

COOPERATIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' TRANSLATION

Issy Yuliasri

Semarang State University

(This is a modified form of a paper presented at Asian EFL Journal-Asia TESOL International Seminar Cebu Island, Philippines, August 12-13, 2011)

ABSTRACT

This classroom action research aimed at applying the Cooperative Learning techniques, particularly the Jigsaw and Think-Pair-Share techniques, to help students improve their Indonesian-English translation skill, especially in terms of diction, grammar, and rendering of message/content of the text. The research was done in one 'Translation 2' class of the English Literature Program, the English Department of UNNES. This research showed positive results, revealing that the application of Cooperative Learning techniques could improve students' skill in translating, particularly in terms of diction, grammar, and rendering of message/content of the text. This was seen from the results of evaluation of the process and products during the research period. With the application of Cooperative Learning techniques, the evaluation of translation products showed significant improvement in students' translation, particularly in terms of diction, grammar, and rendering of message/content of the text. The results of observation and questionnaire also showed that in general students were more active, motivated, enthusiastic, interested, and they gained better understanding of translation techniques. The students admitted that with Cooperative Learning techniques they could learn easily as they got inputs from their teammates, and they became aware of their mistakes. In addition, with group works they could get varied translations.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning Techniques, Jigsaw, Think-Pair-Share, Translation.

INTRODUCTION

Learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia generally feel that translating, particularly translating Indonesian to English, is a very difficult task. This understandable, considering that translating is a very complex task demanding some integrated competencies such as linguistics competence, extra linguistics competence, transfer competence, instrumental competence, psycho-physiologic competence, and strategic competence.

On the above basis, the writer tried to find an alternative technique of learning that was expected to enhance students' ability in translating, particularly their linguistic skills, especially in terms of diction, grammar, and rendering of content or message as a whole.

Cooperative learning approach was used in this research, by applying the techniques introduced by Kagan and Kagan (in Jacobs, et al, 1997), i.e. jigsaw and think pair share. It was expected that

the application of these cooperative learning techniques could gradually enhance the students' skills in translating from Indonesian into English.

Cooperative Learning is a learning strategy in which learners are divided into groups to share responsibilities of their own learning as well as the teammates' learning. The purpose is to achieve success together in learning.

As quoted from <http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/intech/cooperativelarning.htm>, research projects have shown some strengths of cooperative learning as follows:

- enhance learning and academic achievement
- enhance retention
- enhance learners' satisfaction of the learning experience
- help learners develop oral communicative ability
- develop learners' social ability
- enhance learners' self esteem
- help increase positive inter-racial relationship

There are four components of cooperative learning as suggested by Jacobs et al. (1997: 8-12), namely: positive interdependence, collaborative skills, processing group interaction, and individual accountability.

One of the definitions of translation was given by Newmark (in Machali, 2000:5) as follows "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text".

Translation involves the process of rendering of thoughts/ideas or meanings from the source text (ST) to the target text (TT) in the way the author of the original text intended, and so there is a demand for equivalence between the ST and TT. Translation is a complex task, requiring comprehension of the content of the source language text and rendering into the target language text in an acceptable manner while maintaining equivalence.

The process of translation, according to Eugene Nida (in Bassnett-McGuire, 1980:16), consists of 3 stages, namely: analysis of source language text, transferring of message, and restructuring. Analysis of the source language text starts with reading and comprehending the content of the text. Comprehending of the source text involves two aspects, i.e. linguistic aspect (sentence, clause, phrase, and word levels) and extra-linguistic aspect (related to socio-cultural aspect of the source language text). The second stage is transferring. After the translator comprehends the content, meaning, and message of the source language text, he/she has to transfer the content, meaning, and message into the target language. The third stage is restructuring, which is a process of refining the text into a suitable style acceptable in the target language, readers, or listeners (Harimurti-Kridalaksana in Nababan, 2003: 28). In this stage the translator needs to revise the language style so that it will be suitable with

the type of text translated and with whom the translator is intended for.

