

## PEER FEEDBACK AS A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING STUDENT'S TRANSLATION SKILL

**Nunuk Tri Hapsari, Nugraha Krisdiyanta, Ismiati**

Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa Asing (STBA) LIA Yogyakarta

E-mail: n3hapsari@gmail.com, nugrahakris@gmail.com, ismiatistba@gmail.com

### Abstract

One of the processes that should be taken in the process of translation is reviewing the translation. This step must be taken before a translation product becomes the final text of the translation. In that process, peer feedback is needed. This article is research about the use of peer feedback in the process of reviewing student translations. The research was qualitative research. It was conducted based on the activities of a translation class in STBA LIA Yogyakarta. The research aims to see whether there is an improvement in the final results of student translations on their translation products based on their peer feedback. In this research, students are asked to translate some Indonesian texts into English. The translation then was given some comments and suggestions by their peers before they revised the translation to be the final product. The data were taken based on the students' translation products. The peer feedback and Componential analysis theory are used as the basis of analysis in this research data analysis. The results showed that peer feedback could not be used as a basis for improving translation results due to the same difficulties among peers over problems in selecting and restructuring translating text from Indonesian as a source language to English as a target language. The role of the lecturer in this matter is still needed in Translation Class at STBA LIA Yogyakarta.

**Keywords:** peer feedback, translation, lexical choice, componential analysis

### INTRODUCTION

Learning process for the translation course is carried out by giving or understanding the sufficient language and translation theories. Brown said, "Learning is acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience, or instruction" (Brown, 2007, p: 21). The understandings of language and translation theory are intended as a provision for students' analytical skills. Based on Brown's theory also, translation practices are good ways for creating students' experiences and skills in the translation process. Therefore, translation practices are intended as a provision of their practical skills.

The practical skills could be achieved and, of course, influenced by understanding problems in a translation process. These problems include linguistic and non-linguistic problems. Linguistic problems can be in the form of abilities towards the source language (SL) and target language (TL) owned by the translator (student). The non-linguistic side includes cultural and contextual knowledge of the translated text.

Student competence about SL and TL, in this case Indonesian as SL and English as TL, is strongly influenced by student competence in these two languages. In translating Indonesian into English, the contextual side of the text is assumed to cause minimal difficulties rather than linguistic

side. That is because of the influence of the cultural similarities between students and the SL context. Thus, improving linguistic skills becomes an important point that is more emphasized in the learning process.

One of ways that can be done to improve skills in terms of language is to practice translating Indonesian texts into English. By practicing translation of various types of texts, students are expected to get real experience in translation.

By having the translation experience, students will find their own difficulties during the translation process. The difficulty, of course, is related to the problems in the translation process, one of which is the selection of the right 'lexical choices' in English according to the meaning and context of Indonesian as the source language of the translated text.

Lecturers as subject supervisors, in this case, act as supervisors and evaluators of student translations. Lecturers must be able to provide input on difficulties and mistakes made by students. However, technical corrections do not only come from lecturers but also the students. Fellow students can provide input, criticism, or questions related to the results of their mates' translations. This technique has a positive side, namely students are able to identify mistakes made both by themselves and by their fellow students and are able to independently correct mistakes made.

This peer feedback is interesting to apply in the learning process of Translation II in Even Semester 2014/2015 because so far the input, criticism and corrections have always come from the lecturer. The students only have to accept the results of the corrections that have been given by the lecturer. By identifying problems, errors, and difficulties in the translation process and translation products independently, students are expected to be able to find appropriate strategies for themselves in the translation process. Analytically they are able to apply the translation theory they have learned in the analysis of SL texts so that they can produce good TL texts according to the right meaning and context.

Based on the background presented above, the problem that arises is how can the feedback given by fellow students improve skills in word selection for determining the equivalence of meaning in translation?

There are several relevant studies that have been conducted based on peer feedback and the research results that have been published in scientific journals. The results of the publications found by the authors in these scientific journals are the result of peer feedback research in improving students' writing skills.

Amin Bolourchi, and Maryam Soleimani from Iran conducted a research on peer feedback and aimed to explore whether PF can be used to improve writing performance and to reduce writing anxiety levels of language learners in the EFL context. This study revealed students' written production as well as its effect on anxiety level due to their peer feedback (Bolourchi, 2021). Their research was done considering the important role of PF in EFL classrooms and regarding the few numbers of comparative studies containing PF, anxiety, and writing performance. Thus, their study

attempted to explore the impact of PF on EFL learners' writing performance and writing anxiety (Bolourchi et al., 2021).

