

Lecturers' Perceptions on the Utilization of Translation Rubrics for Guiding Peer and Self-Assessment in Higher Education

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Abstract

Evaluating translation skills in students is challenging due to difficulties in maintaining fairness and providing proper feedback. This study examines the perspectives of college teachers on using translation rubrics to guide self-assessment and peer assessment among students. Interviews with two instructors from Politeknik Negeri Padang showed that rubrics are crucial tools for conducting fair and organized evaluations. These rubrics reduce bias and clarify what is expected by focusing on key aspects like translation accuracy, readability, and maintaining the original meaning. Both instructors agree that students assessing their own work and others' is beneficial because it enhances editing skills and increases their understanding of translation. Despite this, there are some challenges. People might interpret rubric criteria in different ways, time for assessment can be tight, and existing technology doesn't always meet the needs. Nevertheless, digital tools such as MS Word and Google Docs are considered helpful in simplifying the process. The study stresses the importance of having uniform rubrics and technological support to improve the teaching of translation and encourage students to become more independent learners.

Keywords: Lecturers' Perceptions, Peer Assessment, Rubrics, Self-Assessment, Translation Assessment.

Introduction

Translation is not just switching words between languages; it is a complex job that involves understanding the languages and cultures deeply, along with the original message (Munday, 2016). In colleges, teaching and evaluating translation skills is getting more attention, especially in courses that train future professional translators. But grading students' translation work can be tricky because it can lead to subjectivity. Teachers have to find a balance between being accurate and interpreting while providing useful feedback (Hurtado Albir, 2017).

Using rubrics for assessment might help make grading clearer and more consistent. Rubrics break down what's expected into specific, measurable parts (Andrade, 2005). In translation studies, rubrics evaluate aspects like accuracy, equivalence, readability, style, and consistency

(Waddington, 2001). These tools help instructors give fair evaluations and show students exactly what makes a translation effective. As noted by Byram and Grundy (2003), well-crafted rubrics assist in both grading and teaching by aligning with learning goals.

In addition to teacher-led evaluations, many modern translation programs encourage students to assess their own work and that of their peers. These approaches focus on ongoing learning and fostering student independence (Black & Wiliam, 2009). When engaging in self-assessment and peer reviews, students become more involved and develop critical thinking skills, learning to evaluate their work, which is crucial in translation (Oscarson, 2009). Topping (2009) notes that peer assessment is more effective with clear guidelines like rubrics, which reduce confusion and improve grading reliability.

Still, applying rubrics and student-driven assessment effectively is not without its challenges. Teachers may understand rubric standards differently, leading to inconsistent grading (Panadero & Jonsson, 2013). Students may also have difficulty using rubrics correctly without enough training, especially for tasks requiring interpretation, like translation. While tools like MS Word track changes and Google Docs are available, they're not always ideal for rubric-based assessment or detailed text analysis (Bowker, 2002). Therefore, understanding how teachers use rubrics and their views, especially in student evaluations, is important.

This study examines the perception of lecturers on using rubrics to guide peer and self-assessment in translation lessons at Politeknik Negeri Padang. Interviews with two experienced lecturers revealed insights into their use of rubrics, challenges faced, and their expectations. The study aims to answer these key questions:

1. How do lecturers perceive the role of rubrics in translation evaluation?
2. What are the perceived benefits and challenges of using rubrics for peer and self-assessment?
3. What support or tools do lecturers need to apply rubric-based assessment more effectively?

Initial findings reveal that lecturers consider rubrics vital for providing consistent feedback and reducing bias. One lecturer highlighted that rubrics provide stable criteria helping students see areas needing improvement, especially when paired with peer feedback. Another stressed the importance of self-editing before submitting tasks, noting that rubrics aid students in understanding quality standards. However, both mentioned issues like varying interpretations of rubric criteria and the time-consuming nature of manual assessments. These results align with past research by Jonsson and Svingby (2007), indicating that although rubrics enhance transparency, their success depends on mutual understanding and correct application.

This study contributes to ongoing discussions in translation education about integrating rubrics, peer learning, and technology. It argues that well-designed rubrics, supported by appropriate training and tools, can significantly aid both evaluation and learning enhancement. As translation education progresses, developing a balanced, rubric-informed assessment framework is essential for preparing students to tackle real-world translation challenges..

