# DEPICTING EFL LEARNERS' STRATEGIES AND DILEMMA IN TRANSLATION

**Afif Ikhwanul Muslimin**
**Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia**
*afifikhwanulm@uinmataram.ac.id*


**Fitrana Harintama**
**Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia**
*fitranaharintama@uinmataram.ac.id*

## Abstract

**Depicting EFL Learners' Strategies and Dilemma in Translation.** The present study is aimed at depicting EFL learners' strategies and dilemma in conducting English-Indonesia translations. This study will employ survey design with quantitative approach. The participants will be 124 EFL learners who are joining translation class at English Education Department, UIN Mataram in academic year 2021/2022. The adapted questionnaire comprises translation problems in terms of vocabulary, culture understanding, choice of strategy, grammar and specific field of study will be administered to participants. Furthermore, the collected data will be analyzed statistically, portrayed into charts, and discussed with existed theories. The result of the research showed that all strategies (Newmark, 1988) were applied by students. However, the most dominant strategies used were recognized translation, transference, functional equivalent, synonymy, and shifts. Similar to the analysis on the EFL students' dilemma in translation, students experienced five dilemmas such as facing difficulty to choose best strategy to translate, owning limited vocabulary, getting difficult in matching SL and TL grammar, lacking of culture understanding, and being unable to know the translation of specific term in different field. The lowest frequency of students' acknowledgement on the dilemma was about the understanding on TL culture.

Keywords:    Translation; EFL learners; dilemma; Indonesia

## Introduction

Nowadays translating activities continue to be more important practices (Soang, 2016), especially in Indonesia and in approaching globalization era, translation activity has a large benefit in developing knowledge or science as well as in international exchange of culture. Translation does not only transform one

319

*Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature Studies*
*[TBI] IAIN Manado*
*Volume 2. Number 2. December 2022*

language to another on, but also give the right information to convey its content well. In this case, foreign literature influences much toward Indonesian literature because they are closely related to each other scientifically.

Tian (2004) gives description about other significance of translation. He states that translation is becoming more and more important in international and intercultural activity. For the facilitates mutual understanding among different and conflicting racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural groups. This is because translation has a function to bridge a communication among different people with different language and culture. For this reason, then he adds that, training translation people from different place and background can understand each other. Without existence of translation, people that have differences language and culture will difficult to communicate.

Translation is an effort to divert messages from one language to another language. According to (Newmark, 1988), describes translation as a craft consisting of the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement on one language by the same message and/or statement in another language. In addition, Bell (1991) the process or result of converting information from one language or language variety into another. The aim is to reproduce as accurately as possible all grammatical and lexical features of the source language original by finding equivalents in the target language. At the same time, all factual information contained in the original text must be retained in the translation.

To do translation, translator meets various types of translation materials which differ in text genre, length, field of study, language style, etc. These diversities triggers translator to consider the translation strategies should be used to translate the translation materials. Then, Newmark (1988) explains the fifteen translation strategies which enable translator to choose the right way to do translation. Rietveld and Hormelen (2019) state that translation strategies help the translator to translate accurately. Hence, translation teacher should know how far students comprehend and apply the strategies in translation.

In the translation activity, of course there are some things that need to be considered, for instance: the word choice, the translation grammar or the structure between source language and target language, the use of suitable translation strategy, and the culture of the target language. As the result, translation is not an easy work done by students who just start enjoy the translation (Erdogan & Taraioglu, 2018). However, in some schools in Indonesia, translation has been

taught since in their high schools (Fajrin, 2021). Hadrus (2017) states that some students in university mention to have dilemma in translation such as unable to find the translation of new vocabulary and to dependent to dictionary.

English Education Department in State Islamic University of Mataram, NTB also holds translation course in the fifth semester. The students are introduced to the theory and practices of English-Indonesia translations. Due to the aforementioned issue in the introduction, it is needed to know the students' comprehension on the use of translation strategies and their dilemmas during translation. Hence, the present study is objected at knowing the translation strategies used by students as well as investigating students' dilemmas in English-Indonesia translations.

## Methodology

The present study employed descriptive quantitative survey study by administering translation strategy and translation dilemma questionnaire to 124 students who joined English translation class at English Education Department in Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram. The questionnaire adapted Newmark (1988) framework which discussed the 15 strategies used by translator to do translation. In addition to grasp the translation dilemma, the researcher adapted Hadrus (2017) questionnaire which delving the difficulties in translation. However, from the aforementioned numbers of prospective participants, only 99 students participated to send back the questionnaire.

To analyze the data, the researcher searched for the percentage of each item in questionnaire among all items to perceive the most dominant item appear in both themes: the translation strategies and the dilemma.

## Findings and Discussion

The present study was aimed at depicting EFL learners' translation strategies and dilemma in conducting English-Indonesia translations. The finding would be displayed according to the aforementioned formulation of research objectives.