In order to produce good translations, a translator must have the so called translation competence. According to PACTE, translation competence consists of 6 sub-competences, namely: (1) communicative competence in two languages (Source Language and Target Language), i.e. the ability to comprehend the text in the source language and express it in the target language; (2) extra-linguistic competence, i.e. the knowledge of the theories of translation, the knowledge of the two language cultures, and encyclopedic and thematic knowledge; (3) transfer competence, i.e. the ability to undertake the whole process of transferring from the source language text into the target language text; (4) instrumental/professional competence, i.e. the knowledge and skills related to a professional undertaking of translation, such as the knowledge about documentation resources, new technologies, etc.; (5) psycho-physiologic competence, i.e. the ability to apply the psychomotoric, cognitive, and affective resources; (6) strategic competence, i.e. the procedure that an individual takes verbally or non-verbally, consciously or subconsciously, in order to solve the problems during the process of translation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was intended to enhance the students' skills in translating from Indonesian to English and change their learning

behavior in "Translation 2" class by applying Cooperative Learning Techniques, particularly the jigsaw and think-pair-share techniques.

This research was done among the sixth semester students of the English Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Semarang State University, by using classroom action research consisting of two cycles. Cycle 1 consisted of identification of problems and defining alternative solution. Cycle 2 consisted of identification of problems and development of action 2. Reflection was done by evaluating the action 1 and the following cycles (Arikunto, et al, 2006).

This research was designed to give the participants the experience of translating using cooperative learning techniques to improve their ability in translating from Indonesian into English, particularly their linguistic skills covering diction, grammar, and rendering of message/content. The cooperative learning techniques applied in the translation practice were the jigsaw and think-pair-share techniques.

To find out the improved skills as well as the students' responses on the use of the techniques, pre-test, post-test and questionnaire were given. The pre-test and post-test was the same test, requiring the students to translate 3 different texts from Indonesian into English. The questionnaire consisted of 11 questions to be answered anonymously.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Pre-test and Post-test

The pre-test was meant to find out how students translated 3 different texts, especially viewed from the aspects of diction, grammar, and re-rendering of content/message or ideas in the target text. The result of the pre-test revealed that the rendering of message/content of the text was problematic. Although the content/message of short and simple sentences was generally rendered sufficiently, there was distorted meaning in the translation of complicated sentences and those related to subject matters that they were not familiar with. Based on this pre-test result, certain techniques of learning were used to improve the students' translation, particularly in terms of diction, grammar, and content/message. Cooperative learning techniques were used, particularly the Jigsaw and Think-pair-share techniques.

As opposed to the result of the pre-test, the post-test revealed that participants could translate 3 different texts (popular, academic, and legal texts) better than their performance in the pre-test. The improvement was shown from their general reduced mistakes in basic grammar, showing that they were more careful with grammar, although in complicated sentences there were still some mistakes. In terms of diction there was also improvement as proven by students' ability to differentiate the choice of words for

popular, academic, and legal text. In terms of rendering of content/message there was an improvement, but the style of the language was still unnatural English. This was understandable because a lot of practices and experiences are needed to produce natural translation in the target language. The following are examples of students' translation in the post-test.

Original Indonesian text (popular article):

Eksplorasi terhadap tubuh-tubuh perempuan pemain film 'Suster Keramas' bekerja pada tubuh yang memiliki nilai jual. Bagi kapitalisme, adegan Sakuragi melepas baju di depan dua laki-laki memiliki nilai ekonomis yang menjanjikan. Proses ini disebut ekonomi libido, sebuah sistem ekonomi yang menjadikan segala bentuk potensi energi libido sebagai komoditas dalam rangka mendapat keuntungan. Ketika tubuh-tubuh perempuan bebas diperjualbelikan di bioskop-bioskop atau dunia digital, dia sudah tidak bermakna lagi bagi dirinya sendiri, tapi cenderung dilihat sebagai komoditas yang akan menghasilkan modal dan keuntungan. Ia menjadi obyek untuk bersenang-senang, dinikmati, dipertontonkan, dan diperjualbelikan layaknya komoditas pasar.

