

EXPLORING SYNTACTIC CHALLENGES IN INDONESIAN-ENGLISH INTERPRETING: A STUDY ON EFL INTERPRETING STUDENTS

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Abstract

The study investigates the challenges faced by EFL interpreting students of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (UNG) in translating Indonesian to English, focusing on the impact of syntactic structures, grammatical accuracy, and lexical choices on interpretation clarity. Using Gile's (2020) syntactic analysis model, the research analyzes students' translations to identify common errors, including tense shifts, inconsistent pronoun usage, and unidiomatic phrasing. The findings reveal that these issues often result from differences between Indonesian and English sentence structure, and limited understanding of English idiomatic expressions. For example, errors such as translating gender-neutral pronouns inaccurately or misinterpreting tense and modal constructions distort the source message's meaning. The study underscores the need for targeted training in syntactic analysis, idiomatic adaptation, and cross-linguistic processing to improve EFL students' ability to produce accurate and fluent interpretations. This research contributes to the understanding of linguistic and cognitive challenges in EFL interpreting.

Keywords: Syntactic Challenges; Indonesian-English Interpreting; English as Foreign Language (EFL).

INTRODUCTION

Interpreting is translating spoken or sign language from one language to another while maintaining the original message's purpose, to facilitate real-time communication between speakers of different languages. According to Pöschker (2004), interpreting is a mode of translation in which target speech (TS) delivery can only be completed once since the source speech (SS) is only said once. Furthermore, Mobit (2014) defined interpreting as an oral translation process that allows the listener to instantly grasp and comprehend the meaning of the speaker's message. From those opinions, it can be concluded that interpreting is a form of translation that needs an immediate understanding of spoken messages by the listener as an interpreter because it involves real-time speech.

By reason of the need to understand the source speech and then transfer it to the source language without delay, in the EFL context, the process of interpreting is usually considered challenging. Omulu, et. al (2022) in their research discovered some challenges often encountered by EFL students. They are lack of vocabulary, difficulty in finding equivalent words, difficulty in

understanding pronunciation, topic mastery, time limitation, anxiety, as well as concentration. Along with this opinion, Moneus, et. all (2024) stated that EFL students commonly face language difficulties in interpreting. Those language difficulties include problems in translating terms, handling long sentences, and problems with the fast speed of speech. To sum up, interpreting in the EFL context presents a range of challenges that significantly impact students' ability to convey meaning from one language to another language effectively.

To facilitate the accuracy of interpreting results, EFL students need to have a high level of proficiency in both source language and target language, in this particular case Indonesian and English. Mastery of both languages will allow students to comprehend the linguistics that covers the sentence structure and meaning, topic of the speech, idiomatic expression used in the speech, and cultural references that may not have direct translations. This is along with the idea stated by Namy (in Afrina and Ardi: 2021) who said that translation and interpreting involve not just linking the language gaps, but also addressing cultural differences. In conclusion, achieving a high level of proficiency in both Indonesian and English is essential for EFL students to ensure accurate interpreting results, as it enables them to deal with linguistic aspects and cultural differences effectively.

In the English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (UNG), Interpreting is taught as an elective course in the 5th semester. In this course, the students are provided with basic knowledge, experience, and skills regarding interpreting. The materials cover the concept of interpreting, the types of interpreting, basic skills in interpreting, consecutive interpreting, and simultaneous interpreting. In addition to that basic knowledge, the students are also equipped with some interpreting exercises with suitable methods and strategies to help them practice to become prospective interpreters.

However, in practice, EFL students of ELESP UNG usually face some difficulties in interpreting, particularly when it comes to understanding and handling sentence structure. This difficulty happens because of the complexity of both SS and TS, where variations in syntax can lead to confusion and misinterpretation. Students often struggle with long sentences that have multiple clauses, making it difficult to understand and accurately interpret during real-time speech. Furthermore, differences in grammatical rules and sentence construction between English and Indonesian can also complicate their ability to transfer messages accurately.

In linguistics, the study of sentence structure is known as syntax. Syntax plays an important role in the study of interpreting results as it influences how interpreters process and convey information between SS and TS. In the context of Indonesian EFL students who learn to interpret, syntax which refers to the

composition of words and phrases to form sentences, affects their ability to deal with languages that have different structural characteristics. They have to possess the competence in comprehending Indonesian sentence structure, as well as the ability to transfer it to the appropriate English sentence structure without changing the intended meaning.

