



IS TRANSLATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AN ACADEMIC OR VOCATIONAL FIELD?

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Abstract

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Undergraduate higher education in many countries are common to teach translation theories in a class while the students need more practice as close as the professional translator does. The purpose of this study is to explore how undergraduate higher education institution administering the translation class in Indonesia. This study used an exploratory case study method on a translation class of an English Education study program year 2022 with data gathered are from the learning documents, lecturers, and students. The data are analyzed using thematic analysis following steps familiarization, coding, generating, reviewing, defining, naming theme and writing up. The themes are validated using data triangulation that cross checking among the collected data. This study shows that the undergraduate level prepares the academic field of translation that will serve as a base of knowledge to pursue advanced level in the academic and/or goes to specialize for becoming professional translator later. It is recommended to have further study on how to teach the academic field of translation, such as translation teaching model, teaching method, assessment and so on.

Keywords: Higher Education; Translation Class; Academic; Vocational Field

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INTRODUCTION

After completing secondary education or high school, students continue pursuing a degree or advanced qualification at colleges, universities, or other institution of higher learning. This stage is also known as tertiary education and also as a preparation stage before entering the workforce or professional careers (Fugate & Amey, 2000). As mentioned before, universities as part of tertiary education offer a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate program across various disciplines. The students are commonly having to conduct a research to pursue their academic and professional goals. Then it is common information that universities promotions are announcing what the students will have after graduate from the institution. The announcement is easily seen in the universities' brochures of new student admission. It is written under graduate profile column. One of graduate profiles shown is a translator.

Translator as a graduate profile is offered by study program which held foreign language studies such as English, Mandarin, Japan, Germany, France and so on. In such study programs, the primary objective is to develop students' proficiency in the chosen foreign language(s) to a high level of fluency and accuracy. The "translator" graduate profile emphasizes the development of translation skills, enabling students to effectively

and accurately translate written text from one language to another. In achieving the objective, a study program needs to set a curriculum preparing students to be a translator. Referring the translation primary objective, the curriculum set has the students have to have high language proficiency within at least two languages; master theoretical aspects of translation, including different translation strategies, approaches, and methodologies; be accustomed to engage practical translation exercises along with the increasing complexity and length; understand cultural context of both the source and target languages.

Becoming a translator, students may have the option to specialize in specific areas of translation, such as legal translation, medical translation, technical translation or literary translation. However, higher education has 3 level which are undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate (Camacho-Zuñiga et al., 2021). Translation in undergraduate level is a specialized program which focuses on developing student's skills in translating text from one language to another. Graduate translation involves more advanced and specialized training compared to undergraduate translation program. Last, postgraduate program in translation are designed for individuals who already possesses a high level of proficiency in multiple languages and have a strong foundation in translation theory and practice.

In Indonesia, undergraduate and graduate translation then differ into academic and vocational translation. Mostly the translation class in undergraduate is more academic than graduate. It is shown in Indonesian Higher Data Base (PDDIKTI) that there is no study program for applied linguistic for undergraduate. However, the undergraduate study program still promote that they are preparing a curriculum for becoming a translator. This phenomenon is interesting to be explored as translator is a professional career that should be accomplished by a student who study in vocational program. In fact, the universities in Indonesia administer the academic program for profiling a graduate to have a career in translation.

Research related to translation class is focusing on CAT technology for supporting tools (Jackman, 2021), that can use virtual class with collaborative translation (Pitkäsalo & Ketola, 2018) and/or use CorpTrans system as innovation in translation teaching media (Zhou & Gao, 2022). Regarding lecturer of translation, it is suggested to teach translation after being certified by the respective departments (Shehab & Ahmad Thawabteh, 2020). That suggestion is from Pakistan case study in translation class. Actually, the certification will be beneficial to undergraduate students that their professors/lecturers are qualified to teach translation. Not only the lectures are criticized, the translation teaching method are also investigated (Shahsavarezadeh & Tabrizi, 2020).

