

# TEACHING TRANSLATION BY USING A COOPERATIVE WORK PROCEDURE (Classroom Action Research at English Department of Language and Arts Faculty, Semarang State University)

Rudi Hartono  
Semarang State University

## ABSTRACT

Translating Indonesian texts into English versions is a complicated task for students to do. It is shown by them when they do translation in the classroom. The problems usually come into their mind when they have to search equivalent words, appropriate grammar and accepted structure for target language they will produce. This scene can be observed when they do translating activity individually. They just do it themselves without doing collaboration with their friends. They only look up a dictionary and think of it themselves. In this situation a teacher just assigns the task and assesses it, no more to do. As a result, the translation products of the students are poor. Therefore, in order to improve the students' translation ability and quality of translation, the teacher should teach the students translation by using a Cooperative Work Procedure (CWP) in their translation process. This procedure can lead the students be able to translate well and produce good translation products because they do translating process in a collaborative group.

**Key Words:** teaching translation, translation, Source Language, Target Language, Cooperative Work Procedure

## INTRODUCTION

The main problem of translation is finding out the equivalence (Larson, 1984). In relation to this statement, Nida (1969:12) defines that translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalence of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. Sperber and Wilson in Bell (1991:6) state that translation is the replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of an equivalent text in a second language. So, the equivalence is the main point that should be solved by all

translators. Here the translators should be able to find out the closest and most natural meaning of words for the target language they aim.

The problem of equivalence itself can be felt when someone translates or teaches his or her students translation. The students are usually complaint that they are difficult to translate the text given to them by their teacher. The difficulties they often have are finding out the equivalent words, appropriate grammar and structure for their translation. This happened particularly when they translate Indonesian texts into the English ones.

Based on the pilot study done in the previous semester, for example, it is shown that almost students who took part in translation class had difficulties in the

vocabulary, grammar, and structure equivalence. This fact can be seen in the following chart.



Based on the chart above, it can be explained that vocabulary (45%) is the most difficult aspect in translation, while grammar (30%) is less difficult than vocabulary or more difficult than structure, and structure itself is the easiest of all. According to the observation and interview, the difficulty of vocabulary itself means that the students are not easy to find out equivalent words when they translate them into English. Then the difficulty of grammar equivalence means that they are difficult to find out appropriate grammar based the grammatical rules of English. Meanwhile, the difficulty of structure is that the students are difficult to determine accepted structure in English language.

This situation almost happened every semester, particularly in the even semester on which the students took translation subject that obliged them to translate the

texts from Indonesian into English. The main factor that made them difficult to translate was translating the texts by keeping conventional procedure. In the translation process each student did translating activity individually. Practically the students never asked one another. They just looked up their dictionary and thought of everything themselves. The teacher himself did not monitor or lead them to do the best. He just assigned them and assessed their translation products. As a result, the students' translation quality was poor.

This atmosphere is not good to leave behind, so that there should be a solution to overcome those problems. The alternative solution to eliminate the problems above is applying a Cooperative Work Procedure (CWP) in teaching translation. This procedure is not a new

one but it will be effective to lead the students to become a good translator. It means that through this procedure they will be trained to translate the texts in group and managed to produce a better quality of translation.

In relation to this problem, Gerding-Salas (2000) says that a good translator should define some essential starting-points for the approximation to a text to be translated, such as the author of the text, the aim of the text, the readership, and the standard to be used, for which it is important to identify and categorize the author, the message, the kind of discourse, the translator and the readership. All these points are primary requirements for those who want to be a good translator. So the procedure that can send the students to this goal is applying Cooperative Work Procedure (CWP).

According to Gerding-Salas (2000) the Cooperative Work Procedure can send the translator students to be 1) a translator who is aware that misunderstanding of the text will decrease translation quality, so they have to use effective strategies in translating process, for examples, underlining words, detecting translation difficulties, and searching appropriate equivalences contextually, 2) a translator who knows that the meaning is not only delivered or transferred through words but also through diagrams, pictures, and charts, and 3) a translator who is able to understand deeply the essence of meaning, taste, register, style, etc and to

map the format of source text, such as references, paragraphs, text dints, columns, tables, and else by paying attention to target text units. This procedure can motivate translator students to be productive translators and to produce a better quality of translation.

In addition Benny Hoed (2003) and Xianbin (2005) comment that a translator should be able to transfer the message from source language into target language. He or she has a central role in translation process and has to decide to choose whether he wants to use foreignization ideology or domestication ideology. It means that here the translator should be consistent on his or her choice whether he or she tends to the source text or the target text. This consistency is also a problem for him or her.

