

INVESTIGATING THE MOST COMMON STRATEGY IN TRANSLATING ENGLISH IDIOM MADE BY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS

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Abstrak

Penerjemahan idiom menjadi salah satu kemampuan yang harus dikuasai oleh mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Namun, beberapa mahasiswa mengalami kesulitan dalam menerjemahkan idiom karena idiom tidak bisa diterjemahkan secara literal. Oleh karena itu, mahasiswa memerlukan strategi tertentu itu mengatasi kesulitan dalam menerjemahkan idiom. Baker (1992) mengajukan empat strategi seperti menggunakan makna dan format yang sama, menggunakan makna yang sama dengan format yang berbeda, penerjemahan dengan parafrase, dan penerjemahan dengan penghilangan idiom. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan strategi mana yang banyak digunakan oleh mahasiswa dan alasan mereka menggunakannya. Peneliti mendapat jawaban untuk rumusan masalah pertama dari 11 tugas mahasiswa dan kuisioner. Setelah mengetahui strategi yang paling banyak digunakan, peneliti menganalisa hasil pekerjaan mahasiswa kemudian mewawancarai mahasiswa yang memilih strategi tersebut untuk mendapatkan jawaban bagi rumusan masalah kedua. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penerjemahan dengan parafrase menjadi strategi yang paling banyak digunakan oleh mahasiswa. Alasan mereka memilih strategi tersebut bervariasi. Alasan yang umum adalah strategi ini lebih mudah dibanding dengan strategi yang lain.

Kata Kunci: penerjemahan idiom, strategi, mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa Inggris.

Abstract

Idiomatic translation becomes one of the skill that English Department students should master. However, some students find it difficult to translate it since idiom cannot be translated literally. Therefore, the students need certain strategy to overcome the difficulties. Baker (1992) proposed four strategies such as using similar meaning and form, using similar meaning but dissimilar form, translation by paraphrase, and translation by omission. The aims of this study are to find out which strategy that most of the students use and the reason why they choose it. The researcher got the answer for the first research question from the students' works and questionnaire. After knowing which strategy that is considered as the most common strategy, the researcher analyzes the students' works then interviews the students who choose it to get the answer for the second research question. The result shows that translation by paraphrase becomes the most common strategy. The reasons why they choose it are various. The common reason is this strategy is easier compared to the other strategies.

Keywords: idiomatic translation, strategy, English Department students.

INTRODUCTION

Translation has become the important skill that should be mastered by English Department students. Translation itself has a function as a bridge between two languages. Therefore, people who do not speak in the same language can communicate with each other through translation. Another reason why translation is considered as an important skill because becoming a translator is one of the expected job from English Department's graduate. Moreover, as a future teacher, mastering translation skill is also crucial especially when the students do not understand English. Therefore, the teacher should translate it in correct way.

There are some type in translation and of them is idiomatic translation. Idioms are usually used in daily conversation to make the conversation become more natural. Idioms also can be found in a narrative text when the characters give the wise words or make the conversation. Some students find it hard to translate the idioms since idiom cannot be translated in literal way. If it is translated literally, the idiom will lose its meaning. Therefore, the readers cannot understand the context of an idiom.

There are some strategies that the students can use to overcome the obstacle in translating the idioms and to prevent any errors during the process. One of the strategies is from Baker (2018). She suggested four strategies. Those

are using similar meaning and form, using similar meaning but dissimilar form, translation by paraphrasing, and translation by omission.

This study aims to uncover the most common strategy and the reason why the students use it. The researcher breaks down the research questions into:

1. What is the most common strategy used by the students in translating idioms?
2. What are the factors that contribute to the students' choices in choosing the most common strategy?

