according to the context. Second, translating non-equivalent words as they are. For this kind of words, we do not have to translate them because it may cause the translation seems funny or confusing.

Third, analyzing borrowed words from the text. This kind of words is interesting to learn because it deals with language development. Furthermore, it is the witness that language is dynamic. Indonesian language borrowed words from many languages, especially from English as international language. In the case of computer, there are many words that have no equivalence in Indonesian. Then, Indonesian borrows the source language words to have the new words. Here are the explanations of each type of words.

1. Finding Appropriate Equivalent Words

One important thing in translating is equivalence, where a word in source language has a word that has exactly the same meaning in target language. Equivalent words in certain language can be found in dictionary, or on google translate as the most familiar translator online. There are many words of the texts above which have equivalent words in Indonesian. In text 1, there are the words ‘screen’ and ‘file’ that have equivalent words ‘layar’ and ‘arsip’ in Indonesian. The word ‘file’ even is more familiar when it is in the source language than in the target language.

In text 2, there are the words ‘setting’ and ‘network’ that have equivalent words ‘pengaturan’ and ‘jaringan’ in Indonesian. Again, for some students, the word ‘setting’ is more familiar when it is in the source language than in the target language. In text 3, there are the words ‘connection’ and ‘wireless’ that have equivalent words ‘hubungan’ and ‘nirkabel’ in Indonesian. In this case, the word ‘connection’ is more familiar when it is translated as borrowed word, to be ‘koneksi’. In the other hand, the equivalent word
‘nirkabel’ is not so popular among students. They tend not to translate it as they know what it is.

In text 4, there are the words ‘Wi-Fi connection’ and ‘free Wi-Fi’ that have equivalent words ‘hubungan Wi-Fi’ and ‘Wi-Fi gratis’ in Indonesian. Since ‘Wi-Fi’ stands for Wireless Fidelity that is quite difficult to say, it is always said so. As what happened in text 3, students also decide to translate the word with ‘koneksi Wi-Fi’. As for ‘free Wi-Fi’, some students translate it with Wi-Fi gratis, while the rest translate it with the original phrase.

In text 5, there are the words ‘damage’ and ‘install’ that have equivalent words ‘merusak’ and ‘memasang’ in Indonesian. As the word ‘damage’ is unfamiliar for almost all students, the equivalent word ‘merusak’ is accepted well. On the contrary, the word ‘install’ is considered easier to comprehend when it is translated as ‘menginstal’. It is because the word ‘memasang’ does not exactly present the meaning of the word ‘install’.

2. Keeping Non-Equivalent Words as They Are

The next way we can do to translate English into Indonesian on computer text is to keep non-equivalent words as they are. The words may have been borrowed by Indonesian after suitting them with the nature of the target language. Or, they may be pure non-equivalent words that must be used as what they are, as they are considered as a term used widely in the world. For this, people will comprehend them easily without having to be translated into their L1 or another language. It is not necessary to force ourselves to translate them. Often, the result will be confusing to understand, or even be funny to read.

As in the first way, we have to decide such the words correctly, whether they have equivalent words or not. The point of this way is to translate non-equivalent English words into Indonesian as they are. There are many words of the texts above which have no equivalence in Indonesian. In text 1, there are the words ‘operating system’ and ‘application’ that have no equivalent words instead of borrowed words. Both are translated to be ‘sistem pengoperasian’ and ‘aplikasi’. The translation are similar to the source language with Indonesian taste.

Another words are ‘desktop’ and ‘shortcut’ which are confusing when translated into Indonesian. The word ‘desktop’ is translated as ‘perangkat komputer’ which has general meaning and does not specifically points the desktop itself as a part of computer. While the word ‘shortcut’ is translated as ‘jalan pintas’ which leads reader to leave the topic of the text as it will impress another thing outside the topic. In text 3, there is the word ‘ethernet’ that has no equivalent word in Indonesian. The word, then, translated as it is.

