



INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research

Volume 4 Nomor 1 Tahun 2024 Page 1449-1460

E-ISSN 2807-4238 and P-ISSN 2807-4246

Website: <https://j-innovative.org/index.php/Innovative>

## Students' Difficulties in Translating English into Indonesian at Descriptive Text

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kesulitan apa saja yang dihadapi siswa ketika menerjemahkan teks narasi dari bahasa Inggris ke bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dan desain sebagai studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara terhadap 15 mahasiswa tingkat tinggi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesulitan siswa dalam menerjemahkan teks deskriptif disebabkan oleh dua faktor yaitu internal dan eksternal, faktor internal: kurangnya motivasi, bakat, dorongan, dan kemampuan kognitif. faktor eksternal: lingkungan sekolah, pengajar, fasilitas, teman sekelas dan ruang kelas, serta faktor lingkungan dan sosial budaya, serta perbedaan struktur dan pola bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Inggris membuat siswa bingung mengorganisasikan makna kedua bahasa tersebut. Penelitian ini menyarankan agar siswa mampu memperluas dan memperkaya kosa kata dan keterampilan bahasa Inggris dari berbagai sumber platform, serta membangun rasa percaya diri.

Kata Kunci: *Teks Deskriptif, Kesulitan Siswa, Penerjemahan, Menerjemahkan*

## Abstract

This research aims to find out what difficulties students face when translating narrative text from English to Indonesian. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach and design as a case study. Data obtained through interviews with 15 higher students. The results of this research show that students' difficulties in translating descriptive text are caused by two factors, namely internal and external, internal factors: lack of motivation, talent, drive, and cognitive ability. external factors: school environment, instructors, facilities, classmates and classrooms, as well as environmental and sociocultural factors, and the differences in the structure and patterns of Indonesian and English, making students confused about organizing the meaning of the two languages. This research suggests that students can expand and enrich their vocabulary and English skills from various platform sources, as well as build self-confidence.

Keywords: *Descriptive Text, Students' Difficulties, Translation, Translating*

## INTRODUCTION

Translating is the process of transferring a concept from one language to another. It is a directed procedure that moves written information from the source language to the target language (Pinchuck, 1977); Wilss, 1982). Students often face difficulties when trying to translate English texts into Indonesian, especially descriptive texts. The difficulty arises because there are many differences, such as grammatical structure, vocabulary, and the way sentences are formed between these two languages. Every translator inevitably faces a number of problems, such as language problems, grammar and cultural elements in the target language (Rm & Rosa, 2020).

Related to the title of this research, it is very important to study it globally, because there are still many students who have difficulty translating from one language to the language they want to use. Research by (SOLAIMAN, 2021) shows that there are still many students in India who have difficulty translating, namely tenses, grammar, prepositions, grammatical agreement, definite and indefinite.

The importance of this research is studied because there are still many students in Indonesia still find it difficult to translate the text from English to Indonesian, due to the lack and limited vocabulary and phrases they have, both in terms of prepositions, verb phrases, noun phrases, and participle phrases (Susany, 2019).

According to research by (Puspita et al., 2022, Aprianti & Ardi, 2023 and Nofrian & Syafryadin, 2023) mentioned that most students have difficulty translating text, because of the lack of vocabulary they have, grammatical errors, because of language patterns.

different, difference culture, errors in choosing the right words, lack of idiomatic knowledge, lack of experience, and lack of student enthusiasm.

The research of (Hastuti et al., 2020) research shows that there are two things that cause difficulties for students in translating, the first is mostly caused by linguistic variables, while the second is non-linguistic factors.

According to (Arigusman, 2018) students are experiencing difficulties among them: inadequate structural understanding, inappropriate use of verbs, errors in modal word order, and errors selection of the type of procedure, inadequate mastery of terminology, and failure to appear in certain nominal sentences.

Even though many researchers have studied this research, there is still little research that examines the difficulties students face in translating descriptive text from English to Indonesian. This research also covers students' psychological aspects in the translation process, such as their level of motivation and self-concept as translators. Therefore, this research focuses on what difficulties students face.

