

STUDENTS' COMPETENCE IN TRANSLATING RECOUNT TEXT AT KHAIRUN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the types of errors made by students in translating texts. The research involved 22 students from class B, semester 5 in the English Education Study Program at Khairun University. This research employed a qualitative method to identify and categorize the translation errors made by the students. The findings revealed four types of errors: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors. The results showed that 11.7% of students made omission errors, while 7.8% made addition errors, making it the least frequent error type. Misformation errors were found in 19.5% of students. The most dominant type of error was misordering errors, which occurred in 61% of students. Among all the identified errors, misordering errors were the most frequent type found in class B, semester 5 students. The findings indicate that misordering errors significantly affect the accuracy and clarity of students' translations.

Keywords: *competence, translation, recount text*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis jenis-jenis kesalahan yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa dalam menerjemahkan teks. Penelitian ini melibatkan 22 mahasiswa dari kelas B, semester 5 di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Khairun. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengkategorikan kesalahan penerjemahan yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa. Hasil Penelitian menunjukkan empat jenis kesalahan, yakni penghilangan, penambahan, kesalahan informasi, dan kesalahan pengurutan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 11,7% siswa melakukan kesalahan penghilangan, sementara 7,8% melakukan kesalahan penambahan, yang merupakan jenis kesalahan yang paling jarang terjadi. Kesalahan misformasi ditemukan pada 19,5% siswa. Jenis kesalahan yang paling dominan adalah kesalahan pengurutan, yang terjadi pada 61% siswa. Di antara semua kesalahan yang teridentifikasi, kesalahan pengurutan adalah jenis kesalahan yang paling sering ditemukan di kelas B, mahasiswa semester 5. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kesalahan pengurutan secara signifikan mempengaruhi keakuratan dan kejelasan hasil terjemahan mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci: kompetensi, terjemahan, cerita ulang teks

INTRODUCTION

Translation is an essential skill in second language acquisition, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, as it facilitates the accurate transfer of meaning, tone, and style between languages. For university-level learners, especially those at Khairun University, mastering translation—particularly in translating recount texts—is critical not only for linguistic accuracy but also for fostering deeper language competence. Recount texts, which convey personal experiences in a chronological sequence, require a nuanced understanding of verb tenses, discourse markers, and narrative coherence. Effective translation of such texts demands more than grammatical knowledge; it involves a cultural and contextual awareness that allows learners to convey messages naturally and meaningfully.

According to Nida (2020), successful translation emphasizes natural meaning and stylistic accuracy in the target language. Likewise, Toury (2016) asserts that translation must follow cultural and social norms, requiring learners to engage with the sociolinguistic dimensions of both the source and target languages. This understanding is especially significant in multilingual and multicultural learning environments, where misinterpretation due to poor translation can hinder communication. Thus, translation plays a dual role—both as a language learning strategy and a means of intercultural communication.

However, despite its importance, many EFL learners continue to struggle with producing accurate and context-appropriate translations. This phenomenon highlights a key issue: learners often commit errors during translation due to interlingual influences (such as mother tongue interference), intralingual factors (like rule overgeneralization), or limited exposure to authentic language use. These errors are not merely mistakes but reflect deeper cognitive and developmental processes within second language acquisition.

This study addresses a critical research gap in the area of EFL translation studies at the tertiary level in Indonesia, particularly in the context of recount text translation. Although numerous studies have explored translation in general or focused on literary texts, fewer have examined the specific types and causes of errors made by university students when translating recount texts—a genre frequently used in academic writing and language assessments. This lack of targeted analysis hinders the ability of educators to design instructional strategies that effectively address student needs.

The urgency of this research lies in its potential to provide empirical data on the recurring patterns of translation errors and their underlying causes, thereby supporting the development of pedagogical interventions tailored to the learners' actual difficulties. In other words, *Das Sein*—the current reality—is that many students continue to make systematic translation errors, impeding their academic success and communicative competence. In contrast, *Das Sollen*—the desired condition—is a learning environment in which students demonstrate improved translation skills, supported by curriculum design that integrates error analysis and contrastive approaches to language instruction.