Based on the previous explanation, the gap in this research is minimal related research which specifically examines syntactic, grammatical and lexical aspects that affect the process of Indonesian to English interpreting in real time by EFL students. Although previous literature documented more general common challenges such as vocabulary problems, pronunciation errors, and timing problems it has not directly and systematically examined how the differences between Indonesian language structures and those of English affect students' clarity in their interpretation and or accuracy. And this study aims to address the same and realizes what implication it gives for the EFL in terms of interpreter practice and training through its perspective on how different grammar and sentence forms impact interpreting results. Therefore, this study aims to explore the challenges encountered by EFL interpreting students when translating from Indonesian to English, emphasizing how syntactic structures, grammatical accuracy, and lexical choices influence the clarity of their interpretations.

Literature Review

The Concept Interpreting

Interpreting is a complex cognitive activity that involves transforming spoken or signed messages from one language to another in real time. It is different from translation, which typically refers to written communication. Similar to this argument, Masduki (2020: 1) also stated that language interpreting, or interpretation, is the cognitive process of enabling oral and sign-language communication, either simultaneously or consecutively, among users of different languages. This skill requires not only a high level of proficiency in both languages but also strong listening, memory, and analytical skills.

As previously mentioned, interpreting can occur in various modes, including simultaneous interpreting, where the interpreter conveys the message as the speaker is talking, and consecutive interpreting, where the interpreter waits for the speaker to finish before delivering the message in the target language. Some research studies this area of interpreting. For instance, Ferdowsi and Razmi (2024) studied the impact of anxiety on the performance of interpreting students, particularly in consecutive interpreting. Their study employed qualitative research through semi-structured interviews with 30 Iranian students, identifying various factors that influence their anxiety level and suggest

potential strategies for reducing anxiety. In addition, Al-Jabri, Ali, & Alhasan (2024) investigated the interpreting strategies employed by television interpreters to translate English proper nouns into Arabic, specifically analyzing King Charles III's political speeches. Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods, the study categorizes proper nouns based on their internal syntactic structures. The findings reveal that interpreters often use some strategies, such as omission, compression, transliteration, and combination of transliteration and translation.

Moreover, several studies have explored different aspects of interpreting. For instance, Pöchhacker (2004) defines interpreting as an oral translation activity that facilitates communication between speakers of different languages. Fügen et al. (2007) further elaborate on this by emphasizing the importance of accuracy and clarity in interpreting to avoid misunderstandings. In a study by Ma (2013), the relationship between interpreting direction and performance was examined, highlighting how language proficiency and syntactic differences can affect the quality of interpretations.

Additionally, research by Liu (2020) discusses the professionalization of interpreting and its unique characteristics compared to translation, providing a historical context for interpreter training. The challenges faced by interpreters, particularly EFL students, are also documented in various studies that identify issues such as vocabulary limitations and difficulties with real-time processing (Omolu & Mappewali, 2020). These studies collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of interpreting and its significance in facilitating effective communication across languages.

Syntactic Analysis in Interpreting

Syntactic analysis plays a crucial role in understanding the process and outcomes of interpreting. It involves examining the structure and grammar of sentences in both the source language and target language to ensure accurate and coherent translation. Several recent studies have explored the importance of syntactic analysis in interpreting.

Ma (2021) examines how differences in sentence structure between English and Chinese affect the performance and strategies employed by translation and interpreting students during sight translation tasks. The study highlights the extra cognitive load placed on students working between languages with contrasting syntactic structures. Furthermore, Gile (2020) proposes a model of interpreting that includes a "syntactic analysis" phase, where the interpreter breaks down the source language sentence into its constituent parts to understand the relationships between words and phrases. This analysis informs the reformulation of the message in the target language. In addition, Kalina (2019) identifies "syntactic processing" as one of the key strategies

employed by interpreters to manage linguistic differences between languages. Interpreters may employ techniques like restructuring or reordering sentences to align with the target language's syntactic conventions.

In conclusion, syntactic analysis is a fundamental aspect of interpreting that enables interpreters to navigate linguistic complexities, maintain accuracy, and deliver coherent and natural-sounding translations.

