



## **TRANSLATION QUALITY OF BILINGUAL NEWS “*VAKSIN PALSU ANCAM ANAK INDONESIA JADI SOROTAN MEDIA ASING*” BY NOVITA CAHYADI ON B2B NEWS SITE**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to find the translation quality of a news on B2B site. This study was descriptive-qualitative research. The data were two news articles entitled “*Vaksin Palsu Ancam Anak Indonesia Jadi Sorotan Media Asing*” by Ismail Gani and “*Parents Told to Contact Doctors Amid Indonesia Vaccine Scandal*” by Novita Cahyadi published in B2B (*Berita 2 Bahasa*) news website. The analysis of this study was based on three aspects of translation quality (accuracy, clarity, and naturality) proposed by Larson . The data analysis results showed that there were several inaccuracies in the translation interfering the overall meaning. The translation clarity was considered good and the text was easily read by the reader since the absence of ambiguous or unclear words in the translated text. Whereas, the lack of quality was found in naturality aspect. The translated text had grammatical errors since it applies inappropriate tenses in the target language. However, the translation quality was considered good.

**Keywords:** *Translation Quality, News Translation, Bilingual Text,*

### **Introduction**

Translation can be viewed from three perspectives, namely translation as a phenomenon, translation as a process, and translation as a product (Hatim and Munday, 2004: 6). Translation as a phenomenon considers translation involved cognitive, linguistic, and visual aspects. As a process, Hatim and Munday view translation as messages rendition from one language to another by considering the cultural context of the target language. Meanwhile, as a product, they propose translation as the result of a message rendition process in the form of a text. In translation studies, the most regularly-highlighted aspect is the product in a text form. Therefore, the things that are most frequently studied are translation products.



The discussion on translation as a product, certainly, cannot be separated from its quality. The quality of a translation will also be a benchmark for the quality of the translator. If the quality of the translation has been recognized, then the translator will be trusted to translate further projects.

Along with the technology and civilization advancement and, the demand for translation is also increasing. This is also stated by House (2015: 97-106) that the civilization development also demands more and more translation requests. A big number of translators emerge as a result of high translation demands. Unfortunately, the new comer translator has not acquired qualified comprehension. Thus, the quality of the translation must really be considered because the information may spread very quickly in this global world.

The field that mostly demands translation activity is the news realm. This is because the global world has one of the fastest influences in sharing information worldwide. If the quality of the translation is not taken into account properly, then the information conveyed to a country can fatally ruin the relation between the two countries.

As a matter of fact, the story of the bombing of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the Americans in 1945 is a memorable moment. The atomic bombs dropped by American planes on two Japanese cities on different dates (August 6 for Hiroshima and August 9 for Nagasaki) razed entire cities to the ground and caused an enormous loss of life (Mishelle in *An Outline of the History of the United States*, 2005). However, behind this incident, there was a moment that was never expected before. Quoted from an article written by John J. Marchi, a member of the United States senate in *The New York Times* magazine a year after the incident, the bombings that occurred in Japan were known to be due to translation errors (quoted from Nainty, 2016).

It was known that a few days before the bombing, precisely on July 26, 1945, the allies broadcast the results of the Potsdam Declaration which stated that the Japanese surrendered unconditionally in World War II, otherwise Japan would be attacked. The Japanese government experienced tremendous pressure at that time. Until the next day, the Japanese prime minister at that time held a state address on a radio which was broadcast live to all corners of the world. He said in his speech “*Seifu wa kore o mokusatsu shi, I made sensou kanchiku ni maishin suru*” (cited in Santoso, 2010). Then the Japanese prime minister's statement was translated by the *Doumei* news agency as “The government is ignoring the declaration and until then we still go forward with the war solution.” Of the two sentences above, the word “*mokusatsu*” in Japanese is interpreted as “ignoring” in English. In fact, according to a Japanese translator expert, Torikai Kumiko, the word “*mokusatsu*” is most suitable to be interpreted as “give it the silent treatment” for the prime minister's sentence. This meant that Japan would wait for the reaction of the Soviet Union first. Meanwhile, the enemy perceived it differently. It was because of a mistranslation that atomic bombs hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the ground.

