

# ERRORS IN TRANSLATION OF JAVANESE TO ENGLISH BY GOOGLE TRANSLATE

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**Abstract**—Today, Google Translate is widely used to translate simple words to complicated texts among many local and national languages. This paper aims to find errors made by Google Translate in translating Javanese to English. *Bima Bungkus* as an act in Javanese shadow puppets (*wayang kulit*) is used as input for the translation. By using qualitative descriptive method, this research asserts errors in translation based on error analysis theory which consists of mistranslation, omission, addition, misformation, and misordering aspects. Those categories are used to classify the absence of items needed to complete the translation. What are missing from the translation are explained from grammatical, structural, vocabulary, and semantic perspectives. Beside finding the errors, the researchers would like to analyze what cause them by comparing both structures of Javanese and English languages. Those are not only differences on phrases and sentences, but also rhymes and dialects between Javanese and English that made such absence in translation. From the output, Javanese as local Indonesian language without questions have such rules different from English as global language. Local aspects emphasize language as everyday interactions among subjects, while global ideas as seen in Google Translate provide structural correction from subjects to certain texts as merely objects.

**Keywords**—English; error analysis; Google Translate; Javanese; translation

## I. BACKGROUND

In 2006, Google launched its pioneering Google Translate service, instant on-screen translations services in and out of more than 70

languages, meeting the needs of the monolingual student generation with ever increasing efficiency and popularity. The characteristics of this machine are free, accurate, instant, statistical, fast, and even general. However, the one-dimensionality of machine translation restricts the response of the on-screen polyglot to a singular, literal definition of each word or phrase [1]. Mistranslations as errors are related to structures, vocabularies, to contexts of the texts itself. The main idea of Google Translate is to bridge such cultural gaps among many languages. Somehow, it has failed to do so in further conditions. It may know quite words that were given to, but to understand it widely are another thing. Moreover, this machine does not include any quality control which is really needed in professional translation [2]. Google Translate indeed has so many data about many languages, but still any language is never easily being reduced to such easy and simple language-paired translations.

Previous researches have been done in analyzing both the use of Google Translate and its errors. Some of them are done by Sri Rahmawati [3] which analyzed error analysis of Indonesian folklores to English, Iswah Adriana [4] that stated errors in Arabian texts to Indonesian, and Siti Nur Jamilah [5] that showed semantic errors in English to Indonesian translations. The researches emphasized that languages are not just words, phrases, or sentences, but also cultural meanings. Indeed, languages have structures that may be changed to other forms, but its complexities on texts are quite different.

The writers would like to analyze how Javanese is translated into English by Google Translate is adequate but still contains such errors. As folklores are mirrors of traditional culture, story of *Bima Bungkus* in *wayang kulit*

is full of Javanese cultural experience from language, plot, background, to dialect of the people. *Bima Bungkus* is an act of Mahabharata modified by Javanese ideas that tells us about ancient kingdom and how its surrounding people interact each other. Made by Ruku Lux [6] in his Youtube channel, animation of the story is aimed for students in classes. Besides, it contains moral lessons for audience about how to be kind to other human beings.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

The writers use qualitative method to assert this writing. The steps of the research include watching the video on Youtube, transcribing the video to written subtitle, translating it through Google Translate, comparing the transcript with the translation, and analyzing its errors. The errors in translation were asserted based

on error analysis theory by Dulay, Burt, and Karshen [7] which consists of omission, addition, misformation, and misordering aspects. The categories are used to classify absence of items needed to complete the translation. Moreover, mistranslation as error is named to show whether there were such inequivalence between transcript and translation [8]. The researchers would like to compare Javanese and English languages, not only differences on phrases and sentences, but also rhymes and dialects that made such absence in translation.

