THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF *BATU MENANGIS* CHILDREN'S STORYBOOK: A STUDY OF TRANSLATION ERRORS AND ITS READABILITY

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ABSTRACT

*Translation is the process of stating the same message from the source language to the target language. The translation results of each individual can be different even in the same context. Translation errors will still happen either in the direct translation or indirect translation, specifically in bilingual textbooks. This is often experienced by non-native speakers whose translation results are still unacceptable, in other words, far from the original meaning. The lack of insights in both source language and target language caused the errors to make different interpretations and can also bemuse the readers or listeners. This research is conducted to develop a translation study by discovering types of error in English translation experienced by the author and determining its readability among some invited respondents. After doing some translation practices, particularly in the translated texts, children's literature is selected to be the research object. Under the title **Batu Menangis** which is arranged and translated by M. Rantissi. This book is written in two languages, Indonesian (Source language) and English (Target language). Qualitative research for this research applying the explicatory research method to describe the analysis explicitly to give a more detailed description of error types. Besides, the research is also a quantitative research by applying the survey research method to get a concrete data assessment to support the analysis. Error Analysis Concept becomes the approach to help the researcher classify the errors into some subcategories. The researcher found some errors in grammatical and spelling. Mostly, grammatical errors occurred in the English translation of **Batu Menangis.** The rest were such minor errors in misspelled words. These errors are affecting the readability of the text itself because some readers might find it unreadable. The author is predicted to not aware of the mistakes in her English translation in which the erroneous accidentally appears due to the lack of knowledge in the target language. Meanwhile, the results of the readability assessment showed that the English translation errors in Batu Menangis children's storybook are still understandable and readable with the original meaning.*
Keywords: *translation errors, readability, translation*

INTRODUCTION

A golden period when humans love to learn and explore everything without any exceptions is in childhood. The closest thing that will be automatically learned is language. Language learning demands the ability to memorize words and interpret meanings and opinions in everyday life. The process of learning a language efficiently starts from the age of children. Bilingual children's storybooks are kinds of books written to support children's reading ability in learning a language. Unfortunately, some translation errors will still be possible happen. The errors may be in grammar errors that structurally occur in the word orders, spelling errors, and incorrect dictions, ambiguity. An example of grammar errors from the English translation of *Batu Menangis* is "Dia selalu menjawab dengan nada sinis, bahwa itu adalah pembantunya." is translated into "She used **to answered** cynically that the woman was her servant." A grammar error in the use of to-infinitive made by herself. This causes the target text unreadable, and the children's comprehension could also be affected if these errors continue. There might be misunderstanding either in conceiving or delivering the meaning. The translators should consider the most reasonable translation since the children's reading abilities are not equal compared to the adults' (Aida, 2015, p.16).

Furthermore, translators should have the ability to "feel" themselves into children's language by formulating the texts on an appropriate level (Gabriele, 1998, p.45). In other words, creativity is such a must in the translators' writing to deepen the contextual meaning of the texts. Sometimes the translators of bilingual children's storybooks are the authors themselves since they can re-interpret the source text freely. Because of that, authors frequently have to deal with the difficulty of not producing a good translated version of their books.

Considering that there are many translation errors in the English translation of bilingual children's storybooks, the researcher intends to develop a translation study by discovering types of errors in translation experienced by the author, who also become the book's translator. Other than that, also surveying the level of its readability among some respondents. The object of the study to the research is from a bilingual storybook entitle *Batu Menangis* that was written and translated by M. Rantissi. The

storybook was translated into English, *The Crying Stone* then was officially published in 2013. Since the book is available in two languages at once, the readers do not have to read it separately.

The researcher chooses a bilingual storybook because it is one of the genres in children's literature. Furthermore, it is easy to collect both the source text and the target text as the research data on Translation errors. The English translation of Batu Menangis (The Crying Stone) contains spelling and grammar errors. However, it still refers to the exact meaning of the source text. By reading the translation, the readers are expected to understand the storyline. For the English translation readability, the researcher uses a questionnaire since it is efficient to garner assessment data from some respondents who are capable in both English and Indonesia.

