

Translation of imperative sentences and its mistakes: strategy analysis in pragmatic studies

Tarimah Vamat¹ | Surwati Madarulzaman²

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 27 December 2019
Revised: 18 January 2020
Accepted: 9 February 2020

KEYWORDS

*assertive,
commissive,
declarations,
directive,
expressive,
ilocution,
imperative sentences,
strategy analysis.*




ABSTRACT

Pragmatic studies focus on the use of a language in relation to its context. One of the notions of pragmatics is a study of how language is used to communicate, especially the relationship between sentences and the context and situations in which they are used. The speech act is one of the pragmatic sub-studies. Speech acts are closely related to human activities that cannot be separated from language, either individually or in groups. In speech acts, speakers and speech partners must understand each other the rules of the language that govern this, so that speech act activities can run well. Each speech participant is responsible for each of these lingual interactions, where a context has a role in forming a speech act. Furthermore, speech acts are the utterance of sentences to state so that the intent of the speaker is known to the listener. He distinguishes three aspects related to speech, namely locational, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. Locutionary is merely the act of speaking, namely the act of saying something with words and sentences in accordance with the meaning of the word (in the dictionary) and the meaning of the sentence is in accordance with the syntactic rules. Ilocution is certain things that are intended or want to be achieved from a speech act. Perlocutionary refers to the effect caused by the resulting speech act. Furthermore, it divides illocutionary into 5 categories: assertives (assertive), directives (directive), commissives (commissive), expressives (expressive) and declarations (declarations).



Copyright © 2020 by The author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, as long as the original authors and source are cited. No permission is required from the authors or the publishers.

Correspondence:

 Vamat, T.
 11800 Gelugor, Penang, Malaysia
 vamat@usm.my

¹  Universiti Sains Malaysia, Gelugor, Malaysia

²  Universiti Sains Malaysia, Gelugor, Malaysia

1 INTRODUCTION

In this paper, the illocutionary speech act chosen as the study material is the directive illocutionary speech act that is contained in one of the scenes in novel *The Godfather*, the text is attached. This novel tells the story of the life of the Italian mafia in America, which has a leadership structure between subordinates and superiors, of course, in carrying out their actions there are many instructions or orders for subordinates to do something, these forms of instruction in pragmatics are included in the directive category, where an act speech is done so that the speech partner does something. In saying a sentence, someone doesn't just say something with the pronunciation of the sentence, but there is a certain meaning in it [1][2]. Uttering (speech act) a certain sentence can be seen as doing an action (act), in addition to saying the sentence.

Translation is the translation from the Source Language to the Target Language. As for what is transferred is the meaning or message contained. Furthermore, the cultural values contained in the message must be clearly transferred to TL. Related to the meaning that is translated, sometimes a text in SL does not only have a literal meaning, but there is an intention in it. This of course must be the attention of a translator. The translation of a speech act or utterance is one example of a case where a sentence text not only has a literal meaning but also has a specific purpose that must be translated. The speech act is studied in depth in a pragmatic sublinguistic [3].

The choice of speech acts as a research study is where the speech act is one of the interesting subpragmatics to study its relationship in the field of translation, apart from presuppositions and Gricean implicatures. Regarding the choice of focus on illocutionary only because locational tends to be purely semantic studies, whereas focus is more on matters outside linguistics. The relationship between illocutionary speech acts and translation [4]. However it is translated, the illocutionary force of sentence would not change. In translating a speech act, the illocutaries in SL and TL must be the same. Therefore, the translation is not merely translated literally but there are certain intentions that must be conveyed to TL.

Translation studies cannot be separated from the techniques, methods and ideologies used in translation. Besides that, the quality of translation is also an important part of a translation study. In the translation process, the ideology is determined first, then the methods and techniques. Conversely, in research of a translation work that must be determined first is at the micro level, namely the techniques used by the translator, then continued at the macro level, the translation method used, after that at the super macro level, determines the ideology used by the translator. Furthermore, the quality of the translation can be

seen from three aspects, namely: accuracy, acceptability and readability. Accuracy relates to the equivalent meaning in SL and TL. Acceptability is related to the suitability of language rules that exist in TL. Readability relates to the degree to which the target reader can understand the translation [5].