Furthermore, error analysis offers a powerful lens through which teachers and researchers can understand the learning process. As proposed by Ortega (2015), error analysis not only helps identify learner strategies and difficulties but also serves as a diagnostic tool for improving teaching materials and methods. Errors such as omission, addition, misformation, and misordering—outlined by Bailey and Fahad (2021)—reveal patterns in student interlanguage development and offer insights into where instructional support is most needed.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the kinds and causes of translation errors in recount texts written by EFL learners. It seeks to fill the empirical gap in current research, respond to the practical needs of language educators, and contribute to the broader discourse on translation pedagogy. By doing so, it is expected that the findings will not only inform theory but also enhance instructional practice, leading to more effective and culturally informed language learning outcomes.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach because it aims to deeply understand the competence of fifth semester students of Khairun University in translating recount texts. This approach was chosen because it emphasizes contextual understanding, subjective interpretation, and in-depth analysis of the experiences and strategies used by students in the translation process. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique to determine the research subjects, namely 22 fifth semester class B students from the English Language Education Study Program who were considered to have sufficient experience and understanding in learning English, both formally and informally. Data were collected through a translation test from Indonesian to English recount texts. This test aims to explore the difficulties and techniques used by students in translating the text.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study examines the errors made by students in translating recount texts at Khairun University. Data from this study were obtained through a test in translating recount texts. In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings from the test results. is about the causes of student errors in translating recount texts written by fifth semester English education class B students at Khairun University. Meanwhile, the discussion section is an analysis of research findings.

A written test was used to obtain data on errors made by students. In this case, the researcher presented the test instructions. After that, students were asked to translate a recount text which was given 90 minutes. Students were asked to translate recount texts with topics, holidays, . After that, the researcher identified the types of errors from the test results using the concept of Heidi Dulay in Rehmani (2023) there are several types of errors, namely omission, addition, misordering. and misinformation The researcher then calculated the errors in writing simple past tense sentences based on the type of error according to Dulay's Theory, and presented the results in a percentage formula according to Sugiyono (2008).

1. Results of the test translating recount texts

a. Types of errors in using simple past tense

1) Omission

Omission is a type of error made by students when making a statement but omitting something that should appear. Most students make mistakes when omitting the plural form (s) in a sentence, and there are also words that are written but do not have a clear meaning because they omit one letter in the word, other errors such as the past tense marker -ed, regular and irregular verbs.

Table 1. The data of Omission Error

Students	Error Identification	Error Correction	Error Explanation
N.B.H	This was my first time visiting such a beautiful waterfall to reach	It was the first time for me to visit such a wonderful waterfall. To reach	The error in this sentence is a run-on sentence, where two ideas are combined without a clear separation. The phrase "to reach the waterfall location" does not have a complete

	waterfall location.	waterfall location.	subject and predicate, making the sentence unclear.
N.B.H	The capital of lampung	The capital city of lampung.	The sentence "the caoital of Lampung" is incomplete because it is only a nominal phrase without a verb. In order to be a correct sentence, a verb needs to be added, for example "Ibukota Lampung Without a verb, this phrase does not provide complete information.
I . A	Lampung Indonesia	Lampung province.Indon esia	The phrase "Lampung Province, Indonesia" is used to indicate a specific location. "Lampung Province" emphasizes that Lampung is a province, not just the name of a region or tribe. "Indonesia" is added for clarity, especially in an international context.
L.M	The air there was so very fresh	The air was so fresh	The sentence "The air is so fresh." does not need "there" because the focus is on description, not existence. "Was" is a linking verb that connects the subject "air" with the predicate "so fresh". If using "there", the structure changes to "There was fresh air.", which states the existence of fresh air, not describing it.
M	Since we arrived	When we arrived	"When" is used to indicate a specific time of an event, while "since" indicates an event that began in the past and is still ongoing. For example, When we arrived indicates a specific time of arrival, while Since we arrived indicates an event that has been ongoing since arrival. Therefore, in "When we arrived," "when" is more appropriate than "since."

From table 1. the total number of omission errors made by students is 5. The items in bold above are marked. from the table above The phrase "When we arrive" is used correctly instead of "**Since we arrive**" because "when" indicates a specific point in time, while "since" refers to an action that began in the past and continues to the present. For example, "**When we arrive**, ." refers to the time of arrival, while "Since we arrive." implies an ongoing event.

The main difficulty faced by students in using Simple Past Tense in writing recount texts lies in the change of Verb 1 to Verb 2, as well as weaknesses in vocabulary. Many students understand that recount texts describe past events but have difficulty with verb conjugation. In addition, lack of vocabulary hinders their ability to construct clear and grammatically correct sentences.

2) Addition

Addition errors are characterized by the presence of an item which not appear in well-formed utterance. Addition is indicated by the presence of an "unwanted" item in sentences. This happens when the students overuse certain grammatical rules of the target language.

