EQUATING GRAMMATICAL EQUIVALENCE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Grammatical equivalence refers to the diversity of grammatical categories across languages that may vary across languages and it tends to pose some problems in terms of finding a direct correspondence in the target language. This study attempts to investigate problems of the grammatical equivalence comprises of number, gender, person, tense, and voice categories. The framework undertaken is promoted by Baker (2011). The findings of the analysis are shown; with regard to number, singular or plural forms in English as the source language (SL) are interpreted into either singular or plural forms in Bahasa Indonesia as the target language (TL). Furthermore, in terms of gender, Masculine in SL can be translated into general in TL and Feminine in SL can be translated in a straight line to TL. All of SL pronouns are decoded into their respective counterparts in TL. SL tenses might be translated lexically or understood from the context. Then, the active voice in SL is interpreted into either TL in active or passive voice, while the passive voice is translated into TL passive only. In fact, different grammatical structures in the SL and TL may cause remarkable changes in the way the information or message is carried across. These changes may induce the translator either to add or to omit information in the TL because of the lack of particular grammatical devices in the TL itself. In respect to findings, the further suggested studies are demanded to review pragmatic equivalence in the translation works of another languages.

Keywords: grammatical equivalence, translation studies, source language, target language.
INTRODUCTION

Translation is now becoming an important issue in this globalization era. Since a long time ago translation is known as one way of learning languages. Dagilienė (2012) stated that translation has always been the core of the controversies on whether it can be a valid and effective tool in foreign language learning. Thus, having ability in translation becomes a primary necessity for students who learn language especially foreign language. In Indonesia for example, English taught as a foreign language. It is generally agreed that meaning is important in translation. Indeed, translation has often been defined with reference to meaning. According to Pym (2005), translation is the replacement of meaning from a source language into a target language. This is done by going from the form of the first language to the form of second language by way of semantic structure. The meaning must be held constant, only the form changes.

In truth, the difficulty in translation is the fact that every language has its own rule and system. Every language has different way in arranging word by word to be phrases, sentences or even paragraphs. Köse (2011) defines translation consist in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in term of meaning and secondly in terms of style. It implies that the meaning of the target text must be equivalent with that of the source. The term “equivalent” is obviously a key term. Since, translation is no longer just a seeking of other words with similar meaning. It is more about how to finding an appropriate way to express a thought in another language. Regarding explanation above, the research question of this study is formulated as follow: “How does grammatical equivalence occur in the English sentences to Bahasa Indonesia of students’ work sheets?”

LITERATURE REVIEW
Translation

The term translation is defined differently by many experts in translation. Each of the definition is proposed from the different point of view. Malmkjær (2005) understood translation as a process that involves the delivering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that the surface meaning of the two is approximately similar and the structures of the SL is preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures is seriously distorted. Wuryantoro (2005) stated that translation is a process which involves activities such as studying lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context of the source language text. Furthermore, translator must analyze the text in order to determine its meaning, and then reconstructing this same meaning using the lexicon and grammatical structure which are appropriate in the receptor language and its cultural context.

Regarding to definitions above, we may conclude that translation involves two different languages. They are Source Language (SL) and Target Language (TL) or Receptor Language. Among the definitions, there are two key words, that is, meaning or message and equivalence. Meaning/message in the target text (TT) must be equal with the meaning in source text (ST). In conclusion, translation is a process
of delivering/replacing message from one form to another by finding the equivalence both in meaning and style (grammatical structure).

Equivalence in Translation

The varying concept of equivalence exists due to the increasing of research quantity in this field time to time. Equivalence can be seen from linguistic approach, cultural and semantic/pragmatic and the theorists who combine all approaches. The last one sees that translation is not the equivalence of individual words, and not only the equivalence of the pragmatic meaning, however it is the equivalence at all levels (Leonardi, 2000). Baker (2011) is one of the theorists of this group and sees that equivalence must be at different levels. Nevertheless, all translation theories are related to the notion of equivalence in one way or another. Equivalence is important to maintain the authenticity of source text message.

However, even there are many definitions about equivalence, it must be remembered that meaning is the most common basis for equivalence. The meaning on the target text must be equivalent to the source text. Therefore, to obtain same meaning in target text, sometimes, finding grammatical equivalence is an obligation.

Grammatical Equivalence

Since every language has its grammar system, it may result in some change in the information content of the message which carried out. This change may take translator to either add or omit information which does not express in the source text. This can occur when the target language lack of particular grammatical devices to express the information in the source text (Baker, 2011). Sometimes we do not omit the information, but state it or explain it according to the structure or grammar of TL. So, lack of equivalence between languages in terms of grammar leads to grammatical problems in translation.

In English grammar, there are some grammatical expressions which Indonesia does not have. Thus, we have to find the equivalence in order to gain a proper meaning. Baker mentions five categories of grammar which may lead a translator into difficulties because of the lack of grammatical structure in the target language, those are: number, gender, person, tense and voice.