From this incident that changed world's history, the translation quality must be considered. Translation is not only related to words to discourse in two languages. However, it is a relation between two different cultures or even more. Based on the above incident, many believe that errors caused by translation are not merely a factor of misunderstanding. Many parties take advantage of these conditions. It is suspected that this mistake was manipulated by several parties, including politics.

The quality of the translation can also be seen from the impartiality of the translator himself. If the translator tends to be more in favor of one language or country of where the news will be published, then the authenticity of the information contained in the source text may be distorted. This situation is on the contrary with the understanding of translation asserted by the experts who consider that translation only changes form, not meaning.



Based on the importance of news as well as news translation, the writer wanted to assess the quality of bilingual news translations published through cyberspace by B2B sites (bilingual news). This bilingual news is a news site that provides news about Indonesia in both Indonesian and English text. The source text (ST) on this site is Indonesian and the target text (TT) is English. The news was then translated into English entitled “Parents Told to Contact Doctors Amid Indonesia Vaccine Scandal” by Novita Cahyadi. The interesting thing when the text is briefly observed is that the title is different from the source text. The Indonesian title focuses on Indonesian children while the English translation focuses on the word “vaccine scandal”. The writer then this is very interesting considering that news headlines are very strong to generate news opinion. Therefore, the writer evaluated the quality of the translation of this news comprehensively.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In translating a text, many factors are involved. These factors determine the quality of the translation produced by the translator. Different translators may generate different quality of translation of a text.

According to House (2015), the quality of translation is emphasized on several aspects of the text. Those are field, tenor, mode, and genre. Field involves the main material and social action carried in the translation text and source text. The two texts should have similarities in this aspect. The main material in the source text should not be different from the target text. The tenor emphasizes the author’s attitude in the text and the relationship between his social roles and social behavior. Mode refers to whether the author's delivery is simple or complex. Meanwhile, genre covers the general purpose of the author of the source text and the similarity text types from the source text and target text.

Moreover, Machali (2009: 153) proposes criteria for the quality of translation results are based on the accuracy of meaning reproduction, fairness of expression, terminology, and spelling. In detail, Machali (2009: 156) proposes her own assessment of the criteria for translation quality which she refers to indicators of translation assessment. The details are described as follows:

1. Almost perfect translation (86-90/A)  
It involves reasonable delivery, unlike translation, the absence of spelling errors, grammatical deviations, and terminology errors.
2. Excellent Translation (75-85/B)  
It includes the absence of meaning distortion, literal translation, and misuse of terms. It allows only one or two grammatical/spelling errors.
3. Good Translation (61-75/C)  
It allows the absence of meaning distortion, 15% of literal translation, no more than 15% of grammatical errors and idioms, one or two uses of non-standard term and only two grammatical/spelling errors.
4. Moderate translation (46-60/D)  
This criterion determines the translation is not natural, there are several a distortion of meaning, some stiff literal translations but not more than 25%. There are some idiomatic and grammatical errors are found not more than 25%. There are one or two uses of terms that are not standard/general or unclear.
5. Bad Translation (20-45/E)  
This criterion covers the translation strongly felt as a translated text, there are considerable rigid literal translations, meaning distortion and errors in terms are no more than 25%.

More concisely, Larson (1998) suggests the quality of translation is based on three features which are:



1. Accuracy  
Accuracy refers to the meaning equivalence from source text and target text. During the translation process, the translator may make mistakes in determining the meaning. Therefore, the assessment of accuracy must take the first place to be assessed.
2. Clarity  
Clarity means how easy the translated text is understood by the reader of the target text. The results of a translation might be accurate in all aspects, but may not be easily understood by the target readers. That is why this aspect of clarity is important to know whether the target text is communicative or not.
3. Naturalness  
Translation might be accurate and understandable to readers. However, whether the idioms or expressions in the target text are natural or not are determined from the natural features. In this natural aspect, Larson emphasizes grammatical forms and figurative language in the target text.