Translation Assessment in Higher Education

Assessing translation skills is a crucial part of training future translators. It evaluates whether students can accurately capture the meaning, use correct language, and write clearly in the target language. However, assessing translation is difficult because people might interpret it differently (Waddington, 2001). Translation is not just about switching words; it's about understanding different languages, cultures, and situations (House, 2015). Teachers often face

challenges in being fair and consistent, especially when evaluating style or subtle meanings in translations.

Experts like Hurtado Albir (2017) suggest that assessments should consider both the end product (the translated text) and the techniques students use. Unfortunately, many education programs still focus mostly on the final translation instead of the learning process that helps students grow and improve over time.

Role of Rubrics in Language Learning

Rubrics are widely used in education to assess complex tasks. A rubric provides clear guidelines on what is expected and how the work will be graded. In translation, rubrics highlight important aspects such as accuracy, style, and readability (Waddington, 2001; Byram & Morgan, 1994).

Rubrics help with both grading and teaching. Andrade (2005) argues that rubrics give students clarity, letting them understand how their work will be evaluated. This understanding benefits both students and teachers because students know what to aim for, and teachers can provide consistent, clear feedback. When applied correctly, rubrics make grading more reliable and less subjective (Jonsson & Svingby, 2007).

In translation classes, rubrics assist teachers in checking if the meaning is conveyed accurately, if language choices are suitable, and if the text flows well. Panadero and Jonsson (2013) note that rubrics are particularly useful for complex thinking tasks, as they guide students in reflecting on their work and making improvements.

Nevertheless, using rubrics can be challenging. Different teachers might interpret rubric criteria differently, leading to inconsistency, especially in subjective areas like style or creativity (Tremblay, 2011). Additionally, rubrics should be tailored to match course goals, requiring careful planning and adjustment.

Peer and Self-Assessment in Translation Pedagogy

Peer and self-assessment are rooted in educational theories that emphasize student responsibility, reflection, and active involvement in learning (Falchikov, 2005). In translation education, these practices encourage students to engage more deeply with their work, understanding translation strategies and language use better. Oscarson (2009) mentions that self-assessment helps learners identify their strengths and weaknesses, promoting awareness and self-control. Peer assessment allows students to learn from each other, improving teamwork and editing skills. Topping (2009) stresses that peer feedback is most effective when structured with tools like rubrics, ensuring focus and useful insights.

In translation classes, peer and self-assessment could involve reviewing drafts, holding class discussions, and doing editing exercises. These activities not only build translation competence but also simulate real-world translation settings, where revising and collaborative editing are standard (Mossop, 2014). Despite their benefits, peer and self-assessment have challenges. Students may not feel confident critiquing their peers or might hesitate to give honest feedback. Without clear criteria or training, peer assessments can lack depth or be biased (Tai et al., 2018). Thus, incorporating rubrics in these assessments is essential for ensuring quality and fairness.

Using Technology in Translation Assessment

Technology has greatly changed how translation is taught and assessed. Tools like Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT), cloud platforms, and online workspaces help teachers give quicker feedback and keep students more engaged (Bowker, 2002).

In assessing students, tools like MS Word's track changes, Google Docs, and systems like Moodle and Canvas make it easy for teachers to comment, work together with students, and follow a structured evaluation method. These tools help teachers by allowing them to give feedback during the learning process and create a paperless environment, which makes managing tasks easier and faster (García, 2010). Moreover, digital rubrics in these systems can provide students with regular and clear feedback. Research by Shih and Tsai (2017) shows that students are more likely to improve their work when they receive feedback based on these rubrics, as it clearly points out what needs to be improved.

However, these tech tools also have some gaps. They often struggle to understand the deeper meaning needed for translating well. For example, automatic systems might miss important details like how sentences fit together, the tone of the text, or cultural elements in translation (Gaspari et al., 2015). A teacher pointed out that these tools "cannot detect the context of the text," showing that human insight is still necessary.

There is also a digital skills gap. Not all students or teachers are comfortable using digital tools, which can make technology-based assessments less effective (Tai et al., 2018). Therefore, there is a growing need for applications that are easy to use and specifically designed for translation education, with features like built-in rubrics and collaborative functions.

Methodology***Research Design***

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design to explore lecturers' perceptions on the utilization of translation rubrics for peer and self-assessment practice in the classroom. This approach is chosen to gain a deep understanding of people's thoughts and actions (Creswell, 2014). To gather detailed insights, semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing lecturers to share their experiences and views on translation assessment. Furthermore, this research focuses on rubrics as tools for assessment and teaching aids that promote independent learning and collaboration through peer and self-assessment. By engaging lecturers as key sources, the study highlights the benefits and challenges of using rubrics in teaching translation.