Not all languages have a grammatical category of number, and those that do not necessarily view accountability in the same terms. This distinction has to be expressed morphologically, by adding a suffix to a noun or by changing its form in some other way to indicate whether it refers to one or more than one: “student/students”, “man/men”. Some languages prefer to express the same notion lexically or, more often, not at all (Baker, 2011). Gender is a grammatical distinction according to which a noun or pronoun is classified as either masculine or feminine in some languages. Baker (2011) stated that in most languages that have a gender category, the masculine term is usually the “dominant” or “unmarked” term. In effect, this means that the use of feminine forms provides more specific information than the use of masculine forms can be said to provide; it rules out the possibility of masculine reference, whereas the use of masculine forms does not rule out the possibility of feminine reference. Gender distinctions are generally more relevant in
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translation when the referent of the noun or pronoun is human. Grammatical category of person relates to the notion of participant roles. The most common distinction is that between first between “(I/we)”, second person “(you)”, and third person “(he/she/it/they)”. In addition to the main distinction based on participant roles, the person system may be organized along a variety of other dimensions (Baker, 2011). Tense and aspect are grammatical category in a large number of languages. In some languages, the tense and aspect system, or parts of it, may be highly developed, with several fine distinctions in temporal location or distribution” (Baker, 2011). In some languages, it is obligatory to specify more unusual types of temporal and aspectual relations. “Although the main use of the grammatical categories of tense and aspect is to indicate time and aspectual relations, they do not necessarily perform the same function in all languages”. Voice is grammatical category which defines the relationship between a verb and its subject. In active clauses, the subject is the agent responsible for performing the action. In passive clauses, the subject is the affected entity, and the agent may or may not be specified, depending on the structures available in each language. Baker (2011) stated that, languages which have a category of voice do not always use the passive with the same frequency.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research fits in descriptive research. Descriptive research focused on providing descriptions of phenomena that occur naturally, without the experimental or artificial treatment (Creswell & Clark, 2007) while the content analysis is an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models without rash quantification (Mayring, 2000).

This research was conducted at one of University in Aceh. With regard to the data, it was chosen by lecture’s document of a translation class (documentation). Sugiyono (2009) stated that documentation is the past event record, it can be in writing, pictures, or works from anyone. It is a technique of data collection through written inheritance on archives, the idea of books theory, and proposition related to the research problem.

RESULTS

Problem in Category of Number

When talking about grammatical equivalence of number, plural and singular concepts will be found. Both English and Bahasa Indonesia have this concept in number but of course they have very different rules. The different rules between them may cause problems in translation. Sometimes singular noun of English is translated into plural noun in Bahasa Indonesia and vice versa in order to get the equivalence and acceptable form in the Target Language (TL). It can be done as long it does not change the information or message implied in the sentence. It should be done based on the rules of the two languages. A sentence below is the example of changing plural concept into singular in Target Language (TL) causes loss of information. For example:
...we will be rewarded well if we do good to the animals?
...kami akan mendapatkan pahala juga jika kami berbuat baik kepada hewan itu?

The use of suffix –s in the word “animals” indicates plurality. The word “animals” should be translated into hewan-hewan in Bahasa Indonesia by duplicating noun hewan to show that there are more than one hewan (animal). But singular noun hewan is used to translate “animals”. It shows that plural concept of English of noun is translated into singular noun in Bahasa Indonesia. This concept can be accepted when it point general noun. It does not show generalization in this sentence. It influences the message conveyed in the sentence because it gives the idea that the man only asked about do good to one specific or only one animal. Meanwhile in the English Sentence, they point more than one animal.

Problem in Category of Gender

Language relates to culture of the society. Learning a language means learning culture indirectly. Translating a Source Language (SL) into a Target Language (TL) involves translating source culture to the target language culture. It should be done to make the translation acceptable in the target language. English and Bahasa Indonesia have different culture that sometimes creates problems in translation process.

Sentence 2 (K.F.):
The acquired research show the perception stage of women is better than men based on the min value is obtained.
Dapatan kajian memperlihatkan tahap persepsi kumpulan perempuan yang lebih baik daripada lelaki berdasarkan nilai minimum yang diperolehi

From the sentence (2), the word “women” is translated into perempuan in Bahasa Indonesia by students. The word perempuan is indeed defined as feminine in Bahasa Indonesia. But, in this context, the word “woman” should be translated into wanita considering the context is about adult female. Usually the word perempuan is defined by the word “girl”.

Problem in Category of Person

English third singular divides into two groups. The distinction is based on gender reference, he for masculine and she for feminine. Meanwhile there is only one third singular person, dia in Bahasa Indonesia. Translation includes this part eliminates some information related to gender distinction. The example is below:

Sentence 3 (S.K.):
An average monthly income of respondents was dominated by his or her with income of more than 1 million to 3 million.
Purata pendapatan perbulan responden adalah didominasi oleh mereka yang mempunyai pendapatan lebih dari 1 juta sampai 3 juta.
“His” and “her” are possessive adjectives of third singular pronoun, which “his” is from “he” (masculine) and “her” is from “she” (feminine). Bahasa Indonesia has only *dia* to translate them, so that the translation is *dia* or *dia* /-nya or –nya. It sounds wrong and awkward because they are the same. So the word mereka which point to third plural person is used. It does not represent masculine or feminine only but both of them.

