

Interlingual and Intralingual Problems in Translating Short Fiction from Indonesian into English

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study is to find out the Interlingual and Intralingual Problems faced by students in translating Short Fiction. Content analysis was used for both data collection. This study used tests and interviews to determine what errors and problems during the translation process which were then adjusted for applying relevant learning methods. The research sample consisted of 30 students majoring in English Literature. The analysis showed that most of the students needed further understanding of the use of grammar and the meaning of English words. This is due to the influence of their first language and lack of competence in the rules or structures of English. This research highlights the importance of more effective educational strategies and in-depth approaches to improve students' translation skills in English. The implications of these findings for learning methodologies are comprehensively discussed, along with suggestions for future research.

Keywords: interlingual, intralingual, translating, short-fiction.

1. Introduction

Academic English learning requires students to master and comprehend language skills, including communicative competence in speaking and writing English texts. One of the objectives of teaching English is to develop their translation competence. Translation is one of the activities that students should understand to improve their writing skills. By knowing how to translate according to linguistic rules, students can easily understand the text's content and interpret its meaning. Students will also be able to explore several types of genre-based writing, such as descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure, and report. It is generally accepted that translation is the process of transferring the source language (L1) to the target language (L2), which is a complex task for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). Venuti, L. (2017) defines translation as the process of rewriting a literary work's original text concerning the society's ideology. This is when the translation process becomes broader, not only based on the content of the text but has many internal and external aspects.

Newmark (1988) argues that there are many obstacles that a person experiences in making texts. This is because Indonesian and English have different language structures, so many things could be improved in interpreting a text. Students still need help translating texts which makes them often produce translation errors. Many factors cause students to be wrong, which results in misinterpretation. The most common is grammar, based on differences in structure or knowledge of the target language.

Previous research has underscored the importance of knowing students' translation difficulties and their impact on the quality of their translations. One such study, conducted by Tia (2019), emphasized the importance of understanding interlingual and intralingual. Both are key factors that can cause errors in the translation process. Using a content analysis approach, the researcher identified the types of errors in translation and their causes. The research results show that translation errors often occur at various levels, including semantic, lexical, morphological, and grammatical. In addition, cultural differences between the source and target languages can also cause translation errors. The anxiety factor felt by the translator is also identified as one of the significant causes of errors. Recommendations from this

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study include the need for an increased understanding of the linguistic aspects of the target language for students to promote language acquisition and improve academic outcomes.

However, the insights from the research conducted by Kurniawan (2021) elaborate more. In this study, the researcher identifies different types of errors that occur in translation. The results showed that translation errors often occur at various levels, including semantic, lexical, morphological, and grammatical errors. Semantic and lexical errors usually arise when translators cannot find the right word equivalents in the target language, resulting in inaccurate translations. In addition, morphological errors, such as pluralization and incorrect use of tenses, show a lack of understanding of morphological rules in English. Grammatical errors, including improper sentence structure, are also a significant problem, where translators often translate literally without considering the context.

Furthermore, research conducted by Hartono (2021) shows that interlingual problems arise due to the influence of students' mother tongue, which causes them to apply rules from their own language to English, often in an inappropriate way. Lack of knowledge of previously learned grammatical rules, incorrect concepts regarding certain usages, and overgeneralization also contribute to the errors students make. Intralingual problems include grammatical errors, such as inappropriate use of prepositions, articles, tenses, and verb forms, as well as errors in subject-predicate structure. In addition, students also experience lexical problems, where they struggle to choose the right words, as well as syntactic problems which include sentences that are too long or incomplete. Mechanical aspects, such as the use of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization, are also challenges that interfere with readers' comprehension.

1.1. Concept of Translation

Translation plays an important role in facilitating the exchange of global perspectives between individuals. The significant differences between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) include structural, cultural and stylistic aspects. This makes translation a valuable tool, especially for those who lack proficiency in understanding the source language. In this context, translation serves as a bridge of communication, allowing access to information and ideas that were previously difficult to reach due to language barriers. It also carries the responsibility of conveying the message precisely and correctly. In Munday's (2016) view, the concept of translation has three interrelated dimensions. First, it is a field of study or a widely observable phenomenon in the context of cross-linguistic communication. Secondly, translation refers to the concrete result in the form of a translated text. Third, the term also encompasses the active process of producing translations, commonly known as translating.

