

# How Applied English Students' Dealing with Literary Translation

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## How Applied English Students' Dealing with Literary Translation

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### Abstract

*The graduate students of Applied English are expected to have skills on translations needed by the industry. They are expected to be able to translate any kinds of texts either formal, advertisement, directions or literary. The translation of the literature differs from other forms of translation. It is interesting to find out the ways the applied students dealing with literary translations. In collecting the data, document analysis in the form of analyzing the students work and interviews were done. The result showed that translation literary works is not an easy job for applied English students when they do not have the theory related and not familiar with. Based on the study, it was found that several mistakes are committing by the students when translating the literary works such as using literal translation, misunderstanding the context, having over confidence and lacking vocabularies. On the other hand, the students realized their mistakes well and understand that through reading a lot, improving the vocabularies and having more experiences will ease them to deal with the literary translation.*

**Keywords:** *applied english; literar; translation*

### 1. Introduction

Indonesian government had introduced the National Education Blueprint for Smart and Competitive Indonesians 2005-2025 which priorities the development of vocational education and training (VET) sector and focuses on increasing the number of vocational schools and improving the English communication skills of their graduates. This initiative was implemented to meet the high demand for young and skilled human capital by the industry. The students are expected to be able to initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy limited social demands. Statistics seem to confirm that a bright future eludes vocational school students, who have topped the unemployment rate for the last three years with 8.63 percent this year, 8.92 percent in 2018 and 9.27 percent in 2017. The apparent gloomy state of vocational school students ignores the decisive role that vocational education will play as the country is anticipating a big harvest of its demographic bonus between 2020 and 2035. In fulfilling the expectation the vocational students are expected to master many skills needed by the industry especially the English.

Diponegoro University as one of the biggest university in Indonesia supports the government to reaching the goal through the vocational school. One of the departments in the school is Applied English. The graduate students of Applied English are expected to have skills on translations needed by the industry. They are expected to be able to translate any kinds of texts either formal, advertisement, directions or literary. The translation of the literature differs from other forms of translation. The sheer size of the texts involved in literary translation sets it apart. Dealing the translation for about thousands of

words is not an easy task for the faint-hearted. Recreating novel or other literature in a new language without losing the beauty and essence of the original work is not an easy job. One of the key challenges of literary translation is the need to balance staying faithful to the original work with the need to create something unique and distinctive that will evoke the same feelings and responses as the original. As literary translators will attest, a single word can be extremely troublesome. The author of a work of fiction has chosen that word for a good reason, so the translator must ensure that it is faithfully delivered in the target language. One of the biggest challenges in this arena of literary translation is the balance to remain true to the original work while creating an entirely unique piece that evokes the same responses as the original piece. The author has chosen a particular word for a particular reason, so it is depend on the translator to ensure rightfully delivered in the target language.

As we know, the vocational students are expected to fulfill the industry need and there is high demand for literature translator in this globalization era where cross-context communication is hard and costly. Many people more concern on the Indonesian literatures such as *Bumi Manusia*, *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, *Laskar Pelangi* and many more. In addition, the need for translation English-Indonesian also quite high since more Indonesians want to enjoy international literature such as Harry Potter, Da Vinci Code and many more. So, the importance of literary translation is immeasurable since it makes people to understand the world. Many readers are able to enjoy new sight into the different ways of life through contemporary translations. More people are able to enjoy the creative, fertile and highly imaginative minds of foreign authors. Without the translation of literature, people would not be able to read the vast majority of literary works that are available in archives and libraries around the world. Therefore it is interesting to see the applied students whose having high demand to deal with any kinds of text dealing with the literary translations.

## 2. Literature Reviews

Translation makes people easily get any information without confusion. Gibova (2012: 27) states that “when analyzing translations of any sort, be it literary or non-literary texts, there are certain categories that allow us to examine how the target text (TT) functions in relation to the source text (ST).” In addition, different genre of text has different treatment or procedures depending on the functions such as referential or informative, expressive, and operative (Reiss, 1976; Nord, 1977, cited in Colina, 2003:14).

Dealing with the translations many linguists have defined translation in their own perspectives. Newmark (1988:7) defines translation as “a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language.” In line with Newmark, Larson (1984: 3) states that “Translation is transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language. This is done by going from the form of the first language to the form of a second language by way of semantic structure. It means that this is being transferred and must be held

constant." In this case Larson (1984) gives opinions on the completeness and harmony between language forms and structures of meaning. This is a package that is capable of delivering a form of understanding the meaning of the text contained by the source that should be able to be transferred to the target text with full responsibility.