The first plural pronoun in English (we) does not distinguish the inclusive and exclusive form like in Bahasa Indonesia, *kita* and *kami*. When the word “we” is found, it becomes confusing to the translator because s/he should make a long decision to choose the word *kita* or *kami* to translate it.

Sentence 4 (N.C.):
The friends of the prophet asked: O Messenger of Allah is there we will be rewarded well if we do good to the animals?,
*Sahabat-sahabat baginda bertanya: Ya Rasulullah adakah kami akan mendapatkan pahala juga jika kami berbuat baik kepada hewan itu?*

The speaker is the friend of Rasulullah and the addressee is Rasulullah. The use of word *kami* to translate “we” is because the translator thinks that the speaker represent his friends and does not include the addressee as part of the friends. It means that “we” is translated as exclusive.

Problem in Category of Tense

Tense and aspect in English have many variations. Some of them are difficult to reflect in Bahasa Indonesia because the form does not exist. If it is not translated in the correct and proper form. Past perfect (had + past participle) and present perfect (have + past participle) are the examples that explain below:

Sentence 5 (N.C.):
Rasulullah had said: People who try to help the widow and the poor are like the one who fights in the way of Allah, worship at night and fast during the day”
*Rasulullah telah bersabda: Orang yang berusaha membantu janda dan orang miskin seperti orang yang berjuang di jalan Allah, beribadat di malam hari dan berpuasa di siang hari*”

Sentence 6 (U.M.):
a number of sampel has been considered complete for population which over than 5,000 people as many as 400 people.
*jumlah sampel sudah dianggap mencukupi bagi populasi yang melebihi 5,000 orang adalah seramai 400 orang.*

In sentence (5), the form of “had said” indicates past perfect. In sentence (6), the form “has been considered” indicates present perfect. In Bahasa Indonesia, perfect is marked by temporal determiners ‘telah’ or ‘sudah’. They are used for both past and present perfect and no verb changes such as in the sentences above. It
means that past and present perfect in Bahasa Indonesia are not distinguished and have the same meaning. Meanwhile, English has distinguished them because they have different meanings. Past perfect means that the activity was finished before another activity or time in the past. Present perfect expresses the idea that something happened before now, at an unspecified time in the past.

**Problem in Category of Voice**

The use of active and passive has its own function. For example, the main function of passive form is to avoid specifying the agent and to give an impression of objectivity. When active is translated into passive or vice versa without changing the position or function of the agent, it tends to change the message, such as happens to the following sentences.

Sentence 7 (F.P.):
The manager of the bank fell on the floor realizing the value of rupiah fell to the lowest point in its history.

*Manager bank itu terjatuh ke lantai ketika menyadari bahwa nilai rupiah jatuh ke titik terendah sepanjang sejarahnya.*

The word ‘fell’ has the first form ‘fall’. It can be active or passive sentence with “The manager of the bank” as the agent or the affected entity. If it is an active sentence, the translation should be *manajer bank itu jatuh*. But, the phrase “fell on the floor” in this sentence is an idiom. So, it should be translated into *manajer bank itu terkejut*. The position of the subject, “The Bank Manager” is not changed but the meaning is different. The word *jatuh* gives idea that The bank manager makes a mistake that causes him physically fall, but the word *terkejut* gives the idea that someone or something makes him shocked.

As stated at the first of this study, this study focused on analyzing the ability of students in translating English grammatical equivalence into Bahasa Indonesia, especially to investigate problems of equivalence in the English sentences to Indonesian sentences found in the students’ work sheet with theory proposed by from Baker (2011) which divided grammatical equivalence into five categories such us number, gender, person, tense, and voice.

The result shows that translating grammatical categories of English into Bahasa Indonesia is not easy because there are some rules that cannot be applied directly from source language (SL) into target language (TL). It sometimes creates some problems for the translators. A translator should consider some factors in choosing the right ways in translating those grammatical categories so that s/he will achieve the equivalence and the translation is acceptable and seen natural for the target readers.

**CONCLUSION**

After discussing the problems of equivalence in the English sentences to Bahasa Indonesia sentences found in the students’ work sheet, the writers found some differences in translating between English and Bahasa Indonesia in grammatical
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equivalence categories that creates problems such as found in the students’ worksheet.

The problems are, first, in category of number the problem found in translating SL plural into TL singular. Second, in category of gender the problem found in translating SL feminine role into TL feminine role that is not acceptable in TL because it will change the context. Third, In category of person the problems are found in translating SL first plural into TL first plural inclusive or exclusive, SL second person into TL second person singular or plural, SL third singular person male or female into TL third singular person neuter in person system, there is no verb changes in tense and aspect system in Bahasa Indonesia, it only uses temporal determiners and adverbs of time that sometimes create problems to the translator. Fifth, some English utterances are written in active voice but they give passive meaning in Bahasa Indonesia.

REFERENCES