Table 2. The data of Addition Errors

Students	Error Identification	Error Correction	Error Description
M.I	Last holiday,my beloved wife and I visited the lembah pelangi waterfall in ngarip district,	Last holiday,my beloved wife and I visited Lembah Pelangi waterfall in ngarip district,	The sentence does not use "the" before Last holiday because "last"already indicates a specific time. Likewise, place names like Lembah Pelangi Waterfall generally do not need "the", unless they contain general words like river or mountain range. Thus, the sentence is correct as written.
A.B	Province of lampung, Indonesia	Lampung province, Indonesia.	The word "of" is not used in "Province of Lampung, Indonesia" because in English, the name of the administrative region is written directly without "of". If used, it becomes "province of Lampung",

			which is more suitable in descriptive sentences, not as an official name.
N.S	The air there was very fresh and I couldn't resist jumping into the water immediately.	The air was so fresh at that time and I could not bear to jump into the water immediately.	The word "there" is not used because the sentence focuses on describing the air, not its existence. If it were used, the structure would change and be less natural.
R.A	It's kind of windy there and I seen only green,green,and green.	It is quite windy there and all I could see only green,green,and green.	The word "kind of" is not used because "quite windy" is clear enough without the need for approximation. Meanwhile, "see" is used after "could" because modal verbs must be followed by the base form of the verb, not the past participle like "seen".

From the table 2. the total numbers of addition errors committed by students were 4 errors. From the analysis above, several corrections were made to improve grammatical accuracy. The first example is "Last holiday, my beloved wife and I visited the Lembah Pelangi Waterfall in Ngarip District, Province of Lampung, Indonesia." The phrase "**Province of Lampung**" was revised to "**Lampung Province Indonesia**" because administrative region names in English are typically written without "of" unless used in a descriptive sentence.

The next correction is "**The air there was very fresh, and I couldn't resist jumping into the water immediately.**" The word "there" was removed to maintain the focus on describing the air rather than indicating its existence.

Additionally, "**It's kind of windy there, and I seen only green, green, and green.**" was changed to "It is quite windy there, and all I could see was only green, green, and green." The phrase "kind of" was removed because "quite windy" is already clear. The verb "seen" was corrected to "see" since modal verbs like "could" must be followed by the base form, not the past participle. These corrections ensure proper structure and clarity in the sentences.

3) Misformation

Misformation errors are characterized by the uses of the wrong form of the straight or structure. While in errors of omission, the items are not supplied of all, in errors of misformation the learners supply something although it is in an incorrect form.

Table 3. the data of Misformation Errors

Students	Error Identification	Error Correction	Error Description
N.J	Holiday yesterday.I and my darling visited air terjun lembah pelangi.	Last holiday,my beloved wife and I visited lembah pelangi	The sentence has errors in structure, word order, and capitalization. "Holiday yesterday" lacks a verb, "I and my darling" has incorrect word order, and place names should be capitalized as "
N.F.I	This was my first time visiting such a beautifull waterfall.	It was the first time for me to visit such a wonderful waterfall.	The sentence contains errors in spelling and capitalization. The word "beautifull" is misspelled with an extra "l" and should be "beautiful." This is used to emphasize the specific experience being talked about, while "visiting" functions as a gerund that describes the activity in that experience.
H.A	When we arrived there,I was amazed by the beautiful liem of the waterfall.	When we arrived there, I was amazed by the beautiful scenery of the waterfall.	The word "liem" does not have the appropriate meaning in the context of the sentence, so it needs to be replaced with "scenery", which means scenery and is more appropriate to describe the beauty of the waterfall.
S.R	We had to walk after traveling for about three hours by motorbike from Bandar lampung,	We should go on foot after having around three hours trip riding a motorcycle from Bandar lampung,	The errors in this sentence include inappropriate word choice and unnatural sentence structure. The phrase "had to walk" indicates an obligation in the past.

F.S	I was amazing by the beautiful view of waterfall	I was amazed by the beautiful scenery of the waterfall.	The mistake in this sentence is the use of the word "amazing", which should be "amazed", because the subject receives a feeling of awe. In addition, "view" is more appropriately replaced with "scenery" to describe the overall natural scenery.
R.R	All I could see only green,green,and gren.	All I could see only green, and green.	The error in this sentence is a misformation in spelling, where the word "gren" is a misspelling of "green". The word must be corrected to "green" so that it matches the correct spelling and can be understood clearly.

From the table 3. the total number of misformation errors committed by students were 15 Error includes errors in sentence structure, word choice, spelling, and capitalization. These errors occurred due to incorrect word selection and improper sentence construction, which may lead to misunderstanding for the reader or listener.