One of the compulsory subjects for the Mathematics Education study program in tertiary institutions. Education Personnel Education Institute (LPTK) is English for Teaching Mathematics. The English course for Teaching Mathematics is a compulsory subject to equip students with knowledge of mathematical terms in English so that they broaden their horizons. This course also equips Mathematics Education students as prospective mathematics teachers in this global era, who are required to have soft skills, one of which is mastering English. The material in this course is material that students have obtained in introductory basic mathematics courses such as logic, sets and functions and added with algebraic, geometry and statistics materials. "Reading a math book is different from reading other types of books and reading a math textbook is different from the traditional way students are taught to read textbooks in general"[6]. Reading math books is different from reading other types of books and reading math texts is different from the traditional way students are taught to read text in general. Here are some things that can be considered when understanding mathematical reading: (1) Read slowly, read mathematics texts slowly, not in a hurry, and with full concentration, (2) Survey your assigned material, read main ideas, the first sentence of each paragraph, and closing paragraphs or summary sentences if any, this will make the reader understand the basic idea of the section, (3) Every word is important, mathematical texts are usually written briefly and to the point, each word is carefully chosen to explain a concept, (4) read the concepts, read repeatedly if necessary, until you master the topics in that section, (5) don't skip diagrams, charts, illustrations, and figures, understanding what is being illustrated will be very helpful, (6) write and recite as you read, writing while reading makes the reader more carried away in reading [7].

English text books are commonly used in the lecture process in higher education, both for English courses and other math content courses. The obstacles faced by students so far are the lack of ability to understand a reading / text before finding mathematical concepts in the reading. Therefore, the ability to understand reading in English is very necessary so that students can understand the mathematical concepts in a text book. There are 360 basic mathematical words or terms in English. These vocabularies can be found in all topics in mathematics, namely algebra, geometry, analysis, statistics, and combinatorics [8]. The thing that needs to be considered when students translate mathematical vocabulary in English is that there are differences

in meaning between mathematical terms and terms commonly used in everyday life. Multilingual capability is one of the most needed abilities in the global era and the industrial era 4.0. One of the most vital international languages is English, because English can connect people with the world in various fields including education [9]. Mastery of English will support an individual's achievement. This can be seen from the government's decision to make English a compulsory subject and subject in schools and universities. At the higher education level, each study program has English courses, both general English courses and special English courses in accordance with the field of expertise.

Based on the researcher's experience as a lecturer teaching English for Teaching Mathematics, the cause of students' lack of understanding of English mathematics text is because students are not accustomed to reading English text books and are dependent on the help of machine translators. Machine translation assistance is of course very much needed, but students often do not refine their translation results. This causes the results of the translation carried out by students to still appear to be word for words and not comprehensive according to the context of the sentence. What should be done when translating is to read and understand the text as a whole first, then after being translated (whether with the help of a machine translator or not) the sentences are refined according to the context of the reading. This can minimize errors in translating mathematical texts in English [10].

Researchers feel that this ability is very important for students to master, from understanding mathematical texts in English to translating into Indonesian. The translation process requires observing, identifying and finding suitable solutions. Therefore the translation process requires the right strategy [11]. However, studies in the field of Mathematics Education rarely raise this topic. The description above becomes a reference for this research, which is to analyze how the English-Indonesian text translation strategies are carried out by Mathematics Education students.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

'Comprehension strategies' and 'production strategies' are two distinct stages in translation. The first are related to analysis of the source text, while the second are the result of various comprehension strategies and are related to how the translator manipulates the linguistic material to produce an appropriate target text. 'Understanding strategy' and 'production strategy' are two different stages of translation. The first is related to the analysis of the source text, while the second is the result of various comprehension strategies and is related to how the translator manipulates the language material to produce a

suitable target text [12]. There are 2 stages of a translation strategy, namely "comprehension strategies", referring to source text analysis, and "production strategies", referring to the results of the production of translated texts. In comprehension strategies it is expected that understanding the text as a whole does not only focus on word units. Then in production strategies, it is expected that there will be an interpretation of the meaning in accordance with the context of the reading. This is a complex task where the translator faces several problems that require observation, identification and finding suitable solutions. The way translators deal with this problem is called strategy [13].

