

# Fundamentals of Translation: Theory and Practice

An Introduction to Translation Studies



Putu Ayu Prabawati Sudana  
I Made Suta Paramarta



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**PT YAPINDO JAYA ABADI**

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# PREFACE

Translation is one of the critical roles in the process of communication between different languages, cultures, and professions. Effective translation is a valuable academic skill and is a practical competence needed in many areas, such as business, education, and international collaboration in today's globalized world. However, many beginner learners often face difficulties in understanding both the theoretical foundations and practical aspects of translation.

This book, **Fundamentals of Translation: Theory and Practice**, is designed to meet the needs of beginner translators, especially students who are beginning to learn translation. It is meant to offer a well-rounded mix of the essential theories and practical application, allowing students to steadily develop their translation skills in a systematic and meaningful way.

This book has been developed based on findings from a needs analysis carried out with professional translators. Their insights and experiences have had a profound impact on shaping the content, making the materials relevant, practical, and aligned with real-world translation needs. Thus, the book does not only introduce key concepts in translation studies, but also allows the focus to be laid on skills that can be applied in real life.

This book is divided into eight units, which address key areas in translation. Each unit combines straightforward learning of concepts with a range of exercises and tasks, offering learners the opportunity to participate actively and build up their skills in a gradual manner. The task-based method used in this book motivates students to practice translation in real contexts, thereby promoting accuracy and self-confidence.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all contributors who have supported the development of this book. We also thank the professional translators who have been involved in the needs analysis, as well as our colleagues and students who have contributed to the development of this work with their input.

We are hoping that this book will be helpful to beginning translators and help them along in their studies of translation.

Jakarta, Juni 2026

The Authors

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors are grateful to all who have helped in the making of this book and look forward to the feedback from its readers.

We would like to thank Grammarly for its assistance with language editing and proofreading of this book. The writing support features in Grammarly have played a key role in maintaining clarity, accuracy, and consistency of the language used in the materials.

We also would like to thank our colleagues, students, and translation professionals who contributed their input and feedback to make this a meaningful learning resource.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

This book, **Fundamentals of Translation: Theory and Practice**, is developed to address the needs of beginner translators, particularly students who are taking their first steps in learning and practicing translation. This book includes a wide array of topics essential for mastering translation.

### **Unit 1: Introduction to Translation**

This chapter discusses the fundamentals of translation, starting with definitions provided by experts (Catford, Nida & Taber, Newmark, Baker), the difference between translation (written) and interpreting (oral), types of translation based on approach (literal, free, semantic, communicative) and text domain (literary, scientific, technical, legal, audiovisual), the concept of translation units from the word to the paragraph level, as well as fundamental issues such as equivalence, cultural differences, differences in language structure, register, and ambiguity.

### **Unit 2: Equivalence and Translation Shifts**

This chapter discusses the concept of equivalence in translation, its types (formal equivalence and dynamic

equivalence), the concept of translation shifts or category shifts, and the relationship between equivalence and translation shifts.

### **Unit 3: Phrase Translation**

This chapter focuses on the translation of phrases, the importance of phrases as units of translation, the pitfalls of word-for-word translation, linguistic differences in phrases between English and Indonesian, problematic types of phrases (collocational phrases, idioms, cultural phrases, and verb phrase ambiguities), as well as strategies for addressing common issues such as structural differences, lexical non-equivalence, over-translation, under-translation, and cultural embeddedness.

### **Unit 4: Clause and Sentence Translation**

This chapter covers the translation of clauses and sentences, the types of clauses in English (independent clauses, subordinate clauses, noun clauses, relative clauses, adverbial clauses), the types of adverbial clauses (time, cause, condition, concession, purpose, result), as well as compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences and strategies for translating them.

## **Unit 5: Cultural Words and Expressions in Translation**

This chapter discusses the translation of cultural words and expressions, language as a cultural system, the concept of cultural untranslatability, translation as cultural negotiation, categories of cultural terms (ecology, material culture, social culture, social institutions, gestures, and customs), as well as strategies for translating cultural terms such as borrowing, adaptation, explanation, and omission.

## **Unit 6: Idioms, Proverbs, Collocation, and False Friends in Translation**

This chapter discusses four challenging linguistic elements in translation: (1) Idioms: non-compositional meaning, degree of idiomaticity, translation strategies; (2) Proverbs: linguistic characteristics, cultural dimensions, literal vs. functional strategies; (3) Collocations: types of collocations, naturalness as a quality parameter, fixed vs. free collocations, and collocations and register; (4) False Friends: categories (total, partial, register-based), semantic shifts, and contrastive examples in English–Indonesian.

## **Unit 7: Specialized Text Translation**

This chapter discusses the translation of specialized texts that require specific domain knowledge, including: legal texts (characteristics of legal language, text types, challenges, and strategies), medical texts (medical language, text types, challenges, ethics), technical texts (manuals, SOPs, installation guides, safety instructions), and business texts (business emails, company profiles, reports, proposals), each accompanied by language characteristics, text types, challenges, and translation strategies.

## **Unit 8: Translation Quality Assessment and Machine Translation**

This chapter discusses the evaluation of translation quality based on three main criteria (accuracy, readability, and acceptability), common types of translation errors (literal, lexical, grammatical, and omissions/additions), an introduction to Machine Translation (MT), including its development, advantages, and limitations, as well as post-editing techniques in MT (types and basic steps).

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The book *Fundamentals of Translation: Theory and Practice* is a practical and accessible book that will be of interest to any beginner translator, especially to translation students who are beginning to learn about translation studies. This book provides a balanced combination of essential theories and hands-on exercises to help learners develop both their understanding and skills in translation.

The content is based on a needs analysis conducted with professional translators and reflects real-life requirements and practices. The book is structured into eight units, featuring core concepts and activities that encourage active learning and confidence in translation.

The book provides a clear explanation and will be useful not only for students who want to equip themselves with a solid foundation in translation but also for those who wish to apply the skill in various academic and professional settings.

