EXPLORING THE STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION OF TRANSLATION ACTIVITY IN POETRY CLASS

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Abstract

Students’ perception of language learning has been an interesting topic for the researcher. The present study aims to investigate the students’ perception of translation activity in the Poetry classroom. The students’ perception was collected through questionnaire. The questionnaires contain 5 items that cover the students’ opinion about translation activity, students’ experience in Translation activity, students’ perception about the usefulness of translation activity, students’ preference about classroom interaction and students’ willingness of course length. Based on the result shows than Students has positive perception relate to Translation activity. They think that translation activity is important to be applied in the poetry classroom and can help them understand the poetry text. Students feel that translation activity is important, that is why they like it when they get assignments and working in group to translate. In Translating, they also prefer to use machine translation.

Keywords: Perception, Translation Activity, Poetry Class

Introduction

Translation is a necessary communication tool in language, but Translation, which is used as a teaching method, is often ignored. The classical teaching method that is the grammar-translation method, was criticized because, in teaching language, the learners should focus on form rather than the function. For many years, "in the current most popular Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, the target language is used during authentic, functional communicative activities, and the students’ native language has no particular role in the classroom. Many CTL teachers maintain that the best way for learners
to achieve native-like control of the target language is to think in that language rather than translate or reprocess the target language into their mother tongue (Liao, 2006).

Many EFL teachers in Indonesia will hesitate to teach translation courses in non-translation classes. They believe that Translation is an aspect of language acquisition that is useful and beneficial for students. However, there is still doubt whether the students will be motivated to take the course. The main reason is, the students rely on Translation based technology or machine translation such as google translate instead of taking that conventional course, wasting time. Another reason is, teaching translation involves a lot of theoretical, boring things for students.

In our global world, with a multilingual society, Translation is clear communication. The Translation is a valuable skill, not only for professional translators and interpreters but also for the academic community. Despite many doubts regarding Translation in EFL Classroom, the translation study in the EFL classroom is still considered attractive. Therefore, the researcher is interested in researching Translation in a poetry classroom. In the process of teaching literary Translation, especially teaching about poetry, where practicing literary Translation can become an exciting and challenging activity for students. Therefore, this present research is to explore the students’ perceptions of translation activity in the Poetry classroom.

**Literature Review**

**Translation in EFL Classroom**

Although Translation is a foreign –language –related skill, it has been rejected by many language theoreticians and teachers as a means of teaching foreign languages. (Cook, 2010, p. 15), Some others think that translation is very helpful in the process of teaching foreign languages. In Libya, some EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers claim that they find translation helpful in their teaching and that their students find it useful in facilitating their learning. (Al-Mansouri, n. d., p. 1). This is in line with the views of some modern researchers and writers on the use of Translation in foreign language teaching

The use of Translation activities in foreign language teaching is well perceived in (Duff 1989), whereby it is well demonstrated that translation activities can be employed not only to enhance the four primary language skills; but also, to develop accuracy, clarity, and
flexibility. Translation integrated into the language learning practice along with generally used learning activities, such as reading, listening, writing, and vocabulary development could be defined as a “pedagogical tool”, considering that its purpose is to teach a language (El -Mahi, 2018). Translation activities allow students to communicate both ways: to and from a foreign language. When translating students are encouraged to pay attention to differences in structure and vocabulary, to strengthen grammatical competence, to shape their own way of thinking and to correct common mistakes that may have gone unnoticed. Students can make the best of their learning if they are encouraged to use translation skills properly.

Teaching Literary Translation

Literary Translation is a completely different process from non-literary Translation. Non-literary Translation is considered mechanical. Non-literary Translation does not involve his mind in translating. There is no room for culture, choice of meaning. This is a replacement process of words from the original text with words from the Target Language. But literary translations emerged original text author's mind with Translation. So, the translator involves his thoughts in Literary Translation. He must pay attention to culture, choice of words, and meanings. This is not a substitute for words but is made up of the original author's mind.

In Practicing literary Translation can be an exciting and challenging activity for college students (Harto & Handayani, 2017). This translation practice allows the students to explore scholarly works in terms of the author's emotions. Since the texts of literary works relate to the author's feelings, the students should consider the accuracy or correctness of their expressions, choice of words, and structure of their sentences to maintain the quality and the actual meaning shared by the author in doing Translation works. Concerning the literary translation's excitement, some relevant experiences in Japanese literary translation class practices are shared (Porcaro 1999), reiterating that literary translation class is a unique, challenging, and exciting practice for the students.

Poetry Translation

The first step in translating poetry is to understand poetry to understand the difference between poetry translation and other
translations. Poetry uses poetic elements such as meter, verse form, rhyme, repetition of words to create. Poetry also makes multiple interpretations and achieves musical effects as it uses assonance, alliteration, onomatopoeia ambiguity, symbolism, irony, and other stylistic devices. These elements are characteristic of the literary genre in "poetry," so when translating involved in translating poetry, he should remember all such poetic qualities and translate them live. Poetry is unique from all other forms of literature.

