



## DESIGN THINKING IN TRANSLATION CLASS

**Nadia Gitya Yulianita**

Jenderal Soedirman University

[nadiagityay@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:nadiagityay@unsoed.ac.id)

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### Abstract

Design thinking is believed as a suitable approach to encourage students' critical thinking in the 21st century. This paper explores how students in higher education engage this type of learning in the classroom. The participants of this research are postgraduate students in Translation class in one of the universities in Indonesia. Through observations and questionnaire, the researcher evaluates the impacts of design thinking to the students. The result shows that the students already do the task well, but not all of the students actively expose their answers since this task is a group task. Therefore, the researcher suggests some improvements to be applied in the classroom activities. Those suggestions are expected to trigger active participation and help the students increase their knowledge and translation skills.

**Keywords:** critical thinking, design thinking, translation

### Introduction

Making classroom's situation be active is one of the challenges for teachers. This could be done by implementing an approach that could involve the students in the teaching and learning process. Task-based learning (TBL) is an alternative teaching approach that could be implemented besides the traditional PPP method (Present, Practice, and Produce). Usually, TBL is done in three stages, namely pre-task, task cycle, and post-task (Willis, 1996). Recently, there is a new model of learning called design thinking. Usually, this approach is used in the business field. It provides human-centered innovation. Liedtka (2015) states that the customers' needs will lead us to new ideas with the best competitive advantage. In other words, design thinking indicates the clients' needs and problems then tries to solve them with new excellent ideas. Basically, design thinking is similar to TBL which focuses on problem-solving which is done by the students. While TBL only has three stages, design thinking consists of five stages. They empathize, define (the problem), ideate, prototype, and test (Dam & Teo, 2018).

The task-based approach usually consists of three steps, namely pre-task, task cycle, and last stage. In the pre-task stage, the teacher usually introduces the topic and the task. Then, the task cycle stage consists of tasks, planning, and report. It means that the students start doing their tasks, form the plan on how to report the result of the task, and report it in front of the class. Finally, in the last stage, the teacher lets the students to listen to their friends' presentations which are already good so that the other students can learn from them (Willis, 1996).

Meanwhile, design thinking consists of more than three steps. There are other sources that mention that there are five, seven, or more steps of design thinking but the basic principle is still the same. Design thinking triggers the students to think creatively in order to solve the problem(s). In this paper, the researcher uses a theory of design thinking from Institute Design of Stanford. It is because they are at the fore-front in giving training about design thinking in education (Dam & Teo, 2018). Based on that theory, there are five steps of design thinking, i.e. empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test.

Empathize is the step where the designer understands your client. In the field of design, it is common for the client to have requests or demands that the designer needs to fulfill. Sometimes, they have preferences that are difficult to be done. However, the designer still needs to accomplish the design by discussing the concept that meets both the client's needs and the best concept according to the designer.

Meanwhile, in translation, empathize usually deals with the target readers and the clients who ask for your translation. The translator has to know your target readers so that he could decide what kind of translation that he would produce. It would be different when he wants to produce translation for children or for adults. The language and translation techniques should match the target readers' levels and needs. In addition, the clients who ask for the translation usually have some requirements about how the translation should be or about the translation fee. The translator should understand and discuss the translation product with the clients so that both parties would meet an agreement.

Define is the step where the designer finds the problem(s). The designer knows the problem(s) and try to find a way to solve the problem(s). The clients who come to the designer asking for a design must have problem(s). Understanding those problems is the designer's job so that he can make a design that can help the clients solve the problems. It is similar to translation where the clients come to the translator, they must have problems in understanding and translating the source text. Therefore, they need help from the translator to do it. The translator should understand the problem(s) in order to translate well.

Ideate is the third step where the designer starts to come up with ideas to solve the problem(s). After understanding the problem(s), the designer starts to make ideas or designs to solve the problem(s). Similar to that, the translator will try to choose proper translation techniques to translate the source text. Basically, all of the translation techniques are good. It is the translator's job to decide which technique is most suitable to translate any particular term from the source text into the target text.

In the next step, which is a prototype, the designer designs the solution(s) of the problem(s). In the field of design, the designer would come with possible suggestions or designs which could solve the problems and meet the clients' needs. The designer would build the design based on the ideas that he gathered before. In translation, the translator decides which translation technique that he use to translate the source text.

In the last step, the test, the designer exposes the solution(s) and get feedback to improve the solution(s). It means the designer shows his design to other people

or clients and see whether his design can solve the problem(s) and satisfy the clients' needs or not. Similarly, the translator gives his translation to clients or target readers and get opinions from them whether his translation is accurate, acceptable, and readable.