Indra Hartoyo from the Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Medan, conducted a research aimed at determining the effectiveness of the Peer Review Pattern on improving the writing skills of students of the Department of English Language and Literature, State University of Medan. The research was carried out with a Class Action Research design for third-semester English Education Study Program students (Hartoyo, 2015). In this study, Hartoyo cites that the PPR approach model creates a fun learning process (adventure learning) and interactive relationships with students (Brown, 2001; Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991). Learning with this approach creates a learning process that is a classroom community where there is negotiation, collaboration, the spirit to be responsible together, the emergence of various kinds of questions and interpretations, misunderstandings between fellow students (Hartoyo, 2015).

Another research conducted by Tusino aims to determine the ability of students to write essays, to describe the improvement in writing aspects, and to find the effectiveness of peer editing in improving students' writing skills. This study used an experimental method with a non-equivalent control group design. The population of this study was all fifth semester students of the English education study program at Muhammadiyah University of Purworejo (Tusino, 2015).

Research conducted by Silvani Umar Ali, Hamzah Machmoed, and Burhanuddin Arafah from the English Studies Program, Postgraduate Program, Hasanuddin University aims to determine (1) the effect of peer feedback on the writing performance of learners of English as a foreign language; (2) learner's response to peer feedback in English writing class. This study is an experimental model consisting of two groups: the experimental and control groups. This research was conducted at Khairun University, North Maluku (Silvani et al., 2015).

Based on those similar studies above, those previous researches were focused on the effectiveness of peer feedback in writing skills especially on the improvement in students' writing English skill. This research, like those researches, is also intended to determine the effect of feedback given by friends on language learners. However, unlike them, the emphasis of this study is the effect of the feedback on the writing skills in transferring message as the translation product or final result of the translation from Indonesian text as the SL into English text as the TL.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Peer feedback**

Providing corrections to assignments that are given to students is one of the duties of a teacher. This duty is expressed as a form of guidance provided in a learning process. As stated by Anna Uhl Chamot, Sarah Barnhardt, and Pamela Beard El-Dinary, in *The Learning Strategies Handbook*, students need guidance in finding strategies during their learning activities, one of which is the given task (Chamot et al., 1999). However, corrections do not have to come from the lecturer alone. Other

students can play an active role in providing corrections and input to other students. This is known as peer feedback or peer review. Peer review is able to give a positive effect on the integration of study groups, one of which is able to encourage students to pay attention to their colleagues to be better (Harmer, 2007). Based on this input and criticism from colleagues, students will be able to understand and correct their mistakes. In terms of translation, they will rearrange their translated text into TL. So, it is expected that they produce a better translation product.

This rewriting has a positive impact, as stated by Penny Ur that rewriting has a positive influence on the overall writing process (Ur, 2012). In this case, students begin to re-translate the translation process from the beginning, starting from analyzing the SL texts, understanding the meaning and recasting the meaning in their TL. By doing the process from the beginning, the understanding of the meaning contained in the SL text will be better. Another positive side of peer feedback is the willingness of students to correct their mistakes and be able to learn from them.

Peer feedback is also one of the two main techniques proposed by Marianne Celce-Murcia, in her book *Discourse and Context in Language Teaching*, in addition to self-questioning (Murcia, 2000). Furthermore, Celce-Murcia explained that the approach that can be used in peer feedback is the role-play technique. In this case, fellow students as readers will read and understand the writings of other students who must explain or answer questions that arise concerning their writings. Based on this dialogue, the student will rewrite so that interpretations no longer appear, and his writing becomes reader-based (Celce-Murcia et al, 2000).

The result of student translation as the first writing given to the lecturer, which will then be given to other students to get feedback, is considered as the initial draft of the translation. The final result of student translation is the result of student writing/retranslation based on input/criticism and suggestions from colleagues. This final product is hoped to be much better translation since peer feedback has a positive impact on translation quality. (Lin, Song, Guo and Wang, 2021)

### **Componential Analysis**

Translation is a process to convey information, message or meaning contained in a SL text into TL text. To be able to understand well the information, messages, or meanings contained in a SL text, a translator must be able to find the meaning of words or more complex meanings of texts that arise because of the relationship of words in sentences, utterances or texts in general. Bell said that to be able to create a meaning requires an identification process and more importantly data segmentation into more detailed element codes (Bell, 1997). These codes are known as 'component analysis' (CA).