This research aims to find out comprehensively about the difficulties students face when translating English descriptive text into Indonesian. the author is also committed to finding out the underlying reasons that influence translation, such as grammatical errors, vocabulary gaps, and cultural differences. However, the aim of this research is to identify students' difficulties and find solutions that can be implemented to help students overcome obstacles and improve their translation skills. Researchers have 2 problem formulations that will be discussed related to this research, why do students often find it difficult to translate descriptive texts in English into Indonesian? and What are the internal and external factors that cause students' difficulties in translating descriptive texts in English into Indonesian?

English and Indonesian are two different language systems, with their respective differences in syntax and idiomatic expressions. These differences can cause errors in translation, loss of important nuances in the text, and inaccurate understanding. Apart from that, students may also have difficulty finding equivalent words and expressions, because there are words in English that do not have a direct equivalent in Indonesian, and vice versa. Cultural differences are also a factor, as descriptive texts often contain cultural references that are difficult to translate from one language to another. Thus, students are faced with complex challenges, which include language proficiency, cultural sensitivity, and a deep understanding of the texts they translate. Effective solutions and adequate support are essential to help students overcome these difficulties and develop their translation skills well.

Students' difficulties in translating English into Indonesian in descriptive texts have provided valuable insight into the challenges students face in overcoming language and cultural differences. The research results show that differences in language structure, vocabulary and syntax between English and Indonesian are the main factors causing difficulties. In addition, the research also highlights how important it is to understand the cultural context in translation, because descriptive texts often reflect different cultural realities. With this research, it is hoped that it can open the door to a more detailed approach to overcoming this problem, including the development of better educational resources and more effective learning strategies to help students overcome difficulties in translating, especially for descriptive texts.

### 1. The Definition of Translation

The goal of translation is to convey meaning from one language to another. "A craft consisting of attempts to write statements and replace messages in one language with the same statements and messages in another language" is what Newmark (1988) defines as translation.

Translation, according to (Budianto, 2010) is a natural translation that appears to have been written in the target language originally. This translation uses standard English language and vocabulary; it is neither unusual nor uncomfortable. Therefore, in order to translate well and naturally, one must make sure that they have taken into account the need to make several adaptations to the target language environment sequentially.

Siregar (2015) asserts that translation plays a crucial role in the advancement of the national language by enhancing its ability as a communication medium. Particularly for those who are unable to speak or comprehend another language, translation is quite helpful.

Translation is a fundamental process that enables effective communication and understanding between individuals who speak different languages (Urlaub & Dessen, 2022).

### 2. Kinds of Translation

Word-for-word translation, free translation, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptive translation, idiomatic translation, and communicative translation are the eight categories of translation techniques, according to (Newmark, 1988). These are Newmark's eight translation techniques:

a. Word For Word Translation

In this technique, referring to certain terms, the translator effectively translates the content of the source language into the content of the target language.

b. Free Translation

Similarities typically arise at the sentence level, although free translation is typically unrelated to proportionate sentence searches. In order to converse and convey ideas in the target language, the translator must be able to push messages in the source language at the paragraph or discourse level.

c. Literal Translation

Between word-for-word translation and free translation is literal translation. In a true literal translation, the translator could start with a word-for-word translation and subsequently change the target sentence's word order.

d. Faithful Translation

Within the constraints of the target grammar, a faithful translation will make an effort to convey the original use structure's right contextual meaning. This demonstrates that in order to accurately convey the goals of the researchers, the translator must be able to understand the meaning of the original language.

e. Semantic Translation

Semantic translation entails converting less critical social meanings into a third, globally accepted phrase that is culturally neutral but not metaphorical. It provides more flexibility than accurate translation since it involves a method of comprehending and adjusting the content of the source language as long as it stays contextually suitable.

f. Adaption Translation

The "freest" type of translation is adaptation translation. In essence, it is protected and used for dramatization (comedies and poems, topics, characters, storylines, short tales, stories, etc.), where the contents of the text are rewritten, and the culture of the source language is changed to reflect the culture of the target language.

g. Idiomatic Translation

An interpretation that creates a "message" from the original but tends to alter the nuances of meaning by using idioms and colloquial language that are typically used in the original is known as an idiomatic translation.