Jacob (2002) adds that the translator has to adapt the message to the target audience and use only what he or she considers to be the most appropriate solution in any given situation. The ultimate aim is to communicate the message as effectively as possible. Thus, communicating the message to the target language readers is an effective solution in translating. Roberts, as stated in (Mamur, 2005), mentions five competencies translators must possess, namely (1) linguistic competence, i.e., the ability to understand the source language and produce acceptable target expressions, (2) translation competence, i.e., the ability to comprehend the meaning of source text and express it in the target text, (3) methodological competence, i.e., the ability to research a particular subject and to select appropriate terminologies, (4) disciplinary competence, i.e., the ability to translate texts in the same basic disciplines such as economics, information science and law, and (5) technical competence, i.e., the ability to use aids to translation like the word processor, database, and Internet.

In the process of translation, translators usually use some procedures to solve the specific translation problems. There have been overlapping terms to refer to the procedures, such as 'translation method' and 'translation strategy' as proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet, Nida, Taber, and Margot, Vasques Ayora, Delisle and Newmark which were then reviewed and revised by Molina and Albir (2002) to get a better classification consistent in its application and were meant to reach all kinds of texts. Molina and Albir proposed the term 'translation technique' and defined it as "a procedure for analyzing and classifying an effort to achieve translation equivalence".

### **Literary Translations**

Translating literary texts is different when compared to translate non-literary texts. Translating scientific texts is not as complicated as translating literary texts (Purwoko, 2006). Literary texts contain unique and distinctive aspects that are hard to translate. Literary texts have different text structures and linguistic characteristics from non-literary texts, so translating these texts has its own difficulties and complexities (Soemarno, 1988).

A literary text is the work that contains messages and styles. Messages that contain connotative meaning and style in the form of aesthetic-poetic mechanism is the characteristic of literary text. Literature is itself a series of papers that describe the history of a community, containing artistic and aesthetic values and read as references (McFadden in Meyer, 1997: 2). A translator of literary texts will face a variety of difficulties, such as difficulties associated with meaning, such as lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, the meaning of contextual or situational, meaning textual, and socio-cultural

significance. There are meanings that are easily translated (translatable) and not even difficult to be translated (untranslatable). Furthermore, if a translator is already well aware of his role, he will produce a good translation, namely the qualified translation that is easy to understand and looks like a natural translation product and helpful as a source of information (Kovács, 2008: 5).

### 3. Materials and Methods

The focus of this study is to investigate how applied English students dealing with the literary translation. This study employed qualitative case study (Baxter and Jack, 2008; McMillan and Schumacher, 2003, cited in Syamsudin and Damayanti, 2007). The data used in this study were some words or phrases from students' opinion from interview towards literary translation. The primary intent of the informal interview is to find out what the interviewees think and how the views of one individual compare with those of another (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). In addition, their translations resulted were analysed to see their way in translating the literary text. The participants were taken from fourth semester of Applied English Department whose have learnt translation for 3 semester but they never do literary translation. They were asked to translate the short story text from the storynory.com entitle When the Sun Hid in the Cave and after that we discussed and analysed about their translation quality.

### 4. Results

In measuring their ways on translating the literary text, the students were asked to translate a short narrative story in English to Indonesia. The story was taken from storynory.com which entitled When the Sun Hid in the Cave. Based on their interviews and their translations, it was found that the applied English students faces several problem related to the literary translation. Even though they have familiar with translation proses, but dealing with literary translation is quite tough for them. They felt hard to translate that short story accurately without losing the soul of the text. Several mistakes they make in dealing with the literary translation.

#### 4.1. Literal translations

Some of students use literal translation in doing literary translation. It made they change the meaning of the original one. Translating a script word for word is almost sure to change the meaning of the translation from the original since it is literary translation, they should not do literal translation to share the soul of the text. It was found that some of the students translate the text literally like translating the sentence "Nobody can live on love alone, however." into "*Bagaimanapun, tidak ada yang dapat hidup dengan cinta sendirian*". It doesn't feel smooth and easy to understand since the phrase *hidup dengan cinta sendirian* is ambigu and hard to understand. It will be easy to understand and smooth if the sentence is translated into *Bagaimanapun keadannya tidak seorang bisa hidup sendiri tanpa cinta* or *Bagaimanapun, tak ada orang yang dapat hidup tanpa cinta*. Based on the interviews, it was also found that the students have difficulty in finding the equivalent word in translating the text.

#### **4.2. Misunderstanding the context of a word**

If the translator misunderstands the context that a word is used in, he will translate it differently which can alter the original meaning. It was found that The phrase 'The farmer shrugged his shoulders' is quite hard to translate into Indonesian since the students misunderstanding the context. Some of them translated into *Petani itu mengangkat bahu-nya* meaning that they only translated the words without seeing the context. In addition, based on their interviews, they agree that in dealing with this translation, understanding the context is very important to see the equivalent word to be translated. After discussing the translation result together they also realise how important to understand the context and kind of texts.

