

## Song Lyrics Translation Project in Translation Class

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**Abstract.** This study intends to describe the procedure of implementing a song lyrics translation project as a learning method in translation class and students' responses to this project. This research used a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The sample of this research is 27 students who take a translation class in the 2022/2023 academic year. This study used a questionnaire as an instrument for collecting data. The results show that the song lyrics translation project was implemented in six steps, 1. Project explanation; 2. Song selection; 3. Translating by semantic translation method; 4. Translating by free translation method; 5. Presentation; 6. Evaluation. Then, from the questionnaire results, although this project is labeled as having high difficulties, there are many benefits to this project. For example, this project has a high contribution to developing students' Japanese skills, especially when it comes to vocabulary and grammar, and this song lyrics translation project become an enjoyable class activity because students have a high interest in this project. In conclusion, regarding the result, the song lyrics translation project is one feasible learning method that can be used in translation class.

**Keywords:** Translation, Song, Lyrics, Japanese, Indonesian

### 1. Introduction

Translation (or *Honyaku* in Japanese terms) class in the Department of Japanese Literature Faculty of Humanities Universitas Komputer Indonesia is one of the subjects that must be taken by all students in the 7<sup>th</sup> semester. This class is held with project-based learning, the student-centered form of learning method [1], through authentic questions and problems within real-world practices [2] that lead to meaningful learning experiences [3].

This translation class also becomes a continuation of the introduction of translation class in the 6<sup>th</sup> semester, in which translation theory become the main learning material. In the translation class, various kinds of texts are often used as learning material, for example, story text in novels, news articles, and academic texts, but not with song lyrics. This study aims to describe how the implementation of Japanese and Indonesian song lyrics translation as a translation project in the classroom and how the response from students regarding the project.

There has been some research related to song lyrics that have been adopted as translation studies, for example about song lyrics translation technic and method [4] [5], and about musical and linguistic problems [6] which become the main reasons for the implementation of this song lyrics translation project.

## 2. Method

This study used a descriptive method because this study aims to describe the procedure of implementation song lyrics translation project as a learning method in translation class and student responses to this project. The questionnaire was used as its instrument for collecting data in this study. This method is in line with what Arianingsih [7] has done in a similar study.

The questionnaires were distributed to all students who take translation classes in the 2022/2023 academic year via the Google form application with the following link <https://forms.gle/rChQicM26oyYFeuA7> for 1 week, starting January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