Back translation:

Exploitation of female bodies of the women playing in the movie "Suster Keramas" works on those bodies having market value. For capitalism, the scene of Sakuragi stripping of her clothes in front of two men has a promising economic value.

This process is called libidinal economy, an economic system that makes all forms of libidinal energy potentials as commodities to gain profit. When the female bodies are freely traded in the movie theatres or digital world, they are no longer meaningful to themselves, but tend to be seen as commodities to gain capital and profit. They become objects for pleasure, enjoyment, and being exposed and traded like market commodities.

Sample of student's translation 1:

The exploitation of the actresses's bodies happening in *Suster Keramas* film works only on economically valuable bodies. According to capitalism, the scene where Sakuragi trips off her clothes in the front of two men is regarded as a promising economic value. Such process is called the libido of economy, a system which transforms every potential libido energy as a commodity to get a lot of benefits. The free trade of women's body in movies/digital world will make them become meaningless for themselves. Not only that, they will also be considered as a valuable commodity and a source of investment and benefit. Moreover, they are transforming into an object of amusement, a show-piece, and traded like any other market commodities.

Original Indonesian text 2 (academic text):

Penerjemahan adalah suatu tindak komunikasi. Sebagai tindak komunikasi, kegiatan tersebut tidak terlepas dari bahasa. Dengan demikian, kegiatan penerjemahan

merupakan kegiatan yang melibatkan bahasa, dan dalam pembahasannya tidak dapat mengabaikan pemahaman tentang konsep-konsep kebahasaan.

Back translation:

Translation is an act of communication. As an act of communication, the task is inseparable from language. Thus, translation task is a task that involves language, and its discussion cannot neglect the understanding of the concepts of language.

Sample of student's translation 2:

Translation is an act of communication. As a communication, it can't be separated from language. Thus, it can be said that translation is an act which involves language and cannot neglect the understanding of linguistic concepts.

Original Indonesian text 3 (legal text):

Para pihak wajib mematuhi segala ketentuan yang telah ditetapkan dalam pasal-pasal Perjanjian ini. Segala pelanggaran terhadap ketentuan tersebut akan dikenai sanksi sesuai dengan yang tertera dalam pasal mengenai sanksi.

Dalam hal terjadi persengketaan yang tidak dapat diselesaikan dengan kesepakatan bersama, salah satu pihak atau para pihak berhak mengajukan permasalahannya kepada pengadilan untuk mendapat penyelesaian hukum.

Back translation:

Both parties must adhere all the stipulations specified in the paragraphs of this Agreement. Any breach of the stipulations will be penalized with the sanctions specified in the paragraph of sanctions.

In case of dispute that is not resolved with mutual agreement, one of the parties or both parties have the right to raise the issues to the court to gain legal settlement.

Sample of student's translation 3:

The parties are adhere to the appointed terms setforth in the paragraph. Any term violation will be come under sanction appointed in the paragraph of sanction. In case of dispute which can't be solved by the agreement of the parties, one party or both have a rights to put the problem in the la-court to get the law completion.

Interview and Questionnaire

In order to triangulate the post-test, an informals interview with the participants was done on the aplication of cooperative learning in translation. They responded that cooperative learning technique could help them do the translation more easily as they got different opinions from the teammates.

Besides the informal interview, participants were also given questionnaire with 11 questions. In response to question number 1 whether they consider "translation 2" as a difficult course, 17 students (73.91%) considered that it was very difficult for the following reasons: (1) they were weak in grammar, (2) it was difficult to

produce natural English sentences, (3) they were weak in vocabulary/diction, (4) Indonesian-English translation is more difficult than English-Indonesian translation, (5) carefulness as well as cultural knowledge of the target language are needed, (6) unexpected texts are often found, (7) lack of practice time, (8) complex problems, (9) lack of mastery of translation techniques. From such responses, it can be concluded that the majority of the students considered Indonesian-English translation difficult and realized that to be able to translate well a good mastery of English grammar and vocabulary is needed besides carefulness.