#### h. Communicative Translation

In communicative translation attempt to convey the original text's pertinent and exact meaning in a way that the reader may understand and successfully grasp the language's core ideas.

### 3. Definition of Descriptive Text

A type of text known as descriptive text is one that describes an actual item (person, location, and stuff). It will make the actual thing easier for the reader to grasp. Identification and description are then included in the descriptive text. Identification is the process of attempting to characterize a thing. The process of describing the item is then what the description does. Every writer or person uses descriptive prose to describe anything, someone, an animal, a place, or an occurrence to a reader or listener (Knapp & Watkins, 2005).

(Keraf, 1981), when a writer uses descriptive writing, they are able to convey to the reader the feelings and visuals they experienced. In order for readers to imagine or feel as though they are participating in it as well, the writer attempts to portray a picture, sensation, and experience to them. Students describe things clearly, though, so the reader can see the subject of the description—for example, what they are describing about their class.

(Depdiknas, 2004), a descriptive text's grammatical or linguistic characteristics include: it concentrates on a particular person. It indicates that the attributive and identifying processes are used with a single, distinct item to be described. The object's quality is assigned via the attribution procedure. In an active sentence, such as "it has White fur," attribute process is employed. The identification procedure is applied to passive clauses that utilize adjectives to modify nouns, such as "the cat owns the white fur." Big mansion, gorgeous beach, attractive female, etc. are a few examples. Verbs that connect are used. Because it employs the simple present tense and describes an item, all of the information should be accurate.

### 4. General Pattern of Descriptive Text

Certain general frameworks are helpful when producing descriptive prose, but they are not necessary for the truth of our writing. The configuration is:

The main topic of this study is identification as the first generic. The process of identification involves locating the phenomena that requires description. In a descriptive paragraph, the first phrase is identification. The token (subject or participant) in a descriptive text should be specified to provide the best identification. Relational identification should

be the procedure (verb or predicate). This is the fundamental information a writer of descriptive text must be aware of. Even if the social function can be fulfilled, the writer will make erroneous identifications in the descriptive text if they are indifferent to these qualities (Tessuto, 2015; Hyland, 2004); Zavolzi, 2021).

The summaries are the descriptive text's second general structure. A writer must describe the components, traits, and attributes of a certain object to produce a description. In the description, the participant or subject is referred to as the token and carrier. Relational attributive refers to the verb or process used in the description. An item known as an attribute makes up the final section. They should all be written textually: carrier and token, relational-attributive and attribute. This means that, aside from the relationship process, the writer must refrain from becoming a general participant and refrain from employing any material or mental activities. The author must utilize a straightforward present tense and the epithet to convey the quality (Van den Heuvel et al., 2016; Lu et al., 2021).

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted at an Islamic university in Medan, the data collected was obtained from interviewing 15 higher students without any elements of coercion or falsity of data. Researchers collected data by interviewing higher students with 5 questions.

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a case study research design. Qualitative research is a method carried out by someone who is able to collect data in all aspects as a single researcher, although in the field they can be assisted by a team or group (Pradoko, 2017). Descriptive research methods are research used to describe or explain a phenomenon, event, or situation and research methods that systematically collect accurate data to describe the phenomenon (Sahir, 2021).

A case study is a research method used to study a particular phenomenon, situation or subject as a whole, a case study is collecting and analyzing data about a case. This is usually considered to be the case because there is a problem, challenge, obstacle, or deviation. However, cases can also be considered cases because of their superiority or success (Auliya et al., 2020). Researchers also analyze cases to understand the characteristics, context, dynamics and details of the phenomenon under study and researchers also collect data from respondents and convey this information in the form of descriptive text and investigate additional information related to the research subject.