### EFL learners' translation strategies in conducting English-Indonesia translation

The first research objective that was targeted to meet was about knowing the translation strategies applied by students during the translation process
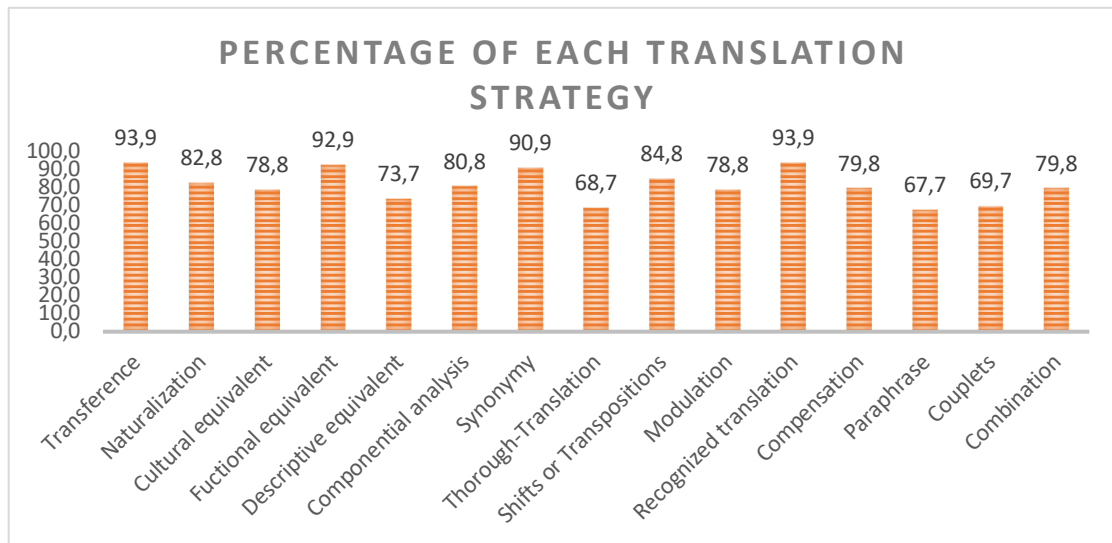
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Figure 1. The percentage of each translation strategy usage

Figure 1 depicts the strategies that had been applied by EFL students to translate materials in translation course that they were joining. The figure shows that all 15 strategies were applied by students. According to the data, there were four strategies which were applied by more than 90% of students, they are recognized translation, transference, functional equivalent, and synonymy. The least percentage (percentage below 70%) of strategies applied by students in translation course were paraphrase, thorough-translation, and couplets.
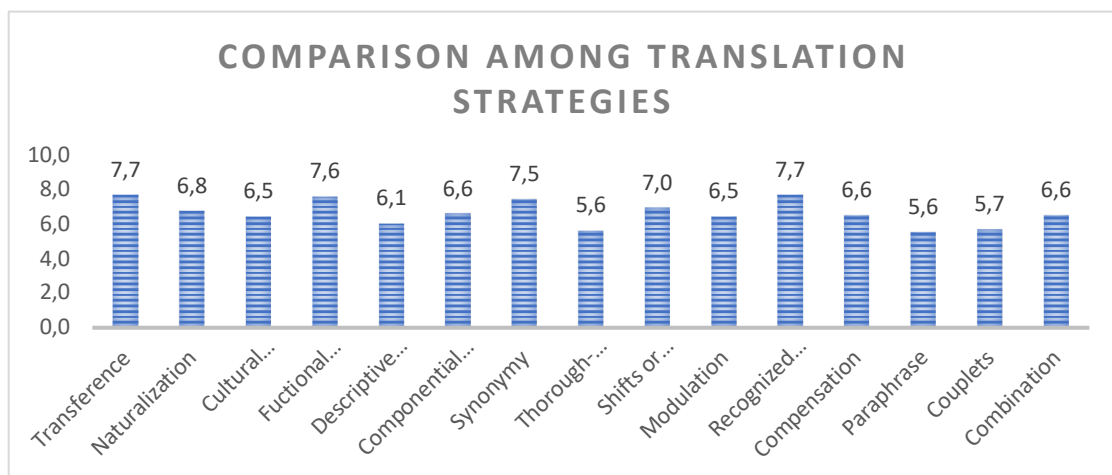


Figure 2. The percentage of each translation strategy among all strategies

322

*Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature Studies*
*[TBI] IAIN Manado*
*Volume 2. Number 2. December 2022*

Figure 2 depicts the strategies that had been applied by EFL students to translate materials in translation course that they were joining. The figure shows that all 15 strategies were applied by students. The highest in numbers among all strategies are noted from the percentage above 6.9. The highest usage of translation strategies were recognized translation, transference, functional equivalent, synonymy, and shifts. Then, the lowest percentage of usage by EFL students in translation were thorough translation, paraphrase, and couplets.