Therefore, the research is expected to give theoretical and practical benefits to the translation practitioners, scholars, students, and postgraduates. The theoretical benefit is about understanding the definition of translation, error analysis, and readability to predict and support the phenomena in translation research. Furthermore, the practical benefit is in raising awareness of English translation errors in children's literature, especially bilingual storybooks, that needs much attention out of the use of language should be simple and not wordy.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is mixed between qualitative and quantitative research that uses the explicatory research method and survey research method. According to Mary W. George, qualitative research "*designates any research whose results are captured in words, images, or non-numeric symbols*" (2008:7). In analyzing the findings, the description is constructed in words. Then, quantitative research "describes any approach where the phenomenon under study is captured via measurement and expressed in numbers that can be analyzed" (2008. p. 7). It is the opposite of qualitative research which the result will be based on the measurement or in numbers. In applying quantitative research the researcher uses the survey research method by distributing questionnaires to several respondents to assess the readability of the English translation of Batu Menangis to get a concrete data assessment in determining how readable the English translation whether it gives ease or difficulty. Meanwhile, the explicatory research method is applied for qualitative research because the researcher intends to describe the analysis explicitly to give a more detailed description of error types. The research comprises both collecting and analyzing data. The data analyzed in this research are primary. Furthermore, the classification of Error Analysis by Keshavarz (2012) is applied as the approach in the research to help the researcher classify the errors into some subcategories and support in elaborate the errors in detail.

The data analyzed as the object of the study are sentences with the focus orientation on the English translation of *Batu Menangis* children's storybook by M. Rantissi. The book is translated from Indonesian into English by the author herself and was officially published by Bintang Indonesia Jakarta in 2013. It aims to be a media of English learning resources for children regardless of grade.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Mother language dominantly leads the way translators think. No wonder that mistranslating text is possible to accidentally occur. The awareness to avoid making errors is still low for those who become the translator for their own works. As stated by Keshavarz (2012, p. 60), "*Errors are considered to be systematic, governed by rule, and appear because a learner's knowledge of the rules of the target language is incomplete. They are likely to occur repeatedly and not recognized by the learner.*" Translator might not recognize the errors in the translated version of their works. The primary factor leads to the lack of knowledge of the target language that makes the process of stating the same message is not conveyed properly. Another factor comes from the involvement of the rules of the mother language. For example in Indonesian the use of "yang" in sentence is correct to direct the subject into some things.

Hampir setiap hari kita mendengar berita tentang penebangan hutan yang dilakukan oleh orang-orang yang tidak peduli dengan lingkungan.

In English, it becomes:

Almost every day we hear the news about illegal woodcutting <u>that</u> has done by irresponsible people <u>who</u> do not care about the environment.

The underlined modals should not always use as the way to represent the repeated "yang". The translator can simplify the sentence into:

Almost every day we hear the news about illegal woodcutting done by irresponsible people not caring about the environment.

Some errors also occur in the morphological features of the mother tongue. As in the use of tenses, Indonesian does not have tenses to signify or make the sentence structured. In contrast, English has tenses to indicate the time and verb forms. Keshavarz classified the errors into Linguistic-Based Classification and Process-Based Classification. But, the discussion is only focused on the linguistic-based classification with the more comprehensive categories as follow:

 a) Orthographic Errors
 b) Phonological Errors
 c) Lexico-Semantic Errors
 d) Morpho-Syntactic Errors

In the storybook, Morpho-syntactic errors occurred the most as in the choice of words/dictions, wrong tenses, and error in the use of modal. Error in the choice of words can be discovered through the verb, adverb, and adjective. Another error was also found in orthographic errors in misspelled words. The following is the discussion of the findings:

a) <u>Morpho-Syntactic errors</u>

1. Grammar Error – Missing Article

>2/p.2/L2
>TT: Suaminya sudah lama meninggal dunia.
>ST: Her husband had passed away <u>long time ago</u>.

Explanation: Long time ago is grammatically incorrect. The translator does not use an indefinite article. The indefinite article is used before a noun for the time / identity is unknown.

Correction: "a long time ago" because it represents a single point in time.

2. Grammar Error – Wrong diction

>6/p.4/L3
>TT: Setiap hari ia hanya bersolek dan berjalan-jalan di sekitar rumahnya agar setiap orang mengagumi kecantikannya.
>ST: <u>Everyday</u> she only dressed up and walked around in order to be <u>admirer</u> for her beauty.

Explanation:

a) *Everyday* is an adjective that is commonly placed before the noun to form a noun phrase. While *Every day* is an adverb of time. This sentence is supposed to use the adverb of time. Therefore, "everyday" should be written in-between space "every day".