In his book also, furthermore, Bell explains that the basic assumption in component analysis is that the meaning of a word is a combination of several elements of meaning semantically. These elements can be obtained based on, (1) the pronunciation; (2) the syntactic information; (3) the morphological side; and (4) its semantic meaning (Bell, 1997).

In translation process, component analysis can be used in order to find the equivalent meaning of word or expression from SL to TL. Componential analysis (CA) in translation is the basic comparison of a source language word with a target language word which has a similar meaning, but not an obvious one-to-one equivalent, by demonstrating first their common and then their differing sense components (Newmark, 1988, p: 115).

However, in addition to paying attention to the semantic component of its meaning, in obtaining the right meaning, the 'situation, context and universe of discourse' need to be considered in the process of retransmitting meaning in SL into TL. As Bell said, meaning depends on the context of its use (Bell, 1997).

## **METHOD**

This research is a mixed research in which the research was conducted as an experiment. The data gathered was in a form of numbers but the explanation is a form of qualitative research. This research was conducted in a class of Translation and aims at the improvements in the learning process and students' understanding of the learning materials provided, particularly to improve students' skills in choosing the right words in a text translation process from Indonesian into English. This research on learning reflection in the classroom involves the lecturer and the students of Translation class.

The research had been carried out for 7 weeks or at the second half of the semester. Before the research, the students were given the basics of translation theory. The research is divided into 5 (five) stages, namely (1) problem identification; (2) planning; (3) implementation; (4) evaluation; (5) general discovery (Emzir: 2014). The problem identification stage was carried out on the students' activities in doing the translation practices. The focus was on the students' effort in identifying the lexical items for the analysis components. The planning stage was the peer feedback.

A peer feedback process was prepared among the students during the translation process. In the implementation process, there were three stages. The first one was the draft. When the students produced their first translations, these were identified as the draft. The second stage in the implementation was the identification of problem during the translation practice. The third one was the discussion based on the peer feedback. The evaluation stage was carried out by rearranging the translation results in TL as the result of the student's final translation. The last stage, the general findings, was the conclusion stage of the research conducted by the lecturer based on the method applied.

## **Respondents/Participants**

The research subjects were students who were enrolled in the Translation II course of S1 English Literature for Evening Class at STBA LIA Yogyakarta. There were 11 (eleven) students. The scope of research based on these problems is limited to the scope of linguistic problems identified during

the translation practice in the Translation II course at Even Semester of the 2014/2015 Academic Year.

### Data collection and analysis

The data was taken from the mistakes made by the students in their initial draft of their translation. Their initial draft is their translation product of three types of different text given by the lecturer. Those types of text are narrative text, textbook text and news text. For each of the text, the lecture investigated and determined some words, phrases, or expressions that could cause problems in their translation.

From those three of text, not all students could find all difficult words. Each of text has different percentage for difficult word found and loss by students. The types of texts, the types of difficult words and the percentage of the students' identification of those types can be seen in the table below:

**Table 1**  
**List of difficult words**

Type Text	Type of difficulty	Found	Percentage	Loss	Percentage
Narrative	10 Words and context	4	16%	6	24%
Textbook text	10 Words	6	24%	4	16%
News text	5 Phrases	4	16%	1	4%
	25	14	56%	11	44%

In the data collection technique, three instruments were used to gather the data. The first one was the results of the student's first translation. The second one was the results of the error identification from peer feedback. The third instrument was the results of the student final translation.

The first data as the student's first translation was the initial translation of students in three different types of text, namely narrative text, scientific text and news text. For the first data, there were 33 data taken from 11 students. In the 33 data, the lecturer identified and recorded errors in the choice of words used by each student in each of the originally translated texts. These notes were lecturers' personal notes that were not given to peer students.

The first data of the student's initial text was given to different peers to identify word choice errors in the translation product. The correction given to the peer had to be accompanied by Component Analysis on each word to find out the meaning components of the word from its linguistic and contextual components. The identification and CA notes for each word in the initial translation were returned to the initial text translator. These identifications and notes were also used as the basis for the revision of the initial translation.

The results of the revised translation became the third data that was used as a comparison to see whether there was an improvement in the students' final translation product. The results of the study were based on a comparison of the initial text and the final text of this translation.

