



An Analysis of Students' Ability in Translating Idiom in Narrative Text

¹Riskaulina Sinaga, ²Dewi Murni, ³Muhammad Candra

¹English Language Education Study Program, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji, Tanjungpinang, Indonesia

²English Language Education Study Program, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji, Tanjungpinang, Indonesia

³English Language Education Study Program, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji, Tanjungpinang, Indonesia

Corresponding email: riskaulinaa@gmail.com

Received March 17, 2021; Revised April 1, 2021; April 4, 2021

<https://doi.org/10.31629/jjumrah.v2i1.3138>

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to find out the student's ability in translating idiom on narrative text written. This research belongs to descriptive qualitative research. The subject of this research involved twenty students of fourth semester of English Department Students Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji. The instrument used was a test, which the students are asked to find the idioms that from the narrative text given by the researcher. After finding the idioms, the students were asked to translate them into Indonesian with correct meaning. The result of this research revealed that the students' ability to find and translated idiom was still not accurate in translation. The students only found a few of idioms from 20 idioms given by the researcher in the narrative text. The problem that was arisen from the results analyzed was inability of students to translate with the correct meaning so that some students translated word by word.

Keywords: Translating, idiom, narrative text.

I INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the most important aspects in human life since it is the medium used by human do communication in their daily life. In language, human beings can express what ideas, feelings, and thoughts that they want to communicate to others. Generally, language is used by people in all their communication activities. Without language, human beings cannot communicate and express their feelings or ideas to others. Today's, learning a new language is not an easy for the learners. They have difficulties in learning it. One of the factors causing the difficulties is the appearance of their first language disturbing the acquisition of their new language. Therefore, in the preliminary study, most of the students did not like English. Some of the explanations of the reasons that they mentioned was that the new language, in this study was English, they did not use it in their daily life. They found English as a subject merely taught at school. English is a foreign language that was not easy to be mastered. To master it, students should be aware of linguistics units including syntax, spelling, and word shape. Adapting to the language unit that they were familiar was not easy for them. Thus, it was a question that understanding and mastering became challenging for students. Translation

required the conversion of information and messages from source language (SL) to target language (TL) as an act. In many parts of the world, translation has involved as an act of transferring information and message from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). The purpose of the translation was to allow the learner to understand the source language without any significant impediments.

Culler (1976) stated that languages contained a concept which was very different from one to another since the world was organized differently. With regard to idioms, many people did not realize that their language in daily communication had idioms which were always spoken. The goal of the translation was to allow the learners to understand the source language without any significant obstacles. In essence, translation appeared to be described as a method or kind of operation to turn one language into another. Translation was a process of rendering the meaning of a text in a different language in the manner in which it was intended by the author (Newmark, 1988). It means that the context of the source language (SL) needed to be synchronized with the target language (TL) when interpreting the text. The translator must know the ins and outs of the language and understand the meaning of an idiom, typically, someone understood the definition of a memorizing idiom. The essence of the idiom should be interpreted from the sense of the original language and then converted into the target language. In addition, idioms can be learned by using a grammatical approach from the source language and grammatical variants can be checked in the target language as well. With regards to idioms, many people did not know that their vocabulary on their daily conversation had idioms which were spoken.

English is a language that was exceptionally rich in idioms. What is idiom? Two or more words were constructed into idiom. An idiom was a collection of terms described by a specific structure, in which they were less consistent than their constituents' sense. Translating an idiom was equivalent to translating a metaphoric phrase. This meant the interpreter would have perspicacity and a detailed knowledge of the target language and society in order to be able to translate the idioms correctly. The following expression, for example, used phrase of 'hands'. Jeff has two hands, a right hand and a left hand and Jeff is an old hand in the store. The term of 'two hands' in the first sentence is Jeff's two actual hands while in the second sentence the word 'an old hand' meant the guy who has long experience in his job.

Communicative translation had a method namely communicative alternative by Hervey (1992). Communicative alternative was a means of decoding idioms of the target language, by looking for its equivalents. While elements of the source language's exoticism tended to shift into the target language's exoticism as in the example: His mind is a bee in his bonnet = There are many lights on his head. We can see from the translation above that the lights on the head were a genius concept which existed in the mind as we always see in cartoon comics. But this form of translation was still not commonly understood, since the translation sentence was not known in Indonesian as a whole or general.