The research method used is descriptive qualitative. This study describes an analysis of the errors in the translation of English texts carried out by students of Mathematics Education. Data was collected from 31 students in one of the tertiary institutions participating in the English course for Teaching Mathematics for the odd semester of the 2020/2021 Academic Year. The instrument used was an English text with a mathematical context regarding Mathematics and Proofs with the topic isosceles triangle which is a piece of text in Chapter Zero (preliminaries) of the book *A First Course in Abstract Algebra*. Data analysis was carried out in 3 stages, namely: data condensation (data reduction), data presentation, and drawing conclusions [14]. In the data condensation stage (data reduction), the work results of students were classified based on the two translation strategies then reduced to focus on math vocabulary and mathematics learning. At the data presentation stage, the reduced data is presented in a table and then analyzed descriptively. The last stage is drawing conclusions based on the two previous stages.

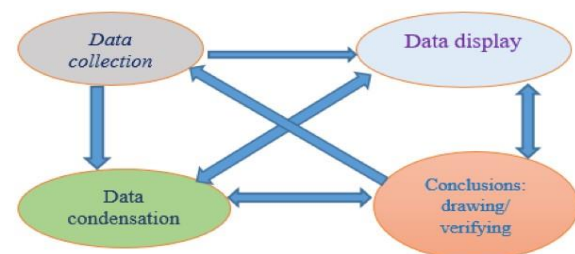


Figure 1. Data Analysis Chart

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Researchers provide an English mathematics text on Mathematics and Proofs with the topic isosceles triangle (samakaki triangle). This text is given to students as the task of translating English-Indonesian text within 30 minutes using an offline dictionary tool. Of the 31 students who work on this assignment, all students can complete the translation according

to the specified time limit. Based on the data obtained, it is known that all students are able to complete the translation of all sentences. In general, the difficulty of students in translating this text is that the vocabulary of mathematics and mathematics learning cannot be adapted to the translation by students. Therefore, the discussion on the results of this study is focused on the vocabulary of mathematics, the vocabulary of learning mathematics, and its suitability to the reading context [15].

So far there is no instrument or questionnaire available to determine the educational needs of heart failure patient caregivers in Indonesia. The purpose of this study was to translate and validate the English version of the questionnaire "Educational Needs of Caregivers Instrument" into the Indonesian version. The translation and adaptation process is carried out based on the five stages of the World Health Organization's guidelines for translation and adaptation. The results showed that there were 5 different terms between the two cultures: "talk" vs "discuss", "to know the expected course of the disease process", "to receive information about how to go about making lifestyle changes", "to feel as if others have my welfare in mind", "to have help with financial concerns". Six experts in the cardiovascular field were involved in the assessment of the instrument content validation. The results showed that the content validation index was 0.93 for relevance, 0.91 for accuracy, 0.83 for clarity, and 0.84 for ease of understanding. In the end, an Indonesian version of the questionnaire was created called the "Caregivers Educational Needs Questionnaire" and this questionnaire was declared valid.

Instruments or questionnaires are very commonly used in education and research. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary the meaning of an instrument is a means used by researchers to collect research data. Instruments can also be interpreted as a set of test kits. Many studies use instruments as data collection tools. Often, research also begins with the translation of the questionnaire before it is used in the actual population. This is important to do if the language of the questionnaire to be used is different from the population to be involved.

To date, in Indonesia there is no single instrument to identify the educational needs of heart failure patient caregivers. In fact, the role of caregivers of heart failure patients is very vital. Several studies have shown significant evidence that the majority of caregivers are family. The existence of a family turns out to be able to increase self-confidence in care. Without them knowing it, they actually need to prepare an effective treatment strategy to meet the specific needs of better treatment for heart failure patients.