The translation theories course in Iran were not applicable as the students are not using the theories to real translation activities. The study is suggested that translation need more exercises in translating rather than theories comprehension. The exercises is suggested to have learning and practicing as close as the professional does (Siregar et al., 2020). From the previous research that many countries for undergraduate level is common to teach translation theories in a class. However, translation theories are a set for academic translation. The academic translation provides theoretical approach and broader topic to its translation such as translation history, translation theory, cross-cultural communication and sociolinguistics (Snell-Hornby, 1988). In short, undergraduate is more focused on academic translation rather than vocational translation.

The purpose of this study is to explore how undergraduate higher education institution manage the translation class in Indonesia. As the phenomenon over countries that more focusing academic rather than preparing undergraduate to be immediately ready for industry becomes this research question that "is translation in higher education in Indonesia an academic or vocational field?" to have better understanding on the main

question. Several questions arise how the register, discourse, target situation, skills and strategies used in translation class.

METHODS

In answering the research question, this study used an exploratory case study method. This method is for gaining an initial understanding of a teaching translation phenomenon that has not been extensively researched before. The subject of this study is a translation class of an English Education study program year 2022 consisting the learning documents, lecturers, and students. Furthermore, this class belongs to an excellent teaching university in Jakarta. This class was enrolled by 938 students and was facilitated by 8 lecturers. As the classes were divided into 8 lectures, one of their students was selected as the respondent. Thus, the interviewed students are eight. From the all 8 lecturers who teach translation, the coordinator of the subject is selected to represent the group. The data of this study are documents and interviews. The data are analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis used is following steps familiarization, coding, generating, reviewing, defining, naming theme and writing up (Squires, 2023). The themes are validated using data triangulation that cross checking among the collected data.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results

This section is answering follow the step of thematic analysis. Familiarization in this study is literature review related to the academic and vocational translation terms. Both of them are part of translation studies that academic can be an initial part of vocational one. Munday (2016) categorized translation studies into two part Pure and Applied Translation. The translation studies then are categorized into academic and vocational field. See Figure 1.

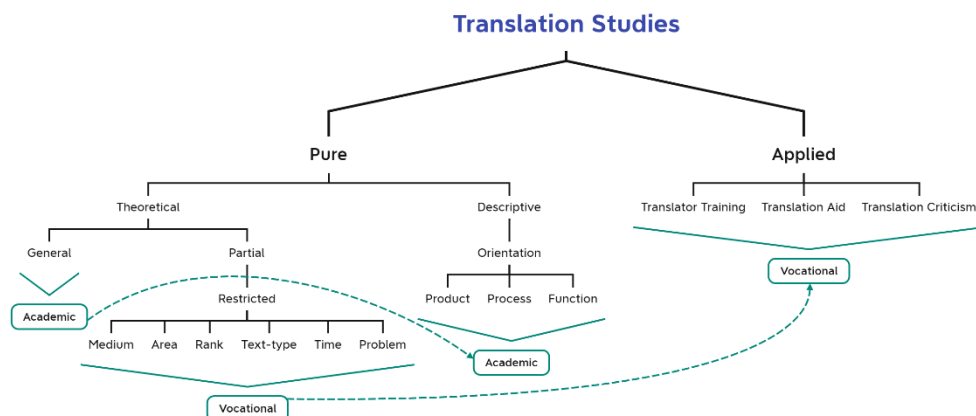


Figure 1.
 Translation Studies with Academic and Vocational Field Partition

Academic and vocational translation differ in their focus, objectives, and approach to preparing individuals for careers in the translation field. Academic offer to specialized in theoretical knowledge (Wheelahan, 2015) by advancing understanding in the field of translation studies and preparing students for research, academic careers or further at the postgraduate level. The academic translation study general translation together with descriptive product oriented, process-oriented and function-oriented translation.