The followings are the steps of a Cooperative Works Procedure suggested by Gerding-Salas (2000):

- (1) The teacher makes a selection of the material to be translated. Texts must be chosen according to previously defined objectives for translation practice, taking into account the degree of difficulty of the texts (semantic, cultural, stylistic, etc.), the topic or the specific knowledge area (science and technology; social, institutional, economic and/or political topics; and literary or philosophical works), the translation problems to be solved, and so on.

- (2) After browsing through the text (scan reading and/or skim reading), the students, assisted by their teacher, should identify the source, the norm, the type of text, the register, the style and the readership of the text selected. It is a kind of game of the imagination in which the text is real but the client and her/his needs are imaginary.
- (3) The students should read the whole text at least twice: The first reading will be comprehensive and general, to become acquainted with the topic and to understand the original, always bearing in mind that meaning is context-determined.
- (4) The second reading must be a "deep" reading, placing emphasis on items where translation problems may appear. In other words, this is what I have called "reading with translation intention," i.e. doing pre-editing and assessing the quality of the writing (Reminder: Not all texts are well written). In my opinion, when translating into the target language, if the translator detects mistakes (usually due to misprints) in the original text, s/he should be entitled to amend them in her/his version if too obvious or else consult the client or an expert in case of doubt. When doing this "reading with translation intention," students should first underline unknown terms and then they should mentally confront potential translation difficulties in the text with suitable translation procedures.
- (5) The teacher then divides the text into as many segments as students in the group. Depending on the degree of difficulty and the length of the text, these segments may be paragraphs, columns, pages or even whole chapters. Then, each student is assigned a fair portion of the text. The segment distribution order should rotate so that a different student begins a translation unit every time.
- (6) If the topic is already quite familiar to the students, they do a preliminary translation. As this is the first approach to the text, it will probably lack naturalness, since students tend to transfer source language units of translation to target language units of translation ("one-to-one translation," Newmark, 1995a). This first approach can often be made orally and suggested annotations may be written in the margins.
- (7) If the topic is completely unknown to the students, they should consult complementary literature. In other words, before beginning the transfer process, they should resort to various documentation sources, especially parallel texts (those which are similar in nature and style) in the language of the original. This allows them to achieve a deeper understanding of the topic under study.

- (8) Once the "one-to-one" version is accomplished, the students do a second version of their own translation—this time a written draft—handling the most suitable translation strategies and procedures and being faithful in the transfer of ideas.
- (9) With the original text in front of her/him and being careful to follow the same correlative order of the source language text, each student reads out her/his own version of the translated text, making the necessary pauses between sentences.
- (10) The students and the teacher follow the reading of each text attentively. As a monitoring activity, everybody should feel free to stop the reading at the end of a given sentence and have the reading of the segment repeated, when the situation warrants comments, suggestions, questions, contributions, etc. The students have to "defend" their work against criticism.
- (11) During this procedure, the students and the teacher need to set up all necessary conventions with regard to the homogeneity of the terms and the coherence and cohesion of the final version.
- (12) As Newmark states, "translation is for discussion" (Newmark, 1995b). Students should then be encouraged to take notes and discuss the (in)convenience of the contributions and comments arising from this analytical reading of each one of the different versions proposed.
- (13) As a metacognitive activity, the students, assisted by the teacher, analyze the translation strategies and procedures used, and discuss the reasons taken into account in the choice of each analyzed criterion: "The ability to discuss translations in an objective way is central to a translator's competence", (Kusssmaul, 1995).
- (14) The students hand in the final version of their revised and post-edited segments, which have already been amended in the light of the whole text. The work must be typed, double-spaced and paged according to the original.
- (15) The teacher makes a final revision (second post-edit), gives formative evaluation and makes comments, emphasizes findings, "happy" solutions and creative acts, on the one hand, and analyzes failures and weaknesses in the process, on the other.

## THE STUDY

The present study aims to find support from empirical evidence to see if a Cooperative Work Procedure is effective in teaching translation at the sixth semester university students of English department.

This study employs a classroom action research (CAR) proposed by Elliott that has popular stages: Plan, Action,

Observation, and Reflection (Maclsaac, 1996:2). This research was conducted in one class consisted of 20 students that had specific problems in translation. They faced the problems of vocabulary, grammar, and structure when they did translation individually. The pre-test was given as a starting point that informed the condition before the research. Then the students were interviewed in order to know the information of their problems in translating texts individually from Indonesian into English. To complete the information taken from the students, the observation was done in the classroom.