For example, in "**Holiday yesterday. I and my darling visited air terjun lembah pelangi.**" the error lies in sentence structure, word order, and capitalization. The correct form is "**Last holiday, my beloved wife and I visited Lembah Pelangi.**" Another example is "This was my first time visiting such a beautifull waterfall," where "beautifull" is misspelled and should be "beautiful."

Additionally, the phrase "**When we arrived there, I was amazed by the beautiful liem of the waterfall.**" contains a vocabulary misformation, as "liem" is not a proper word and should be replaced with "scenery." Another case of misformation is found in "I was amazing by the beautiful view of the waterfall," where "amazing" should be "amazed" since the subject is receiving the feeling of amazement. Also, "view" is better replaced with "scenery" to describe the overall landscape.

Another spelling misformation appears in "**All I could see only green, green, and gren.**" The incorrect word "gren" should be corrected to "green" to match the correct spelling. Similarly, in "We had to walk after traveling for about three hours by motorbike from Bandar Lampung," the phrase "had to walk" implies past

obligation, whereas an alternative phrase like "We should go on foot" could indicate a recommendation instead. These errors mainly stem from misformation in word choice, sentence structure, and spelling, requiring corrections for clarity and proper grammatical accuracy.

4) Misordering

Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect arrangement of words or morphemes in a sentence. While in errors of omission, necessary elements are entirely missing, and in errors of misformation, incorrect forms are supplied, misordering errors occur when learners provide all required elements but in the wrong sequence. These errors often affect the clarity and grammatical correctness of a sentence, leading to confusion in meaning.

Tabel 4. the data of misordering

Students	Error Identification	Error Correction	Error Description
T.L.N	Me and my beloved wife visit pelangi valley in ngarip district.	My beloved and I visited lembah pelangi waterfall in ngarip district.	The sentence contains misordering, verb tense, and word choice errors. "Me and my beloved wife" should be "My beloved wife and I" for proper subject pronoun order. The verb "visit" should be "visited" to match the past tense. Additionally, "Pelangi valley" should be "Lembah Pelangi Waterfall" to reflect the correct place name.
S.R.S.M	Lampung Airport	Bandar Lampung	The error in the sentence is related to word choice. "Lampung Airport" should be "Bandar Lampung" because "Bandar Lampung" is the correct name of the city, whereas there is no specific airport named "Lampung Airport."
S	This is one time I visit waterfall which very beautiful.	It was the first time for me to visit such a wonderful waterfall.	The sentence contains word choice, verb tense, and misordering errors. "This is one time" should be "It was the

			first time" for proper expression. The verb "visit" should be "visited" to indicate a past event. Additionally, "which very beautiful" should be "such a wonderful waterfall" for correct grammar and natural phrasing.
N.L	Use motor bike from Bandar Lampung.	Motorcycle from Bandar Lampung	The errors lie in word choice, grammar, and articles. "Motor bike" should be "Motorcycle," and an "a" is needed for clarity.
I.N	I was very amazed beatiful background waterfull	I was amazed by the beautiful scenery of the waterfall	Errors include word order, prepositions, spelling, and clarity. "Very amazed" is unnecessary, a preposition is missing, and "beatiful" and "waterfull" are spelled incorrectly. Correction: "I was amazed by the beautiful scenery of the waterfall."
R.K.L.I	To get the location waterfall, we have to walk after take on around 3 hours travel with from Bandar lampung	To reach the waterfall location, we should go on foot after having around three hours trip riding a motorcycle from Bandar Lampung	Errors include word choice, grammar, and prepositions. Unnatural phrases are corrected to make them clearer, such as "To get the location waterfall" becomes "To reach the waterfall location."
N.L.S	The fresh air makes me want to jump right to the water	The air was so fresh at that time and I could not bear to jump into the water immediately.	Errors include word choice, prepositions, clarity, and tense. "The fresh air" is unclear, "jump right to the water" should be "jump into the water," and tense should be consistent in the past tense.

From the table 4. the total number of misordering errors committed by students were 47 errors Errors in the sentences include misordering, word choice,

grammar, spelling, and clarity issues. These mistakes affect sentence structure, readability, and overall accuracy, potentially leading to misunderstandings.

For instance, in **"Me and my beloved wife visit Pelangi Valley in Ngarip District,"** the error lies in subject pronoun order and verb tense. The correct form is **"My beloved wife and I visited Lembah Pelangi Waterfall in Ngarip District."** Similarly, **"This is one time I visit waterfall which very beautiful"** contains incorrect phrasing and tense; it should be **"It was the first time for me to visit such a wonderful waterfall."**

Another example of word choice error is **"Lampung Airport,"** which should be **"Bandar Lampung"** since the sentence refers to the city, not an airport. Additionally, **"Use motor bike from Bandar Lampung"** should be **"Motorcycle from Bandar Lampung,"** as "motor bike" is not commonly used, and an article is needed for grammatical correctness.