## III. JAVANESE TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The data is story named *Bima Bungkus*. The writers translated it to Google Translate then compared it with transcript of subtitle of the video as follow:

**Table 1**  
Transcript of Video and Its Google Translate Translation

Transcripts	Translations
<p>Bima Bungkus</p> <p>Jaman semono, ing negari Ngastina ana ratu kang asmane Prabu Pandhu Dewanata. Sang Prabu kagungan garwa kang aran Dewi Kunthi. Putrane sing angka loro lair wujud bungkus. Mergo laire bungkus, Prabu Pandhu njaluk tulung marang Para Kurawa kepiye carane supaya bayi wujud bungkus mau bisa pecah.</p> <p>Prabu Pandu: Ngger Putraku Para Kurawa, aku njaluk tulung marang sliramu supaya bisa mecah bungkus jabang bayi.</p> <p>Kurawa: Inggih Sang Prabu.</p> <p>Para Kurawa kepengen mecah bungkus kuwi. Yen wis pecah, bayine arep dipateni. Nanging bayi bungkus mau ora bisa pecah suwene wolung tahun nganthi adhine lair kang dijenengi Janaka. Bareng Janaka wis ngancik dewasa, banjur Janaka sowan daleme Eyang Begawan Abiyasa.</p> <p>Janaka: Kanjeng Eyang, kados pundi nasibipun kangmas kula? Kula nyuwun tulung supados kangmas kula saged medhal saking bungkus, Kanjeng Eyang.</p> <p>Eyang Begawan Abiyasa: Ngger Janaka, mangertio yen kahanane kakangmu kuwi pancen wis dadi kodrating dewa. Nanging sawise lair saka bungkus, kakangmu bakal dadi bocah kang sekti mandraguna. Mbesuk yen gedhe bakal dadi satria utomo. Mula, bayi kuwi selehke ning alas Mandalasana ngenteni pitulungan saka dewa.</p> <p>Kahanan bayi bungkus mau ndadekake geger negari Ngastina amarga ora ana sing bisa mecah bungkus bayi kuwi. Banjur Bathara Guru ngutus Gajah Sena mecah bungkus jabang bayi.</p> <p>Bathara Guru: Gajah Sena, kowe dak utus mecah bungkus jabang bayi kuwi.</p> <p>Gajah Sena: Inggih, Rama.</p>	<p>Bima Bungkus</p> <p>In that day, in the Kingdom of Ngastina there was a king named King Pandhu Dewanata. The king had a wife named Dewi Kunthi. His second son was born in a pack. As a result, King Pandhu asked the Kurawa how to make the baby form a wrapper to break.</p> <p>Prabu Pandu: My son, Kurawa, I beg you to break your baby.</p> <p>Kurawa: The king.</p> <p>The Kurawa wanted to break the wrapper. When broken, the baby is about to die. But the baby pack cannot break for eight years until his brother's birthday named Janaka. When Janaka had grown up, then Janaka came to Grandma Begawan Abiyasa's house.</p> <p>Janaka: Kanjeng Eyang, where is my destiny? I beg you to be able to pull out of the wrapper, Kanjeng Eyang.</p> <p>The Begawan Abiyasa: Ngger Janaka, realize that your brother's name is a god. But after the birth of the wrapper, your brother will become a child who is a powerful man. The next time the big will become a spell. Since then, the baby has to leave Mandalasana for the assistance of the gods.</p> <p>The baby's wrapping situation makes the country feel bad because of the fact that no one can break the baby's wrap. Then Bathara Guru sent Gajah Sena broke the baby's wrap.</p> <p>Bathara Guru: Elephant Sena, I'm sending you a pack of baby.</p> <p>Elephant Sena: Well, Rama.</p> <p>Elephant Sena then broke the wrap. When the elephant wraps the elephant holding the baby. Elephant Sena dies. But all the power and elephants' burden is on the baby's</p>