Vocational is preparing students for immediate entry into workforce (Wheelahan, 2015) as translator or language service providers to meet industry demands. The vocational is more specific than the academic. They have six restricted things which are medium, area, rank, text-type, time and problem (Munday, 2016). The partial theoretical translation is used in training of translator, used various aid to support their work and to criticize other translation works.

Research results from the sample class shown in the chart as follows. There are register, discourse, target situation, skills and strategies theme. Register is gathered by examining and analyzing the language used in a particular text. Discourse is gathered by analyzing the systematic study used. Target situation is examining the context and requirement of the target audience. Skill and strategies is examining how assessment of the language skills and learning strategies the students used in the context of translation. See Figure 2.

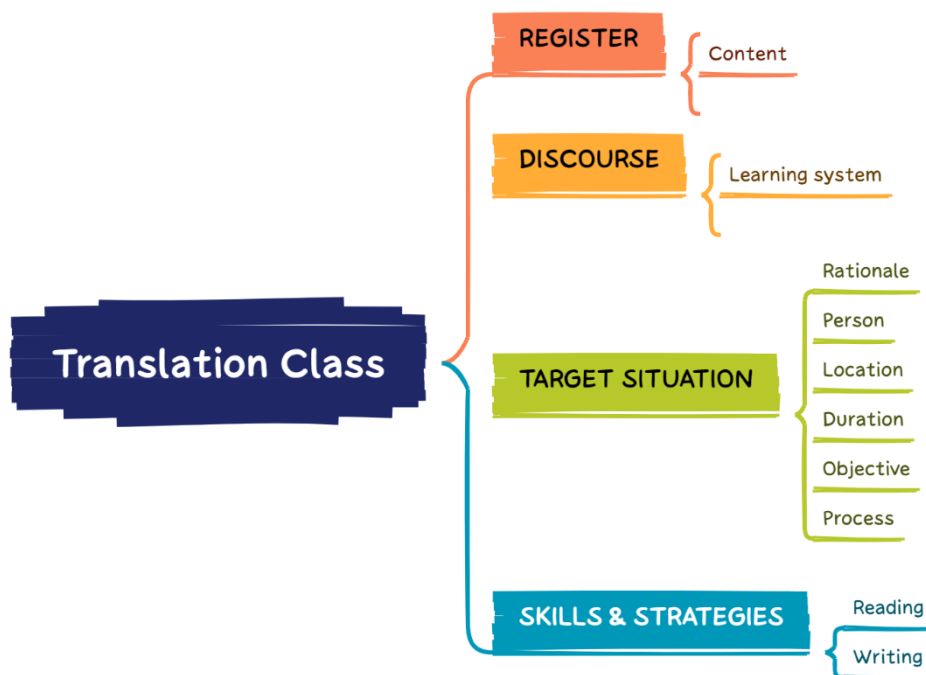


Figure 2.
 Translation Class

Discussion

1. Translation in Academic and Vocational Higher Education

Study program in academic higher education that administer translation class offers one and/or two semester(s) of transferring the theory and practice of translation. This class has prerequisite class(es) to be done. The texts and materials used is adjusted for academic purposes. The main objectives of translation in academic higher education is to make research and academic content accessible to a wider international audience. Similar situation occurs in vocational higher education administering translation class. It also has certain competences should be acquired. Unlike academic, translation in vocational higher education prioritize hands-on training and real-world application of translation skills.

Similarity on academic and vocational in translation class are both needs students to have language proficiency (Dagilienė, 2012). Both are studying translation theory and practice with a certain cultural context. Both also provides computer assisted translation (CAT) tools and software commonly used in the translation. Both also gives professional ethics as academic translator and vocational translator. However, the differentiation of academic and vocational in translation class is distinguished by focus, objectives and approach in preparing individual careers in the translation field.