Meanwhile, Osman (2017) offers a perspective that emphasizes the cognitive aspect of translation. He views the activity as a complex mental process in which the essence or meaning of a linguistic discourse is transferred from one language system to another. This view highlights that translation is not simply the transfer of words, but involves deep understanding and reconstruction of meaning in different language and cultural contexts. From a broader perspective, the process involves rewriting the original literary text with the ideology of the society in mind. This view emphasizes that the activity of language transfer is a comprehensive process, influenced by the content of the text as well as various internal and external factors (Venuti, 2017).

1.2. Interlingual and Intralingual Problems

An understanding of interlingual and intralingual problems is essential for identifying sources of errors and developing effective translation strategies. Interlingual and intralingual problems are the two main categories of errors often encountered in the translation process (Kaweera, 2013).

Interlingual problems relate to interference from the mother tongue (L1) to the target language (L2). In the context of translation, these interferences can be divided into three main aspects: lexical, syntactic and discourse interference (Tuaychareon, 2003). Lexical interference involves errors in the use of collocations and confusion in word-meaning relationships. For example, translators may use collocations from their native language directly into the target language, which may result in unnatural or even incorrect translations. James (1998) points out that collocation errors often occur when translators use direct translation to form collocations in the target language.

Syntactic interference involves errors in sentence structure and problems in word order. It often occurs due to differences in grammatical structure between the source language and the target language. Aristiawan (2019) and Lin (2019) identified several sources of interlingual errors in syntax, including errors of omission, addition, incorrect formation, and incorrect order. Khatter (2019) also noted that errors in punctuation, spelling, prepositions, articles, and incorrect word forms often appear as a result of syntactic interference.

Intralingual problems, on the other hand, arise from the structure of the target language itself and reflect the competence of the translator at a certain stage in the mastery of the target language (Kaweera, 2013). In the context of translation, intralingual problems may include overgeneralization, disregard of rule constraints, incomplete application of rules, and incorrect concepts.

Overgeneralization occurs when translators overapply target language rules, often resulting in inaccurate translations. Rule constraint neglect involves failing to understand the limitations of using certain structures in the target language. Sari, Mu'in & Yamin (2019) found that rule boundary neglect is the most frequent intralingual error among learners of English as a foreign language.

Incomplete rule application occurs when the translator fails to apply the required structure completely in the target language. Murtiana (2019) explains that this problem often arises because the translator is still in the developmental stage of second language acquisition. Misconceptions involve misunderstandings of concepts in the target language, which can result in inaccurate or confusing translations.

An understanding of these interlingual and intralingual problems is crucial in translation studies. By identifying the sources of errors, researchers and practitioners can develop more effective translation strategies and better teaching methods for translator training. In addition, awareness of these issues can help translators to be more aware of potential errors and improve the quality of their translations. In the context of translation teaching, an understanding of interlingual and intralingual issues can assist instructors in designing more effective curricula. By focusing on areas that are frequent sources of errors, instructors can help students develop strategies to overcome specific challenges in the translation process.

2. Research Methods

This study utilized content analysis with a qualitative approach. Content analysis is a method that allows researchers to examine human behavior indirectly by analyzing their communications, typically focusing on the written content of these interactions, according to Creswell (2012: 16), qualitative research involves the systematic exploration of social or human issues, aiming to gain in-depth knowledge of central phenomena through literature review, goal setting, and research implementation.

In this study, the population was English Literature students from the Faculty of Language and Literature, Makassar State University. The total number of students in this study was 30 people in one class. During the translation process, the researcher finally determined 25 students as samples based on the predetermined translation selection criteria.