Transcripts	Translations
<p>Gajah Sena banjur mecah bungkus mau. Nalika mecah bungkus gadinge gajah dicekel jabang bayi. Gajah Sena mati. Nanging kabeh kadigdayan lan kasektene gajah rumasuk ing awake jabang bayi. Bayi mau dijenengi Bima lan gadinge gajah dadi pusakane bayi kang aran Kuku Pancanaka. Bathara Guru banjur ngutus Dewi Umayi supaya maringi kawruh kautaman urip marang Bima.</p> <p>Bathara Guru: Dewi Umayi, kowe dak utus menehi wejangan marang Bima yaiku tata caraning urip, tata caraning dadi satriya, karo menehi sandhangan, kalung, lan gelang.</p> <p>Dewi Umayi: Sendhika dhawuh, pukulun.</p> <p>Sawijining dina, Bima lunga menyang alas ketemu Bathara Narada banjur dheweke nyuwun pirs marang Bathara Narada.</p> <p>Bima: Sejatine aku iki sapa?</p> <p>Bathara Narada: Kowe kuwi saktemene anake Pandu karo Dewi Kunti sing nomer loro kang lair bungkus, ngger. Banjur sliramu ditulung dening gajah kang arane Sena. Mula, kowe tak jenengi Bratasena.</p> <p>Kepiye bocah-bocah, wis podho ngerti to?</p>	<p>-body. The baby is named Bima and the elephant's elephant is the baby devil named Pancanaka Nail. Bathara Guru then sent Dewi Umayi to give the best of life to Bima.</p> <p>Teachers of Guru: Dewi Umayi, I promise you to offer Bima a life order, dressed as a person, with clothes, necklaces, and bracelets.</p> <p>Dewi Umayi: Sendhika ordered, tossed.</p> <p>One day, Bima went to the woods to see Batara Narada</p> <p>and then asked Batara Narada.</p> <p>Bima: Who am I?</p> <p>Batara Narada: You are the son of Pandu with the second born Dewi Kunti. Then you helped by the elephant named Sena. Well, you do not name Bratasena.</p> <p>How are children, do you know?</p>

After being translated, the transcript then is compared with the translation. The next step is finding errors, analyzing, and reconstructing them as follow:

**Table 2**  
Errors Listed in Translations of The Story Bima Bungkus

No.	Source From Transcript	Google Translate Output	Kinds of Errors	Reconstructed Translation
1.	Bima Bungkus	<i>Bima Bungkus=</i>	Misordering of noun phrase	<i>Bima Bungkus</i> , or <i>Bima in Hard Shell</i> , or <i>Wrapped Bima</i>
2.	Putrane sing angka loro lair wujud bungkus.	His second son was born <i>in a pack</i> .	Mistranslation of noun	His second son was born <i>in a hard shell</i> or <i>in a wrap</i> .
3.	kepiye carane supaya bayi wujud bungkus mau bisa pecah.	<i>how to make the baby form a wrapper to break</i> .	Mistranslation of noun	<i>how to break the wrap or shell of the baby</i> .
4.	aku njaluk tulung marang sliramu supaya bisa mecah bungkus jabang bayiku.	I beg you to break <i>your baby</i> .	Mistranslation of possession	I beg you to break the wrap or hard shell of <i>my baby</i> .
5.	Kurawa: Inggih Sang Prabu.	Kurawa: <i>The king</i> .	Omission of approval	Kurawa: <i>Yes, the king</i> .
6.	Para Kurawa kepengen mecah bungkus kuwi.	The Kurawa wanted to <i>break the wrapper</i> .	Mistranslation of noun	The Kurawa wanted to <i>break the wrap</i> or <i>the hard shell</i> .
7.	Yen wis pecah, bayine arep dipateni.	<i>When broken, the baby is about to die</i> .	Mistranslation and misformation of passive form	<i>When broken, the baby is targeted to be killed</i> .
8.	Nanging bayi bungkus mau ora bisa pecah suwene wolung tahun	But the <i>baby pack cannot break</i> for eight years	Mistranslation and misformation of passive form	But the <i>baby's wrap</i> or <i>hard shell cannot be broken</i> for eight years
9.	nganthi adhine lair kang dijenengi Janaka.	until <i>his brother's birthday</i> named Janaka.	Misformation of passive form	until <i>his brother was born and</i> named Janaka.

