

A STUDY OF THE MISTAKES IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE INDONESIAN MINOR THESIS' TITLES IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION STUDY PROGRAM IN POLITEKNIK LPKIA BANDUNG

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Abstract:

Students in the Business Administration Study Program in LPKIA Bandung must do their final projects as one of the requirements before graduating from the D-3 program. This final project is called minor thesis and is written in the Indonesian language. It is a custom practice that the titles and abstracts of the minor thesis be written in both Indonesian and English languages. As the students mostly have limitation in their capability to write in English, many of them just translate the titles and abstracts, for example by using the Google's translation services. Hence, there is a great possibility the translation will be incorrect; some words or expressions may not be translated correctly to conduct the originally intended meanings of the authors. Additionally, it sometimes happens that students just misperceive the meanings of certain words, for instance, the Indonesian word 'pengelolaan' may simply be used and interpreted as 'management' while students may actually want to discuss about 'penanganan' or 'handling' of a certain task or procedure. This study uses the descriptive analysis method to unveil common mistakes made by students when translating their minor thesis' titles from Indonesian to English, to discuss and offer better English choices of words for their translation, and to provide a reference so that students in the future can avoid similar mistakes when they write their minor thesis' titles in English.



Keyword: English translation, titles, minor thesis

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INTRODUCTION

Institut Digital Ekonomi LPKIA Bandung, formerly called Politeknik Komputer Niaga LPKIA, is a vocational higher-education in Bandung, Indonesia. One of its study program is Business Administration, where the students have to produce a minor thesis as their final projects. Almost all these are written in Indonesian, but the abstracts must be written both in Indonesian and in English. Because the abstracts

must be translated into English, the thesis' titles must also be translated into English. Then, because English is a foreign language and regarded as a difficult language, the theses authors often make mistakes when translating their thesis' titles. This research aims to find out the three top categories of common mistakes in their thesis' titles so that anticipation and preparation can be done in the future to avoid or reduce similar mistakes. In an era of globalization, effective communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries is paramount. As the English language continues to serve as the lingua franca of the global business world, the accuracy of translations from native languages takes on a newfound significance. In this context, our study embarks on an intriguing journey into the intricacies of translating Indonesian minor thesis titles in the field of Business Administration into English.

The title of a thesis serves as its initial gateway, offering a glimpse into the research's focus, scope, and significance. However, the nuances and complexities embedded within different languages can often pose challenges during the translation process, potentially leading to unintended errors or misrepresentations. This study aims to shed light on these intricacies by systematically analyzing the mistakes that commonly occur in the English translations of Indonesian minor thesis titles in the domain of Business Administration.

Our investigation delves into the realms of linguistics, translation theory, and business academia. By scrutinizing the errors encountered in these translations, we seek to better understand the underlying linguistic and cultural factors that influence them. In doing so, we hope to contribute valuable insights to the field of translation studies and, more specifically, to the realm of academic research in Business Administration.

As we embark on this journey through the intricacies of translation, our objective is not just to highlight the errors but also to propose strategies and recommendations for improving the accuracy and fidelity of English translations. By bridging these linguistic gaps, we aim to facilitate clearer and more effective communication among researchers, educators, and professionals in the globalized world of Business Administration.

Join us as we explore the fascinating terrain where language, culture, and academia intersect, uncovering the nuances that lie beneath the surface of thesis titles and striving for enhanced precision and clarity in cross-cultural communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

However, this translation may not be suitable to use in the students' minor thesis' titles. Why? Let us see the definition of the word '*kelola*'. In one of the best Indonesian dictionaries, Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesia Dictionary) the word '*kelola*' is a verb which means *menyelenggarakan (pemerintahan)*, *mengurus (perusahaan, proyek)*, *menjalankan yayasan* or in English to manage (government), to run (a company, project), to manage (a foundation). (Tim Penyusun Kamus, 1996).

Then, let us see the second definition of 'management', given by Griffin who defines it as a set of activities that include the acts of making plans and decisions, organizing, leading and also doing control of an organization's human resources, finance, physical and also information, with the objectives to achieve organizational targets effectively and efficiently (Griffin, 2013).

A problem arises, because when students translate the word *'pengelolaan'* into 'management' in their minor thesis' titles, most of them DO NOT actually mean to talk about planning, decision making, organizing and controlling (PDOC). This can be seen in the following title examples, *'Administrasi Pengelolaan Barang'*. After reading the contents of the minor thesis, it is found that by this phrase the author actually intends to talk ONLY about how administration is done or handled in relations to the goods stored in a warehouse. The author actually wants to describe how data are taken down, processed, distributed, stored in achieves and that sort of things.