Responding to question number 2 whether they have got necessary knowledge/skill to take "Translation 2" course, 13 students (56.52%) responded yes, while the rest 10 students (53.58%) considered that they had not got enough knowledge/skill for the reason that during the "Translation 1" course they had not got enough theory and practice of translation. From such responses, it can be concluded that students were well aware of the importance of mastering certain competencies, not merely linguistic competence but also extralinguistic competence. They were also aware of the importance of experience and practice.

Dealing with question number 4 whether group work activities (with cooperative learning) made them motivated, enthusiastic, understand, and

improved/ progressed. Below were the responses:

- 78.26% felt more motivated; 21.74% did not feel more motivated
- 69.56% felt more enthusiastic; 30.44% did not feel more enthusiastic
- 65.22% felt more interested; 34.78% did not feel interested
- 82.61% gained more understanding; 17.39% did not gain more understanding
- 78.26% gained progress; 21.74% did not gain progress

From the above responses, it can be concluded that the majority of the students gave positive responses toward cooperative learning as seen from the more students who felt that they were more motivated, enthusiastic, interested, and gained better understanding and progress.

The rest of the questions were intended to ask the students about their gain in grammar, diction, and rendering of content/message: about which component (grammar, diction, and rendering of content/message) was the weakest and need improvement; about the most significant gain in translation Translation 2 course; whether the process of learning Translation 2 for 16 meetings (1 semester) was enough to improve their Indonesian-English translation significantly; their expectation for future learning; their comments on the application of cooperative learning techniques; and whether they still need the lecturer's directions and explanations. The responses indicated that they gain a lot of progress in translation by applying the cooperative learning

techniques. For translating, the abilities that need to be improved was the ability to render the content/message. In Translation 2 course with cooperative learning application, they gain better understanding of suitable diction, they were also aware of the importance of real experience (practice) with different type of texts/subject matters, and that the 16 meetings were not enough to improve their Indonesian-English significantly for the reason that they needed more practice and in depth understanding of various fields. They also expected more practices, more lectures from the lecturer, more assignments, and more varied texts in translation learning. It can be concluded that in general the students' responses were positive toward cooperative learning techniques. Also, to gain good translation, feedback from the lecturer was highly needed.

CONCLUSION

The application of Cooperative Learning techniques was good to improve students' skill in translating from Indonesian into English. With the application of Cooperative Learning techniques, the evaluation of students' translation shows significant improvement, particularly in terms of diction, grammar, and rendering of content/message. In addition, the application of Cooperative Learning techniques in the Indonesian-English translation in Translation 2 course have made the students felt more motivated, enthusiastic, interested,

and gained better understanding of different translation techniques.

REFERENCES

- Arikunto, Suharsimi, Suhardjono, Supardi. 2006. *Penelitian Tindakan Kelas*. Jakarta: PT Bina Rupa Aksara.
- Bassnett-McGuire, S. 1980. *Translation Studies*. London New York: Routledge.
- “Cooperative Learning”. [available at <http://www.edtech.kennesaw.edu/intech/cooperativelarning.htm>] [accessed on 9 Juli 2008]
- Jacobs, George M, GanSiowk Lee, and Jesica Ball. 1997. *Learning Cooperative Learning via Cooperative Learning: A Soursebook of Lesson Plans for Teacher Education*. San Clemente: Kagan
- Machali, R. 2000. *Pedoman bagi Penerjemah*. Jakarta: Grasindo
- Nababan, M.R. 2003. *Teori Menerjemah Bahasa Inggris*. Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta.