ESL STUDENTS' DEFIANCE IN TRANSLATING COMPOUND WORD ON LITERARY WORK

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Abstract

This study serves the intricate challenges faced by English as Second Language (ESL) learners when tasked with translating compound words from a novel. Translation, often considered a complex cognitive and linguistic process, presents a unique set of difficulties for ESL learners, particularly those in the novice stage of language acquisition. This study explores the factors contributing to ESL learners' defiance in effectively translating compound words from literary texts. The study employs qualitative analyses, as well as participant observations. Novice ESL learners are engaged in translation tasks, drawing from excerpts of contemporary novel, and their experiences are analyzed to uncover patterns of defiance in the translation process. Findings suggest that ESL learners grapple with linguistic nuances, cultural disparities, and literary stylistic elements that are integral to accurate and contextually relevant translation. Moreover, learners often encounter cognitive overload, leading to difficulties in maintaining fluency and coherency in their translations.

Keywords – ***compound words, defiance, ESL, translation***

Introduction

The journey of English as Second Language (ESL) students in mastering the intricacies of a new language is a complex tapestry woven with various challenges. Among these challenges, a particularly intriguing aspect surfaces when ESL students grapple with the translation of compound words in literary works. Compound words, formed by combining individual words to create nuanced meanings, stand as linguistic hurdles that demand a deeper examination. Translating compound word in two language pair may raise problem in the lexical choice and cultural matters (Hikmaharyanti, 2020). Moreover, the form of compound word and noun phrase is the same and it makes compound word sometimes challenging to translate (Damayanti, 2020).

The parameter of investigating the difficulty of compound word translation can be conducted by analyzing whether the result of translation is equivalent, irrelevant, or untranslatable. Equivalence is a fundamental concept in translation theory that explores the relationship between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) in the translation process. Toury (1980) stated achieving equivalence is not always possible due to linguistic and cultural differences. This matter is also concerned to the irrelevance in which the concept of "irrelevance" in translation theory pertains to instances where certain elements, words, or cultural nuances in the source text are deemed unnecessary or unsuitable for inclusion in the target text. Toury added that in certain translation contexts, norms may dictate that certain elements deemed irrelevant in the target culture should be omitted or adapted to align with the

expectations of the target audience. Moreover, the untranslatability can also be seen as the incapability of finding the equivalent words in the target language context. The concept of "untranslatability" refers to the idea that certain words, phrases, or cultural elements in a source language cannot be accurately conveyed or fully replicated in a target language. Catford (1965) contended, is due to contrasts within the SL and the TL, while social untranslatability is due to the nonappearance within the TL culture of a important situational include for the SL content.

This research embarks on an exploration of ESL students' defiance in translating compound words within the realm of literary works. Wegerbauer (2022) categorized compound words into three types; open form, closed form, and hyphenated form. Closed compound words are far simpler to know and utilize than open compound terms. Closed compound words behave and appear like single words since there are no spaces between the words. In this study, the form of closed compound is directed to the source translated by the sophomore students in order to know how many students can find the equivalent and the study addresses the gap in existing research by shedding light on the reasons behind ESL students' resistance to translating compound words. By undertaking this exploration, it is aimed to unravel the cognitive and cultural complexities intertwined with language learning, specifically within the context of literary exploration. Furthermore, this research endeavors to provide actionable insights that can inform educators and language practitioners in tailoring effective pedagogical approaches to alleviate the challenges faced by ESL students in this specific linguistic domain. Through an in-depth analysis of the defiance exhibited by ESL students in translating compound words, this research seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of language acquisition processes and pedagogical strategies. Ultimately, the findings of this study aspire to enhance the effectiveness of ESL education, fostering an environment where students can confidently navigate the intricate terrain of compound words in literary contexts.

Methods

This study adopted a qualitative research approach, which allowed for an in-depth exploration of ESL students' experiences and challenges when translating closed form compound words. The participants, consisting of 31 students majoring in English, were selected from the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar. These students had undergone eight sessions of Basic Translation, including one on literary texts, providing them with the necessary background for the study.