To obtain data, researchers used interview techniques as a technique for collecting data.

interview

Interviewing is the process of gathering information regarding research objectives through private questions and responses between the interviewer and the respondent, or respondent and interviewer, utilizing a tool called an interview guide (Nazir, 2009). Giving respondents or students the same five questions to ask to get comprehensive information, the researcher employed a systematic interview strategy to collect data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Researchers analyze the data that has been carried out through the data collection process and explain the research, namely by asking questions and conducting interviews. Interviews were conducted to analyze students' conditions in learning in translation courses, especially in descriptive texts. Interviews were conducted to determine the difficulties students face in translating descriptive texts.

In this research, researchers will present the results of interviews with 15 students. Interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth information from students regarding problems in translating descriptive texts. Researchers asked students several questions based on previous data or information related to this research. This is necessary as part of the data collection that researchers must carry out to obtain as much information as possible properly. Research is carried out as follows: In this study, researchers prepared 5 questions for students. Researchers get results based on all the answers that have been answered by students.

"Do students use a dictionary or ask the lecturer when they get a difficult word?" was the first query the author posed to the students. After four students responded, they looked up the challenging term in the dictionary. In response, three more students said that if they were unable to understand a challenging term, they would speak with the instructor personally. Six students then responded, saying they searched the dictionary for the challenging term and would ask the professor if they were completely unfamiliar with it. The other two pupils, meanwhile, remained mute and offered no responses. This is because not all students bring dictionaries, and only some students comprehend the sentences they are translating.

In the second question, "which is more difficult for you to transfer, is Indonesian to English or English to Indonesian?" The researcher questioned students about the difficulties they encountered while switching from the source language to the target language. Nine students said that they found it challenging to translate from Indonesian to English. Then,

four students said that translating from English into Indonesian was more challenging. The other two pupils responded by saying that they were each equally challenging. Lack of knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary is the reason why translating descriptive texts from Indonesia into English is more challenging than translating descriptive texts from English into Indonesian. They're not very knowledgeable about it. Aside from that, students may find it challenging to interpret and arrange them due to the structural variations between English and Indonesian.

The third question, researchers asked students about "do students experience difficulties in understanding English form patterns when transferring English to Indonesian?". Eleven students answered yes. The other four students answered that it was not too difficult. This is because some students have problems when they translate English texts. The general pattern in English is (sv, svv, svo) while the Indonesian pattern is (spok). Naturally, both are distinct from one another and confuse them as they need to rearrange the words.

The next question, "What media do students use when they get a difficult word?" the researcher inquired. All students answered that they open dictionaries and digital online dictionary applications if the word is difficult, and they don't know the meaning. The digital dictionaries used are Google Translate, DeepL, U-Dictionary etc.

The last question from the research is "Do they feel confused when studying descriptive text?". All the students admitted that they struggled to organize content in well-chosen, exact sentences that readers could understand while translating descriptive texts into Indonesian due to their limited vocabulary knowledge.

Linguistic issues, meaning challenges, and internal and external influences are some of the causes that may cause students to struggle while translating English descriptive writings into Indonesian literature. Word order, sentence structure, and suffixes are examples of linguistic issues in English. Lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, contextual meaning, textual meaning, and cultural meaning are examples of meaning difficulties.

Students' internal factors are those that they already possess. There exist several internal components, including physiological aspects like bodily state and sensory perception, as well as psychological factors like motivation, talent, drive, and cognitive ability.

External influences are those that originate within the learner. These include instrumental elements like school programs, instructors, facilities, classmates, and classrooms, as well as environmental factors like the family and sociocultural environments.

Researchers provide solutions based on the challenges students have while translating English descriptive texts into Indonesian. Students need to commit more words to memory first. Second, to help students feel comfortable and prevent feelings of inferiority, embarrassment, and fear, lecturers should focus more on helping students whose English proficiency is weak to pose inquiries on the issue with translating descriptive text.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the article is that students have difficulty translating English texts into Indonesian, due to internal and external factors in students, and also due to lack of vocabulary, differences in the lexicon of the two languages, grammatical structure, and cultural background. This research also emphasizes how important it is for students to understand their cultural context because descriptive writing often represents different cultural realities. The solutions that researchers also suggest are increasing English vocabulary, creating more dynamic learning materials, and utilizing technology and building self-confidence.

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