The researcher used a test by giving short fiction stories to be translated from Indonesian to English. This was done to find out what factors influenced the errors in their translation. In addition, interviews were conducted to collect data on the problems faced by the students during the translation process. The interview consisted of several questions designed to obtain research data.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Result

The participants in this study consisted of sixth-semester students of English Literature, the Faculty of Language and Literature, The State University of Makassar. The data obtained came from the results of translation tests and interviews, reflecting the assessment of the students' translation errors and the difficulties they faced in the translation process.

The translation test consisted of carefully selected texts that incorporated a range of linguistic features and potential translation pitfalls, designed to elicit a variety of error types. The subsequent interviews provided valuable context to the quantitative data, offering insights into the students' decision-making processes, their awareness of translation strategies, and the specific linguistic and cultural barriers they encountered. This dual approach not only highlighted the most common areas of difficulty in English-to-Indonesian translation among these students but also shed light on the complex interplay between language proficiency, cultural knowledge, and translation skills.

The data obtained includes various factors such as the types of translation errors (omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering), difficulties in finding the meaning of English words, determining the correct placement of morphemes, understanding sentence types, recognizing tenses, and distinguishing singular and plural functions

Table 1. Students' Translation Errors Caused by Interlingual and Intralingual Factors

	Types of Error	Frequency			Total	Percent
		Week 1	Week 2	Week 3		
Interlingual	Omission	72	53	30	155	30.45%
	Addition	60	54	39	153	30.05%
	Misinformation	82	56	31	169	33.20%
Intralingual	Misordering	16	13	3	32	6.28%
		230	176	103	509	

The analysis of the translation tests revealed several key findings. All errors were identified, followed by omission (30.45%), addition (30.05%), misinformation (33.20%) and misordering (6.26%). Notably, errors related to tense recognition and the distinction between singular and plural forms were particularly common among misinformation errors. The study also found a correlation between students' vocabulary size and the frequency of omission errors, suggesting that limited lexical knowledge often led to the omission of words or phrases in the target text. Furthermore, students with stronger grammatical knowledge tended to produce more accurate translations overall, but sometimes at the cost of naturalness in the target language.

Based on the data above, the researcher stated that there were two biggest causes of errors that affected students' skills in translating, namely interlingual and intralingual. The description of the cause of the error based on the difficulties found will be described as follows:

Table 2. Students' Translation

Problem	Difficulties	Strategy to overcome
Interlingual	- Difficulty in finding the meaning of words in English	The structure of English and Indonesian sentences is very different, so it's best not to translate according to Indonesian rules.
	- Distinguish between singular and plural functions	Increase memorization and learn new vocabulary to understand how to convey messages or main points from a text
		Understand the literal meaning and make it a habit to understand the context of the material in a text before starting to translate.
Intralingual	- Determine the correct placement of morpheme	Learn the functions and rules of grammar and then try to make sentences.
	- Understand and distinguish the types of sentences	Make a list of tenses so that it is easy to distinguish them and identify them indicating the number of objects
	- Recognize the types of tenses	Learn the types of sentences and get to know their characteristics in more detail

The results of interviews with 25 students regarding difficulties in translating short fiction from Indonesian to English revealed some of the main challenges faced. These problems can be categorized into two groups: interlingual and intralingual. In the interlingual context, students reported significant difficulties in finding appropriate English equivalents for certain Indonesian terms. This indicates a gap in their command of English vocabulary. In addition, students also had difficulties in distinguishing and using singular and plural forms appropriately, which may be due to the difference in usage systems between the two languages.

Meanwhile, in the intralingual aspect, students face some important challenges. They reported difficulties in determining the correct placement of morphemes in English word structures, indicating difficulties in understanding and applying word formation rules. The students also had difficulty in understanding and differentiating the types of sentences in English, indicating the need for an improved understanding of sentence structure. Furthermore, they had difficulty recognizing and using the correct types of tenses, which may be due to the more complex time system differences between Indonesian and English.

