IDENTIFYING THE ABILITY OF STUDENTS IN TRANSLATING LITERARY WORK

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kompetensi mahasiswa Program Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris semester lima dalam menerjemahkan karya sastra, khususnya puisi, dari Bahasa Inggris ke Bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif, yang menggabungkan tes dan kuesioner respons tertutup untuk mengukur keterampilan penerjemahan dan mengidentifikasi permasalahan umum. Data menunjukkan bahwa 38,46% siswa menunjukkan kompetensi penerjemahan yang memadai, dan hanya 2,56% yang memperoleh tingkat luar biasa. Permasalahan yang umum terjadi antara lain menentukan arti kata, menggunakan tenses yang benar, memilih kata yang dapat diterima, dan menggunakan konjungsi. Temuan ini menggarisbawahi perlunya bantuan instruksional khusus untuk mengembangkan kemampuan penerjemahan siswa, khususnya dalam mengatasi kompleksitas penerjemahan sastra. Penelitian tersebut menekankan perlunya pembentukan kompetensi linguistik dan budaya dalam pendidikan penerjemahan, menonjolkan fungsi kosa kata, tata bahasa, dan pengetahuan unsur puisi. Dengan menangani bidang-bidang ini, instruktur dapat membantu siswa memperoleh tingkat kompetensi penerjemahan yang lebih signifikan, sehingga meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa dan kesadaran budaya mereka secara keseluruhan.Abstrak ditulis dalam bahasa Indinesia dan Bahasa Inggris menggunakan huruf Book Antiqua 11 pt dengan spasi tunggal. Panjang abstrak tidak lebih dari 250 kata. Hindari penulisan singkatan, akronim, ataupun simbol matematika pada abstrak. Abstrak artikel hasil penelitian berisikan latar belakang singkat, tujuan, metode, hasil penelitian.

Kata Kunci: kemampuan penerjemahan, siswa, karya sastra

Abstract

This study explores the competence of fifth-semester English Education Program students in translating literary works, notably poetry, from English to Indonesian. The research utilizes a quantitative method, combining a test and a closed-response questionnaire to measure translation skills and identify prevalent issues. The data suggest that 38.46% of students display adequate translation competence, with just 2.56% obtaining an exceptional level. Common issues include determining word meanings, utilizing the correct tenses, choosing acceptable words, and using conjunctions. These findings underline the need for specific instructional assistance to develop students' translation abilities, especially in addressing the complexity of literary translation. The research emphasizes the necessity of establishing linguistic and cultural competency in translation education, highlighting the function of vocabulary, grammar, and knowledge of poetic elements. By addressing these areas, instructors may better help students obtain more significant levels of translation competence, boosting their overall language ability and cultural awareness.

Keywords : translation ability, students, literary work

INTRODUCTION

English is extensively taught as a second language at different educational levels

worldwide. Mastery of listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities is essential for effective English language acquisition. Translation is necessary for learners who have reached an intermediate or advanced level. Translation transfers written material from one language to another, requiring a solid understanding of linguistic theory and the particular languages used. It requires comprehension of cultural subtleties and language complexities, making it a multifaceted but essential proficiency. Enhancing these abilities not only enhances communication but also enhances one's comprehension of English. Thus, a complete method to learning English includes the basic language abilities and the capacity to translate, thus providing a thorough language mastery. Acquiring diverse skills is essential for students who want to become fluent and adaptable in English as a second language, improving their overall ability to communicate (Juniaty, 2019).

Studying translation helps students to access a variety of material broadly accessible in English, therefore acting as a critical communication tool that links people internationally via many languages. However, translating is a strenuous activity requiring great work and focus. Translators must precisely transmit the meaning of the original material, making it a challenging effort. Translators must comprehensively master the source and destination languages, considering their difficulties. Translating literary works, especially poetry, is far more challenging than translating other material forms, such as business writing, books, and novels. This issue derives from the necessity to maintain the creative and emotional qualities of the original work. Therefore, translation is not just a technical talent but also an art form that demands a profound grasp of language and culture. Proficiency in translating strengthens communication and broadens access to varied information and literature.

As proven by academic studies addressing the complications faced across numerous translation projects, translating materials into excellent translations is a strenuous activity. Hadrus's (2017) research focused on the translation problems faced by second-grade pupils at SMA Negeri 1 Lappariaja while handling argumentative texts. His results suggested that pupils needed help with linguistic issues, including vocabulary use, sentence construction, and overall speech coherence, which presented more significant obstacles than non-linguistic features. These observations underline the crucial need for focused interventions and instructional assistance to increase students' language abilities in interpreting argumentative texts successfully, enabling enhanced translation performance in educational contexts.

Research done via interviews with fifth semester students at one of University in Medan focusing on English Department students struggling in translation course. Many students struggled with translating words and phrases owing to insufficient vocabulary, and many found translating sentences and paragraphs challenging because of uncertainty over grammatical structures. Consequently, their translations needed to be more creative and were based on their knowledge. When entrusted with translating poetry, students experienced extra problems communicating the message into Bahasa, since poems have distinct features that could be more challenging to adapt into another language. These results indicate the need for increased vocabulary and grammar teaching to strengthen students' translation abilities, especially in addressing the complexity of poetry translation. Addressing these difficulties is vital for helping students generate accurate and meaningful translations that respect the intricacies of both the source and destination languages.

The definitions of translation presented by many specialists illustrate its intricacy and multidimensional character. Newmark (1988) underlines the necessity of transmitting the intended meaning of a book into another language while keeping the author's original purpose. Hatim and Munday (2004) see translation as translating written material from one language to another. Basnett (2002) characterizes it as ensuring that the surface meaning of the source language text is retained closely in the target language, balancing adherence to the original structure without altering the target language's natural form. Larson (1988)

characterizes translation skill by accuracy, naturalness, and clarity in the translated text. Sofyan and Tarigan (2018) enhance this concept by adding factors such as accuracy, equivalence of meaning, translation abilities, text function, grammar, and style to assess translation competency. Together, these viewpoints underline that good translation needs both linguistic skill and a deep awareness of cultural subtleties and communication goals in both source and destination languages.

As Perinne (1992) describes, poetry is a timeless and universal art form. It embraces profound meanings and acts as a record and interpretation of major human events. It is built in the most captivating and artistically beautiful language, giving it a unique communication that spans nations and civilizations throughout history. Translating poetry is incredibly demanding and provokes substantial discussion over the suitable approaches and intended effects (Singh, 2011). This method entails studying the author's intended meaning and the formal devices utilized in the source language and evaluating the poetry forms and figurative language applicable to the target language (Fadaee, 2011). Translators must examine several concerns, including linguistic, literary, artistic, and socio-cultural obstacles, which might influence students' ability to translate poetry successfully. Many students prefer to focus on literal translation, which is inappropriate for poetry since it fails to retain the subtleties and creative components of the original piece. Effective poetry translation needs a profound grasp of both languages and the capacity to transmit the emotional and cultural core of the poem, making it a complex and delicate process. Developing these abilities is vital for correctly interpreting poetry and keeping its original beauty and meaning.

For this study, the researchers used the poem "To My Mother" is a heartfelt poem by Edgar Allan Poe, written in honor of his mother-in-law, Maria Clemm, who was also his aunt. The poem expresses Poe's deep affection and reverence for her, emphasizing the special bond he feels due to her role in his life and in the life of his beloved wife, Virginia Clemm. Poe contrasts the love he feels for Maria Clemm with the love he had for his own biological mother, suggesting that his emotional connection to Maria is even stronger due to her connection with Virginia. Edgar Allan Poe wrote "To My Mother" in 1849. This poem was one of his last works, composed shortly before his death in October 1849. Researchers selected the poem "To My Mother" because it contains a complete evaluation tool. It tests students on multiple fronts—language ability, cultural knowledge, emotional impact, and literary analysis. This multidimensional method ensures a complete evaluation of students' translation skills and ability to handle complicated texts.

The study of identifying students' ability in translating text has found various findings. The study conducted by (Andriani & Anggraini, 2020) that investigates the students' competency in translating the passage of Indonesian text. In the research, the researchers explore the students' ability in seven areas including the understanding of noun phrase, active-passive, and tenses (grammatical). The findings reveal that learners can efficiently translate sentences from Indonesian to English. Most children are skilled in translating sentence structures, such as fundamental present, past, and future tenses, noun phrases, and passive and active sentences. Some students struggle with clarity from active to passive and vice versa. While students' broad translation skills are promising, extra instruction and practice in altering phrase structures are essential to improve their confidence and competence.

There was another research from Rosyidah, Zahrida & Hati (2019) that revealed students' competencies in transferring language From Indonesia to English through narrative work. The result presented 61.22% of students exhibited an acceptable competence in translating narrative texts from Bahasa Indonesia to English. This means that most of the sampled students did successfully in this activity. However, a review of descriptive data suggested that most students needed help connecting to lexical and grammatical components

while translating narrative materials. Efforts to develop these core abilities assist students in overcoming particular challenges observed in their translation attempts, assuring more successful and nuanced translations in academic contexts.

Also, the research discovered by Tasyakurna and Syarif (2021) showed how students' ability in report translating through SL (Indonesian) to TL (English). This research showed that at three students earned an excellent level, one student gained a reasonably good level, and three reached an almost good level. Three students were graded reasonably, with no students slipping into the wrong group. Overall, the learners displayed a reasonably excellent capacity to translate report materials, suggesting a generally favorable performance level among the participants in this research.

Based on the discussion above, the researchers have the strong interest to explore more regarding the students' ability in translating text. The previous studies above were still few to explore the field in literary work. Therefore, this research aims to investigate students' ability in translating literary work area deeper, used poetry instrument. This study will benefit for lecturers to sharpen students' awareness in interpreting cultural element in literary work. The research questions for this study are: (1) What are the students' ability in translating literary work? (2) What are difficulties students faced in translating literary work?

METHOD

Quantitative design used in this research, which involves explaining phenomena by collecting and analyzing numerical data using statistical techniques (Cresswell, 2013). The research employed a quantitative method to investigate students' proficiency level and challenges in translating literary work (poem) from English into Bahasa Indonesia. This study, conducted at one of University in Medan majoring English Education Program, targeted fifth-semester students, totaling 149 individuals across four classes (1, 2, 3, and 4) with 35, 35, 39, and 40 students, respectively. Using cluster random sampling, a method endorsed by Gay (1987) for its effectiveness in selecting homogeneous groups, 39 students were chosen as samples. This sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, leading to the selection of 9 students each from Classes 1 and 2; 11 students from Class 3 and 10 students from Class 4.

The research utilized a test to gauge students' translation abilities and a closed-response questionnaire to identify their difficulties. The translation ability test was scored based on Waddington's (2001) criteria, enabling the researchers to classify the students' proficiency levels. The data gathered from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, specifically percentages, to provide insights into the common translation problems experienced by the students. The instrument used for the test was the poem written entitled "To My Mother" written by Edgar Allan Poe. The text of the poem can be viewed in Figure 1.

The findings of this research aimed to shed light

To My Mother
by Edgar Allan Poe
Because I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore, by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus, are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

Figure 1 Poem "To My Mother" by Edgar Allan Poe

on the translation competencies of English Education Program students and the specific issues they face when translating literary work (poem). By understanding these aspects, the study contributes to identifying areas that need improvement in the curriculum or teaching methods to better support students in developing their translation skills. The comprehensive approach of using both a test and a questionnaire allowed for a detailed analysis of the proficiency levels

and the underlying problems, providing a well-rounded understanding of the students' translation abilities and challenges. The standardization of the translation ability level according to Waddington includes level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 which starts to the successful description until inadequate description.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, the researchers presented the findings of level in students' ability and the difficulties faced by students through data percentages description from test and questionnaires.

Students' Ability Level in Translating Literary Work (Poem) from English to Indonesia

After analyzing the test result, the researchers obtained the data of students' ability in translating literary work. The analysis of students' ability to translate literary works, specifically poetry, from English to Indonesian reveals a range of proficiency levels among the participants, based on Waddington's (2001) classification. The findings are summarized in Table 1, which categorizes the students' abilities into five levels: *excellent, almost excellent, sufficient, insufficient, and completely insufficient*. A total of 39 students participated in the study. The students' ability in this case would be categorized in the table 1 below.

Table 1
Students' Classification Ability in Translating Literary Work

No.	Level of Ability	Description	Frequency	Percentages (%)
1.	5	Excellent	1	2,56
2.	4	Almost Excellent	10	25,64
3.	3	Sufficient	15	38,46
4.	2	Insufficient	13	33,34
5.	1	Completly insufficient	0	0
Total			39	

In the level 5, exemplary transfer of ST information with minor revisions needed for professional standards. The translation reads almost as if it were originally written in the TL, with only minor errors. This level is considered excellent. The data indicates that only a small fraction of the students (2.56%) exhibited an excellent level of translation ability. This suggests that just one student demonstrated a high proficiency in translating poetry, effectively capturing the nuances, emotional depth, and stylistic elements of the original text. This student's performance indicates a strong understanding of both the source and target languages, as well as an ability to navigate the complexities of literary translation. In this level,

In the level 4, Nearly complete transfer with one or two minor inaccuracies requiring some revision. Large sections read like they were originally written in the TL, but there are several errors. This level is almost excellent. A slightly larger group of students, representing 25.64%, achieved an almost excellent level of translation ability. These 10 students showed a high degree of skill but still had some areas for improvement. They were able to convey the meaning and tone of the original poems effectively, although minor errors or inconsistencies might have been present.

In the level 3, the general ideas are transferred, but with multiple lapses in accuracy, needing considerable revision. Some parts read like the original text, while others clearly seem like translations, with numerous errors. This level is deemed sufficient. The largest group, comprising 38.46% of the students, was categorized as having sufficient translation ability. These 15 students demonstrated basic proficiency, managing to translate the texts in a way

that retained the general meaning and structure but likely with some inaccuracies or a lack of finer detail. Their translations may have been more literal, missing the subtleties of the original poetry.