**Students' Perception in Translation**

This study shows that students' perceptions are an essential factor in student behavior and can be the basis for designing learning models that optimize learning outcomes. Students' perceptions reflect how, why, and what students learn. As stated earlier, the purpose of this study was to determine students' perceptions of Translation. Research shows that investigating students' perceptions is essential in EFL teaching. Students have differing opinions about the subject matter, content and objectives, the degree of difficulty, the time students invest in the course, adult learning, and the role of the teacher (Florez, 2012)

Wang found similarities and differences between teacher and student perceptions of the role of fluency and accuracy in language teaching and learning. Wang also suggests that Translation is a useful tool in learning, and there should be more translation exercises

**Method**

This research applied a qualitative method with some percentages of the qualitative data to see the number of students interested in poetry and explore the students' perception of translation activity in the Poetry classroom. This research was classified into descriptive qualitative research. The descriptive analysis involves collecting data to answer the status of the object of the study and the research questions. The data were collected from fifth-semester students at the English Education Department in Wiralodra University. Then the participant of this study is students who took the poetry subject. Questionnaires were administered to students to see their perceptions.
Results

Thought out the students' feedback on questionnaire, the researcher gathered important data about students’ perception of Translation activity in Poetry Classroom. The writer reveals the students’ perception of translation activities which consist of five aspects, including: the students’ opinion about translation activity, students’ experience in Translation activity, students’ perception about usefulness of translation activity, students’ preference about classroom interaction and students’ willingness of course length. The major perceptions are illustrated below.

![Figure 1. Students’ Opinion about Translation Activity in Poetry Classroom](image)

Based on Diagram above, it shows that students' opinions are positive about translation activity. They are interested and consider translation activity important in poetry class. Almost 90% of students (18) said that they agreed that the translation activity is interesting to be held in poetry class, but there are 10% (2) students less agree that translation activity is interested. Then, almost 90 % of students also think that this translation activity is important to do in poetry class. However, there is still one (5%) student who thinks that they do not agree that the translation activity is important and there is another student who less agrees when the translation activity is implemented in the poetry classroom.

1. **Students’ experience in Translation activity**

This section reveals students experience about translation activity in poetry classroom, where this experience illustrates how many translation activities have been done and what translation aids,
they use when doing translation activities in poetry classroom. The following is an explanation diagram.

![Figure 2. Students’ experience in translation activity](image)

Students’ response to the experience of translation activity is ranked as follows: most of students (13) has had 1 to 3 assignment and (7) The students had more than 3 assignments. Machine translator dominates in assisting students in translation assignment, 16 students reported use Google Translator to translate source texts to target texts both for English into Indonesian and vice versa. Using Google translate is an effective and simple way compared to using manual translation, namely open dictionary. Even though there are 4 students who still use manual dictionaries, due to quota limitations, they prefer to use manual translation (dictionary).

2. Students’ perception about usefulness of translation activity

There are 5 choices offered for the students concerning the usefulness of translation in learning poetry. In the first place, 20 students respond that the translation activity is very helpful for them to obtain information in understanding poetry. In the second place, 16 students perceive the translation Activity helps them in expanding the vocabulary. In the third place, 14 students respond that translation activity help them in their reading poem skill. Then, 13 Students respond translation activity develops their writing a poem. While 10
students believe, translation activity increase their confidence in analyzing poem.

![Figure 3. Students’ usefulness of Translation activity](image)

### 3. Students’ preference about classroom interaction

Based on classroom interaction, in the first place, students choose working in group. Students think that group learning can help them do their assignments more easily, because they can share tasks with each other, exchange information. Harmer (2001) argued in workgroup learning, students willingly contribute to the interaction and offer different ideas and varied opinions. Johnson (1995) suggests that student’s interaction in group is an important factor of cognitive development, educational achievement of students and emerging social competencies and develop the learners’ capacities through collaborative.

Then, in the second place, they consider that direct interaction between students and teachers has a productive impact on a student’s self-esteem and enhances their skills. In line with Davis, operating as socializing agents, teachers can influence students’ social and intellectual experience via their abilities to instill values in children such as motivation to learn (Davis, 2003). In the last, there are 4 students who want individual learning. They prefer to work alone when the work is considered easy (Diezmann & Watters, 1997), and feel that the division of work in groups is unfair because they do more than their share of work (French et al, 2011)
The questionnaire result concerning the student preferences on willingness and time invested to translation activity are 95% of students who want to take part in translation activities in poetry class, they realize that this activity is very important. Relate to the course length, 18 out of 20 students (90%) prefer the longer course more than an hour per meeting, while the shorter course (less than hour) is preferred by 2 students (10%). It can be concluded that translation activity is important in poetry class.
5. Students’ opinion about translation activity

This section reveals the students’ opinion about the translation activity done in poetry classroom. There are two aspects of questions including their interest and their opinion about the importance of translation activity in poetry classroom. The table shows the different opinions of students regarding translation activity in poetry classroom.

Conclusion

It may be concluded from the discussion that the students made macrolinguistic errors at both the discourse and pragmatic levels, indicating that the students’ ability to produce and develop stretches of language larger than a sentence is still limited. Furthermore, there are several possible explanations of these errors, including a lack of vocabulary, grammatical mastery, lack of attention, and the teacher’s delivery manner. As a result, EFL students should seek to achieve maximum proficiency in the target language by intensive reading, listening, and writing, as well as be conscious of their mistakes and prevent repeating them in their future learning.

Moreover, EFL teachers are also expected to focus on the errors do the students commit to writing an essay. They must create the situation in learning process more enjoyable for the students to enhance student’s motivation in learning writing. In learning writing, Students' pragmatic and discourse competencies should be enhanced in the classroom by focusing not only on the accuracy of linguistic forms but also on the functional uses of language to achieve native-like proficiency, primarily in the flow of information.
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