Methodology

This study used qualitative method that is considered suitable to answer the research questions of this study. Three EFL students of ELESPP, UNG who have enrolled interpreting course were taken as participants. The data were collected from the recording of the participants' Indonesian-English interpreting results through note taking. This data collection technique helped to provide syntactic structure employed by the participants, particularly the EFL interpreting students. The collected data were then analyzed through several steps. Firstly, the recorded data were transcribed, then identified and categorized based on the syntactic structure that appeared in students' interpreting results. Secondly, the categorized data were analyzed by using syntactic analysis. Finally, the data were interpreted to give understanding about how syntactic structure influence the accuracy of EFL students' interpreting results.

Findings

This analysis examines the syntactic components and accuracy of Indonesian-to-English interpretation by EFL students. The analysis applies Gile's (2020) syntactic analysis model to break down the source and target sentences, exploring how different syntactic structures—such as subject consistency, choice structures, predicate tone, and lexical accuracy—affect the clarity and precision of the interpretation. By closely comparing the students' translation choices, the analysis highlights the strengths and challenges faced by EFL students of UNG in maintaining syntactic fidelity, emphasizing the role of sentence structure in ensuring accurate and natural translations. Through this detailed evaluation, the study reveals how these syntactic elements contribute to the overall effectiveness of interpretation, providing insights into how students can improve their translation strategies for more accurate communication.

EFL interpreting students face challenges when translating from Indonesian to English due to key syntactic differences. From the data gained in this study, common issues include inconsistent subject and pronoun use, especially with Indonesian's gender-neutral pronouns, leading to unintended gender assumptions in English. Students also struggle with passive voice and adverbial placement, often creating awkward phrasing that reduces clarity. Direct translations of prepositional phrases and tenses further disrupt grammatical

accuracy and alter meaning. Additionally, translating Indonesian expressions without adjustments often results in non-idiomatic English, highlighting the need for careful syntactic adaptation.

Subject and Pronoun Use

There are frequent inconsistencies in subject choice and pronoun use, especially when dealing with Indonesian gender-neutral pronouns. Students may introduce gender-specific pronouns in English, altering the original neutrality of the sentence. It could be seen from the data below.

Data 3:

SS: *...apakah dia wanita atau pria, atau dia dari lingkungan intelektual atau tidak intelektual, mereka sama-sama mendapatkan 24 jam.*

TS: *...whether she is a woman or a man, whether he came from intellectual or not intellectual environment, they get the same 24 hours.*

In data 3, student 1 translated the gender-neutral pronoun *dia* as *she*, introducing a gender assumption that was not present in the original Indonesian. This shift not only alters the neutrality but also adds an unintended specificity to the subject. This pattern highlights a recurring challenge for students when interpreting gender-neutral terms in English. The same problem was also found in data 5. In Data 5, *dia* (singular) is translated as *they* by student 2, causing a shift from singular to plural that affects specificity

Data 5:

SS: *Tidak peduli apakah dia seorang berpendidikan atau tidak, mereka akan mendapatkan perlakuan yang sama.*

TS: *Whether they are educated or not, they will get the same treat.*

Additionally, the use of abstract noun as a subject also found in EFL student's interpreting result. The data is presented below:

Data 1:

SS: *Manusia di muka bumi ini diberikan oleh Allah SWT tiap hari hanya 24 jam.*

TS: *Human life in this earth that was given by Allah SWT everyday only 24 hours.*

In data 1, student 1 used *Human life* as the subject. This subject refers specifically to *humans*—individual people, emphasizing that each person on earth receives 24 hours daily. The SS focuses on *humans* as concrete, individual entities, underscoring the shared experience of time among all people. In the TS, the student choose to use *Human life* as the subject to translate *Manusia* in SS. The shift from *humans* to *human life* changes the meaning significantly. *Human life* is

an abstract concept, implying the overall existence of humanity rather than specific individuals. By referring to *human life* rather than *humans*, the TS loses the individual focus present in the SS.

From the analysis, it can be concluded that the subject choices made by EFL students when translating Indonesian to English can significantly affect the accuracy and focus of the interpretation. Indonesian often uses gender-neutral terms like "*dia*" (he/she) or broad expressions like *manusia* (humans), whereas English can introduce gender-specific pronouns or abstract concepts, which may alter the original meaning. For example, translating *dia* as *she* introduces unintended gender assumptions, while using *human life* instead of *manusia* shifts the focus from individual people to a more abstract idea. These choices can distort the intent of the source sentence, reducing accuracy by introducing assumptions or unnecessary abstractions. Maintaining neutrality, such as using *they* for *dia* and directly translating *manusia* as *humans*, helps preserve the original message's clarity and intent.

