

A Study of the Reasoning Behind the Choices of Meanings Forms of Errors and Their Causes in the Translation of Jumlah Ismiah and Fi'liyah

Syihabuddin Syihabuddin

*FPBS, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Jl. Dr. Setiabudhi No. 229, Bandung, Indonesia
syihabuddin@upi.edu*

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Abstract: This study aims to examine students' ability to identify the structure of nominal and verbal Arabic sentences and determine the meaning of the sentences. This research also aims to identify the forms of errors in determining meaning and the factors causing the errors. The subjects of this study were 23 students who were asked to identify sentence types, translate them into Indonesian, and explain the translation process. The data collected through an open-ended questionnaire. The results showed that students successfully identified 131 variants of the nominal sentences and 49 variants of the verbal sentences. However, in general, they are incorrect in identifying both types of sentences, inaccurate in doing the process of translation, and incorrect in choosing the type of the meanings. The errors in determining meanings are in the forms of conceptual, morphological, lexical, and contextual errors. These errors are due to their lack of understanding of the syntactic structure of Arabic language, and their lack of vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, it is advisable that lecturers should add more exercise in translating.

1 INTRODUCTION

Translation is the process of disclosing the meaning of the source language in the target language. Meanings, which consist of ideas, thoughts, and feelings, can only be fully expressed in sentences. Because what the translator expresses is the meaning or the message, then sentence is the smallest unit of translation. Sentences also vary in kinds according to the diversity of meanings conveyed. The variety of meanings in turn has implications for the diversity of sentence structures. It is this diversity that makes students have difficulties in understanding, identifying, and defining sentence types according to their meaning and structure. Difficulties are also found in understanding the meaning of vocabulary in the sentence types. When determining sentence types and their meanings, students follow a process. How do students understand sentence types and express their meanings? This question will be answered in this research. The answer to that question will be useful for improving translation courses.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

So far, people have been inclined to use translating machines. Some research reports indicate that to some extent translation with the machine is useful, but the translation is unreliable and useless without the intervention of the human mind, because it is far from accurate. A translating machine only works with information input by humans (Stiegelbauer, 2013; Komeilia et al., 2011; Goves and Mundt, 2015). Only research by Ghasemi and Hashemian (2016) found that the frequency of the errors was not significant.

Volkova and Zubenina (2015) therefore suggested that translators adapt pragmatically and socio-culturally, namely by modifying the source language to align with the needs of the target language, as well as intervening the translations so that there is a greater understanding between the source language and the target language, to achieve a good level of readability.

In addition to adaptation, another important point in overcoming the weaknesses of translation machine is by understanding the structure of the

Arabic sentences, the meaning of the sentences, and the meaning of the words.

Structurally, Arabic has two types of sentences: *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah* (nominal sentence and verbal sentence). *Jumlah ismiyyah* consists of *mubtada'* and *khobar*. *Mubtada'* refers to words categorized into the *marfu'* noun that becomes the topic of conversation, usually placed at the beginning of a sentence. On the other hand, *khobar* refers to words categorized as *marfu'* nouns which explain *mubtada'* (Fayyadh, 1995; Abdulghani, 2010). Thus, the structure of *jumlah ismiyyah* can be understood by looking at the categories of words that begin the structure, understanding the words' position as the topic of the sentence, and identifying the *khobar* explaining the *mubtada'*.

The second type of sentence is *Jumlah fi'liyyah*. According to Fayyadh (1995) and Badawi et al. (2004), *Jumlah fi'liyyah* is a sentence consisting of at least two main elements, *fi'il* and *fa'il* and *maf'ul bih*, or *na'ibul fa'il*. The identification of *jumlah fi'liyyah* can be done by recognizing the category of verbs that begin the sentence as a topic, searching for words as *fa'il* from active verbs, looking for *na'ibul fa'il* from passive verbs, or searching for *maf'ul bih* from active verbs.

Subsequently, the identified sentences are analyzed for their structure. According to Syihabudin (2011), in analyzing a sentence, the translator needs to understand the meaning of the sentence syntactically, understand the type of relationship between phrases or sentence constituents, and analyze the meaning of the words contained in the sentence. Even Tartir and Abdul-Nabi (2017) asserted that analysis can be done on the feelings and attitudes of a person as reflected in his or her sentence.

The next step is to analyze the general and specific syntactic meanings, understand the forms of relationships that relate the syntactic functions to one another, understand structural cues based on morphological analysis, and interpret vocabulary based on the previous stages of understanding (Hasan, 1979).