An idiom was a phrase that a lot of people barely learnt. They did not even aware when they interacted with others and often used it. They only presumed that an idiom was a natural term that can be translated one by one as other languages in general. In fact, idiom cannot be interpreted one by one to find out the whole meaning of the word. Chaer (2015) stated that an idiom was a unit of speech whose meanings, its lexical and grammatical components, cannot be "predicted". Lado (1961) defined an idiom as a term that had gained meaning rather than the ordinary meaning of each word (a word phrase or a sentence). Based on the definition by experts, idioms may be said to be words that were not organized according to grammar, having separate meanings for each word, and when mixing, having their own meanings. Idioms cannot be predicted because any phrases were oddly arranged; it had owned meaning independently after being combined. Meanwhile, (Bobrow, 1973) believed, that idioms were stored as single lexical or "idiom terms" that were contained in a different "word dictionary idiom". It was simply interpreted first, but if that sense was unacceptable for the context, the idiomatic

processing retrieved from the dictionary must be ignored, and the meaning must be synchronized as the context. An idiom was an expression whose meaning, unlike the initial meanings, were constructed with a particular meaning. Gibbs (1980) suggested that because of the heavy modern, figurative meaning of the idiom, the literal meaning of the idioms was less importance. The stronger activation of the least temporal pole for idioms as short latency often seemed to be in line with region which was significance for symbolic comprehension and its vital role in the cycle of abstract interpretation. Test was used on this research as the instrument of the research. The researcher used short answer to collecting the data. The researcher gave a narrative text that they could found some idioms in it to be translated. Then, the researcher instructed the students to read a narrative text based on the researcher gave to them and found some idioms that contained on the narrative text.

II METHOD

The subjects of this research were the fourth semester students. The researcher chose one class of Introduction to Linguistic classes of English Education Department of Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji. There were 28 students on the class, but the researcher only took 20 students as a sample. All of the participants were given the narrative text on the process of their analyzed about the idiom.

Short answer was used on this research as the research instrument. Students translated idioms found on the narrative text. The researcher provided narrative text composed of 20 idioms. The researcher provided a narrative text that they might find some other idioms to translate it. In addition, the researcher instructed the students to read a narrative text and found some idioms contained in the narrative text.

The researcher used descriptive qualitative as a method of the research. Cohen (2007) stated that the qualitative data analysis consisted of structure, description, sequence notation, and classification. The researcher analyzed the data by identifying the language idiom functionality. The researcher analyzed the data by defining the ability of translating idiom. The steps were, first the researcher asked students to read the text of their narratives, and then the collection of data-they will determine writing assessments for students to find out the extent of student ability, how much students were needed to find out the idioms, and how much students were required to translate of idioms. After that, the researcher classified the students' ability according to the idioms that they had translated. The researcher brought the idioms into a table to classify the idioms that they found. Next, in order to classify the ability of the students in interpreting the idioms, the researcher also put the idioms they had translated into the table.

III RESULT

The results of this research showed that not all student can translate the idioms correctly. In identifying the idioms, the researcher found that not all students were able to find out the 20 idioms that the researcher gave in narrative text. The students found just a few of the idioms that the researcher gave in narrative text. The researcher found that not all students were able to translate the idioms correctly in the process of identifying the translating idioms. In addition, from 20 students selected by the researcher, there were some students who translated the idioms based on word by word, not the meaning. The researcher found the idiom that the student knew and focused only on some idioms. From 20 students, most of them did not discovered idioms and accurately translated into Indonesian meaning. From 20 idioms, most of students founded 3 idioms in the narrative text. There were silver spoon, down to earth and good egg. Although some of them cannot be translated properly. From the data that the researcher got from this study, the result that students found the idiom can be seen as the following table.