Munday (2016) argues that translation is a process of changing the text from source language into target language. It is similar to the definition of translation from Kuhlwiczak & Littau (2017). They describe translation as a process of transferring from source language to the target language. Translation itself is divided into some types. According to Newmark (1988) in Munday (2016), translation can be divided into two types, semantic and communicative. Meanwhile, Catford (1976) in Adisetia (2013) breaks down the type of translation into extent, levels, and ranks. Then, each part is also divided into certain category. For extent, it is categorized into full and partial translation. Meanwhile, based on level, it is divided into total and restricted translation.

According to McCarthy (1994), idioms are fixed expression that has unclear or visible meaning. The experts have divided idioms into some types. Adelnia & Dastjerdi (2011) breaks down the idioms into five types such as colloquialism, proverbs, slang, allusion, and phrasal verbs. Colloquialism is an idiom that is limited to certain geographical area. Proverbs usually contain the wise words. Slang is a non-formal language and sometimes is not treated as the standard language. Allusion is a type of idioms that refers to particular place, event, or literary work. A phrasal verb is a combination between verb and adverb, verb and preposition, and many more. Meanwhile, the other experts, Sadeghpour (2018), only divides idioms into two types, collocation and phrasal verb.

As it stated before, it is true that the students find the difficulties in translating idioms. Baker (2018) also explains some difficulties that the students may encounter during the process. First, sometimes, a translator fails to recognize idiom as idiom. However, not all of the idioms are hard to recognize. Some of them are easy to recognize especially the idioms that violates the truth. Second, some idioms have two meanings: literal and idiomatic. Third, some idioms do not have any equivalent in the target language. Fourth, some idioms have a similar form in the target language but have totally different meanings. Fifth, the use of idiom in each language is different. In some languages, idioms are used in formal context but on the other languages, it is used in informal context.

To conquer the struggle in idiomatic translation, Baker (1992) explains four strategies that becomes the core from this study. Using similar meaning and form strategy means that a translator translates the idioms in the same way both in meaning and lexical form. Using similar but dissimilar meaning strategy is quite similar to the previous strategy. The difference is that in this strategy, the translation of the idioms do not use the same lexical form. Translation by paraphrasing means that a translator paraphrase the idioms in the target language. Translation by omission means that a translator omits the idioms that do not have any substitute in the target language. Even though using similar meaning and form is considered as an ideal strategy, but Baker (2018) argues that translation by paraphrasing is the strategy that most of the translators use.

Sadeghpour (2018) also explains three strategies for idiomatic translation. The first one is translating idiom word-for-word. This strategy is similar to using similar meaning and form. However, the result by using this strategy may be tricky because the idioms itself can lose its meaning in the target language. The second one is translating idiom with non-idiom. It resembles with translation by paraphrasing since the translators can explain the idioms or make a new short term. The third strategy is translating idiom with an idiom. This strategy is quite the same as using similar meaning but dissimilar form. By using this strategy, the result of idiomatic translation becomes more natural and suitable for literary works.

There are two previous studies that are related to this study. Those are from Adisetia (2013) and Shojeai (2012). In the Adisetia's (2013) thesis, he describes the strategies that a translator uses in a novel called 'Chocolate'. The result of his study shows that translation by paraphrase becomes the strategy that the translator frequently use in translating the novel. Meanwhile, in Shojeai's (2012) paper, he finds out what are the difficulties that the translators deal during the process of translation. The difficulties are various. First, some idioms do not have any substitute in the target language. Second, some idioms may have counterpart in the target language but with different meaning. Third, some idioms may have literal and idiomatic meaning which make it difficult to be recognized as an idiom. Fourth, there are some idioms that can be used in the target language but with different context.

In his paper, Shojeai (2012) also defines several ways to conquer the problem in idiomatic translation. Those strategies are using the idioms that have similar meaning and form, using the idioms that have complementary meanings, paraphrasing idiom, and omitting idiom. The strategies are quite similar to Baker's strategy. Moreover, Adelnia and Dastjerdi also explain ways to overcome the

problem in idiomatic translation that is similar to Shojaei's (2012) paper. They describe Baker's strategy in their paper. Not only Adelnia & Datjerdi (2012), Akbari (2013) also discusses Baker's strategy in his paper as an ideal strategy for idiomatic translation. From the several studies mentioned above, all of them point out Baker's strategy as an excellent way to overcome the difficulties and prevent errors in idiomatic translation. Therefore, in this study, the researcher uses Baker's strategy as a core of this research.

Even though there are some similarities between this study and the previous studies, but there are also the differences. The differences are the previous studies only describe the strategies and problems in idiomatic translation while this study finds out which strategy that is commonly used by the students. Moreover, the subjects of the research from the previous studies are the professional translators while this study focuses more on the students.

In general, this study covers idiomatic translation in translation class. In particular, it covers the most common strategy and the reason why they choose it. However, this study is limited only for English – Indonesian translation class. The researcher hopes that this study will be beneficial for the students and the lecturers. Through this study, the students can understand more about idiomatic translation and the lecturers can teach the strategies that suitable for the students.

METHOD

To obtain the answer from the two research questions, the researcher uses qualitative research design so that the researcher can get the in-depth data. According to Nassaji (2015), qualitative design is used to describe the certain phenomenon that concerned on 'what' rather than 'how' and 'why'. The subjects from this study are 14 English Department students who take English – Indonesian translation class.

The data that are collected from the students are in form of students' tasks, questionnaires, and interview. There are some steps in collecting the data. First, the lecturer gives the tasks to the students. The task consists of 10 sentences that should be translated by the students. However, not all of the sentences are translated. Most of them only translate 6 – 9 sentences. Then, the researcher analyzes the students' works to get the data for the first research question.

Second, after the researcher analyzes the students' works, the researcher distributes the questionnaires to make the data become more valid. The questionnaire itself consists of 19 questions. 9 items represent the four strategies while 9 questions are supporting items for the 9 items. The 10 supporting items are divided into four types such as difficulties in idiomatic translation, the importance of students' knowledge in both languages, the students'

needs of certain strategy, and the number of strategy that the students need.

Third, the researcher analyzes the students' tasks one more time to find the reason why they choose it by looking at the pattern of their translations. After knowing it, the researcher interviews them so that the result becomes more valid. The interviews conducted is in form of semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the researcher asks the questions based on the interview guideline and follow-up questions if it is needed.

To analyze the collected data, the researcher uses Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, and Razavieh's (2010) stages. The stages are familiarizing and organizing, coding and reducing, and interpreting and representing. In the stage familiarizing and organizing, the researcher reads the students' tasks, listens to the audio, and organized the data from each participant. Then, in coding and reducing, the researcher classifies the answer from the students' task and reduce the data that are not used. In interpreting and representing, the researcher interprets the results from interviews and presents in in the next sub-heading.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Most Common Strategy

The lecturer asks the students to do the students' tasks in pairs. Therefore, there are seven groups in a class. In one group, they only translate six to nine sentences and sentence number one is translated by all of the groups. In translating the sentences given by the lecturer, the students use more than one strategy.

Group one translates seven sentences and five of them are translated using translation by paraphrasing. For example, they translate 'beat the time' as 'to do something quickly'. The word 'beat' can be translated literally into 'defeat'. However, if they translate it into 'defeat the time', the meaning is not delivered. Therefore, they choose to translate it into 'to do something quickly'.

Group two translates seven sentences and they translate four sentences using translation by paraphrasing. It can be seen from the way they translated 'orange and apple' into '*sangat berbeda*' which has the meaning as 'very different'. 'Orange and apple' are two different things. Therefore, this group translates it in that way. Meanwhile, the two sentences are incorrect and one sentence is translated using similar meaning but dissimilar form strategy.

Group three translates five sentences and four of it are translated using translation by paraphrasing. For example, in the sentence number four, they translate 'don't beat about the bush' to '*berhenti bertele-tele*' which has the meaning as 'say something straight to the point'. This group paraphrases the idiom into a shorter translation in

Bahasa Indonesia. Meanwhile, the other one sentence is considered incorrect since the meaning is not delivered.