All of these processes are summarized in the three stages of translation as proposed by Nida and Taber (1982), which are: (a) understanding the source text through linguistic and semantic analyses, understanding the translated materials, and understanding the cultural context, (b) diverting the meanings or messages cited in the source text, and (c) reconstructing or compiling the translated sentences until the final results of the translation in the target language are obtained.

3 METHODS

The present research is focused on the process of translating an Arabic text into Indonesian and its translation. It aims to reveal the process of identifying the types of nominal and verbal sentences, the process of understanding the two sentence types, the accuracy of translation, the forms of translation errors, and the factors causing the errors. The source texts, in the forms of seven long sentences, are extracted from *al-Ahram* the online newspaper.

To achieve the stated goal, data were collected from 23 students of Arabic Department at UPI (Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia) in the forms of translation results and responses to open-ended questionnaire. Data were analyzed inductively, from specific to partial data, and then the data were analyzed for categorization, interpretation, and signification as a whole. In identifying sentence types and determining the quality of translation, the translation quality criteria proposed by Syihabuddin (2011), namely accurate, inaccurate, and natural, were used.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of findings and discussion in this research starts from the process of identification of nominal and verbal sentences, the process of selecting meaning, the forms of errors in the selection of meaning, and the factors causing the errors.

4.1 Translation of Nominal Sentence

The research has found that respondents identify variations of the nominal sentences, resulting in 131 variants. Then, the variants are sorted according to the level of accuracy of identification with the results as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Identification of Nominal Sentences.

Categorization of the 131 Sentences					
Accurate		Less accurate		Inaccurate	
F	%	F	%	F	%
23	18	50	38	58	44

Table 1 shows that of the 131 variants of the nominal sentence, only 18% of the sentences are accurately identified. A total of 44% of the respondents make errors in the identification, and as many as 38% identify the nominal sentences less

accurately. The sentences are identified through patterns of understanding as presented in table 2.

Table 2: The Process of Understanding Nominal Sentences.

No	Patterns	f	%
1	Analyzing sentences preceded by <i>isim</i> as <i>mubtada</i> → looking for <i>khobar</i>	2	8.71
2	Analyzing sentences preceded by <i>isim</i> as <i>mubtada</i> → looking for <i>khobar</i> → determining meaning	9	39.00
3	Analyzing sentences preceded by <i>isim</i> as <i>mubtada</i> → translating → looking for <i>khobar</i>	2	8.71
4	Analyzing sentences preceded by <i>isim</i> as <i>mubtada</i>	5	22.00
5	Analyzing sentences preceded by <i>isim</i> as <i>mubtada</i> → translating	5	22.00
Total		23	100

Table 2 shows that in general the students identify the nominal sentences by showing words categorized as *isim* (noun) which serve as *mubtada* and searching for the words that serve as *khobar*, then determining the meaning. However, very few sentences are accurately identified because the means used is cognitivist, whereas the determination of sentences requires an applicative understanding. Thus, the students' ability is only up to understanding nominal sentences cognitively as put forward by Fayyadh (1995).

This cognitivist understanding is evidenced by the result of the translation that they make, in which the percentage of inaccurate translation is greater than that of the accurate translation, namely 73.86% versus 26.14%, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Variants and Accuracy in The Translation of Nominal Sentences.

Sentence	Variants	Categories			
		Accurate		Inaccurate	
		F	%	F	%
Sentence 1	9	7	30	16	70
Sentence 2	13	5	22	18	78
Sentence 3	4	9	39	14	61
Sentence 4	15	2	9	21	91
Sentence 5	15	6	26	17	74
Sentence 6	7	2	9	21	91
Sentence 7	3	11	48	12	52
Average		26.14%		73.86 %	

In understanding *jumlah ismiyyah*, students only look for ones preceded by *isim* without seeking for their *mubtada* and *khobar*.

4.2 Translation of Verbal Sentences

Respondents identify 49 variants of verbs. As many as 72% of the verbal sentences are chosen accurately, 28% less accurately, and 2% inaccurately, as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Identification of Verbal Sentences.

Categorization of the 49 Sentences					
Accurate		Less Accurate		Inaccurate	
F	%	F	%	F	%
33	72	13	28	3	2

Respondents identify the types of verbal sentences by following the thinking patterns as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The Process of Understanding Verbal Sentences.