Participants

The participants in this study were two lecturers from the English Department at Politeknik Negeri Padang, an Indonesian polytechnic known for its language programs (due to privacy purposes, the names of the lecturers were hidden):

- Lecturer A has extensive experience in teaching translation and using rubrics and peer assessment.
- Lecturer B specializes in English teaching and uses standard translation assessment rubrics.

These participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their teaching backgrounds and experience with translation assessment. Their insights are valuable for understanding classroom assessment practices and rubric implementation.

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 open-ended questions. These questions covered current feedback methods in translation assessment, frequency and format of translation evaluation, effectiveness and limitations of rubrics, practices of peer and self-assessment, utilization of technology in translation assessment, and suggestions to improve assessment tools. In addition, the in-person interviews were conducted, recording them with the lecturers' consent, each lasting 45 to 60 minutes. The utilization of semi-structured interviews permitted delving deeper into responses when necessary.

Data Analysis

The interview data were, then, transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This involved several steps: familiarizing with data, generating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and report writing.

The coding process focused on recurring ideas, patterns, and categories about rubric use, feedback methods, assessment challenges, and student engagement in peer and self-assessment. The themes were linked to research questions and supported with direct quotes from lecturers to ensure authenticity.

To ensure trustworthy results, these strategies were implemented:

- Credibility : The findings were validated by sharing transcripts and preliminary results with participants.
- Transferability : Detailed context and participant descriptions were provided.
- Dependability : A Clear record of coding and theme development processes was maintained.
- Confirmability : Researcher bias was minimized through reflective journaling and by comparing findings with existing research.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical research guidelines. Before data collection, participants were informed about the study's goals, procedures, and their rights and obtained written consent. Confidentiality and use of pseudonyms to protect identities were assured. The study posed minimal risk and met with informal approval from the leadership at Politeknik Negeri Padang.

Results and Discussion

This section presents results of this study in accordance with the research questions, followed by a discussion section of the results. The results and discussion are presented based on research questions of this study

Result**RQ1. How do lecturers perceive the role of rubrics in translation evaluation?**

Both lecturers view rubrics as vital tools for assessing students' translation abilities. Lecturer A highlighted that rubrics help her categorize students by skill level and improvement, providing clear guidance for grading that reduces bias. Lecturer B confirmed she uses standard rubrics with criteria such as accuracy, structure, style, and cohesion, which she finds practical and essential for fair evaluations.

RQ2: What are the perceived benefits and challenges of using rubrics for peer and self-assessment?

Lecturer A explained how she organizes peer assessment in her class. Students first correct each other's work, then discuss it with the whole class, and finally get graded based on a rubric. This process helps students learn to review their peers' work as well as their own. Before receiving final grades, students do self-editing, which is an important step to improve their work. Meanwhile, lecturer B also finds self-editing to be effective. It leads to fewer basic mistakes and gives students a sense of responsibility for improving their work. However, both lecturers mentioned a major challenge: different teachers might understand the rubric's criteria in various ways. Lecturer A pointed out that translation naturally allows for many right interpretations, and these differing views can impact the grades students get.

RQ3: What support or tools do lecturers need to apply rubric-based assessment more effectively?

Both lecturers discussed the need for technology that supports translation assessments using a rubric. Lecturer A shared that she uses tools like Google Translate, U-Dictionary, and Google Docs, but these do not allow her to apply rubrics, forcing her to do additional work since she can't grade with her rubric in these tools. Lecturer B pointed out the advantages of MS Word, which offers track changes, and Google Docs, which supports collaboration, but noted that they also lack any rubric feature. Both lecturers agreed that the ideal tool would combine translation analysis, rubric-based scoring, and interactive feedback within a single platform.

Discussion**RQ1. How do lecturers perceive the role of rubrics in translation evaluation?**

The lecturers agree that rubrics are crucial tools for evaluating translations. This highlights the importance of having clear and fair methods to assess translator training. Lecturer A thinks rubrics help sort students by their abilities and progress, which supports their learning. This idea aligns with Andrade's (2005) view that rubrics not only evaluate but also help students improve when applied in teaching. Meanwhile, lecturer B supports using standard criteria like accuracy, structure, cohesion, and style. This matches Waddington's (2001) framework for translation assessment, which suggests a broad approach to recognize the complex translation process. These elements also fit with Hurtado Albir's (2017) model, which states that successful translation requires a strong command of linguistic, textual, and practical knowledge.