Hence, the title had better not be translated as 'Administration of Goods Management', but 'The administration of Goods *Handling*' because the author does not actually intent to discuss the POAC functions, but only to discuss how the administration is handled or executed.

Another alternative for the above case is actually to change the title *'Administrasi Pengelolaan Barang'* into for example *'Administrasi Penanganan Barang'* which literally translates into 'Goods Handling Administration' or 'the Administration of Goods Handling'.

In Kamus Indonesia Inggris by John M. Echols and Hassan Shadily (Echols & Shadily, 1992) the word *'kelola'* is translated as to 'carry out' or 'execute' a job. Thus, *'Pengelolaan Administrasi Kepegawaian'* can be translated as 'the Execution of Personnel Administration'.

METHOD

This research is descriptive, done by accumulating 164 thesis' titles written by students during the period of 2019 until 2021. Those titles were then studied one by one and similar mistakes were noted down and put in different groups. The three groups containing the most notes of mistakes were selected, discussed briefly, and later a suggestion was given that these three groups be considered to represent the most common mistakes found in students' thesis' titles mistakes, and more actions be taken in the future so that thesis authors and supervising teachers could avoid similar mistakes.

Brief explanation regarding the mistakes mentioned above is also given in this article, which can be expanded later to become some sort of teaching and learning materials for students who will have to write thesis' abstracts and titles in the English language in the future.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the study, the three groups containing the most common mistakes found in students' thesis' titles are:

Table 1: Three Most Common Mistakes in Thesis' Titles

Choice of Words	33%	54 / 164 cases
Position of Adjectives	28%	45 / 164 cases

Use of the Preposition 'OF'	11% 16 / 164 cases
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Choice of Words

In this case, students managed to translate an Indonesian words into English, but the choice of words is not correct. The most frequently mistranslated words are:

Table 2: 10 Most Frequently Mistranslated Words

<i>Pengelolaan</i>
<i>Pengajuan</i>
<i>Masuk</i>
<i>Bagian</i>
<i>(Bagian) Umum</i>
<i>Bidang</i> <i>(Kepegawaian)</i>
<i>Pengeluaran (Bahan</i> <i>Baku)</i>

The first word to be discussed is the word '***pengelolaan***', which is used in 33 titles. In 26 titles (79%) '***pengelolaan***' is translated as 'management'. In 7 titles (21%) it is translated as 'handling'.

So far, this translation seems alright. Most dictionaries or translators, for example <https://translate.google.co.id> also translate '***pengelolaan***' as 'management'.

The second word to be discussed is the word '***pengajuan***', which is used in at least five theses and translated by students as '**submission**', as follows: '*administrasi pengajuan perjalanan dinas, pengajuran cuti tahunan, pengajuran dana kegiatan, pengajuran pembelian barang*'; translated as "official travel **submission** administration, **submission** of annual leave, **submission** of activities funds, **submission** of goods purchase'.

In Kamus Indonesia Inggris (Echols & Shadily, 1992) the word '*mengajukan*' is translated as 'set forward' or 'propose'.

Thus, the better translation would be 'the administration of **proposing** an official trip, **proposing** for an annual leave, **proposing** for program funding, **proposing** for goods purchase'. It is better to avoid using the words 'administration of **submission**' because the author is discussing more than just the action of submitting a document.

The third word to be discussed is the word '***masuk***', which is used at least twice and translated as 'entry', i.e. in phrases '*surat masuk*' and '*barang masuk*' which are translated as '**entry** letter' and 'goods **entry**' respectively.

Rather than saying 'entry letter' and 'goods entry', it is better to say 'incoming letter' and 'received goods' or 'incoming goods'.

A reference for 'incoming letter' is as follow: incoming mail refers to the mail, packages, or similar items which are received through postal service, private carrier or courier services (Law Insider, 2022).

A reference for 'received goods' is as follows: received goods refers to the goods which is received by a seller for which the seller has not yet been invoiced. (Law Insider, 2022).

The forth word to be discussed is the word '*bagian*'. In students' thesis' titles, the word '*bagian*' is translated twice as '**part**', that is: 'Administrative Governance **Part**' and '**Part** Governance Administration'.

Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia explains that '*bagian*' means '*cabang dari sesuatu pekerjaan, jawatan dan sebagainya*' ('*bagian*' means a branch of a job, office and the kind. (Tim Penyusun Kamus, 1996)

Therefore, '*bagian*' actually refers to any of the work division in an organization and may be translated as '**department**', '**division**', or '**section**'.