Of all the translation quality assessments submitted by House (2015), Larson (1998), and Machali (2009), there are two aspects that should not be left behind in the translation assessment. These aspects are the accuracy of meaning and the naturalness of the translation results. These two aspects then become the core of the translated text. If the translation text has accurate meaning to the source text and read as not the translation text, the quality of the translation text is considered good.

This research uses the concept of assessing the quality of translation proposed by Larson. The concept only refers to the accuracy, clarity, and naturalness of a text. While the concept of House and Machali, are more suitable to be applied to expressive texts that have more detailed assessments.

### **Previous Research**

Many studies have been conducted by looking at the quality of translation results. Some of these studies focus on news translation. Handoyo (2016) conducted research on news translation techniques on the BBC website and the quality of the translation results. The quality of translation is based on the accuracy, readability, and acceptance. Handoyo found that the techniques used were varied with different frequencies. The most frequently used techniques are amplification, reduction & omission, and compression. While the least frequently used are synonym and established equivalence. Furthermore, Handoyo said that the quality of translation can be said to be considered as moderate quality because of the reducing information and errors in interpreting several phrases.

Another study conducted by Sutantohadi (2017). He examined the quality translation of articles by English D3 Polytechnic students. His research was also based on the techniques and quality of translation and its relationship with the students' competencies. The quality of the translation was based on accuracy and the acceptability aspects. The results of his research showed that the accuracy of data was obtained at 62.86%. There was 20% of less inaccurate meaning and the remaining of 17.14% was for totally inaccurate meaning.

The latest study of translation quality assessment was also conducted by Ningsing et.al (2020). However, the object of their research is dissimilar to this research. Ningsing et.al (2020) analyzed the translation quality of Bound novel. They found that the translation quality of the novel was less accurate with the average points around 2.75, acceptable with the average points around 2.92 and readable with the average points around 3.0. This means that the quality of translation in Bound novel was good.



## Method

This research was qualitative descriptive. The data source was B2B (Berita 2 Bahasa) news website. Moreover, the data were two news articles which are an article entitled “*Vaksin Palsu Ancam Anak Indonesia Jadi Sorotan Media Asing*” by Ismail Gani and translated news article entitled “Parents Told to Contact Doctors Amid Indonesia Vaccine Scandal” by Novita Cahyadi published in B2B (Berita 2 Bahasa) news website.

The data analysis method used referential and translational and apportion methods since this research analyzed translation quality in which the measurement tool is two different languages and parts of the language itself (Sudaryanto, 2015: 15). The data were also analyzed by using Larson’s Theory (1998) of translation quality assessment consisting of three aspects namely accuracy, clarity, and naturalness.

## Findings and Discussion

The results of this study are merely based on the categories of translation quality proposed by Larson. After analyzing the source text in Indonesian and the target text in English, the writer found some errors described as follows:

### Accuracy

Larson (1998: 530) emphasizes that accuracy refers to a translation error. In this case, accuracy is the correctness of interpreting the source text and transferring it into the target text. The accuracy should be characterized by the absence of errors in interpreting the source text.

The news entitled *Vaksin Palsu Ancam Anak Indonesia jadi Sorotan Media Asing* translated by Novita Cahyadi cannot be considered 100% accurate. There is a meaning that deviates slightly from the actual meaning. Starting from the title, the translation performed by Novita Cahyadi has deviated considerably from the source language. Consider the title of the source text below:

Source text: *Vaksin Palsu Ancam Anak Indonesia jadi Sorotan Media Asing*

When examined, the focus of the news headline is that counterfeit vaccines in Indonesia endanger Indonesian children and are currently threatening them. This becomes the world's attention, making this problem even more agitated. Consider the title in English below:

Target text: *Parents Told to Contact Doctors Amid Indonesia Vaccine Scandal*

Back Translation: *Orang Tua Disarankan Menghubungi Dokter Ditengah Pemberitaan Vaksin Palsu*

At first glance, the focus of the two titles is quite different. The phrase ‘*anak Indonesia*’ as victims does not appear in the English translation, nor does the ‘*sorotan media asing*’ that is the most interesting thing that the source language author of the title wants to highlight. However, Novita Cahyadi translated it into a new text whose meaning can be considered 80% distorted.