Same as group three, group four also translates five sentences and one of the sentences is translated incorrectly. This group also translates the idiom ‘orange and apple’ in the same way as group three. Although both groups translate is using translation by paraphrasing, there is a difference between the result of their translations. Group three translates it into ‘they are really different’ while group four translates it into ‘they cannot be together’. Group four translates it in that way because they look at the previous sentence ‘there is no way you can reconcile them’ that has the meaning as ‘*tidak ada cara menyatukan mereka*’.

Group five translates most of the sentences given. They translate nine sentences while the other groups only translate less than nine sentences. In all of their translations, they use translation by paraphrasing. One of the example is the idiom ‘helter-skelter’ and ‘oops-a-daisy’. This group translates ‘helter-skelter’ as ‘to do something hurriedly’ because ‘helter-skelter’ itself is a slide shaped like a castle. Moreover, slide is associated with something fast. Because there is no word equivalence in Bahasa Indonesia, this group translates it into ‘to do something hurriedly’.

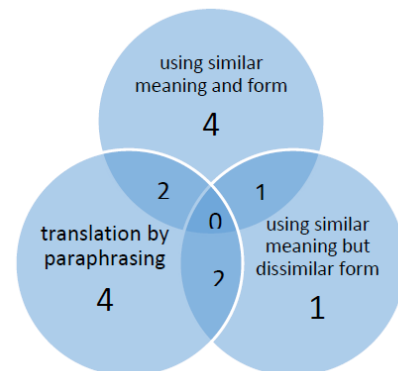
Group six translates six sentences and four of them are translated using translation by paraphrasing. In sentence number eight, this group translates ‘squeeze him dry’ to ‘*materialistis*’. They make a new short term instead of translate it into ‘spend her husband’s money’. They choose to translate it in that way because ‘materialistic’ and ‘spend her husband’s money’ are still related. Moreover, the meaning from ‘*materialistic*’ leaves a strong impression and delivered well.

Group seven translates seven sentences and five of them are translated using translation by paraphrasing. For example, the word ‘lips’ in idiom ‘read my lips’ is not translated literally as a part of body. They translate it into ‘to speak’ since lips and to speak are closely related. Lips is a part of a body that has a function to speak. Therefore, to make the meaning becomes clear, this group choose to translate it in that way.

From the result explained above, it can be seen that each group uses translation by paraphrasing to translate four to nine sentences. Therefore, it can be concluded that translation by paraphrasing becomes the most common strategy.

The next step is analyzing the questionnaires. The questionnaires are constructed based on the list of the sentences that the lectures gives to the students. There are 19 items on the questionnaires. Ten items represent the strategies in idiomatic translation while the other nine items are supporting items for the ten main items.

Figure 3.1



This is the result after the researcher analyzes the students’ questionnaires. In the questionnaires, the students do not only choose one strategy. Some of them choose two to three strategies. Translation by paraphrasing becomes the most common strategy because it is chosen by eight students. Using similar meaning and form strategy is in the second place chosen by seven students. The other strategy, using similar meaning but dissimilar form, is in the third place and it is chosen by four students. For translation by omitting, none of the students choose it.

Although the number between the students who use translation by paraphrasing in the students’ task and the questionnaires are different, but it leads to same way. Therefore, it can be concluded that translation by paraphrasing is the most common strategy. The other ten strategies are divided into three sections. Those are the difficulties in idiomatic translation, the importance of the students’ knowledge in both languages, and the students’ needs of certain strategy.

The result from the first section, the difficulties in idiomatic translation, is all of the students agree that knowing idiomatic translation is hard. It is proven by 14 students who choose agree and strongly agree choices. The second section, the importance of the students’ knowledge in both languages, is also chosen by all of the students. It means that they feel knowing the knowledge in both languages is important. The students are also agree that they need certain strategy to overcome the difficulties in translating idiom. Lastly, the last section, the students’ needs of certain strategy, shows that some of them agree that they need more than one strategy and some of them are not sure whether they need it or not.