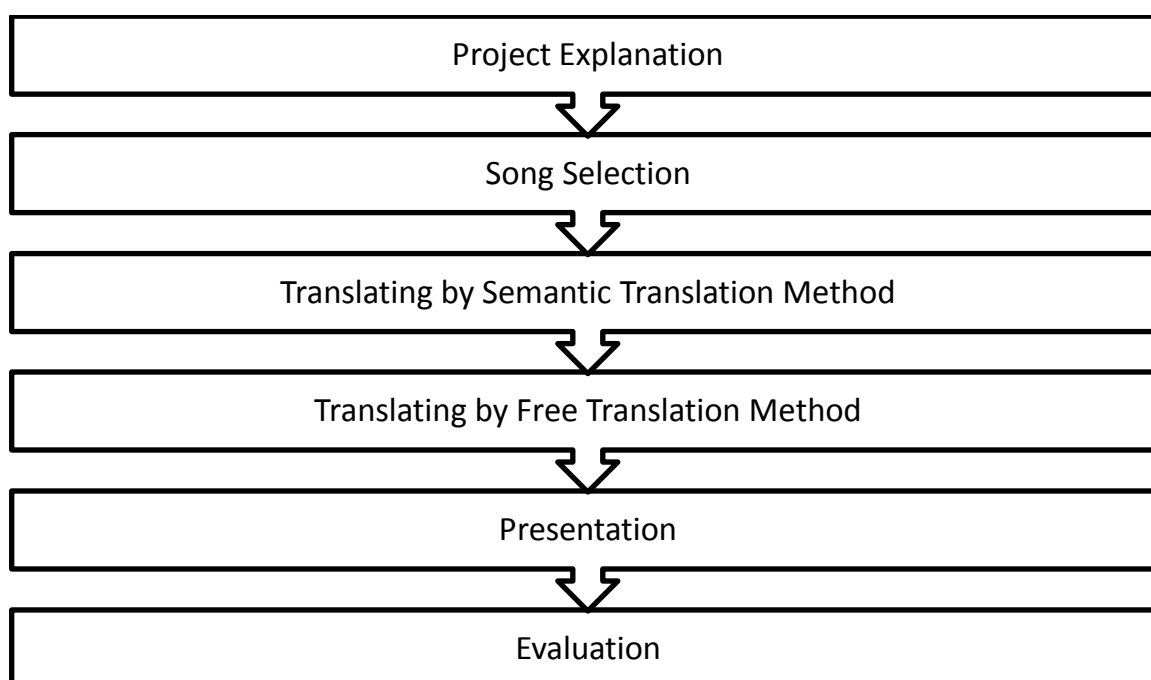
The questionnaire has 2 types of questions, closed questions and open questions. Closed questions were used to collect respondent opinions about interest in this project, time to do this project, the difficulty of this project, and the contribution this project to respondents' Japanese skill development because closed questions will reduce the variability of respondents' responses thereby facilitating the analysis [8]. Meanwhile, open questions are used to collect respondent reason on why they have an opinion as closed questions are answered, and also respondents' suggestions for the continuity of this project in the future, because open questions allow respondents to answer freely and as broadly as possible to questions [8].

Then, the data that has been collected will be analyzed qualitatively, to describe each student's response in a factual and in-depth manner.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The song lyrics translation project in the 2022-2023 academic year's translation class raises the theme of the original soundtrack of some media, for example, films, dramas, animes, or commercials, which will be translated into the target language, both Japanese and Indonesian using 2 different methods, namely the semantic translation method and the free translation method which stated by Newmark [8].

In the 2022-2023 academic year's translation class, this song lyrics translation project is implemented in the following steps.



**Figure 1** Step by Step of Implementation The Song Lyrics Translation Project

In figure 1, we could understand step by step of the song lyrics translation project was implemented in the 2022-2023 academic year's translation class, which divide into 6 steps, 1. Project Explanation; 2. Song Selection; 3. Translating by Semantic Translation Method; 4. Translating by Free Translation Method; 5. Presentation; 6. Evaluation.

First, there is a project explanation which will be held by the lecturer. In this step, the lecturer will explain the project from A to Z to the students, and also some real examples of song lyrics translation to equalize perception about what will the student do in this project.

Second, there is the song selection step. In this step, students will choose a song with the rule that the chosen song must be an original soundtrack of some films, dramas, animes, or commercials which will be translated by each individual.

Third, there is translating song lyrics by the semantic translation method. In this step, students will translate chosen song's lyrics by using the semantic translation method stated by Newmark [9] that was learned in the 6th-semester class. The reason why the semantic method is used in this step is to make every student understand comprehensively the meaning and message of the song lyrics that the students chose.

Fourth, there is translating song lyrics by free translation method. In this step, students will translate the chosen song lyrics using the free method that is also stated by Newmark [9] and also learned in the 6th-semester class. The reason why the free translation method is used after students translated song lyrics by semantic translation method is to encourage students' creativity about remaking semantic method translated song lyrics into new singable lyrics in the target language.

After that, in the fifth step, there is a presentation, in which students will make a video about them singing the chosen song with translated song lyrics by free translation method version in the target language before they present it in front of the class.

And, lastly, in the sixth step, there is evaluation. In this step, the lecturer and students will evaluate this project, including distributing the questionnaire to know students' opinions about this project and also to know students' suggestions about the continuity of this project in the future.

While student responses about this project will be explained by showing questionnaire results as follows.