Subject-Verb Agreement

Based on the data collected in this study, it could be seen that subject-verb agreement also challenges the students in interpreting. These challenges occurred when students fail to match singular subjects with singular verbs or plural subjects with plural verbs. These mismatches are particularly common when Indonesian plural forms, which often rely on context rather than explicit markers, are translated into English, where singular and plural distinctions are more rigidly defined. From the data, it can be seen that in student 2's interpreting result, *dia* (singular, meaning *he/she*) is inaccurately rendered as *they* (plural) (data 5); and in student 3's interpreting result, *cities* is translated incorrectly as the singular *city* (data 7). The data analysis regarding subject-verb agreement are presented as follow:

Data 5:

SS: *Tidak peduli apakah dia seorang berpendidikan atau tidak, mereka akan mendapatkan perlakuan yang sama.*

TS: *Whether they are educated or not, they will get the same treat.*

In Data 5, the original Indonesian sentence *Tidak peduli apakah dia seorang berpendidikan atau tidak, mereka akan mendapatkan perlakuan yang sama* contains the singular subject *dia* (*he/she*) and the verb phrase *seorang berpendidikan atau tidak* (*is educated or not*). The sentence later uses the plural pronoun *mereka* (*they*) to refer to a collective group that will receive *perlakuan yang sama* (*the same treatment*). In the student's English translation, *Whether they are educated or not, they will get the same treat*, a subject misinterpretation occurs: *they* is used in place of a singular pronoun (*he/she*) for *dia*, introducing a plural form that alters

the original sentence's intended specificity. Additionally, *treat* is incorrectly used instead of *treatment*, which changes the meaning. This shift from singular to plural impacts subject-verb coherence and potentially confuses the reader about whether the sentence refers to a single person or multiple people, diminishing the accuracy of the interpretation.

Data 7:

SS: *Beberapa kota terpadat di dunia tenggelam, termasuk Alexandria, Kairo, Mumbai, Shanghai, Bangkok, dan tentu saja Jakarta.*

TS: *Some of the world's most populous city survived, including Alexandria, Kairo, Mumbai, Shanghai, Bangkok, and of course Jakarta.*

In Data 7, the original Indonesian sentence *Beberapa kota terpadat di dunia tenggelam, termasuk Alexandria, Kairo, Mumbai, Shanghai, Bangkok, dan tentu saja Jakarta* includes a plural subject, *Beberapa kota terpadat di dunia* (Some of the world's most populous cities), with *beberapa* (some) clearly indicating a plural context. The verb *tenggelam* (are sinking) is in a continuous form, aligning correctly with this plural subject. Modifiers such as *termasuk Alexandria, Kairo, Mumbai, Shanghai, Bangkok, dan tentu saja Jakarta* (including Alexandria, Cairo, Mumbai, Shanghai, Bangkok, and of course Jakarta) provide additional information about the subject. However, in the student's English translation, *Some of the world's most populous city survived, including Alexandria, Cairo, Mumbai, Shanghai, Bangkok, and of course Jakarta*, a subject misinterpretation occurs: the singular city is used instead of the correct plural cities, contradicting the plural context signaled by *some*. Additionally, the verb *survived* (past tense) does not match the original continuous verb *tenggelam*, which refers to an ongoing action (*are sinking*). These errors disrupt the accuracy and coherence of the translation.

Subject-verb agreement significantly affects EFL students' accuracy in interpreting by disrupting the grammatical coherence and intended meaning of sentences when translating from Indonesian to English. Mismatches in singular and plural forms, such as translating *dia* as *they* or *cities* as *city*, introduce ambiguity and alter the specificity of the original message, leading to potential reader confusion. The tendency to mistranslate continuous actions into past events further shifts the context, as seen in translating *are sinking* as *survived*. Such errors indicate that without consistent subject-verb agreement, students struggle to convey the original meaning accurately, ultimately reducing the clarity, faithfulness, and overall quality of their interpretations.