Table 1 The Result of The Idiom Analysis

Idiom	Many of Students
Silver spoon	19

Down to earth	16
Good egg	18

IV DISCUSSION

This research was trying to determine whether students' ability in translating idiom in narrative text by fourth semester students in English Department Students of Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji. Firstly, the findings showed that there were not all students can translate the idioms correctly. As can be seen on the table 1, from 20 idioms that the researcher gave in narrative text, almost all students founded 3 idioms which contained in narrative text. Based on the data examined, the researcher found that the students still did not interpret idiom with the overall meaning. Hatim, B and Munday (2004) stated that translation was the method of translating a written text from source language (SL) to target language (TL), they did not explicitly conveyed in this definition that the transferred content was sense or paper. All the idioms that the researcher gave for translating idioms, from 20 students, only some students were not correct. Sharp tongue and down to earth were present. From 20 students, there were some students who did not interpret idioms in Indonesian correctly. Many of them translated idioms and interpreted the idiom from word to word. Whereas, the meaning of the idiom must be understood and even interpreted the context as a whole.

The less precise of students in concluding the idiom meaning, the student founded only some of idioms from the idioms that the researcher presented in the narrative text. There were some idioms, based on the original idioms, which were not right in the language. There were some idioms that were wrongly interpreted as 'down to earth' and 'sharp tongue which were translated by student. Therefore, students can be seen to translate with very clear definitions and irrespective of whether or not the language used after the idiom had been translated. There were students who cannot find the idiom that the researcher gave. The student found only 15 idioms of the 20 idioms that the researcher presented in the narrative text. There were idioms based on the original idioms which were very accurate in the translation. However, based on data examined by the researcher, the student wrote idioms which were not included in the researcher's narrative text. Other students, found idioms that was contained in narrative text but not idiom that the researcher gave. This may be inferred that the students knew just some of the idioms in the foreign language based on the analysis. Therefore, the student did not write another language, because the student understood only a few languages.

V CONCLUSION

Idioms were not only found in the voice of a human. There were idioms in the various text styles. Idioms were typically used in formal, concise or dramatic documents. Students frequently misunderstood the definitions of idioms that were often used in narrative texts. Students also believed that languages were just a part of the vocabulary. In addition, they sometimes forgot the sense of the found idiom. Knowing the idiom of language that contradicted basic English compositional principles. On the other hand, lack of knowledge about idioms will influenced on the overall learner's performance. There was an appropriate way for lecturers and students to deal with idioms, and concern such as language comprehension or instructional techniques that needed to be taught. Through learning languages, students can acquire more modern words and more positively promote learning English.

The instruments which were used to analyze the translating idiom were the ability of the students. Linked to the study issue in introduction, the researcher argued that the students' extent to narrative text interpreting idiom. For the research question,

the researcher found some idioms with the general sense that the students still did not understand. All the idioms that the researcher provided in assignment for translating idiom, from 20 students, only some students were not correct, namely "sharp tongue" and "down to earth". Teaching English was very important when interpreting a script. There were often many of the new vocabulary that many students usually never learnt and it became a challenge for those who wanted to improve English better. Students should learn how to correctly translate language, and they even mastered the procedures of interpreting idioms, particularly when translating idioms that translating idioms not by translating it word by word, but rather the essence of the whole idiom.

REFERENCES

- Bobrow, S. &. (1973). On catching on to idiomatic expressions. *Memory and Cognition*, 1, 343-346.
- Chaer, A. (2015). *Makna Idiom dan Pribahasa*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Cohen, L. L. (2007). *Research Method in Education*. Oxon: Taylor & Francis e-Library.
- Culler, J. (1976). *Saussure (American Title: Ferdinand de Saussure)*. London: Fontana.
- Gibbs, R. (1980). Spelling the beans on understanding and memory for idioms in conversation. *Memory and Cognition*, 8, 149-156.
- Hatim, B and Munday. (2004). *Translation, An Advanced Resource Book*. London: Routledge.
- Hervey, S. a. (1992). *Thinking Translation: A Course in Translation Method; French to English*. London: Routledge.
- Lado. (1961). *Modern American Modern*. Jakarta: PT. Prima Karya.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice Hall International.
- Patterson, K. N. (2007). where do you know what you know? The representation of semantic knowledge in the human brain, *Nat, Rev, Neurosci*, 18, 976-987.