The data analysis was carried out based on the comparison of the results of the initial and final translation of students focusing on the accuracy of word choice in translation based on componential analysis and contextual use of words, sentences or texts before and after feedback from peer fellows.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

From the three types of text given to students, it is concluded that there were 25 difficulties that students might find in the form of words, phrases, or expressions. In the initial translation process, students were able to find 56% of these difficulties and 44% were not found, as shown in the following figure:

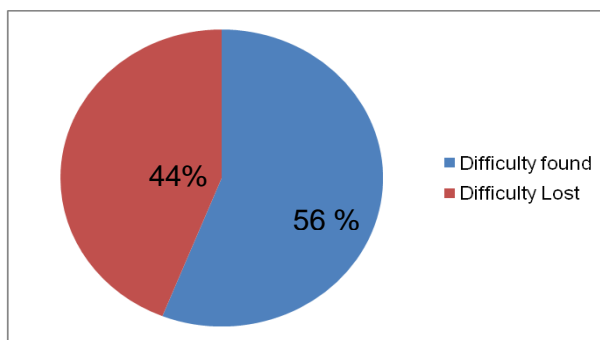


Figure 1. Words Difficulty

Based on the review given by peer, students who were able to improve their translation results were students who were able to identify and analyze the meaning components of difficult words based on both the semantic analysis and the non-semantic analysis, namely the cultural context. The students who did not succeed in improving their translation results were students who only analyzed words based on their semantic meaning components. This meaning feature was not able to help students in finding the right equivalent in the TL.

The data showed that the differences in the types of texts do not affect the translation product and its peers in identifying and determining the componential analysis performed on certain vocabulary. This can be seen from the numbers of difficult words in SL from these three types of text that do not get the right equivalent word in SL. This mismatch of words is due to uncompleted notes from peers in the features meaning in their componential analysis. The feature found is only in semantic feature, they did not analyze the use of the words or expressions.

It happened because each text had its own level or type of difficulty in certain words that needed to be considered in the process of matching these words from SL into TL. However, students agreed that peer feedback has a significant role in the process of improving their translation results.

On the other hand, the success of peer feedback is also determined by the accuracy and precision of students in determining the components of the meaning of the SL with the component meaning of the SL words so that the meanings contained in the SL text can be well matched and conveyed in the TL text.

It is admitted that the peer feedback determines whether or not there is an improvement in the students' final results. It is clearly seen that, when most students have difficulty in identifying the meaning components of the same word in their SL, the peer feedback process in question does not help in improving the final result of student interpretation.

These students' difficulties or errors in identifying words and their components are not determined by the type of text being translated but are determined by the understanding and skills of students in the TL and SL of the text in question. In this case, the mastery of Indonesian as SL and English as TL are two dominant important points.

From the results of this study, it can be indicated that because the mastery of SL and TL still needs to be improved, the role of the lecturer in correcting and providing feedback cannot be completely replaced with peer feedback. It can be understood that the improvement of the student translation results is still influenced by corrections from lecturers and friends.

Students must be able to master the theory and practical skills of translation, so with the theory that has been given students have sufficient provisions in the analysis of SL texts. Word choice mistakes are assumed to occur due to the student mistakes in understanding the SL text so that they are unable to get the meaning contained in the SL text. The wrong meaning will cause mistranslation. The hypothesis that arises is that self-correction as input from fellow students will be able to improve skills in identifying the correct SL meaning and choosing the TL words.

## **Discussion**

At the problem identification stage, the students are faced with three types of SL texts. These texts are of different text genres, namely story/narrative texts, scientific texts in the form of textbook texts and news texts. In each of this text, the learners do the translation from the SL text to the TL text. The text of their translated product is reviewed by the lecturer with a note of diction errors for each student.

From 33 data of initial draft of students' translation product from the three different types of texts, on average, there are 80% of students (9 students) having the same difficulty in choosing the equivalent of words in the TL. The type of text does not determine the students' accuracy in analyzing the meaning component of the difficult word that they should translate in TL. There were three types of text given.

The first text given is a narrative text. This text tells about the experience of a child who was invited by his father to visit his family (his grandfather) who lived in a village located at a mountain. They visited his grandfather in the previous week. In this text, it is assumed that there would be minimal difficulties felt by students as a translator. This is because of the similarity of the cultural background of the text with the cultural background of students as translators.