Tense and Modal Constructions

Based on the collected data, EFL interpreting students often struggle with tense and modal constructions when translating from Indonesian to English due to structural differences between the two languages. Indonesian generally relies

on simpler tense structures and fewer auxiliary verbs, while English requires specific verb forms to convey precise timing and intention. These differences lead students to make errors, such as using informal constructions like *gonna* instead of *going to* or combining verb forms incorrectly, as seen in phrases like *what did you gonna do* instead of *what were you going to do*. Additionally, students may mistakenly shift tenses, using past tense for actions or states that should remain in the present, which changes the intended meaning. Such inaccuracies in tense and modality can distort the timing, tone, and clarity of the message, ultimately reducing the interpretation's formal accuracy and potentially confusing readers about the intended context. Analysis of the data are presented as follow:

Data 2:

SS: *Pertanyaannya adalah apa yang Anda laksanakan dalam 24 jam itu?*

TS: *The question is what did you gonna do in that 24 hours?*

In Data 2, student 1's interpretation demonstrates issues with tense, modality, and agreement that impact the accuracy and professionalism of the interpretation. The original Indonesian sentence, *Pertanyaannya adalah apa yang Anda laksanakan dalam 24 jam itu?* (The question is what did you do in those 24 hours?), contains a main clause, *Pertanyaannya adalah* (The question is), followed by an embedded interrogative clause, *apa yang Anda laksanakan dalam 24 jam itu?* (what did you do in those 24 hours?). The verb "*laksanakan*" implies a completed action, which suggests a past intention. However, in the English translation, "*The question is what did you gonna do in that 24 hours,*" the student introduces an incorrect tense and modal construction by combining *did* (a past auxiliary) with *gonna* (informal, future intention), creating an ungrammatical structure. Additionally, *in that 24 hours* misuses *that* instead of *those*, failing to agree with the plural noun *hours*. The use of *did you gonna do* introduces both a tense error and an informal tone that detracts from the formal accuracy of the original question. A more accurate rendering would be *what were you going to do*, which better aligns with the source's implied past intention and maintains the intended time frame. These mismatches can confuse the reader by distorting the original context and reducing the translation's professionalism.

The challenge in using tense and modal construction was also found in data 5.

Data 5:

SS: *Tidak peduli apakah dia seorang berpendidikan atau tidak, mereka akan mendapatkan perlakuan yang sama.*

TS: *Whether they are educated or not, they will get the same treat.*

In Data 5, student 3's interpretation highlights challenges in accurately conveying tense and modal construction, which impacts the clarity and precision

of the interpretation. The original Indonesian sentence, *Tidak peduli apakah dia seorang berpendidikan atau tidak, mereka akan mendapatkan perlakuan yang sama* (It doesn't matter whether he/she is educated or not, they will receive the same treatment), uses the future modal verb *akan mendapatkan* (will receive) to denote a future action. The student's English translation, *Whether they are educated or not, they will get the same treat*, successfully employs the modal *will* to express future intention, aligning with *akan* from the SS. However, the shift from the singular *he/she* in the SS to the plural *they* in the TS introduces a subtle inconsistency in subject focus. This shift may impact how readers interpret the future action, as the use of *they* could suggest a broader application that differs from the original sentence's singular intent. The example underscores the importance of maintaining consistent subject reference to accurately convey tense and modality in translation, ensuring that the future action aligns with the original meaning.

The analysis reveals that EFL interpreting students often struggle with accurately conveying tense and modal constructions when translating from Indonesian to English, which impacts interpretation accuracy. Indonesian typically employs simpler tense structures and fewer auxiliary verbs than English, leading students to make errors such as inappropriate tense shifts or the use of informal constructions. For instance, in data 2, combining *did* with *gonna* results in *what did you gonna do*, an ungrammatical and informal structure that introduces confusion about both the timing and intent of the action. Similarly, in data 5, the student's translation shifts from the singular *he/she* in the source to the plural *they* in English, subtly altering the focus and potentially broadening the application of the future action *will receive* in a way not intended by the original sentence. Such errors in tense and modality, including the misuse of auxiliary verbs or informal phrasing, can distort the original message's timing, tone, and clarity, ultimately reducing the professional accuracy of the interpretation and potentially confusing the audience about the intended context.

Grammatical inaccuracies and lexical choice

Grammatical inaccuracies and lexical choice play a critical role in the accuracy and professionalism of EFL students' interpretations, as they can significantly affect the clarity and intended meaning of the source speech (SS). These issues often arise when students rely on direct translations without adjusting for grammatical norms or idiomatic expressions in English, leading to misrepresentations of the original message. For example, omissions of necessary prepositions, incorrect verb tense shifts, or awkward word choices can distort spatial, temporal, or contextual information. In this analysis, Data 6 and 8 are examined to highlight common challenges faced by EFL students. These examples reveal how grammatical errors and unidiomatic phrasing—such as misinterpreted

subjects, missing prepositions, and shifts in tense—impact the precision and readability of translated sentences, often requiring revision to preserve the original intent and tone of the message.

