

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

English functions as an international language that plays a vital role in global communication across various fields such as education, business, technology, law, and culture (Mustofa, 2024). In Indonesia, English is taught as a compulsory subject from secondary education to higher education. Students of the English Study Program are therefore expected to master English not only for daily communication but also for academic and professional purposes.

In higher education, English learning focuses on four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, writing is closely related to translation activities. Translation is an academic skill that requires students to transfer meaning accurately from the source language (English) to the target language (Indonesian). It is not merely a process of replacing words but involves understanding meaning, context, and cultural nuances to ensure accurate message transfer.

Translation accuracy refers to the degree to which the meaning of the source text is conveyed correctly in the target text. According to Sari et al. (2023), accurate translation among Indonesian EFL students requires addressing lexical and grammatical errors to achieve meaning equivalence beyond literal transfer. Inaccurate translation may distort meaning and mislead readers, particularly in academic texts that require precise interpretation.

In the digital era, many students rely on machine translation tools such as Google Translate. Although these tools provide convenience, overreliance on them without critical evaluation may reduce students' awareness of translation accuracy. Previous studies (Sari et al., 2025; Baihaqi, 2024) indicate that Indonesian EFL students often rely on Google Translate for writing tasks without critically evaluating its accuracy, leading to reduced translation competence.

Based on preliminary observations of fifth-semester students of the English Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan (UNIMED), students demonstrated varying levels of awareness when evaluating English–Indonesian translations. Some students were able to identify inaccurate translations and justify their evaluations, while others relied on literal translation or intuition. This condition indicates that students’ awareness of translation accuracy remains inconsistent and is influenced by various linguistic and cognitive factors.

Therefore, this study focuses on investigating EFL students’ awareness of English–Indonesian translation accuracy and identifying the factors that influence it. Understanding students’ awareness is essential, as it directly affects their ability to evaluate and produce accurate translations.

Based on these considerations, this research is entitled:

“EFL Students’ Awareness of English–Indonesian Translation Accuracy: A Case Study on the Fifth-Semester Students of the English Study Program at UNIMED.”

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, this research is directed to address the following problems:

1. How aware are the students towards English-Indonesian translation accuracy?
2. Why are they aware the way they are?

C. The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify how aware the students are towards English–Indonesian translation accuracy, the findings revealed that the students showed varying levels of awareness. Some students demonstrated high awareness, shown by their careful attention to meaning equivalence, grammatical accuracy, and contextual appropriateness. They could recognize translation errors and revise their work to achieve accurate meaning transfer. Meanwhile, others showed lower awareness, often translating word-for-word without considering context or naturalness in the target language
2. To know why they are aware the way they are, the study found that students' awareness was influenced by several factors such as their translation experience, exposure to both English and Indonesian texts, and the teaching methods used in class. Students who frequently practiced translation and received feedback tended to show higher awareness, while those with limited experience or reliance on machine translation tools like Google Translate often demonstrated lower awareness.

D. Scopes of Study

This study is limited to fifth-semester students of the English Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan (UNIMED). The focus is on students' awareness of English–Indonesian translation accuracy, particularly their ability to identify inaccurate translations and explain the reasons for their evaluations. The data are obtained through task-based translation evaluation and questionnaires.

E. Significances of Study

This study is significant both theoretically and practically, as outlined below:

1. Theoretical Significance

- a. Educational Contribution: This research provides insights into students' awareness of translation accuracy, which contributes to the theoretical understanding of translation pedagogy and its role in language learning.
- b. Translation Practices: The findings enhance academic knowledge on common challenges faced by students in translation, thereby enriching the body of literature on translation accuracy and student awareness.
- c. Further Research: The study serves as a foundation for future investigations into translation education and awareness, encouraging deeper exploration of the factors influencing students' translation skills and perceptions of accuracy.

2. Practical Significance

- a. Educational Application: The results can inform educators about the effectiveness of current teaching methods, supporting the development of more targeted instructional strategies to improve translation accuracy.
- b. Policy Implications: The study may influence curriculum design by highlighting the importance of fostering awareness of translation accuracy, which is crucial for students' professional development in translation-related careers.