Focus in translation of vocational is to equip students with practical and job-specific skills (Rehm, 1989) that are directly applicable to the translation industry. The main objective is to prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce as professional translators or language service providers. Vocational programs emphasize hands-on training, real-world translation projects, and the use of translation technology to meet industry demands. On the other hand, translation of academic has a broader focus that encompasses theoretical knowledge, research, and critical analysis of translation as a discipline. The main objective is to advance understanding in the field of translation studies and to prepare students for research, academic careers, or further studies at the postgraduate level.

Approach in translation of vocational offer a practical and skill-oriented curriculum (Zhu, 2018). The emphasis is on mastering translation techniques, language proficiency, and the use of translation tools to produce accurate and efficient translations. Coursework may include extensive translation practice, project management, and business skills relevant to the translation industry. On the other hand, academic translation fields have a more theoretical approach and may explore broader topics related to translation, such as translation history, translation theory, cross-cultural communication, and sociolinguistics. The curriculum is designed to encourage critical thinking, research, and the exploration of translation as a social, cultural, and linguistic phenomenon. Last, duration and recognition in vocational translation fields are often shorter in duration compared to academic fields (Giel, 2009). They may be offered as diploma or certificate courses, associate degrees, or bachelor's degrees with a vocational focus. These programs are designed to provide immediate practical skills for employment.

Academic translation programs are typically longer in duration, especially at the postgraduate level. They are commonly offered as master's or doctoral degrees and may involve research projects and the completion of a thesis or dissertation. These programs are geared towards developing expertise in translation studies and contributing to the academic discourse on translation. Both vocational translation and academic translation programs serve valuable purposes in the translation field. Vocational programs prepare individuals for hands-on careers in the industry, while academic programs contribute to the advancement of translation knowledge and the

development of critical thinking skills in the discipline. Aspiring translators should choose the program that aligns with their career goals and aspirations. In confirming the assumption, there are some analysis in undergraduate higher education that administering translation class. The analysis is focusing on translation register, translation discourse, translation target situation, translation skills and strategies as follows.

2. Translation Register

Register analysis in a translation class refers to the process of examining and analysing the language used in a particular text or discourse in order to identify its register (Munday, 2016). Register, in linguistics, refers to the variety of language used in a particular social context, situation or purpose. It is characterised by the degree of formality, vocabulary, grammar and style, which can vary according to factors such as the audience, the topic and the medium of communication.

In a translation course that includes register analysis, students typically learn to identify and analyse different registers in different types of texts, such as written documents, speeches, conversations, advertisements, academic papers and more. The students must adapt the language to ensure that the translation is contextually and culturally appropriate for the target readers. The choice of translation register may vary depending on factors such as the target audience, the type of text being translated, the medium of communication and the intended effect.

The content that used in the translation class is descriptive, report, news item, and narrative text genre. The four genres of text are commonly used in undergraduate student's translation class. It is aligned with other universities that has administer the translation class that is focusing on different text types (Hidayat & Helmanto, 2023). The differentiation is the text types in this university is in numbering format. See Figure 3.

EXERCISES:

Translate the following passages into good Indonesian!

A.

Similar rural technology centers are springing up elsewhere. In India, for example, native researchers are developing small-scale devices that convert biological wastes of all sorts into gas fuel for cooking and heating. Technicians in Lesotho, southern Africa, are developing low cost housing construction materials and techniques. In the Philippines, manufacturers are producing locally designed machinery adapted for the farmer who has more land than he can work by hand but who cannot afford, or make good use of conventionally sized farm machinery.

Figure 3

Content sample of news item text for translation

The content is a news item about technology development in several countries. The students are asked to translate the following (A to E) passages into good Indonesian. The five passages are different text genre: A is news item; B news item; C report; D report; and E narrative.

3. Translation Discourse

Discourse analysis in a course refers to the systematic study and examination of spoken or written language in its context of use (Munday, 2016). It is a field of

linguistics that focuses on understanding how language is used to convey meaning, create social identities, negotiate power relationships, and shape communication in different social and cultural settings. In other words, translation discourse involves analyzing how language is used, structured, and adapted in the translation to convey the intended meaning and communicative purpose of the source text in the target language.