In text 4, there is the word ‘motherboard’ that has no equivalent word in Indonesian. The word is computer-related term that will be funny if it is translated into Indonesian to be ‘papan ibu’, ‘papan induk’ or ‘papan utama’. In text 5, there are the words ‘worm’ and ‘horses’ that have no equivalent words instead of making funny translation. Both are translated to be ‘cacing/ulat’ and ‘kuda-kuda’. The translation are not in line with the subject of the text, which is computer. The words should not be translated as they are the names of malware.
3. Analyzing Borrowed Words from the Text

The last type of words found in the text is borrowed words which have been used in the target language. They are used as they are in the source language or modified to fit the target language. Borrowed words have been non-equivalent words in the first stage. Furthermore, the target language accepts them as new words regarding to the importance of the words in society. This shows the dynamic of language use.

In text 1, there is the word ‘system’ in the title. The word is borrowed by Indonesian language to be ‘sistem’. The pronunciation of the word is just as it is in source language (English). The writing of the word is changed to adjust Indonesian language system. Indonesian language speaks and writes a word in the same way. That is why the letter ‘y’ in the word ‘system’ should be changed to be ‘i’ to be new (borrowed) word ‘sistem’.

The word ‘computer’ in the text 1 is another borrowed word. It is modified to be ‘komputer’ to deal with the sound of letter ‘c’ in the first word. The right pronunciation for the letter in Indonesian refers to letter ‘k’. The other borrowed words in the text 1 are ‘application’ and ‘access’. Both are borrowed and changed to be ‘aplikasi’ and ‘akses’ dealing with Indonesian pronunciation.

In text 2, the word ‘process’ is the new borrowed word found. In the case of pronunciation, English and Indonesian have the same way for the word. It is borrowed and changed to be ‘proses’ to deal Indonesian writing system. There are some borrowed words in text 2 which are found in text 1: computer, system, and application.

In text 3, the word ‘computer’ appears many times. Other than the word ‘computer’, the only borrowed word in the text is the word ‘option’. As what happened to the word ‘application’, the word ‘option’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘opsi’. The sound ‘tion’ is always adapted to be the sound ‘si’ in Indonesian. Text 3 is dominated by non-equivalent words that can be borrowed words in the future.

In text 4, the word ‘computer’ is found again. Another new borrowed words are ‘communicate’, ‘connection’, ‘restaurant’, ‘coffee’, ‘hotel’, ‘business’, and ‘public’. The word ‘communicate’ which is verb is borrowed and translated as ‘berkomunikasi’. The prefix ‘ber’ in the borrowed word indicates that it is verb. The word ‘connection’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘koneksi’ dealing with Indonesian pronunciation and writing system.

The word ‘restaurant’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘restoran’ dealing with the pronunciation and writing system. The letters ‘au’ in the word has the sound ‘o’, while the last letter ‘t’ has no sound. The word ‘coffee’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘kopi’ to deal with pronunciation and writing system. The word ‘hotel’ is borrowed without any change as it is proper to Indonesian writing system. The word ‘business’ is borrowed and changed to deal with Indonesian writing system to be ‘bisnis’.

The word ‘public’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘publik’. The word is well-known and used widely in Indonesian formal language. It is changed in writing system, where the letter ‘c’ is changed to be ‘k’. In the case of pronunciation, the sound of letter ‘u’ in source language is not adapted. Instead of pronouncing it with the sound ‘a’, Indonesian borrows
it with the sound ‘u’. This indicates that Indonesian pronunciation system is in line with its writing system.

In text 5, the words ‘computer’ and ‘access’ occur again. There are many borrowed words found in the text: ‘type’, ‘personal’, ‘information’, ‘virus’, ‘distributed’, ‘install’, ‘antivirus’, ‘program’, ‘automatically’, ‘feature’, and ‘instinct’. The word ‘type’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘tipe’. It is changed in the case of pronunciation and writing system. The last letter ‘e’ is pronounced as it is, while in English, its sound is deleted. The letter ‘y’ is changed to be ‘i’, so it is pronounced as it is.