The primary data source for this research was the bilingual novel "New Moon" and 10 sentences were selected because they contain a substantial number of closed form compound words. The students were asked to identify and translate these compound words, and their translations, along with their reflections on the process, were collected as data. The secondary data was the novel translation “Dua Cinta” as the alternative guidance to determine whether the students’ work meet the message transferred.

Analyzing the data in this research involves a systematic process to uncover insights into ESL students' experiences and challenges when translating closed form compound words. The researcher immerses themselves in the collected data, reads through the translations, takes reflections and any notes taken during the study to develop a comprehensive understanding of the content, after that interprets the data in the context of ESL students' experiences and the specific challenges they faced while translating closed form compound words. While observing the students’ work, the secondary data, the original translation of the novel is used

to compare and to guide whether the result of the students' work meet the concept of message transferred. The graph is served to show how many students translated equivalently, irrelevantly, and untranslatably connecting the concept of Toury and Catford about translation equivalence, irrelevance, and untranslatability, then followed by the breakdown of each compound word translation. In addition, the quick survey is conducted to figure out the difficulties encountered by the students with the same question on "how compound words translation challenges you."

Finding and Discussion

Translation is a complex interplay of linguistic, cultural, and contextual factors that often requires careful consideration of nuanced expressions and compound words. This study delves into the intricate realm of translating compound words from English to Indonesian, exploring the challenges and variations in perceptions among language users. The investigation unveils the diverse landscape of compound word translation, as observed through the lens of students grappling with English-to-Indonesian linguistic conversions. The findings shed light on words that seamlessly find equivalence or irrelevance even untranslability.

The segment of this article engages with the multifaceted nature of compound word translation, dissecting the intricacies that underpin the variations in student perceptions in order to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on translation studies, providing insights into the complexities inherent in the translation of compound words between English and Indonesian. By unraveling the challenges and nuances encountered in this process, this study is expected to foster a deeper understanding of the dynamic interplay between languages and contribute to the development of effective translation strategies. The findings are served through the bar chart below:

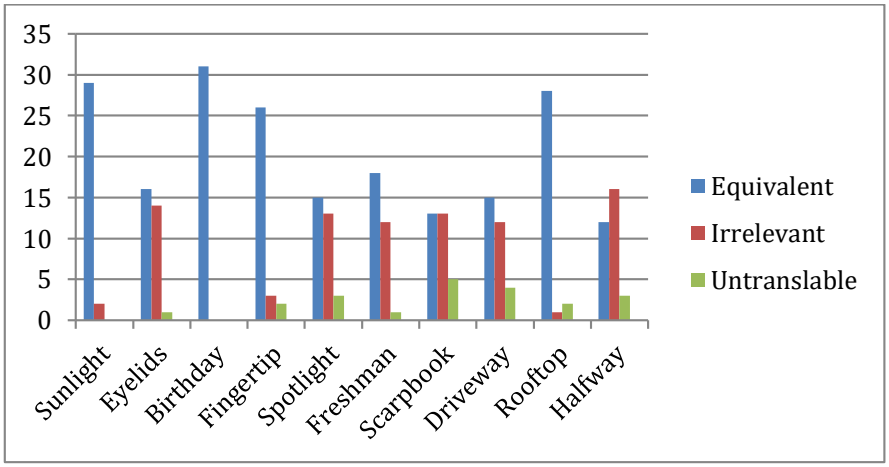

Figure 1. Compound Word Translation

Overall, the data suggests that while some compound words have a high level of agreement on their translation on word *birthday*, others pose challenges, with students finding them either irrelevant or untranslatable. The word *birthday* seems to be universally considered as equivalent with no disagreements and the students found the equivalent of *birthday* as *ulang tahun* in Indonesian. Further, *eyelids* and *fingertip* have some students marking them as

irrelevant or untranslatable, indicating potential challenges in translation and so do *scrapbook*, *driveway*. Meanwhile, *halfway* has a significant number marked as irrelevant, indicating potential confusion or differing opinions on its translation.

Equivalent

This category indicates the number of students who believe that there is an equivalent term or phrase in Indonesian for the given English compound word, for example in the word *sunlight* has a high agreement, with 29 students considering it equivalent, *birthday* is unanimously perceived as equivalent, with all 31 students marking it as such and *rooftop* also has a high agreement, with 28 students finding an equivalent term.