The better translation for the terms being discussed here would perhaps be 'Administrative Governance Department'.

The fifth word to be discussed is the word '*umum*' in the phrase '*Bagian Umum*' which is translated as '**Public** Department'.

In Kamus Indonesia Inggris, '*umum*' is translated as '**general**', '**common**', and '**public**' (Echols & Shadily, 1992).

The question is, if the term relates to a work division in an organization, should it be called 'Public Department', 'Common Department', or 'General Department'?

Google Translate online service translates '**General** Affairs Department' as '**departemen umum**', and the term General Affairs is also found in the industries at present days.

More information about what a Department of General Affairs is in charge of can be obtain in <https://cidea.org/en/department-of-general-affairs>.

The sixth word to be discussed is the word '*Bidang*' in the phrase '*Bidang Kepegawaian*' for instance. It is translated as 'Employee Field'.

Kamus Umum Indonesia Inggris translate '*bidang*' as 'ground, field, **department**'. (Wojowasito, 2976). Again, as the minor thesis author intends to talk about a work division in a company, then '*Bidang Kepegawaian*' would better be translated as 'Personnel **Department**'.

The seventh word to be discussed is the word '*pengeluaran*' in the phrase '*pengeluaran bahan baku*', which is translated as 'raw materials **expenditure**'.

Cambridge Dictionary explains '**expenditure**' as 'the total **amount of money spent** by a person or an organization'.

In his minor thesis, the author is discussing about how raw material which is stored in a store-room is taken out because a certain division within the company or because a certain party outside the company needs the raw material.

Therefore, the work 'expenditure' should not be the correct translation.

Google Translate online service translate '*pengeluaran barang dari gudang*' as '**releasing** goods from warehouse'.

Thus, '*pengeluaran bahan baku*' had better be translated as 'raw material **releasing**'.

Position of Adjectives

In English, the position of adjectives is before or to the left of nouns, e.g. interesting articles, genuine products. In those phrases, the adjective 'interesting' comes before the noun 'articles' and the adjective 'genuine' comes before the noun products. Learn English (British Council, 2022) explains that "most adjectives can be used in front of a noun".

This research reveals that in 45 out of 164 theses' titles (28%) students misplaced the adjectives by putting the adjectives AFTER the nouns or to the RIGHT of the nouns, for examples: **selection employees, Department Operational, and Administrative Sales Procedure**. The correct positions should be **employee selection, Operation Department, and Sales Administration Procedure**.

This happens because in the Indonesian language the position of an adjective is usually AFTER or to the right of a noun. This is known as the D-M rule (hukum Diterangkan-Menerangkan) or the Modified-Modifier law, in which the modified word can be a noun while the modifier can be an adjective. The D-M rule states that in a compound word or sentence it is necessary to mention the word that is being explained before the word that explains (Mulyo, 2018). So, there is a contradiction in terms of placing an adjective and a noun in English compared to in Indonesian. Why many students mis-placed the position of a modifying-adjective in relation to its modified-noun should be easily understood.

Use of the Preposition 'OF'

In English, the preposition '**of**' is used to mean 'belonging to', 'relating to', or 'connected with'; it is used to indicate reference; and to indicate an 'amount' or 'number'. (TALKENGLISH.com, 2022).

The pattern '**the + noun + of + noun**' can be found very commonly used in English, for examples: '**the rule of the game, the first page of the book, the administration of vehicle sales**', etc.

This research unveils at least 16 titles that fail to meet this pattern of using the preposition '**OF**' (11%), for examples: administration procedure employee's annual leave, administration vehicle sales, administration procedure outgoing letters, etc.

The correct phrases would be 'the administration procedure **OF** employee's annual leave, the administration **OF** vehicles sales, the administration procedure **OF** outgoing letters, etc.

Notably in nearly all cases the proposition 'of' is missing in phrases containing the word 'administration' or 'procedure'.

CONCLUSIONS

The three most common mistakes found in theses' titles written by students in the Business Administration Study Program in LPKIA Bandung are (1) choice of words, (2) position of adjectives, which should come before nouns, and (3) the use of preposition 'of' in phrases like 'the administration of vehicles sales'. These mistakes arise when students try to translate the titles from Indonesian to English. It is recommended that before students write or translate their theses' titles from Indonesian to English, they should study and understand how to avoid the three common mistakes just mentioned and to use the right choices of words so as to produce better theses with better English titles.

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