Spelling errors appear in **"I was very amazed beatiful background waterfull,"** where **"beatiful"** should be **"beautiful"** and **"waterfull"** should be **"waterfall."** Moreover, **"To get the location waterfall, we have to walk after take on around 3 hours travel with from Bandar Lampung"** contains awkward phrasing and missing prepositions. A correct version is **"To reach the waterfall location, we should go on foot after having around three hours trip riding a motorcycle from Bandar Lampung."**

Lastly, **"The fresh air makes me want to jump right to the water"** has issues in word choice and preposition use. The improved version is **"The air was so fresh at that time, and I could not bear to jump into the water immediately."** These corrections ensure clarity, grammatical accuracy, and natural sentence flow.

Discussion

In this study, the researcher found results showing that some fifth semester B students of the English education study program at Khairun University made mistakes in using the simple past tense, which can be seen from the results of the students' written test in translating recount texts. A written test for translating texts is one method for measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a particular field. The next step is for the researcher to describe, explain, and evaluate these mistakes into several types of simple past tense errors in writing recount texts. According to Heidi Dulay et al., there are several types of errors, namely omission, addition, misordering, and misformation. However, in this study, the researcher found 3 types of errors, namely omission, edition, and misformation and misordering.

Omission errors made by students, for example, when making a statement but omitting something that should appear. Often they make several mistakes when omitting the plural form in a sentence, and also some words are written but does not have a clear meaning because it omits one letter in the word. And others such as past tense markers -ed, regular and irregular verbs. Addition errors made by talents, for example, students add certain items in sentences that should not need to be added, Misformation errors made by students, for example, making sentences that do not match the form of certain morphemes or structures.

By the four types of errors, researchers tried to find out the cause of the error with the theory of Nong Umar (2016), namely there are seven causes of errors including Adverb Interference, Copulative Verb Interference, Word Order Interference, Tense form Interference, Overgeneralization, Ignorance of Rule Restriction, Incomplete Application of Rules. From this theory, researchers only found 4 causes of errors in the use of simple past tense as seen from the written test of recout texts of fifth semester students of the English education study program at Khairun University.

The first cause of errors in the use of simple past is Copulative Verb Interference, which occurs because foreign languages are very different from Indonesian in terms of copulative verbs, learners tend to skip copulative verbs. The second is Tense form Interference, This cause appears when learners tend to use verbs after the subject without paying attention to the grammatical rule structure. The third is Ignorance of Rule Restriction, This cause appears when it is closely related to the generalization of devant structures carried out by learners because they fail to pay attention to the existing Watures restrictions, namely the application of rules in contexts that do not apply the rules. The fourth is Incomplete Application of Rules, This cause occurs when learners do not understand the rules in the sentence. apply all the rules they have learned, which is caused by incomplete learning. In other words, they do not master the rules and their application thoroughly, so they do not apply the rules according to the situation.

In addition, the cause of student errors in writing and translating recount texts in the simple past tense is because students do not master standard language or often use their first language so that when translated into English there are errors in meaning. This was also found in the Rinata journal (2018) which classifies the causes of errors to contribute to the researcher's analysis of student writing. The three causes of errors consist of Carelessness, First Language Interference, Translation.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research results, this study took 22 subjects of research from class B, semester 5, English Education Study Program, Khairun University. Then it was found that 11.7% of students made omission errors. In addition, 7.8% of students made addition errors. The most dominant type of error was misinformation errors, which occurred in 19.5% of students, and misordering errors, which were found in 61% of students. Of all the types of errors identified, misordering errors were the most frequent among class B, semester 5 students.

Based on the frequency and types of errors found, it can be concluded that the average translation competence of students is in the "sufficient" category. Although some students showed good understanding, the high percentage of errors indicates that there is still room for improvement in mastering translation structures. This indicates that students have not fully mastered the correct word order in the target language, which often leads to inconsistencies in meaning or awkwardness in translation. Therefore, students need more practice and understanding of sentence structures in the target language, as well as paying attention to the context and nuances contained in the source text to produce more accurate and natural translations. In addition, students also need to pay attention to other errors such as errors in the use of words or sentences that are not in accordance with the context, which indicates a lack of mastery of insight and deeper language analysis skills.

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