Having had the information from three sources: pre-test, in-depth interview, and observation, the classroom action research was conducted then. The cooperative work procedure was planned to do. Then the action was conducted by dividing the class into five small groups of four. Each group was given a task of translation. They had to translate an Indonesian article into English. In their group the students translated the text together cooperatively. They did discussion and collaboration. The teacher controlled the class and monitored the groups. He instructed and sometimes solved the students' problems during translating the text. It can be said that in this situation students and students, teacher and students do a good interaction and communication. During the students translated the text, the teacher observed the situation and jotted down the activity done by the students in the classroom. He

also took photographs as the facts of the action and observation. After three fore stages were conducted, the teacher did reflection by doing interviews to all groups of students and giving them questionnaires to answer. All information was obtained as the data of research to support findings and the result of the research.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the pre-test of translation, the students' translation scores were fair. Almost the students got score 60 that indicates not good quality of translation. They did some distortions in meaning, unacceptable grammar, rigid structures, and non-standard terms. Below is the table of pre-test result of translation test from Indonesian language into English.

**Tabel 1**  
**The Result of Translation Pre-test**

No.	Partisipant's Code	Pre-test Score
1.	Code 1	61
2.	Code 2	59
3.	Code 3	57
4.	Code 4	63
5.	Code 5	60
6.	Code 6	60
7.	Code 7	62
8.	Code 8	58
9.	Code 9	63
10.	Code 10	57
11.	Code 11	60
12.	Code 12	60
13.	Code 13	68

14.	Code 14	52
15.	Code 15	58
16.	Code 16	62
17.	Code 17	65
18.	Code 18	55
19.	Code 19	60
20.	Code 20	60
<i>Average Score</i>		<b>60</b>

According to the initial interview before the research was conducted, the students responded some questions given and said that doing an individual translation project or before applying a cooperative work procedure (CWP), the translation process was slow, there were not evaluation and revision of translation, translation task was a heavy burden, and the translation product was not good.

Then based on the observation before the CWP was conducted, the students just did their translation project themselves and only looked a dictionary, while the teacher just assigned and assessed their translation product. Later, according to the questionnaires given, they commented that before the CWP application they really

faced the problems of vocabulary, grammar, and structure in translation process.

On the contrary what happened after the CWP was conducted? All progressed well and seemed successful. For examples, the students' translation scores increased from 60 to 77.80 and the atmosphere of translation process changed extremely, from individual activity to group activity. Here the students can do discussion and share the problems one another interactively and the teacher helps them communicatively. Automatically their translation quality improved well. All students feel that the last condition is better than the previous one. Some data in the tables below can be seen and compared, as the facts that the CWP is effective to use in teaching translation as a way of improving the students' translation quality. Those data are taken from pre-test and post test and also from interview and observation.

The following is the comparison of the translation result between pre-test and post test.

Tabel 2  
The Progress of Translation Result

No.	Individual Participant	Group Participant	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score	Progress Score
1.	Kode 1	I	61	76	16
2.	Kode 2		59		
3.	Kode 3		57		
4.	Kode 4		63		
5.	Kode 5	II	60	75	15
6.	Kode 6		60		
7.	Kode 7		62		

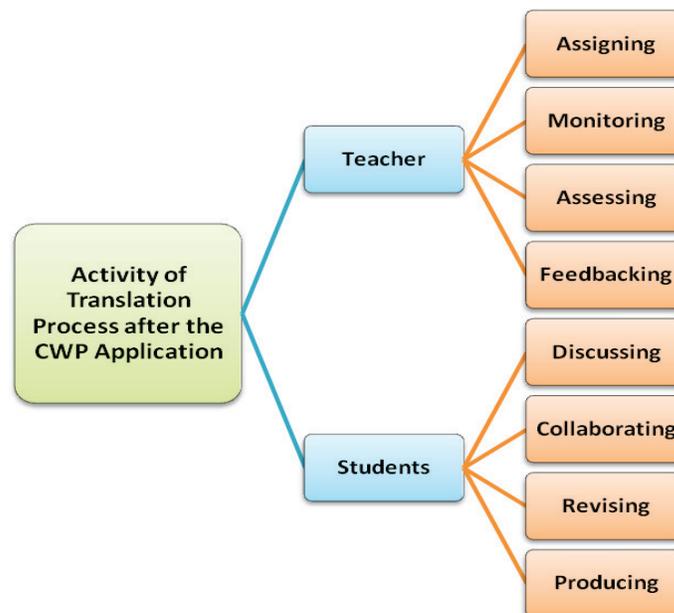
8.	Kode 8		58		
9.	Kode 9	III	63	78	18
10.	Kode 10		57		
11.	Kode 11		60		
12.	Kode 12		60		
13.	Kode 13	IV	68	80	20
14.	Kode 14		52		
15.	Kode 15		58		
16.	Kode 16		62		
17.	Kode 17	V	65	80	20
18.	Kode 18		55		
19.	Kode 19		60		
20.	Kode 20		60		
<i>Average of Progress Score</i>					<i>17.80</i>