No	Patterns	F	%
1.	Looking for <i>fi'il</i> in the beginning of a sentence → looking for <i>fa'il</i>	5	22,00
2.	Looking for <i>fi'il</i> in the beginning of a sentence → looking for <i>fa'il</i> → looking for <i>maf'ul bih</i> /other explanations → determining sentences holistically	2	08.71
3.	Looking for <i>fi'il</i> in the beginning of a sentence → looking for <i>fa'il</i> → looking for <i>maf'ul bih</i> → translating	2	08.71
4.	Looking for <i>fi'il</i> in the beginning of a sentence → looking up translation → looking for <i>fa'il</i>	5	22.00
5.	Looking for <i>fi'il</i> in the beginning of a sentence	3	13.04
6.	Looking for <i>fi'il</i> → translating	6	26.09
Total		23	100

Table 6 shows that students can identify and show the verbal sentences as stated by Fayyadh (1995). However, their understanding is only cognitive, so that their translations are not accurate, with a score of 70%.

Table 6: Variants and Accuracy of Verbal Sentence Translation.

Sentence	Variant	Categories			
		Accurate		Inaccurate	
		F	%	f	%
Sentence 1	13	9	43	14	57
Sentence 2	9	4	17	19	83
Average		30%		70 %	

Based on the data collected, the inaccuracies in translation are due to the length of the verbal sentences which consist of 32 words and 4 verbs, so that students find it difficult to find the key ideas and explanatory ideas constructed by their subordinate

clauses. Another difficulty pertains to the determination of *fa'il*. Students have a difficulty in translating complex sentences.

Then, what about understanding the meaning in an attempt of translating the sentences?

4.3 Meaning Understanding

Table 7: Patterns of Meaning Understanding.

No	Pattern	F	%
1.	Searching for meanings based on word origin → determining meaning according to contexts	6	26
2.	Determining sentence types → determining subject -predicate → understanding meanings of words according to contexts → translating	1	4.35
3.	Determining sentence types → looking up for meanings in a dictionary → translating	2	8.70
4.	Identifying subject-predicate → looking up for meaning in a dictionary → determining meanings according to contexts	2	8.70
5.	Looking up for meanings in a dictionary → determining meanings according to contexts → translating	7	30.43
6.	Giving <i>syakal</i> → translating word for word	1	4.35
7.	Giving <i>syakal</i> → determining sentence types → looking up for meanings in a dictionary → translating	1	4.35
8.	Giving <i>syakal</i> → translating words → translating the whole sentence	2	8.70
9.	Translating sentence by sentence → translating the whole text	1	4.35
Total		23	100

As seen in Table 7, a total of 56.43% of the respondents translate the text directly by looking up for the meanings of words in the dictionary. Therefore, they have difficulty in choosing the meanings offered by the dictionary, so that the chosen meaning is not in accordance with the context; consequently, the translation cannot be understood. There are respondents who initiate the translation by giving *syakal*, and there are some who search for the subject and predicate then translate word for word. Only about 13% of respondents start their translation by understanding the sentence first, identifying the topic discussed in the text, and determining the meaning in context. So it is not surprising that as many as 87% of the students make errors in starting translation.

4.4 Errors in Choosing Meanings and the Causing Factors

The research has found four forms of errors made by the respondents.

First, conceptual error, namely an error in matching a general concept to operational terms, such as the word *manhaj* which is equated to *thariqah*.

Second, morphological error, that is an error caused by misunderstanding of the forms of word, morpheme, or morph, as happens in the whole translation of *mutakaamilan*.

Third, lexical error, namely an error in giving lexical meanings directly from the dictionary; for example, *al-fardu* is translated into *children*.

Fourth, contextual error, that is an error that occurs because of ignoring the context.

These errors occur because, (a) students do not understand the syntactic structure of the source language, (b) students do not know the root words, (c) students have a lack of vocabulary, (d) some students are less careful in reading the text.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

In general, students make errors in identifying nominal and verbal sentences. These errors cause errors in translating the sentences. Such errors occur because of their lack of understanding of the main clauses and subordinate clauses of Arabic language, the complexity of the sentence structure, and the presence of *fa'il* or subject which often appears in the form of omitted pronouns, and their knowledge is that still cognitivist and non-applicative.

In translating sentences, students make errors in the forms of conceptual errors, morphological errors, lexical errors, and contextual errors. These errors are due to their lack of understanding of the syntactic structure, not knowing *mashdar* or *madli* verbs, lack of vocabulary, and carelessness in reading or understanding the meaning of words.

The students' errors in identifying sentences are also due to their cognitive knowledge. Therefore, it is suggested that lecturers of *Tarjamah* course give more exercises in identifying types of sentences, practicing translating, and analysing syntactic elements.

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