Translation discourse goes beyond word-for-word translation; it involves understanding the broader communicative context and the intended meaning of the source text to create an effective and culturally appropriate target text. The students must make linguistic and stylistic choices to produce a translation that accurately conveys the original message while being suitable for the target audience and purpose.

The translation class in the university is starting by getting meaning in context. Then, it continues to translate sequential start by word to word, sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph. This system is stated in their semester program plan (RPS). RPS is a set of plan that lecturer should follow to achieve certain learning (Yusrie et al., 2021). The learning translation system in this university is also focusing on the simple sentences, compound sentences, and complex sentences. For extend learning. figurative learning is also taught such as euphemism, simile, and personification. Thus, the class are done in systematic ways start from easy to hard, simple to complex, definitive to connotative meaning.

4. Translation Target Situation

Target situation analysis in a course refers to the process of examining the context and requirements of the target audience and communicative purpose in a language learning or communication course (Hutchinson & Waters, 1991). It involves gathering relevant information about the learners' needs, goals, proficiency levels, and the specific communicative situations they will encounter.

In language teaching or communication courses, target situation analysis helps educators and course designers tailor their instructional content, materials, and activities to meet the specific needs and goals of the learners. In translation, it involves considering the characteristics of the target audience, the purpose of the translation, the medium of communication, and the cultural and social factors that may influence the reception and understanding of the translated text.

Target situation in the university are varied by rationale, person, location, duration, objective, and process. Rationale of translation class in the university are stated in their RPS. It is stated in Capaian Pembelajaran Lulusan (CPL/graduate learning outcomes). The CPLs of this university are able to adapt the culture of positive target language users into the culture of the mother tongue (CP-KK6); able to translate English orally or in writing into Indonesian properly and correctly (CP-KK7); and, mastering theoretical concepts about literature, literacy, and language learning (CP-KP5).

Person involved in translation class are lecturers and students. the role of lecturers is facilitating the learning process. The students are the main role in this university that the students mostly studied translation theory and did the practice of certain translation theory in the end of every meeting.

Location of the translation class is done by face to face direct meeting and virtual meeting supported by Zoom application. Combining online and offline classes is favorable in many universities. However, this university applies online each consecutive two weeks.

The duration of translation class each meeting is three credits which means two time 60 minutes for theory and another 60 minutes for practice. This has occurrence for 16 weeks in a semester. In the 8th meeting the students do formative assessment called by Ujian Tengah Semester/Midterm test. The test is done by answering some question related to theory. For the final test, the students do summative assessment which the challenges are getting high. The students must translate a certain text given by random lecturers. This kind of test is called Ujian Pengendali Mutu_a standardized test made by the translation consortium.

The objective of translation class is stated in RPS in column *Capaian Pembelajaran Mata Kuliah (CPMK/Course Learning Outcomes)*. See the inset 1.

After completing this course, students are able to translate English orally or in writing into Indonesian accurately, clearly, naturally & dynamically or vice versa properly and correctly and master the principles, concepts, terms and nature of translation. Inset 1 RPS of Translation (source: Translation Learning Document year 2022)

The objective on CPMK is clearly stated that students need to be able to translate English to Indonesian and Indonesian to English accurately, clearly, naturally & dynamically. These outcomes are still biased as the students need to study all general translation theory while the outcome is advancing the knowledge of translation with a proof of translated texts with certain criteria mentioned before. Based on the CPMK, it shown that the objective is preparing the initial stage that possible to promote the students to advance their translation skill to vocational program.

The process of translation class is quite challenging that the consortium is promoting a compulsory module of translation authorized by all the member of consortium. This module is becoming first main reference that the students must have it by buying in an internal bookstore. See figure 4.