Both lecturers point out the importance of rubrics in making translation evaluation less subjective. Translation involves interpretation, but rubrics help ensure fairness and consistency in assessments, which can often be swayed by personal biases. As Sadler (2009) explains, clear criteria can reduce variability in assessors' judgments by providing shared standards. However, because various valid translations can exist, rubrics need to be detailed yet flexible to accommodate different interpretations.

RQ2: What are the perceived benefits and challenges of using rubrics for peer and self-assessment?

In their translation classes, Lecturer A and Lecturer B use rubrics for peer and self-assessment. This approach puts students at the heart of the learning process. Lecturer A has a routine of peer correction, class discussions, and rubric-based grading. This structure helps students learn to reflect critically on their work and collaborate effectively with others. According to Topping

(2009), peer assessment is most effective when clear guidelines are provided for giving and receiving feedback. Moreover, self-assessment is done by students in editing their work before submission, which encourages them to think deeply about their own work. As noted by Panadero and Alonso-Tapia (2013), this practice enhances their ability to learn independently and keeps them motivated.

Lecturer B observed that self-editing helps students make fewer basic mistakes. This suggests that with proper guidelines, students can identify and correct their own errors, a point supported by Oscarson (2009). Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) also emphasize that formative assessments, like self-assessment, boost learning when students understand how to use feedback effectively.

However, both lecturers express concerns about differences in how lecturers interpret rubrics, which can lead to inconsistent grading. Lecturer A points out that translation often involves interpretation, and different teachers may emphasize different parts of the rubric. Tremblay (2011) agrees, noting that even detailed rubrics cannot completely remove personal judgment in evaluating language and style. Therefore, while rubrics make grading more transparent, lecturers need to have a shared understanding of how to apply them, as Jonsson and Svingby (2007) suggest.

RQ3: What support or tools do lecturers need to apply rubric-based assessment more effectively?

Lecturers often use digital tools like Google Docs, MS Word, and dictionary apps in their work. However, these tools do not offer built-in features for assessing translations using rubrics. This leads to a fragmented and time-consuming assessment process. Lecturer A finds this situation a major hurdle, as it requires her to manually align rubric criteria with students' translations across different tools. These issues are not unique. Shih and Tsai (2017) have noted that while digital tools aid feedback and collaboration, they aren't typically tailored for domain-specific tasks like translation assessments. Similarly, Gaspari et al. (2015) highlighted that general-purpose machine translation lacks the context needed for detailed linguistic evaluation and rubric-based scoring.

Lecturer B values tools that promote collaboration, such as Google Docs with comments and MS Word with track changes. This shows creative use of current technology, but it is not being fully optimized. Tai et al. (2018) emphasize that for digital feedback to be effective, it must align with educational goals and assessment frameworks.

An ideal tool for lecturers would integrate translation analysis, rubrics, and interactive feedback. This would address a clear gap in the market, streamline grading, and encourage students to engage more in reviewing their work and that of their peers. Dawson (2017) argues that incorporating rubric integration into digital platforms is essential for the future of modern assessments.

Conclusion

This study looked at how lecturers feel about using translation rubrics to help students assess themselves and their peers at Politeknik Negeri Padang. The research shows that lecturers think rubrics are important tools for grading translations because they help make grading clear, consistent, and fair. Rubrics provide a structured way to grade, helping with objective assessment and guiding students by clearly stating what is expected and where they can improve.

When students use rubrics for peer and self-assessment, it helps them become more independent and thoughtful about their work. They learn to carefully review their own translations as well as those of their classmates. This process leads to better learning and the development of skills. However, the study found that some lecturers find it hard to interpret rubrics. This can lead to inconsistent grading since translation can be subjective.

Lecturers also mentioned the need for better digital tools to use rubrics effectively. Currently, platforms like MS Word and Google Docs have some features, but they aren't enough to fully support translation rubrics. There is a need for specialized tools that can work with rubrics, understand context, and provide quick feedback to make grading more efficient and teaching more effective.

In conclusion, rubrics enhance translation education by ensuring fair grading and providing useful feedback. However, using rubrics successfully requires a shared understanding among educators and new technology that supports the goals of translator training programs.

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