The word ‘personal’ is borrowed without any change in writing system. The change is in the case of pronunciation, where the letter ‘o’ is pronounced clearer. In English, the letter is pronounced with the sound ‘e’, while in Indonesian, it is pronounced with clear sound of ‘o’. The word ‘information’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘informasi’. The change is dealing with pronunciation and writing system. The sound of ‘tion’ is changed to be ‘si’ as in the other borrowed words.

The word ‘virus’ is borrowed and changed only in the case of pronunciation. The writing system is the same as it is in the source language. The pronunciation is changed in accordance with Indonesian way to sound every letter as it is. The sound of ‘i’ in the source language is ‘ai’, then it is changed to ‘i’ sound when borrowed by Indonesian. The word ‘distributed’ is borrowed and translated as ‘didistribusikan’. The suffix ‘ed’ at the end indicates it as passive voice.

The word ‘install’ is also verb, so it is translated to be ‘menginstal’. It is borrowed in the form of noun ‘installation’ to be ‘instalasi’. It is adjusted in Indonesian with only one ‘l’ in the word. The word ‘antivirus’ is borrowed and changed by separating the words. In Indonesian, it is to be ‘anti virus’ with space as it consists of two words. The phrase is pronounced as it is, with the sound ‘i’ for the letter ‘i’.

The word ‘program’ is borrowed without any change in pronunciation and writing system. The word ‘automatically’ is translated to be ‘secara otomatis’. It is borrowed in the form of adjective ‘automatic’ to be ‘otomatis’. The letters ‘au’ is written and pronounced as ‘o’ in Indonesian. In other case, the letter ‘e’ is changed and adapted to be ‘s’ in pronunciation and writing system. In addition, the letters ‘ly’ means ‘secara’ or ‘dengan cara’.

The word ‘feature’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘fitur’. The letters ‘ea’ is changed to be ‘i’ to deal the way of its pronunciation. The last letter ‘e’ is deleted as it is not pronounced in the word. Furthermore, the pronunciation of the letter ‘t’ is as it is in Indonesian. The word ‘instinct’ is borrowed and changed to be ‘insting’ to deal the pronunciation. The equivalent sound of letters ‘net’ in the source language is ‘ng’ in Indonesian.

**CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

**Conclusions**

With reference to literature review and writer’s experience while teaching, it is concluded that translating English into Indonesian on computer text can be done in three
ways; finding appropriate equivalent words, keeping non-equivalent words as they are, and analyzing borrowed words from the text. The three ways can be applied to increase the comprehension of the text since translation is about catching the idea of the whole text. The ways are intended for non-English students whose main subject is other than English. Therefore, the students translate English computer text into Indonesian more to have comprehension about computer than about English.

Furthermore, practicing the ways can have a great impact on students’ confidence to read English text. The ways are expected to be useful for students to have good translation that is easy to comprehend. In conclusion, translating English into Indonesian, especially on computer text, is not about translating word by word, but catching the idea of the text as a whole. In this case, translating the text is one way students can do to know more about computer.

Suggestions

Teaching English for Special Purpose (ESP) is not as simple as teaching English as the main subject. It consists of teaching English and certain subject at the same time. TOEFL as a test requires ability to explain formulas and to avoid students from boredom. These aims can be achieved through applying question-making task. Therefore, when the purpose of giving a task is to avoid their boredom, they should do a task on as original topic as possible.

The case study showed that translating English text into Indonesian dealing with computer should not be translated word by word. It is suggested to pay more attention to the type of words. The words may be equivalent words, non-equivalent words, and borrowed words. Understanding the type of words will help students in translating the text. Furthermore, their mastery about each word will gain good translation. Since translation is not about translating word by word, teacher should guide them to catch the meaning of the whole text.

REFERENCES


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