Data 6:

SS: *Di luar tembok rumah kita, peningkatan suhu menyebabkan kekeringan parah di banyak belahan dunia.*

TS: *Our room homes rising temperatures are causing several droughts may parts of the world.*

In data 6, student 3's interpretation contains significant grammatical inaccuracies and lexical choice errors that impact the clarity and professionalism of the TS. The SS, *Di luar tembok rumah kita, peningkatan suhu menyebabkan kekeringan parah di banyak belahan dunia* (Outside the walls of our house, temperature increases are causing severe droughts in many parts of the world), includes a prepositional phrase indicating location, *Di luar tembok rumah kita* (Outside the walls of our house), a subject (Temperature increases), a causal verb (are causing), and an object (severe droughts). However, in the TS, *Our room homes rising temperatures are causing severe droughts many parts of the world*, the phrase *Our room homes* misinterprets the SS's spatial context, resulting in a nonsensical and unclear subject. Additionally, the omission of the preposition *in* before *many parts of the world* creates grammatical inaccuracy, disrupting readability and meaning. While the verb *are causing* and the object *severe droughts* are accurately translated, the overall sentence fails to preserve the intended fluency and clarity. A more accurate translation, such as *Outside the walls of our house, rising temperatures are causing severe droughts in many parts of the world*, would align better with the original meaning and idiomatic English usage. The same fact was also found in the following data.

Data 8:

SS: *Orang-orang harus mengungsi ke tempat yang lebih tinggi.*

TS: *People had to flee to severe places higher.*

In data 8, the interpretation introduced both grammatical inaccuracies and lexical choice errors that impact the clarity and precision of the message. The SS, *Orang-orang harus mengungsi ke tempat yang lebih tinggi* (People must evacuate to higher ground), includes a plural subject (People), a verb phrase (must evacuate) indicating present-tense obligation, and a prepositional phrase specifying the destination (to higher ground). In the TS, *People had to flee to several places higher*, the verb is shifted to the past tense (*had to flee*), changing the immediacy and urgency of the action conveyed in the SS. Additionally, *several places higher* replaces the idiomatic *higher ground*, introducing ambiguity by suggesting

undefined multiple locations rather than the specific concept of a singular, elevated area used in evacuation contexts. These errors distort the intended meaning, diminishing both the clarity and urgency of the original message. A more accurate translation, such as *People must evacuate to higher ground*, would maintain the correct tense and idiomatic phrasing, ensuring fluency and faithful interpretation.

In conclusion, grammatical inaccuracies and lexical choice play a crucial role in determining the clarity and accuracy of EFL students' interpreting. Errors such as inappropriate tense shifts, missing prepositions, and unidiomatic phrasing often distort the intended meaning, reduce professionalism, and confuse readers. For example, misinterpreted subjects like *Our room homes* in data 6 or unidiomatic phrases like *several places higher* in data 8 result in unclear and ambiguous translations that fail to align with the source message. These issues highlight the importance of precise grammar and careful lexical selection to ensure fluent, accurate, and professional interpretations that faithfully convey the original intent.

Discussion

The findings of this study shed light on the challenges EFL interpreting students face when translating from Indonesian to English, specifically focusing on syntactic analysis. Grounded in Gile's (2020) syntactic analysis model and supported by the theoretical insights, the discussion explores how subject-pronoun use, tense and modal construction, and lexical choice affect the clarity and accuracy of students' interpretations. These findings emphasize the importance of linguistic adaptability in maintaining the fidelity of the source message.

One notable issue highlighted in the findings is the inconsistency in subject-pronoun usage, a problem rooted in the structural differences between Indonesian and English. Indonesian's gender-neutral pronouns like *dia* are often translated incorrectly into gender-specific or plural forms, altering the meaning of the original sentence. In data 3, for example, *dia* was translated as both *she* and *he* in the same sentence, introducing unintended gender assumptions absent from the source text. Similarly, in data 5, *dia* was translated as *they*, shifting the subject's focus from singular to plural. Such errors indicate a lack of understanding of the nuances of pronoun usage in English and highlight the need for greater attention to subject consistency during interpretation. These findings align with Gile's (2020) emphasis on accurate syntactic processing as essential for professional interpreting.