There were many types of research about design thinking conducted in the past few years (Koch, 2016; Leifer, 2016; Sirkin, 2016; Sonalkar, 2016; Wenzel, 2016). However, those researches mainly discuss the implementation of design thinking in business. Some of them state about the definition of design thinking and how to apply it, while others provide the design thinking's advantages. Still, there are some researches that implement design thinking in education (Kwek, 2011; Razzouk & Shute, 2012).

Kwek (2011) did a research about the implementation of this new learning method in a public middle school in the San Francisco Bay Area. He tried to get a fuller understanding of the teacher's decision to adopt this innovative teaching approach. Meanwhile, Razzouk & Shute (2012) emphasize on the features and characteristics of design thinking and discuss its importance in promoting students' problem-solving skills in the 21st century. Since there are not many researches about the implementation of design thinking in education, this topic is interested to be discussed further.

On the other hand, this paper focuses on how postgraduate students in one of Universities in Indonesia engage this type of learning. Besides, this paper also proposes some suggestions in order to improve students' performance to actively participate in teaching and learning activities. In addition, this paper also gives some benefits, for instance, to give better understanding for teachers about the implementation of design thinking in Translation Practice Class, to give ideas for teachers to improve learning activities using design thinking approach, and to be a reference for next researchers who are interested in conducting research about design thinking in education field.

## **Method**

This research is qualitative research which implements the descriptive method. According to Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh (2002), the goal of qualitative research is the depth of understanding rather than the numerical data. Besides, the descriptive method is used to describe the implementation of design thinking in Translation class. This implementation includes on how the students of higher education engage this type of learning and what needs to be improved from this learning method in the Translation class.

The participants of this research are 16 postgraduate students in Translation class. All of them are in their first semester. The data were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews. The observation was done in order to observe on how the students participate in the classroom activities. Meanwhile, the interview was conducted to know how the students feel through the learning process. This would also help the researcher to suggest some ideas to improve the learning process after listening to the students' opinions about the learning process which involves a design thinking approach.

### **Findings and Discussion**

From the data analysis, it is shown that the students already implemented the design thinking approach well in the class. They did all the steps of design thinking, namely empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test. They started by understanding the target readers. This would help them to decide better translation. For instance, if they translate children's books, they have to use translations that are familiar and appropriate for children. Then, they defined the problem(s) that they found during the translation process. For example, when they wanted to translate sentences with rhyme. They have to decide whether to maintain the meaning and form (rhyme) or to choose either one. This would lead them in ideate stage which is finding a solution(s) to their problem(s). The students needed to come up with ideas on how to solve their translation(s) problem(s).

After the students collected the ideas, they had to decide which one is better to solve the problem. This stage is called prototype. They designed and executed the best solution from all solutions that they have thought. Finally, they could test their solution and see whether it could help solve the problem or not. This is the last stage of design thinking where the students could get feedbacks from their friends and the lecturer after presenting their translation version in front of the class.

This approach is supposed to make the classroom be more active but in reality, this implementation of design thinking is still not effective. The researcher found that there were only two or three students who participated actively in teaching and learning activities. It means that this class still needs some improvements to make the students be more active. In other words, the teacher should motivate the students so that they want to engage in teaching and learning activities actively. Some suggestions for teacher to motivate the students, for instance, giving points for those who ask or give comments, making obligation that each student has to speak up, making small groups and each group has to ask or give comments, trying other genres of the text so that the students would not get bored.

The students in Translation Practice 1 Class already did all five steps of design thinking based on the theory from Institute Design of Stanford. They could understand the users (target readers), identify the problems, formulate some ideas to solve the problems, decide the best solutions for their problems, and test their solutions in public to get feedback to improve their translations. This approach is proven to be effective to trigger critical thinking. However, this approach still could not make the students be more active in class. It happens because of some factors, i.e. afraid, lack of confidence, and bored. They were afraid that their friends would think that they were not capable of the class if they ask questions. Besides, they did not have confidence in speaking in public because there were already some of their friends who already stated their opinions. Moreover, they were also bored because their friends translate some texts in the same genre.

In order to motivate the students to be more active in the class, the teacher needs to do some things, for instance giving points for those who ask or give comments. This would trigger their competition feeling and it could also help the teacher assesses the students. Besides, the teacher also can make an obligation that each student has to speak up. The students do not have to ask or give different

questions and opinions, but they can also support their friends' questions and opinions. This would make the discussion activity more alive. If the students still do not want to speak in public, the teacher could make small groups and each group has to ask questions or give comments to other group translations. In addition, the teacher can also try other types of text, for example, scientific texts, humor texts, movie subtitles, and many more, so that the students would not get bored.

### Conclusion

It could be concluded that the students already did design thinking in learning activities but most of them still did not actively engage in learning activities because of some factors, namely feeling unconfident, afraid, and bored. In addition, the teacher needs to motivate the students to speak more by giving points for those who ask or give comments, making obligation that each student has to speak up, making small groups and each group has to ask or give comments, and trying other genres of text so that the students would not get bored.

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