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the average progress score before and after the CWP application is 17.80. It indicates that the action is successful. It means that all students in group increased their scores of translation and improved their translation quality. It is

the fact that the CWP is effective to apply in the translation class.

The other data that can support the effectiveness of the CWP that was successful to send the students to be good translators are the data in the diagram below.

**Diagram 1**  
**The Classroom Activity after the CWP Application**

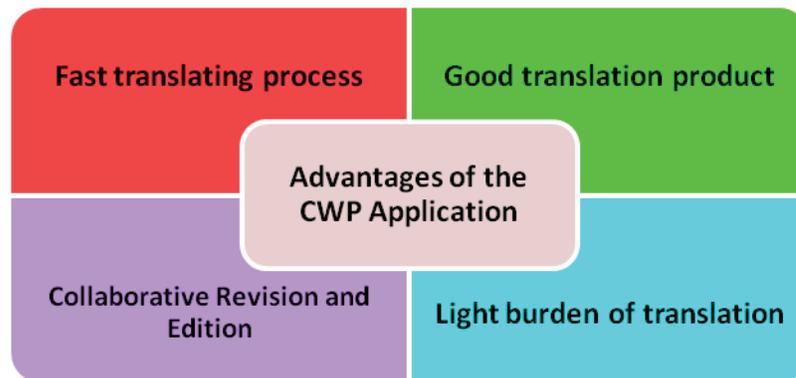


Based on the information above, there is a different condition before and after the CWP application. The activity of translation leads the students to produce a collective product of translation that is regarded as the better result of translation. Here the teacher positions himself not only as a teacher but also as a director or manager, while the students are as players who tend to show a good performance and work of

translation. It seems very harmonious. It must be remembered that finally the real final objective of learning is to help learners be professional in their job.

The following information is taken from the interview. It proves that the CWP application has changed the bad condition into the good one. Look at the diagram below.

Diagram 2  
The Condition after the CWP Application



The last findings can be seen in the table below taken from the questionnaires. It

describes the students' comments before and after the CWP application in the translation process.

Tabel 3  
The Students' Response after the CWP Application

Item	Statement	Response	
		Yes	No
1	There is a difficulty in translating a text from Indonesian into English if it is done individually.	13 (65%)	7 (35%)
2	The vocabulary is a problem in translating a text from Indonesian into English if it is done individually.	10 (50%)	10 (50%)
3	The grammar is a problem in translating a text from Indonesian into English if it is done individually.	9 (45%)	11 (55%)

4	The structure is a problem in translating a text from Indonesian into English if it is done individually.	12 (60%)	8 (40%)
5	Vocabulary, grammar, and structure problems are decreased when the Cooperative Work Procedure (CWP) is applied.	19 (95%)	1 (5%)
6	The CWP is effective to lead students to produce a good translation product.	19 (95%)	1 (5%)

The data above were taken from the questionnaires given to 20 students as respondents of the research. It informs that the translation project done individually has caused the difficulties of vocabulary, grammar, and structure for students. On the contrary the CWP applied in the teaching translation activity has led the students to be successful in producing good products of translation.

### CONCLUSION

The research findings inform completely that the Cooperative Work Procedure is very effective to apply in teaching translation activity because it can create conducive situations for students to produce a good translation product. By doing collaboration and discussion, the students in their groups monitored and directed by the teacher can be able to translate Indonesian texts into English ones successfully.

So, it is suggested that teachers of translation can apply this procedure in their classroom to overcome their students' problems and difficulties in translation process, particularly when they translate the texts from Indonesian into English.

Finally their students will become good and professional translators.

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