**Table 1** Student Interest in This Project

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very Interested	15	56%
Interested	12	44%
Neutral	0	0%
Uninterested	0	0%
Very Uninterested	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>

As can be seen in table 1 above, 56% of the students who take this translation class stated they were very interested in this project, and another 44% said they were interested in this song translation project. From the results of the questionnaire in table 1 above, it can be assumed that the song translation project implemented in this translation class was interesting.

This interest mostly arose from the students' liking for the song, so that the translation of the song did not feel boring. This result is in line with the opinion stated by Harsono [10] regarding songs as fun learning material to bring up in translation class. Some students felt challenged to be able to translate the song so that the song could be sung again in the target language. In addition, the lecturer's attitude in implementing this project in class also seems to influence student interest in this project.

**Table 2** Project Difficulty

Category	Frequency	Percent
Very High	4	15%
High	16	59%
Neutral	0	0%
Low	7	26%
Very Low	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 above presents the results of a questionnaire related to the level of difficulty of this project for students. Understandably, 59% of respondents stated that this project is at a high level of difficulty, and 15% of respondents stated that this project is at a very high level of difficulty. These results are based on the limitations of the student's vocabulary which always become one big obstacle in learning foreign language [11], and for this study, in the source language and/or in the target language of the translation, especially considering that the required vocabulary is not only acceptable in terms of meaning, but also in terms of tone.

Meanwhile, there were also 26% of respondents stated that this project was at a low level of difficulty. The reasons for these answers are more likely due to the good direction of the lecturer regarding the implementation of this project. If summed up as a whole, it can be assumed that this project is indeed at a high level of difficulty.

**Table 3** Project Contribution to Japanese Skill

Category	Frequency	Percent
Very High	20	74%
High	7	26%
Neutral	0	0%
Low	0	0%
Very Low	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>

Next, in table 3, the results of the questionnaire are presented regarding the contribution of this song translation project to the development of students' Japanese skills. It can be seen from table 4 above, that 74% of respondents stated that this song translation project had a very high contribution to the development of their Japanese language, and another 26% of respondents said this song translation project had a high contribution to the development of their Japanese skills. Most of the respondents stated the reasons for the answers in table 4 above with the statement that song translation could add a lot of new vocabulary to their vocabulary, some stated that this song lyrics translation project could increase grammar knowledge both in Indonesian and Japanese language.

Therefore, from the results shown in table 3, it can be concluded that song translation project has a high contribution to the development of students' Japanese skills, especially in the areas of vocabulary and grammar. This result was corresponding with Merici [12], who stated that project based learning had positive contribution to mastering vocabulary.



**Table 4** Time in Doing Project

Category	Frequency	Percent
Very Sufficient	14	52%
Sufficient	12	44%
Neutral	0	0%
Insufficient	1	4%
Very Insufficient	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>

Finally, Table 4 above presents student responses regarding the time allotted to carry out this project to the end. Understandably, 52% of students stated that the time allotted was sufficient, and 44% of students stated that the time allotted was sufficient. There are some students' opinion regarding time management which become important in doing project based learning. This opinion in line with Fitriah [13] that time management is important for student learning, especially with project based learning.

Meanwhile, there was 1 student, or 4% of the respondents who stated that the time allotted to carry out this project until the end was insufficient. The reason behind this negative response is that the student has heard from a professional who translated the song that it takes a very long time to be able to reproduce the original song so that it can be sung properly in the target language. However, despite the negative responses, according to the results shown in table 2 above, it can be concluded that the time given to run this project from start to finish is sufficient.

#### 4. Conclusion

From the results of this study, it can be understood that as a result of the students' lack of vocabulary in the target language, this song lyrics translation project can be stated as a project with a relatively high level of difficulty. However, despite this, the high interest of students who contracted translation courses for Japanese and Indonesian songs made this project enjoyable. Especially considering that more than enough time has been provided to carry out this project as a whole and the project's high contribution to the development of Japanese skills, especially in the field of vocabulary and grammar, this song lyrics translation project is labeled feasible as one of learning method to be implemented in a translation class.

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