One way is to meet the educational needs of heart failure patient caregivers. This is very useful in increasing knowledge and correct treatment methods, and can reduce the feeling of uncertainty about the patient's condition, stress, depression, and improve the quality of life. Research shows that heart failure patients often experience sleep quality disturbances, so there needs to be a good treatment method to overcome it. Therefore, the care performed by heart failure patient caregivers is a challenge in itself. To determine the educational needs of heart failure patient caregivers, a clinical instrument is needed to identify it. However, there is no such instrument in Indonesia. What was found was an instrument in English entitled "Educational Needs of Caregivers Instrument". These instruments need to be translated beforehand, adaptation to Indonesian culture, and also validate the content from expert assessments. So, it can be concluded that the purpose of this study is to translate and validate the English version of the questionnaire "Educational Needs of Caregivers Instrument" into Indonesian.

Furthermore, the translation results of students will be explained in the core sentences of the text. The first sentence of the text is "Every definition is understood to be an if and only if type of statement, even though it is customary to suppress the only if." The translation of the sentence is "Each definition is understood as an if and only if statement, although it is common to emphasize the only if part." The results of the translation of the first sentence vary but have almost the same meaning. Following are examples of some of the student translations for these sentences. Each definition is understood as an if and only if statement, although it is usually to emphasize the 'only if'. Each definition is understood as an if and only if statement, although it is customary to hide only if statements. Each definition can be understood as a type of if and only if statement, although it is common to precede only if statements. Each theory definition is understood as a type of conditional statement with "if" and "only if", although usually "only if" can be ignored.

Based on the example of translation results from students above, it can be seen that the words even though, customary, and suppress make students confused in translating them. In general terms, all students understand the meaning of the sentence, namely that usually the definition in mathematics emphasizes the "only if" part. However, in writing the translation sentence in full, the results are varied and there are some parts that are still wrong, such as in examples 2, 3 and 4. The next sentence which is also the core sentence of the text is "Thus we may define an isosceles triangle as follows:" A triangle is isosceles if it has two sides of equal length, "when we really mean that a triangle is isosceles if and only if it has two sides of equal length." The translation of the sentence is "So we can define a samakaki triangle as follows:" A triangle is

a samakaki triangle if it has two equal sides, "when the real meaning of a triangle is a samakaki triangle if and only if the triangle has two sides. the same length. " The results of the translation of this sentence are also varied, but have almost the same meaning. Following are examples of some of the student translations for these sentences.

We can define an isosceles triangle as follows: "A triangle is isosceles if it has two sides of the same length," we believe that a triangle is isosceles if and only if it has two sides of equal length. same. So we can define an isosceles triangle as follows: "a triangle is isosceles" if "has two sides of the same length", where what is really meant by an isosceles triangle is a triangle that is "if" and "only if" has two sides of the same length. So we might define an isosceles triangle as follows: "a triangle is isosceles if it has two equal sides Length," when we really understand that a triangle is an isosceles triangle if and only if it has two the same side length. Thus, we can define an isosceles triangle as follows: "A triangle is isosceles if it has two sides of the same length," whereas we mean that a triangle is isosceles if and only if it has two sides of the same length. .

Based on the research data, it can be concluded that students are quite familiar with mathematics vocabulary and learning mathematics in English, thus the "comprehension strategies" stage has been carried out quite well. However, it appears that students use the type of word-for-word translation which results in the translation results being less refined and the meaning less precise in the context of phrases, clauses and sentences. So it can be said that the "production strategies" stage is still not good.