These findings provide important insights into the specific challenges' students face in the translation process. These difficulties reflect gaps in their mastery of the linguistic aspects of English, both in terms of vocabulary and grammar. This suggests the need for more targeted teaching approaches to address such problems, such as an emphasis on vocabulary development, intensive practice of grammar, and contextual understanding of English usage. In addition, the findings also underscore the importance of providing more exposure to authentic English usage and practical exercises in translation contexts. Thus, students can develop the ability to address interlingual and intralingual challenges more effectively in their translation process.

3.2. Discussion

The results of this study reveal significant interlingual and intralingual problems faced by students in translating short fiction from Indonesian to English, providing empirical support for theories emphasizing the challenges in the translation process. These findings align with research conducted by Tia (2019), Kurniawan (2021), and Hartono (2021), which underscores that interlingual issues such as mother tongue interference and intralingual problems related to target language competence significantly impact students' translation abilities. The study highlights that most students require further understanding of English grammar usage and word meanings, stemming from first language influence and lack of competence in English rules and structures.

Moreover, these findings consistently align with previous research emphasizing the intricate interplay between various linguistic factors and students' translation skills (Kaweera, 2013; Tuaychareon, 2003; James, 1998). The research outcomes indicate that factors such as lexical, syntactic, and discourse interference, as well as overgeneralization, disregard of rule constraints, and incomplete application of rules in the target language, significantly impact students' translation quality. The implications of these findings are congruent with theories highlighting the complex nature of translation as a cognitive process involving deep understanding and reconstruction of meaning across different language and cultural contexts (Munday, 2016; Osman, 2017; Venuti, 2017).

The implications of these findings hold considerable relevance for enhancing translation teaching practices across various educational institutions. Translation educators must prioritize addressing both interlingual and intralingual issues to ensure that the learning process fosters improved translation skills. This encompasses developing strategies to mitigate mother tongue interference, expanding students' vocabulary knowledge, and enhancing their understanding of English grammatical structures. Moreover, emphasizing the importance of context and cultural nuances in translation is imperative to facilitate more accurate and natural translations. Additionally, educators must recognize the significance of providing ample practical experience and exposure to authentic English language use to help students overcome intralingual challenges. Effective teaching methods that go beyond traditional grammar-focused approaches and incorporate real-life translation exercises can elevate student translation skills and cultivate a more enriching learning environment.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research, it can be concluded that there are significant interlingual and intralingual problems in the translation process of short fiction from Indonesian to English by university students. A thorough analysis of the collected data reveals the important role of mother tongue interference and target language competence in shaping students' translation ability in the context of English language learning. The findings confirm that interlingual factors, including mother tongue interference and difficulties in finding English word equivalents, as well as intralingual factors such as challenges in applying correct grammar and sentence structure, not only affect students' translation accuracy but also shape their approach to the translation process. Therefore, considering both interlingual and intralingual factors is crucial in designing more effective translation teaching strategies and creating an environment conducive to developing proficient translation skills in English language learning.

Furthermore, the implications of these findings carry significant weight. Especially in the realm of educational practice, educators and institutions should prioritize addressing interlingual and intralingual challenges in their

translation courses. Paying attention to aspects such as expanding students' vocabulary knowledge, improving their understanding of English grammatical structures, and providing sufficient exposure to authentic English usage can positively affect students' translation skills. In addition, the incorporation of context-based translation exercises and cultural awareness training is potentially an important factor in improving translation quality. However, it is important to realize that students' individual linguistic backgrounds and proficiency levels may vary, and teaching approaches should be balanced with an understanding of students' individual needs and challenges. For future research endeavors, several suggestions are worth considering. First, conducting longitudinal studies to track the development of students' translation skills over time can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of various teaching strategies. Moreover, expanding the scope of the study to include additional variables that might affect translation quality, such as the cognitive processes involved in translation or the impact of different text genres, could yield a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape translation competence. Furthermore, conducting in-depth qualitative research can provide valuable insights into students' thought processes during translation and their strategies to overcome linguistic challenges. Such research can further inform the development of targeted interventions and teaching methodologies to improve translation skills among English language learners.

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