The Contributing Factors in Choosing the Most Common Strategy.

To find out the contributing factors, the researcher analyzes the pattern of the students' translation. There are some reasons on why they choose translation by paraphrasing to translate most of the idioms. First, this strategy is considered as the easiest strategy compared to the other three strategy. It can be seen from the way they translate the word 'squeeze' in 'squeeze him dry'. They choose the word in Bahasa Indonesia that has the closest meaning to 'squeeze'. Therefore, they choose '*memeras*' which has the same literal meaning. Moreover, this claim is supported by the students' answers in interview session.

Second, the results from their translations become more natural. For example, the idiom 'oops-a-daisy' is translated to '*anakku sayang tidak boleh menangis*', '*ya ampun*', and '*oh tidak apa-apa*'. The idiom 'oops-a-daisy' is usually used to encourage the children when they fall. Moreover, because there is no direct translation from this idiom, the students translate it as natural as possible by imitating the way the mothers in Indonesia say when their children fall.

Third, the students want to make their results of the translation become readable. One of the example is the idiom 'orange and apple' that is translated into they cannot be together. Orange and apple are two different thing as it is mentioned above. However, they translate it that way because the previous sentence is 'there is no way you reconcile the pair' that is still related to 'they cannot be together'.

Fourth, because there is no word equivalence in Bahasa Indonesia, they say they prefer to use this strategy. The idiom 'helter-skelter' is translated into 'to do something hurriedly'. 'Helter-skelter' itself is a slide shaped like a castle. Therefore, it is closely related to the word 'to do something hurriedly'. Moreover, in Indonesia there is no a slide like 'helter-skelter'.

After answering the first and the second research question, the researcher comes to the conclusion that translation by paraphrasing is the strategy that the students frequently used. It is in line with Baker's (2018) claim that translation by paraphrasing is the most common strategy. The reasons on why the students choose this strategy are also various. First, this is the easiest strategy for the students. This claim is supported by Baker's claim (2018) saying that translation by paraphrasing becomes the most common strategy because it is easier. Second, the results of the translation becomes more natural. Third, they want to make their translations become readable. Fourth, there is no equivalence in the target language.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

After analyzing the students' tasks and the students' questionnaires, it can be concluded that translation by

paraphrasing is the most common strategy among the other three strategies. Although the result from students' tasks and questionnaires show the different number of the students who choose it, but it leads to the same conclusion.

The result of the supporting items in the questionnaire shows many things. All of the students agree that idiomatic translation is hard if it compared to the other types of translation. They also agree that it is essential to have knowledge in both source language and target language. Therefore, they also need certain strategy when they are facing they are facing the difficulties in idiomatic translation. Some students say they need more than one strategies, and some of them are unsure whether they need more than one strategy or not.

There are some reasons on why they choose translation by paraphrasing. First, this strategy is easier compared to the other strategies. Second, the results of the translations become natural. Third, the students want to make their readers can easily understand the meaning through their translation. Fourth, there is no word equivalence in the target language.

Suggestion

After finding the answers for the first and the second research questions, the researcher want to give some suggestions for the students, the lecturers, and the future researcher. For the students, the researcher suggests that they should enrich their knowledge so that they can consider and choose the strategy that is suitable with their preferences.

For the lecturer, the researcher suggests that the lecturer can apply the strategy that is considered as the best strategy. Therefore, it can make the students enjoy the learning process and overcome the difficulties in idiomatic translation. However, the lecturer should not force the students to use a certain strategy. Let them explore and decide which strategy that works best for them.

For the future researcher, since this study explores about Baker's strategy in idiomatic translation, the researcher suggests that the future researcher can explore the strategies from the other expert. The future researcher can make a study about the most common strategy based on the other experts.

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