Clarify: The translator wants to tell that - In her everyday life, she always dressed up nicely to attract the guys.

Correction: She only dressed up and walked around every day.

b) Admirer is a noun, however, it is supposed to be a verb.

Correction: …. In order to be admired…..

3. Grammar Error – Error in the use of modal

>39/p.20/L1
>ST: Darmi hanya bisa menangis menyesali perbuatannya.
>TT: Darmi <u>only could crying</u> regretting for her acts.

Explanation: Modal verb is placed after the subject and followed by the base form (V1) of a verb.
Only should be put after the modal verb as the focus for adverb in this sentence.
Correction: Darmi could only cry regretting for her acts.

4. Grammar Error – Error in the use of tense

22/p.12/L1
ST: Tiba-tiba sang ibu berhenti, lalu duduk di pinggir jalan.
TT: Suddenly, mother stopped walking, then she <u>sit</u> down at the roadside.

Explanation: The tense should be in the past tense, not infinitive.

Correction: Suddenly, mother stopped walking, then she sat down at the roadside.

b) <u>Orthographic Errors</u>

1. Spelling error – Misspelled grammatical form

20/ST/BM/p.10/L3
ST: Darmi pun menjawab, "Oh, dia itu adalah pembantuku!"
TT: Darmi answered, "Oh, she is my <u>servant!</u>"

Explanation: sevant should be "servant"

2. Spelling Error – Contextual spelling and Misspelled grammatical form

28/p.14/L1
ST: "Ya Tuhan! Hamba mohon ampun kepada-Mu. Hamba sudah tidak sanggup lagi menghadapi sikap anak hamba yang durhaka ini. Berikanlah hukuman yang setimpal kepadanya!" ucap sang ibu.
TT: "O, My Lord!" I beg Your forgiveness. <u>I can</u> stand facing my insubordinate daughter anymore. Please punish her with a fair punishment she <u>deserve </u>to get!" said mother.

Explanation for contextual spelling: I can should be in negative form. Therefore, it becomes <u>I cannot.</u>

Explanation for Misspelled grammatical form: The subject is a third-person singular which the additional (suffix) s/es is needed. Therefore, it becomes <u>she deserves</u>.

3. Spelling Error – Contextual Spelling

30/p.14/L3
ST: Lalu hujan turun dengan sangat deras disertai petir yang menggelegar.
TT: Then the rain fell down heavily with <u>thunders</u>.

Explanation: The word "thunder" is uncountable. It is not supposed to be an additional final "s".

Readability is something that gives ease to the readers in understands texts. It has a role to predict how readable a written text to be comprehended. Readability refers to the sentence structures, the choice of vocabularies and phrases. The same thing in Dubay (2004, p. 3), "*readability is what makes some texts easier to read than others*." Below are the results of the assessments from the respondents.

Table 1. Summary of the Readability Assessments

No	Respondents	A Frequency	B Frequency	C Frequency
1	R 1	20	15	12
2	R 2	20	15	12
3	R 3	27	14	6
4	R 4	32	13	2
5	R 5	34	11	2
Sum	5	133	68	34
Average		26.6	13.6	6.8

Five respondents filled the questionnaire therefore the results are preliminary. From the table, the A frequency is higher in 26.6 out of 47. It means that the English translation of Batu Menangis is still readable for children in different levels of education. While the respondents felt some translations quite readable bit confusing because of the choice of diction as shown in B frequency 13.6 out of 47. Furthermore, the level of unreadability is low at 6.8 out of 47.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Although there are many errors in the English translation of *Batu Menangis* children's storybook, the respondents find this book understandable and readable for children. But it would be better if, during the process of learning a language, the guidance of parents is involved. Consequently, having proper knowledge of a certain foreign language is required in translation. In the fact that translation is not simply about replacing the interpretation of a text in one language with another language. Translation errors cannot be avoided by non-native speakers of English because the involvement of the rules of the mother language dominantly leads the way they think. This makes them translate literally without pay attention to the context as in diction and detailed description. Other than that relates to the lack of knowledge of the target language that makes the process of stating the same message is not conveyed properly. Therefore, the researcher suggests those who are interested to do the literary translation to read more books that relate to the topic of the literary text, dare to ask somebody if you are lost in the meaning, do not be overconfident to your translation just imagine that you are the reader.

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