#### **4.3. Over-confidence**

It is one of their mistakes in dealing with literary translation. Not having work proofread is not only over-confident but also foolish. It makes them commit many mistakes in translations so the translations didn't look smooth. Based on the interviews, it was found that usually the students just translate the text without proofreading the translation doesn't feel smooth and commit many mistakes.

#### **4.4. Lack of Vocabularies**

Lacking the vocabularies knowledge in translating the literary translation is significant for producing the high quality translations. Based on the interviews, the students have difficulty in translating the literary text especially finding the correct word to use in the text. Most of them said that is hard to find the equivalent word in literary translations since lacking of vocabulary. Some expressions mentioned by the students such as "it is difficult to choosing the right words for tales, it is difficult to find the equivalent words, and it is difficult to understand the story" showing that they lack of the vocabularies. Through the depth interviews, it was found that the students do not like to read a lot and do some practices to improve their vocabularies.

The students realize that translating literary work is different from non-literary since the text contain some aspects that are hard to translate and understand. It contains conotative meaning and style. Those difficulties and mistakes done by them are mostly dealing with lexical meaning, and contextual meaning. Some of them are easy translated and the rest are difficult to be translated. On the other hand, the students understand their mistakes and the way to solve it through reading a lot, improving the vocabularies and having a lot of experiences in translating the text.

### **5. Conclusion**

Translation literary works is not an easy job for applied English students when they do not have the theory related and not familiar with. Based on the study, it was found that several mistakes are commit by the students when translating the literary works such as using literal translation, misunderstanding the context, having over confidence and lacking vocabularies. On the other hand, the

students realized their mistakes well and understand that through reading a lot, improving the vocabularies and having more experiences will ease them to deal with the literary translation.

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*Attachment 1***When the Sun Hid in Her Cave**

At the dawn of time, Susano-o, the spirit of the sea and storms, was making ready to leave heaven and to gush down to Earth. His sister, the far-shining Sun Goddess, said, "Oh, impetuous brother of mine. Before you go, let us exchange tokens of our love and affection for one another."

Susano-o bowed to his sister, drew his sword from his side, and presented it to her. She accepted the gift, and then chewed off pieces of the metal blade in her mouth, before spitting them out. Instantly, the fragments of the sword sprang up as three beautiful daughters.

Then the sparkling Sun Goddess took jewels from her hair and gave them to her brother. He crunched them up with his teeth and spat them out; they became five strong sons.

"They are my sons," said the goddess, "because they were born from my jewels."

"No, they are my sons," said the storm god, "because you gave me those jewels."

Thus the brother and sister began to quarrel. The stormy tempered Susano-o grew so angry that he swept through his sister's rice fields and destroyed them. He flung manure all over her garden, and frightened her maidens so that they hurt themselves on their spinning wheels.

The bright goddess was greatly offended by the evil pranks of her brother. She fell into a most dreadful sulk, and hid herself in a cave in a remote part of the earth. There was no more light, and heaven and earth were plunged into darkness.

Amid this gloom, thousands of gods and spirits gathered in a heavenly river bed to discuss what to do. One of the oldest and wisest gods proposed that they make a mirror, in order to tempt the goddess to come out of hiding and gaze at her beauty. Another suggested that they should sew a beautiful dress as a gift to smooth her temper. Still other gods said that they must offer her jewels and even a palace. At last they decided to make all these gifts, and they set to work.

When they were ready, the divine ones gathered outside the cave of the Sun Goddess. They lit bonfires so that they could see in the darkness, and they called the goddess by her name, Amaterasu, but no matter how many times they called, she remained lurking within the shadows of her hiding place.

The gods needed to do better than if they were to gain her attention, so they began to make music. They clashed symbols and banged wooden clappers together. The plump goddess of mirth, with dimpled cheeks and eyes full of fun, lead a dance. She performed on top of a giant drum that thundered with her every step. She held a stick in her hand with bells tied to it so that they rang out as she danced. Farnyard cockerels joined in with crowing. You can imagine what a lovely concert they made!

The dancing goddess of mirth wore a dress that was held together with vines. As she waved her arms and pranced about, the dress became looser and looser until it fell off altogether and she had not a stitch of clothing on her. The gods found this so hilarious that they all laughed until the heavens clapped with thunder.

Only then did curiosity get the better of the far-shining one, and she peeped out of her cave. She saw her bright face reflected in the mirror that had been placed just in front of the opening, and she was astonished by her own beauty. She did not have long to gaze, however, because a strong-handed god seized hold of her arm and dragged her out of the cave. Then all the heavens and earth were lit, the grass



became green again, the flowers blazoned with a multitude of colors, and human beings looked upon one another's faces.

There was another benefit from this gloomy episode in the history of creation. This was the first time that music, dance, and fun were known on the face of the earth - and these divine gifts have brightened human lives ever since.

Retrieved from <https://www.storynory.com/when-the-sun-hid-in-her-cave/>

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