**EFL learners' dilemma in conducting English-Indonesia translations**

The second research objective that was directed to know the dilemma experienced by EFL students during translation process. The result of dilemma questionnaire administration is presented in figure 3.
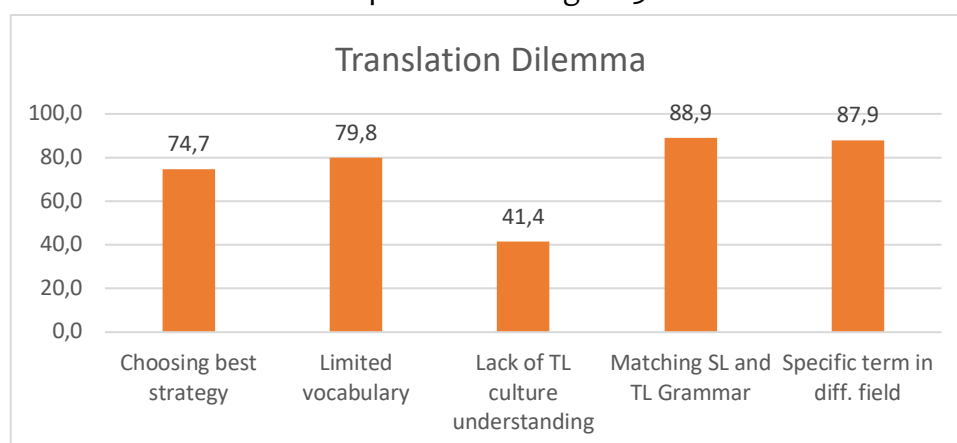


Figure 3. The percentage of occurrence of each translation dilemma

In the present research, it was noted that there were 99 students from 124 names in attendance lists participated in filling the questionnaire. Figure 3 describes the percentage of students who experienced dilemma in translation process. The highest percentage (88.9%) is shown by dilemma on matching the translation between source language and target language grammar. It means that 88 students experience this dilemma. On the other hand, the lowest number of students (41 students or 41.4%) experienced lacking of target language culture understanding.
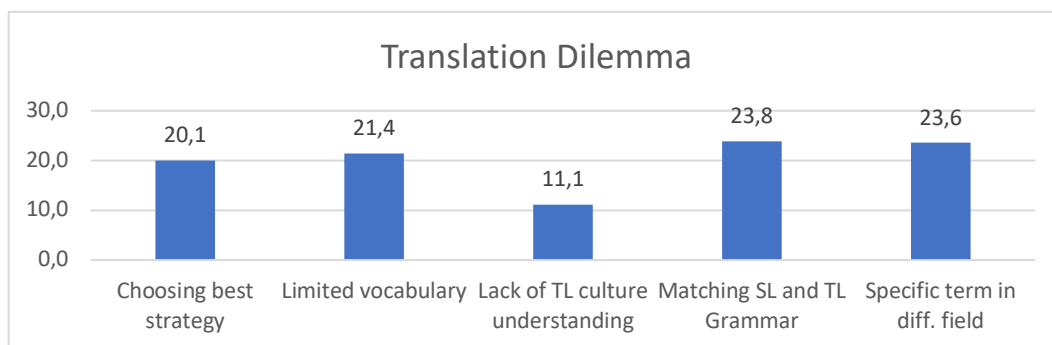
Figure 4. The percentage of each translation dilemma among all dilemmas

Figure 4 shows that EFL students had experienced whole translation dilemmas such as five dilemmas such as facing difficulty to choose best strategy to translate, owning limited vocabulary (Arono & Hadrah, 2019), getting difficult in matching SL and TL grammar, lacking of culture understanding, and being unable to know the translation of specific term in different field (Lucito, 2019). However, the percentage of dilemmas shown in figure were varied. The lowest frequency of students' acknowledgement on the dilemma was about the understanding on TL culture. Then, the most dilemmatic for students was matching SL and TL. This finding is in line with Hadrus (2017) study which states that most students got difficulties in linguistics factors such as matching the grammar of both SL and TL.

With regard English as means of communication that unable to be separated in skills during its practice, the students' dilemma in translation should be aided by the other skills course such as reading course, or writing course (Calis & Dicilitas, 2012). Agustini (2018) states that there is correlation between students' writing ability toward students' translation ability. Accordingly, Widiasari et al. (2015) explains that reading comprehension skill has correlation toward translation ability. Moreover, the students' translation dilemma may be minimized by applying cooperative learning strategies (Yuliasari, 2014) such as Students-Teams Achievement Division (STAD) technique (Ahmad, 2015).

**Conclusion**

The result of the research showed that all strategies (Newmark, 1988) were applied by students. However, the most dominant strategies used were recognized translation, transference, functional equivalent, synonymy, and shifts. Similar to the analysis on the EFL students' strategies in translation, students experienced five dilemmas such as facing difficulty to choose best strategy to translate, owning limited vocabulary, getting difficult in matching SL and TL, lacking of culture

understanding, and being unable to know the translation of specific term in different field. The lowest frequency of students' acknowledgement on the dilemma was about the understanding on TL culture. Then, the most dilemmatic for students was matching SL and TL grammar. The present study implied the need for the teacher to enhance students' translation ability by considering the existed dilemma as well as improving their translation practice incorporated with other language skills and various cooperative learning strategies. Furthermore, it reveals the need for future researcher to dig deeper the correlation of the discussed variables.

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