In the level 2, transfer is undermined by serious inaccuracies, requiring thorough revision. Most of the text reads like a translation with continuous errors. This level is insufficient. A significant portion of the students, 33.34%, were found to have insufficient translation ability. The 13 students in this category struggled considerably with translating poetry, possibly due to limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, or an inability to capture the poetic devices and cultural nuances present in the original text. Their translations might have been disjointed or overly simplistic, failing to convey the depth of the source material.

In the level 1, the translation is fundamentally flawed, making it not worth translating. The student shows a complete inability to express ideas adequately in the TL. This level is completely insufficient. Notably, no students fell into the completely insufficient category, indicating that all participants had at least a minimal level of competency in translation. This suggests that while many students faced challenges, they all possessed some foundational skills in translating literary texts.

Overall, the data highlights a diverse range of translation abilities among the students, with a clear need for targeted instructional support to enhance their skills. The findings underscore the importance of focusing on both linguistic and cultural aspects of translation to improve students' proficiency in translating complex literary works like poetry. Enhancing vocabulary, grammar, and an understanding of poetic devices will be crucial in helping students achieve higher levels of translation competency.

Students' Difficulties in Translating Literary Work (Poem) from English to Indonesian

The data collected from the questionnaire responses highlight several difficulties students face when translating literary works, particularly poems, from English to Indonesian. Table 2 categorizes these challenges and provides insight into the frequency and percentage of students experiencing each type of difficulty.

Table 2
Students' Difficultiues Based on Questionnaire Respond

No.	Difficulties	Frequency	Percentages (%)
1.	I have difficulty in selecting appropriate words in translating	8	20,52
2.	I have difficulty in identifying the meaning of words	15	38,46
3.	I have difficulty in using tenses correctly	10	25,64
4.	I have difficulty in using appropriate conjunction correctly	6	15,38

The data indicate that the most common difficulty students face is identifying the meaning of words, with 15 students (38.46%) reporting this issue. This suggests that a significant number of students struggle with understanding vocabulary in the context of poetry, which often employs figurative language, metaphors, and culturally specific references that can be challenging to interpret. For the example, students found difficulties in interpreting the meaning of words: devotional, unto, infinity

The second most prevalent difficulty is using tenses correctly, reported by 10 students (25.64%). This indicates that students find it challenging to accurately convey the temporal aspects of the original text, which is crucial in maintaining the integrity and meaning of the

poem during translation. For this case, students received hard identification in translating the phrase: Therefore, by that dear name I long have called you—; Was but the mother of myself; but you.

Eight students (20.52%) reported difficulty in selecting appropriate words for translation. This issue can be particularly pronounced in poetry, where word choice is critical to preserving the nuance, rhythm, and emotional impact of the original text. The challenge lies in finding equivalent words in Indonesian that carry the same connotations and aesthetic qualities as the English words. For example, "Can find, among their burning terms of love" to be "Tidak dapat menemukan, di antara istilah cinta mereka yang membara"

Lastly, six students (15.38%) indicated difficulty in using appropriate conjunctions correctly. Conjunctions are essential for connecting ideas and ensuring the coherence of the translated text. Misuse of conjunctions can disrupt the flow and clarity of the poem, leading to a loss of meaning and impact. The example was "And thus, are dearer than the mother I knew" should be translated to "Dan dengan demikian, lebih berharga daripada ibu yang kukenal".

Based on the result above, the Students' Ability Level in Translating Literary Work (Poem) from English to Indonesian for this study showed mostly the sufficient level in translating literary work with 38, 46% (15 students). This result is aligned with the research from Rosyidah, Zahrida, & Hati (2020) that students were mostly in level 3 (adequate) for translating narrative text. Also, this study has similar result with the research with Andriani and Anggraini (2020) that students' competency in translating text was moderate including tenses and noun phrase.

CONCLUSIONS

The research studying students' capacity to translate literary works, especially poetry, from English to Indonesian demonstrates a spectrum of translation abilities among the participants. The data demonstrates that students' translation skills are largely adequate, with 38.46% of students falling into this group. This outcome is consistent with prior research that showed students' translating abilities to be modest. Only a tiny minority of students displayed outstanding competency, suggesting they could successfully capture the intricacies and stylistic characteristics of the original text with minimum mistakes. Conversely, many pupils needed to improve their needed to improve their translation ability, suffering with vocabulary, syntax, and the preservation of poetic techniques and cultural subtleties.

The issues indicated by the questionnaire answers highlight significant areas where students have difficulty. The most prevalent challenge is determining the meaning of words, followed by difficulties in employing tenses appropriately, picking acceptable phrases, and utilizing conjunctions. These issues underline the intricacy of translating poetry, which involves a profound awareness of language and cultural factors. By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a deeper understanding of how to effectively teach translation skills and help students become more proficient in translating literary works, particularly poetry. This will not only enhance their language proficiency but also enrich their cultural understanding and appreciation of literature.

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