Moving on to the content of the news, inaccuracies also appear in several paragraphs. Examples of such distorted meaning transfer are in paragraphs 2, 6, and 10. Consider the explanations below:

P#2



ST: *Polisi mengungkap sindikat kriminal pekan lalu.....*  
TT: *Police smashed a criminal syndicate last week.....*

P#6

ST: *“Jika vaksinasi perlu diulang kami akan melakukannya, tapi itu tidak mungkin.”.....*  
TT: *“If vaccinations need to be redone then we will do it, it's not impossible.”.....*

P#10

ST: *“..... nasional dan kecaman, bahkan Presiden RI Joko Widodo menuntut hukuman seberat mungkin.....”*  
TT: *“.....concern and condemnation, with Indonesian President Joko Widodo demanding the harshest punishment.....”*

In paragraph 2, the source text uses the word *'mengungkapkan'* while the translator uses the word *'smashed'*. These two words are not equivalent. If translated back, the word *'smashed'* is a verb that indicates an act of violence. *'Smash'* in Indonesian when associated with the verb as requested by the source text with the word *'mengungkap'* is defined as hitting, slamming, breaking, damaging, or even breaking something. Turning to paragraph 6, the error made by the translator is fatal. The clause *'tapi itu tidak mungkin'* is translated as *'it's not impossible'* having back translation *'it's not impossible.'* These two clauses have a much different meaning and are important in the news and should not be distorted since it is related to revaccination.

The lack of accuracy is also shown in one word that seems to reduce the emphasis of meaning in a sentence. The word *'bahkan'*, which was the original writer's choice to emphasize an important event, was translated into *'with'* by Novita. The word *'with'* in Indonesian means *'dengan'*. The words *'bahkan'* and *'dengan'* surely have different meanings in terms of emphasizing an event.

Based on the errors made by the translator in this news text, it is considered that there are inaccuracies in the translation that interfere with the overall meaning. However, in addition to the errors described above, the author found that the other paragraphs have been translated accurately.

## Clarity

Larson further explains what is meant by clarity is the ability of a translated text to be understood well and quickly by the target language reader. Larson added that a text might be accurate but the way the message delivered is not communicative. Therefore, in this paper, the author defines the term as readability.

Related to clarity or readability, the translation of the news text in this issue is communicative. The conveyance in the target language is understandable. Even writers who are not natives of the target language (in this case English) are capable of understanding what the original writer intended in the foreign language (in this case the writer read the translation before looking at the target text to analyze). In terms of diction, the translator has also tried as much as possible to use vocabulary that is often encountered in daily life. Moreover, there are no ambiguous or unclear words in the translated text. Therefore, the meaning of the target text transferred from the source text could be easily read by the reader.



### Naturalness

In this aspect, Larson (1998: 531) observes the grammatical form and language style of the target text. A translation might be accurate in meaning and understandable to the reader. However, the form and style of the translation might not necessarily match that of the target language.

Typically, news translations in English always use past tense markers to tell something that already happened (Bessie: 2017) or even until the news is revealed is still ongoing (can be in the form of past tense, present perfect). This is due to the characteristic of news text is reporting something that has happened. However, the translation of the news in this paper, there is something odd or not in accordance with the English form. This is inappropriate use of tenses in the fourth paragraph (4). Consider the sentence below:

Source text: *Kementerian Kesehatan RI bekerja sama dengan Polri telah menetapkan skala prioritas untuk mengatasi penyebaran vaksin palsu. Badan Pengawas Obat dan Makanan (BPOM) telah menyita vaksin palsu hampir dari 30 klinik kesehatan, tetapi belum diketahui seberapa jauh sindikat itu mendistribusikannya.*