Irrelevant

This category shows the number of students who may consider the translation of the compound word as irrelevant, possibly due to the perception that it does not need to be translated or that the concept is not applicable in the Indonesian language, for example *eyelids* has a significant number of students (14) marking it as irrelevant, suggesting some disagreement or uncertainty about its translation, *freshman* has 12 students considering it irrelevant, indicating potential challenges or differences in translating academic terms, and *halfway* has the highest number of students (16) marking it as irrelevant, suggesting potential confusion or differing opinions on its translation.

Untranslatable

This category indicates the number of students who believe that there is no direct equivalent or suitable translation for the given English compound word in Indonesian, for example *eyelids* and *fingertip* have students (1 and 2, respectively) marking them as untranslatable, suggesting potential linguistic or cultural challenges, *scrapbook* and *driveway* have a considerable number of students (5 and 4, respectively) finding them untranslatable, indicating difficulty in finding equivalent terms.

Compound word – Sunlight

SL: I panicked as Edward walked toward us through the glaring **sunlight**. (Meyer, 2006: 9)
TL: Aku panik juga saat Edward berjalan menghampiri kami di bawah terik **matahari** yang menyengat. (Chresnayani, 2009: 16)

Sunlight is included in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *sun* and *light* are put together into one word and one meaning. The word *sunlight* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it contains both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *sunlight* is translated into *matahari* in target language by the translator instead of *cahaya matahari* literally in which 29 students used this compound word to translate *sunlight*. The translator decides to render *sunlight* into *matahari* only because of the word *glaring* is already stated as dazzling light of the sun.

Compound word – Eyelid

SL: I woke with a start–my **eyelids** popping open wide–and gasped. (Meyer, 2006: 10)
TL: Aku terbangun kaget-**kelopak mataku** terbuka lebar-dan terkesiap. (Chresnayani, 2009: 18)

Eyelid is comprised in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *eye* and *lid* are gathered into one word and one meaning. The word *eyelid* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it seats both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *eyelid* is translated into *kelopak mata* in target language by the translator and 14 students translated it into *mata*. The translator decides to render *eyelid* into *kelopak mata* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Birthday

SL: Today was my **birthday**. I was officially eighteen years old. (Meyer, 2006: 10)
TL: Hari ini hari **ulang tahunku**. Aku genap berusia delapan belas tahun. (Chresnayani, 2009: 18)

Birthday is embraced in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *birth* and *eye* are sorted out into one word and one meaning. The word *birthday* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it has both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *birthday* is translated into *ulang tahun* in target language by the translator and 31 students translated it into the same equivalent meaning. The translator decides to render *birthday* into *ulang tahun* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Fingertip

SL: He lifted his free hand and traced one cool **fingertip** around the outside of my lips as he spoke. (Meyer, 2006: 12)
TL: Ia mengangkat tangannya yang bebas dan menelusuri bagian luar bibirku dengan **ujung jarin**ya yang dingin sambil bicara. (Chresnayani, 2009: 22)

Fingertip is composed of close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *finger* and *tip* are assembled into one word and one meaning. The word *fingertip* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it contains both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *fingertip* is translated into *ujung jari* in target language by the translator and 26 students translated it into the same literal meaning, while 4 students translated it irrelevantly and one student let the word without translating it. The translator decides to render *fingertip* into *ujung jari* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Spotlight

SL: No one wants a **spotlight** when they're likely to fall on their face. (Meyer, 2006: 14)
TL: Tak ada yang ingin menjadi **sorotan** bila besar kemungkinan kau bakal jatuh terjerembap. (Chresnayani, 2009: 25)

Spotlight is counted in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *spot* and *light* are organized into one word and one meaning. The word *spotlight* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it has both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *spotlight* is translated into *sorotan* in target language by the translator and 15 students translated it into the same meaning as the translator, while 14 students translated it irrelevantly and 2 students let the word without translating it. The translator decides to render *spotlight* into *sorotan* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Freshman

SL: One of the Marks boys opened the door, the younger one, the **freshman**. (Meyer, 2006: 83)

TL: Salah seorang anak lelaki keluarga Marks, yang lebih muda, yang **baru masuk** SMA, membukakan pintu. (Chresnayani, 2009: 142)