10.	Janaka sowan daleme Eyang Begawan Abiyasa.	Janaka came to <b>Grandma Begawan</b> Abiyasa's house.	Mistranslation of title of the subject	Janaka came to <b>Grandfather Master Teacher</b> Abiyasa's house.
11.	Janaka: Kanjeng Eyang, kados pundi nasibipun kangmas kula?	Janaka: <b>Kanjeng Eyang, where is my destiny?</b>	Mistranslation of title of the subject	Janaka: <b>Grandfather Excellency, how is my brother's condition of fate?</b>
12.	Kula nyuwun tulung supados kangmas kula saged medhal saking bungkus, Kanjeng Eyang.	<b>I beg you to be able to pull out of the wrapper, Kanjeng Eyang.</b>	Mistranslation of title of the subject and phrases	<b>I beg you to pull out my brother from the wrap or hard shell, Grandfather Excellency.</b>
13.	Eyang Begawan Abiyasa:	<b>The</b> Begawan Abiyasa:	Mistranslation of title of the subject	<b>Grandfather Master Teacher</b> Abiyasa:
14.	Ngger Janaka, mangertio yen kahanane kakangmu kuwi pancen wis dadi kodrating dewa.	Ngger Janaka, <b>realize</b> that <b>your brother's name is a god.</b>	Mistranslation of title of the subject and phrases	<b>Dear Janaka, you should realize that your brother's situation is already predetermined by gods.</b>
15.	Nanging sawise lair saka bungkus,	But <b>after the birth of the wrapper,</b>	Mistranslation of noun	But <b>after getting out from the wrap or hard shell,</b>
16.	Mbesuk yen gedhe bakal dadi satria utomo.	<b>The next time the big will become a spell.</b>	Mistranslation of phrases	<b>Someday, he will be a brave soldier.</b>
17.	Mula, bayi kuwi selehke ning alas Mandalasana	<b>Since then, the baby has to leave Mandalasana</b>	Misformation of passive form	<b>Therefore, the baby should be put at Mandalasana forest</b>
18.	Kahanan bayi bungkus	<b>The baby's wrapping situation</b>	Mistranslation of possession	<b>The baby's wrap or hard shell situation</b>
19.	Bathara Guru ngutus Gajah Sena mecah bungkus jabang bayi.	Bathara Guru sent Gajah Sena <b>broke</b> the baby's wrap.	Mistranslation of title and misformation of verb	<b>God Guru sent Gajah Sena or Sena the Elephant to break the baby's wrap or hard shell.</b>
20.	Bathara Guru: Gajah Sena, kowe dak utus mecah bungkus jabang bayi kuwi.	Guru: <b>Elephant Sena, I'm sending you a pack of baby.</b>	Mistranslation of title and misformation of noun	<b>God Guru: Gajah Sena or Sena the Elephant, I'm sending you to break the wrap or hard shell of the baby.</b>
21.	Gajah Sena: Inggih, Rama.	<b>Elephant Sena: Well, Rama.</b>	Mistranslation of title and approval	<b>Gajah Sena or Sena the Elephant: I will, Father.</b>
22.	Nalika mecah bungkus gadhane gajah dicekel jabang bayi.	<b>When the elephant wraps the elephant holding the baby.</b>	Mistranslation of title and noun and misformation of verb	<b>When Gajah Sena broke the wrap, the baby held the elephant's tusks.</b>
23.	kabeh kadigdayan lan kasektene gajah rumasuk ing awake jabang bayi.	all the power and <b>elephants' burden is on</b> the baby's body.	Mistranslation of noun and misformation of passive form	all the power and <b>elephants' force are moved into the baby's body.</b>
24.	gadhane gajah dadi pusakane bayi kang aran Kuku Pancanaka.	the <b>elephant's elephant is the baby devil named Pancanaka Nail.</b>	Mistranslation of title and misformation of nouns	the <b>elephant's tusks became the baby's weapon named Pancanaka Nail.</b>