The recommendation for students is to increase their willingness to read and understand mathematics text books in English. The translation process should be done carefully so that mistakes in translation can be avoided. Furthermore, the recommendation for teachers of English for Teaching Mathematics is that the use of mathematical terms in English needs to be improved by adding their application in the full text so that students gain additional knowledge and can apply them when translating these terms.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, most students are already doing "comprehension strategies" quite well. This can be seen from their understanding of mathematics vocabulary and learning mathematics as well as their understanding of the context of the source text which is already good. However, of the overall student answers, only a few carried out the refinement stage. Students spend their time deciphering words one by one, not first understanding their meaning. So it can be

said that the "production strategies" stage is still not very good. The result of the production of the translated text is still too "stiff" and there is a lack of full interpretation of the meaning of the sentence and the whole paragraph.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to the material presented in this article.

REFERENCES

- [1] Behrens, S. J. (1989). Characterizing sentence intonation in a right hemisphere-damaged population. *Brain and language*, 37(2), 181-200. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0093-934X\(89\)90014-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0093-934X(89)90014-X)
- [2] Berndt, R. S., Haendiges, A. N., Mitchum, C. C., & Sandson, J. (1997). Verb retrieval in aphasia. 2. Relationship to sentence processing. *Brain and language*, 56(1), 107-137. <https://doi.org/10.1006/brln.1997.1728>
- [3] Borghi, A. M., & Riggio, L. (2009). Sentence comprehension and simulation of object temporary, canonical and stable affordances. *Brain Research*, 1253, 117-128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brainres.2008.11.064>
- [4] Borghi, A. M., & Riggio, L. (2009). Sentence comprehension and simulation of object temporary, canonical and stable affordances. *Brain Research*, 1253, 117-128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brainres.2008.11.064>
- [5] Chen, T., Xu, R., He, Y., & Wang, X. (2017). Improving sentiment analysis via sentence type classification using BiLSTM-CRF and CNN. *Expert Systems with Applications*, 72, 221-230. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eswa.2016.10.065>
- [6] Choi, H. S., Park, Y. J., Lee, S. M., & Kim, K. M. (2001). Functional characteristics of a new electrolarynx "Evada" having a force sensing resistor sensor. *Journal of Voice*, 15(4), 592-599. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0892-1997\(01\)00062-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0892-1997(01)00062-5)
- [7] Gruzdeva, E. (2001). Imperative sentences in Nivkh. In *Typology of imperative constructions*. Lincom Europa.
- Koo, H. J., & Rhee, S. (2013). "I will do it... but I'm Asking you to do it": On the Emergence of Polite Imperative from Promissive. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 97, 487-494. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.263>
- [8] Hansen, J. (2005). Conflicting imperatives and dyadic deontic logic. *Journal of Applied Logic*, 3(3-4), 484-511. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jal.2005.04.005>
- [9] Herman, L. M., & Forestell, P. H. (1985). Reporting presence or absence of named objects by a language-trained dolphin. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral*

- Reviews*, 9(4), 667-681. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0149-7634\(85\)90013-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0149-7634(85)90013-2)
- [10] Herman, L. M., Richards, D. G., & Wolz, J. P. (1984). Comprehension of sentences by bottlenosed dolphins. *Cognition*, 16(2), 129-219. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277\(84\)90003-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277(84)90003-9)
- [11] Rizzolatti, G., & Arbib, M. A. (1998). Language within our grasp. *Trends in neurosciences*, 21(5), 188-194. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0166-2236\(98\)01260-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0166-2236(98)01260-0)
- [12] Ruytenbeek, N., Ostashchenko, E., & Kissine, M. (2017). Indirect request processing, sentence types and illocutionary forces. *Journal of pragmatics*, 119, 46-62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.07.011>
- [13] Suganda, S. P. (2017). The Use of Sundanese on Imperative Sentences from Parents to Children. In *International Seminar on Sociolinguistics and Dialectology 2017*.
- [14] Tomasino, B., Weiss, P. H., & Fink, G. R. (2010). To move or not to move: imperatives modulate action-related verb processing in the motor system. *Neuroscience*, 169(1), 246-258. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroscience.2010.04.039>
- [15] Vlemings, J. (2003). The discourse use of French *donc* in imperative sentences. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35(7), 1095-1112. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166\(03\)00024-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(03)00024-9)