Tense and modal constructions emerged as another significant challenge for students, reflecting their difficulty in navigating the structural differences

between Indonesian and English. Indonesian often uses simpler tense markers, while English relies on precise verb forms to convey timing and intention. In data 2, the phrase *what did you gonna do* combined *did* (past) with *gonna* (informal future), creating a grammatically incorrect construction that obscured the intended meaning. Similarly, in data 8, the use of *had to flee* instead of *must evacuate* shifted the immediacy of the source text into a past action, reducing the urgency originally conveyed. These tense errors suggest a gap in students' ability to manage tense consistency in real-time interpreting, an issue also noted by Ma (2021) in studies of cognitive load during interpretation.

Grammatical inaccuracies further complicated the students' translations, particularly in terms of subject-verb agreement and prepositional usage. In data 6, for example, the student's omission of the preposition *in* before *many parts of the world* disrupted the spatial clarity of the sentence. This grammatical inconsistency made the sentence incomplete and harder to comprehend. Such errors indicate that students may struggle with transferring Indonesian prepositional structures into English, where the use of prepositions is more rigidly defined. According to Omolu et al. (2022), prepositional errors are common among EFL students and often stem from overgeneralization or literal translation of the source text.

Lexical choice also played a critical role in the clarity of the translations. In data 6, the phrase *Our room homes* misinterpreted *Di luar tembok rumah kita*, resulting in a nonsensical subject that distorted the meaning of the original sentence. Similarly, in data 8, the use of *several places higher* instead of *higher ground* replaced a clear, idiomatic term with an ambiguous, less precise phrase. These lexical errors not only reduced the readability of the translations but also failed to convey the intended spatial and contextual information. Such challenges reflect the findings of Namy (2021), who emphasized that interpreters must balance linguistic fidelity with idiomatic appropriateness to ensure naturalness in the target language.

The interplay between these linguistic challenges highlights the need for targeted training in syntactic analysis and linguistic adaptability. Students must learn to identify and resolve potential ambiguities arising from structural and lexical differences between Indonesian and English. Kalina (2019) argues that interpreters benefit from practice in restructuring and reordering sentences to align with the conventions of the target language. Incorporating such strategies into EFL interpreting curricula could help students improve their ability to produce accurate and natural translations in real-time.

Furthermore, these findings reveal the cognitive load involved in interpreting, particularly when students are required to make quick decisions about tense, modality, and lexical choices. Gile's (2020) effort model highlights the complexity of balancing listening, processing, and reformulating information

under time pressure, which may explain some of the observed inaccuracies. By addressing these cognitive demands through focused practice and exposure to authentic interpreting scenarios, students can build the skills necessary to manage the competing demands of syntax, grammar, and vocabulary during interpretation.

In conclusion, grammatical inaccuracies and lexical choice errors significantly affect the clarity and professionalism of EFL students' interpretations. These challenges, rooted in structural and idiomatic differences between Indonesian and English, highlight the importance of comprehensive training in syntactic analysis, grammatical accuracy, and lexical adaptation. Addressing these issues can enhance students' ability to produce fluent, accurate, and professional translations, ensuring that the original message is faithfully conveyed to the target audience.

CONCLUSION

The study explores the syntactic, grammatical, and lexical challenges faced by EFL interpreting students of UNG in translating from Indonesian to English, highlighting errors in pronoun usage, tense construction, subject-verb agreement, and lexical choice. These difficulties derive from structural differences between the languages, compounded by limited understanding of idiomatic expressions. The findings underscore the need for targeted training in syntactic analysis, grammatical accuracy, and linguistic adaptability to address these issues. Such measures could enhance students' ability to produce accurate and fluent interpretations, ultimately ensuring effective communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

However, the study has some limitations. The small size of three participants restricts the generalizability of the findings to a broader population of EFL interpreting students of UNG. Additionally, the study focuses specifically on syntactic, grammatical, and lexical challenges, without addressing other factors such as cognitive load, anxiety, or cultural nuances that may influence interpreting performance. Furthermore, the reliance on recorded interpretations may not fully capture the spontaneous difficulties faced in real-time, high-pressure scenarios. Future research with larger, more diverse participant groups and an expanded scope of analysis is recommended to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and strategies in EFL interpreting.

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