However, this contextual meaning component is actually a point in the meaning component feature that the students could not find as translators or as peer reviewers for their initial translation. In the peer feedback stage, the students turn out to have almost the same error results. Componential analysis carried out by students still focuses on the components of semantic meaning only. The meaning component features they found are based on literal and referential meaning components with references to be found in dictionary.

By referring to the purpose of a translation, which is to retransmit messages from SL into TL, the context of a text must be considered. The context here includes the context in which the word is used, including the cultural context of the words in SL and their equivalent TL. In the first type of peer feedback text, peer reviews cannot be used as the basis for revising the translation results. Finally, the review was carried out classically with a guide from the lecturer to provoke students' understanding of the importance of seeing the linguistic and contextual components of meaning.

Therefore, it cannot reach 100% of the peer feedback stages of students to other students. This is because they have the same difficulty in determining the components of the meaning of these words. Of the 11 students, only 3% of students were able to find the right CA in the narrative text genre. Referring to these results, in the first text genre, the lecturer took part in providing final feedback so that students were able to understand the errors they faced.

Based on peer feedback given by peers and lecturers, in the first genre text, the students reviewed and revised their final translation product. In the final production of this translation, it can be seen that 100% of students experienced an improvement in their final translation.

The second text that is given to be translated by students is the type of textbook text. The selected text is the text from the Indonesian grammar book about the rules for using certain words to express 'and others' in Indonesian. In this second type of text, the results of the student translations showed improvement with only 45% of students experiencing difficulties in identifying equivalent words. Half of the students are able to identify words that must be considered for their meaning components when determining their equivalent in TL.

Compared to the type of narrative text with as many as 80% of students experiencing difficulties, the result showed that there was a decrease of 35% of students. This means that more students are able to identify and perform better in their initial translation product. The decreasing level of student difficulty is assumed that the type of textbook text is less influenced by the cultural context. The meaning of the word used is mostly literal meaning that refers to certain things without

any additional meaning or interpretation or cultural context in its use. The error made was in determining the meaning component associated with the text domain.

The componential analysis carried out by students in this second type of text refers to the semantic features of the vocabulary. That semantic features that are easier to find based on referential meanings in the dictionary make it easier for students to identify and determine the more appropriate equivalent word and meaning in TL.

Improvements in peer feedback are also seen in this second type of text. As many as 60% of students are able to find the right meaning component and provide good feedback to fellow learners. Based on the feedback given, 90% of students experienced an improvement in the quality of their translations.

The third type of text given to students is news text. In translating the third type of text, students had same difficulties in finding the equivalent word in specific vocabulary, as their difficulties in translating narrative text. There were 85 % of students that had difficulty in determining the lexical words of the difficult words in the text. With this condition, the peer feedback from students cannot be used 100% for this type of text. Discussions and feedback from the lecturer are carried out first before the process of improving the translation results.

However, for this third type of text, the joint discussion in determining the CA on the required words was not carried out thoroughly. The discussion was carried out randomly as a discussion of examples on word identification and CA words. This was done to provoke and to grow students' sensitivity in applying CA for other words.

Peer feedback was done on these words. Based on the feedback discussion with the lecturer and peer feedback, the students were able to make improvements to the translation results in this third type of text. Based on the results of the final translation of the students, as many as 75% of students were able to produce translations that were better than their initial translations. As many as 25% of students still experience difficulties in their final translation results, especially from the title of the article used in the SL.

## **CONCLUSION**

The process of reviewing the translation results is a mandatory step that must be taken to get a good final translation product. Peer feedback used in this Translation II class cannot be used as a way to improve the student translation results. The lack of student competence towards SL in determining the meaning component in words related to the context of the word is one of the factors that this peer feedback does not work.

The role of the lecturer is still needed as a reviewer in the process of improving the final result of student translations. Improving linguistic and non-linguistic competence is still a point that needs to be improved in the student learning in this Translation II class. Besides, of course, the students need to have more translation practices.

Based on the result of this research, in the learning process in the translation class, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of how to get the right equivalent meaning of words from SL into TL. One way that can be done is by using meaning-component analysis. Mastery of this analysis, especially on the features of its non-linguistic component and the context that surrounds is a must.

Moreover, to grow students' sensitivity as translators, it is necessary to do a lot of practices in translating various forms of text. This translation experience is expected to lead student to a good understanding in translation process.

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