Freshman is taken in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *fresh* and *man* are collated into one word and one meaning. The word *freshman* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it incorporates both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *freshman* is translated into *yang baru* in target language by the translator and 18 students translated it into the same meaning as *murid baru*, while 12 students translated it irrelevantly and one student let the word without translating it. The translator decides to render *freshman* into *yang baru* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Scrapbook

SL: Did you like the **scrapbook** your mom sent you? And the camera from Charlie? (Meyer, 2006: 12)

TL: Kau suka **album** kiriman ibumu? Dan kamera dari Charlie? (Chresnayani, 2009: 21)

Scrapbook is encompassed in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *scrap* and *book* are compiled into one word and one meaning. The word *scrapbook* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it embraces both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *scrapbook* is translated into *album* in target language by the translator and 13 students translated it into the same meaning as the translator, while 13 students translated it irrelevantly and 5 students let the word without translating it. The translator decides to render *scrapbook* into *album* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Driveway

SL: After a moment, I heard the sound of the police cruiser pulling into the **driveway**. (Meyer, 2006: 20)

TL: Sejurus kemudian aku mendengar suara mobil polisi menderu memasuki **halaman**. (Chresnayani, 2009: 35)

Driveway is comprised in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *drive* and *way* are made up into one word and one meaning. The word *driveway* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it involves both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *driveway* is translated into *halaman* in target language by the translator and 15 students translated it into the same meaning as *halaman* or *jalan masuk*, while 12 students translated it irrelevantly and 4 students let the word without translating it. The translator decides to render *driveway* into *halaman* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Rooftop

SL: I stole him out the back door, and carried him across the **rooftops** back to my home. (Meyer, 2006: 32)

TL: Diam-diam kubawa Edward keluar dari pintu belakang, kugendong melewati **atap-atap** rumah, kembali ke rumahku. (Chresnayani, 2009: 55)

Rooftop is covered in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *roof* and *top* are arranged into one word and one meaning. The word *rooftop* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it consists of both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *rooftop* is translated into *atap* in target language by the translator and 28 students translated it into the same meaning as *atap*, while one student translated it irrelevantly and 2 students let the word without translating it. The translator decides to render *rooftop* into *atap* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Compound word – Halfway

SL: It sounded like she changed her question **halfway** through. (Meyer, 2006: 68)

TL: Kedengarannya ia mengubah pertanyaannya di **tengah-tengah**. (Chresnayani, 2009: 117)

Halfway is included in close form as it has no space and hyphen; both words *half* and *way* are put together into one word and one meaning. The word *halfway* is noun category both in Source and Target Languages, because it embodies both two nouns in the combination. The source compound *halfway* is translated into *tengah-tengah* in target language by the translator and 12 students translated it into the same meaning as the translator, while 16 students translated it irrelevantly and 3 students let the word without translating it. The translator decides to render *halfway* into *tengah-tengah* as it has the equivalent meaning in Indonesian.

Conclusion

To sum up, this study has delved into the challenges faced by English as Second Language (ESL) students when translating compound words, particularly in the context of literary works. The complexities associated with compound words, formed by the amalgamation of individual words to convey nuanced meanings, present linguistic hurdles that demand careful examination. The findings of this research, based on the analysis of ESL students' experiences and challenges, provide valuable insights into the intricacies of translating closed form compound words. Furthermore, the research has addressed a significant gap in existing literature by shedding light on the reasons behind ESL students' resistance to translating compound words. By doing so, it contributes to the broader understanding of language acquisition processes, specifically within the context of literary exploration. This exploration of cognitive and cultural complexities intertwined with language learning is crucial for educators and language practitioners seeking to tailor effective pedagogical approaches. The findings of this research, as presented in Figure 1, suggest that while some compound words, such as *birthday* exhibit a high level of agreement on their translation, others, like *scrapbook* and *halfway* pose challenges, leading to students finding them either irrelevant or untranslatable. Further, the students' survey has revealed that linguistic factor like confusion of translating the combined words made them translating the compound words literally or just let them as they were (untranslatability). In essence, this research contributes to the dynamic field of translation studies by unraveling the complexities inherent in the translation of compound words between English and Indonesian.

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