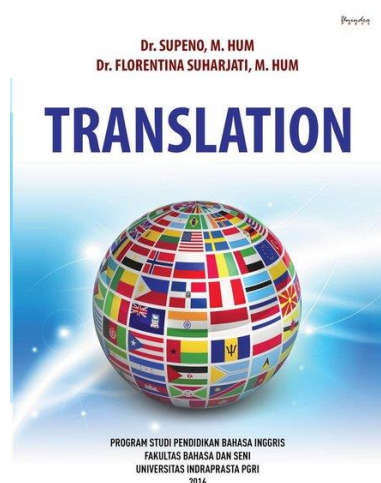


Figure 4
Module of Translation

Additional sources to support the process are slides from the lectures, dictionary both source and target language. The main and additional learning source are helpful to guide the students to study certain aspect of translation they need to know and master. In short, the aspect are the history, the translation process, the translation procedures, type of sentences in translation, figurative languages common in translation, meaning context in translation, letters and minute in translation, and other type of text genres.

5. Translation Skills & Strategies

Skills and strategies analysis in a course refers to the process of identifying and assessing the language skills and learning strategies that students use in the context of language learning or communication courses (Hutchinson & Waters, 1991). This analysis aims to understand the strengths and areas for improvement in students' language proficiency and their ability to employ effective learning strategies to enhance their language learning process. Translation skills and strategies are the techniques and approaches that translators use to effectively render a text from one language to another while maintaining its meaning, style, and context. These skills and strategies are honed through practice, experience, and continuous learning, and they play a crucial role in producing high-quality translations.

Skills and strategies used in this university is divided into reading and writing. Those two skills are compulsory in doing translation. As the students must have excellent reading comprehension skills to understand the source of the text its entirely. This reading comprehension skills involve grasping the main ideas, details, and nuances present in the text. Not only the reading comprehension skills, the students must be able to do analytical reading. In addition, writing skills for translation is dealing with how to convey meaning style and tone in the target language. Strong writing skills enable the students to produce clear, accurate, and natural sounding translations that resonate with the target audience. This writing skills would be best along with proofreading and editing skills.

To overcome the requirement of reading and writing skills, the strategies used in the university is putting several related studies in the first and second year of undergraduate. The reading skills can be acquired in first semester by completing Bahasa Indonesia subject; in second semester Basic Reading; in third semester Active Reading. For writing skills can be acquired in second semester by completing Basic Structure; in third semester Basic Writing; in forth semester Understanding Structure.

CONCLUSION

Translation in higher education prepares the students to become translators. It is held by a language study program with a specific curriculum. Each level of higher education has different set of curricula for translation. The curricula for becoming a professional translator should be designed regardless of whether translating is an academic or a vocational field. As both of programs have different focus, objective, approach and duration of study.

This research is focusing on undergraduate level as an early stage of translation class. This study shows that the undergraduate level prepares the academic field of translation that will serve as a base of knowledge to pursue advanced level in the academic and/or goes to specialize for becoming professional translator later. It is proved by the administration of translation class is following the translation studies that consist pure theoretical with the descriptive translation orientation. The evidence is supported by

the result of analyzing register, discourse, target situation, skills and strategies. The register is based on text genre; the discourse is done systematically from simple to complex; the target situation is aligned with mastering the theoretical concept, and the person involved is dominantly the students. Furthermore, the location is done with face to face meeting and virtual meeting which are accomplished in one semester. For confirming the competence of the students, the objective set asked the students to make a translation product in a summative assessment. The Consortium of Translation takes part to monitor the process by adding learning sources; the skills are reading and writing that the students must acquire before the translation class. As a consequence, the consortium gives suggestion to previous subjects related to reading and writing to be done systematically from basic to advanced.

This study is limited to the undergraduate level of translation education. It is recommended to have further study on how to teach the academic field of translation, such as translation teaching model, teaching method, assessment and so on.

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