25.	Bathara Guru banjur ngutus Dewi Umayi supaya maringi kawruh kautaman urip marang Bima.	<i>Bathara Guru</i> then sent <i>Dewi Umayi</i> to give <i>the best of life</i> to Bima.	Mistranslation of title and misformation of noun	<i>God Guru</i> then sent <i>Goddess Umayi</i> to give <i>knowledge of life</i> to Bima.
26.	Bathara Guru: Dewi Umayi, kowe dak utus menehi wejangan marang Bima yaiku tata caraning urip, tata caraning dadi satriya,	<i>Teachers of Guru: Dewi Umayi, I promise you to offer Bima a life order, dressed as a person,</i>	Mistranslation of title and misformation of verb and nouns	<i>God Guru: Goddess Umayi, I sent you to teach Bima about how to have great life as man and to be a brave soldier,</i>
27.	Dewi Umayi: Sendhika dhawuh, pukulun.	<i>Dewi Umayi: Sendhika ordered, tossed.</i>	Mistranslation of title, approval, and noun	<i>Goddess Umayi: As you wish, Your Majesty.</i>
28.	Bathara Narada: Kowe kuwi saketemene anake Pandu karo Dewi Kunti sing nomer loro kang lair bungkus, ngger.	<i>Bathara Narada: You are the son of Pandu with the second born Dewi Kunti.</i>	Mistranslation of title and misformation of verb and nouns	<i>God Narada: You are the second son of Pandu with Princess Kunti that was born in a wrap or hard shell.</i>
29.	Banjur sliramu ditulung dening gajah kang arane Sena.	<i>Then you helped by the elephant named Sena.</i>	Misformation of passive form	<i>Then you were helped by an elephant named Sena.</i>
30.	Mula, kowe tak jenengi Bratasena.	<i>Well, you do not name Bratasena.</i>	Mistranslation and misformation of verb	<i>Therefore, I named you Bratasena.</i>
31.	Kepiye bocah-bocah, wis podho ngerti to?	<i>How are children, do you know?</i>	Mistranslation and misformation of verb and nouns	<i>So, children, you have understood the story, haven't you?</i>

The listed errors above show how the translation is incomplete and cannot deal with the structures of Javanese languages. Many errors are seen because of three main reasons. First, inadequate data of Javanese vocabulary to English. Google Translate used to ignore many words unknown to it such as *Bathara* and *gading*. There are words to say many things differently, such as *Ngger* and *mangertio* or even phrases like *Sendhika dhawuh*, *pukulun* and *Kepiye bocah-bocah, wis podho ngerti to?*. Javanese sentences also somehow do not follow such rigid structure such as missing subjects or pronouns. Second, Javanese particular structure, especially high language or *krama inggil*, is used when speaking with older people. For example, it is the same in saying *ya* or yes to young or older people in English. In Javanese, *inggi* is used to say yes to older ones. Saying *father* is also the same while Javanese's *krama inggil* prefers using *Rama* to appreciate older persons. Third, palace-centric terms used in shadow puppets' act are harder to be translated to usual Javanese or other foreign

languages. Terms of *Bathara*, *Dewi*, *Begawan*, *kanjeng*, *Kanjeng Eyang Begawan*, and *pukulun* are used to speak with noble people. Somehow, it is quite still hard to imagine the background and plot of the story if the machine or even the user does not really know about acts in Javanese shadow puppets show.

What are missed in the output of translation contain misformation, omission, and mistranslation from verbs, nouns, phrases, to titles of the subjects. Mistranslations are mostly seen in Google Translate's output since there is not adequate vocabulary of various Javanese words. It is not about such grammatical errors, but many words are not translated well enough because the machine cannot process what are them. The unknown words then affected the translation itself since many phrases are not turned into passive forms or past tenses. Indeed, it shows instant conditions that people have to accept whether it is wrong or even incomplete at all. Many contexts are also neglected by only stating one definition to various meanings. One



main idea is about the word *bungkus*. In general English, *bungkus* is translated into pack, package, wrap, or even box. However, what is meant in this story is like placenta of newborn baby which is so hard like a shell. Google Translate failed to see whether the word is a noun or adjective since Javanese language do not differentiate both of them. Moreover, indeed, the knowledge will only be known if the audience understands the background of plot of Mahabharata. The story of *Bima Bungkus* is meant to tell people that human beings have to go beyond such burdens to be brave and powerful enough to face everyday life. Kurawa may want to kill Bima but with help from other such as Bathara, his grandfather, brother, he could surpass the challenge by being a powerful soldier afterwards. *Bungkus* do not mean such present or gift but it is like a temptation for Bima and his surrounding to be overcome.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Structural correction of Google Translate is not perfectly applied to Javanese language especially in story of *Bima Bungkus*. There are errors from misformation, omission, to mistranslation of verbs, nouns, phrases, and titles of the subjects. There is not adequate data of Javanese language to English so that many words are not properly translated. The unknown words then also affected the grammar itself which resulted in other errors. Contexts of the story and some important keywords are also missing because of incomplete translation. Google Translate cannot cope with complexity of Javanese language as asserted in the story's translation. The machine only translates the inputted words while it does not do any quality control of the output. It is what it is except being checked once again manually by the user.

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