Target text: *Indonesia's health ministry is working with police to determine the scale of the problem. The national food and drugs agency has confiscated vaccines from nearly 30 health clinics, but it is not yet known how far the syndicate reached.*

The first error lies in the tense marker of the verbal phrase *bekerja sama*. By Novita Cahyadi, this verb is translated as *is working with*. This is assumed that when the reader is reading this news, the police are working with the ministry (in the real sense). When looking at the next words, after phrase *bekerja sama* there is the verb *telah menetapkan* that means it already happened marked by the word *telah* in Indonesia. The question then is whether *bekerja sama* or *menetapkan skala* happened first. Certainly, when critically examined, the ministry would first invite the police to cooperate and then set the priority scale. In English, the proper use of the present continuous tense is when something is being done and at the same time it is being said and is not used to mark a time that occurs before the event that follows. Hence, the conclusion is that the translation of the phrase *bekerja sama* into *is working with* is inappropriate since the incident happened well before the original writer wrote the news report.

The second type of error is also found in the verb *menetapkan*. If the first error lies on the event that comes first, then this error lies in the event after the word *bekerjasama*. The phrase *telah menetapkan* is a verbal phrase that expresses an action that generates a result. The translator then translated it into *to determine*. In this case, *to determine* is dissimilar to the phrase *telah menetapkan*. The word *telah* in English could be expressed by the word *has/have/had* followed by a third form verb (past/present perfect tense) or marked by past tense. If the translator used *to determine*, this is assumed that the ministry and the police have not generated results in their cooperation. Meanwhile, what the original writer expressed is that the cooperation has been successful. Therefore, the use of the tense marker for the translation of the phrase *telah menetapkan* is incorrect.

The final error of the fourth paragraph is in the phrase *belum diketahui*. In the target text, this phrase is translated as *it is not yet known*. The result of the analysis becomes as follows; First, like the first error above, the use of present tense (it is not...) is not appropriate for news reporting; Second, the word *yet* in this translation is appropriate to express the word *belum* in the source text. However, the use of the English word *yet* must be followed by the correct tense marker. Commonly, in English, the word *yet* is followed by a perfect tense marker and placed at the end of the sentence. For example, the sentence “Yeni **has not paid** her debt yet” is perfect tense sentence of English where the word *yet*



is put at the back. The conclusion is that the use of the word *yet* is incorrect because it is not followed by the appropriate time marker.

In contrast to the grammatical form, the writing style of the target text is considered appropriate. This is indicated by the shortening (in this case summarizing) some sentences in source text. However, the shortening does not distort the meaning. This is done to follow the language style of the English language. Commonly, the language style of English is to the point or direct and straightforward. Native English speakers usually have a low context culture where they do not want to waste time by saying unnecessary and repeated things. In contrast to Indonesian which has a language style that is too wordy. In this case, the Indonesian culture is high context where Indonesians like to add more words to the text (written or spoken) to increase the content or extend the time (Saputri and Saraswati: 2017).

## Conclusion

As the result of the globalization era, information from various countries with different languages can be accessed easily. However, not all people understand the language. Thus, translation requests are often needed to convey information, especially news even printed or non-printed news. Due to the condition, many translators have instantly emerged. Therefore, determining the translation quality is very important to see the translator's ability in conveying source text meaning to be more reliable. If it has been determined, many people will use and trust his services. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the accuracy of the news translated by Novita Cahyadi is still deficient because there are several errors in conveying meaning. While on the readability aspect, the target text is qualified. Although less accurate, the message is delivered communicatively and understandably. However, this does not mean that the translated text is 100% in accordance with the standard target language. Looking at the aspect of naturalness, the translated text has grammatical errors since it applies inappropriate tenses in the target language. Apart from that error, the language style is similar to the target language style. The translator seems to try to make long-winded Indonesian sentences concise as in accordance with the target language speaker's style.

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