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Beyond Accuracy: The Essential Contribution of Text Function to Translation Quality Assessment

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A B S T R A C T

The growing diversity of translation quality assessment (TQA) models has raised concerns about consistency and reliability, as previous studies show that the same target text may receive different quality judgments when evaluated using different frameworks. This variation exposes the limitations of accuracy-oriented approaches and underscores the need for a more function-sensitive assessment model. In response, the Function-Based TQA model introduces text function as a key quality dimension that extends evaluation beyond linguistic correctness to communicative effectiveness. This study examines the importance of incorporating text function as a central criterion in TQA and explores its perceived role among translation professionals. Adopting a descriptive research design, the study draws on qualitative data from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with translation lecturers and professional translators actively engaged in TQA. The data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative data analysis model. The findings demonstrate that text function plays a fundamental role in TQA by determining whether the target text fulfills the same communicative purpose as the source text within its target context. To facilitate practical assessment, this study proposes clearly defined quality descriptions and a corresponding scoring system for different levels of functional adequacy. Overall, the study argues that including text function as a distinct quality dimension enhances the consistency, explanatory power, and applicability of TQA models, contributing to a more holistic approach to translation evaluation.

I. INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of translation practice is to reproduce a text in a different language while conveying the full message of the source text (ST). The extent to which the translated text represents the ST message determines its quality, and translator training is generally designed to help trainees produce high-quality translations (Alaskar, 2025; Jabu et al., 2021). However, translation quality is often subjective, and current issues in translation quality assessment (TQA) arise partly because different TQA models yield inconsistent evaluations of the same translation. This inconsistency has motivated researchers

to propose improved TQA frameworks capable of addressing such discrepancies. One early contribution was offered by Sofyan and Tarigan (2018a), who incorporated text function as one of the criteria for evaluating translation quality. This inclusion is rooted in the notion that the object of translation is the text, and every text performs a particular function. As Nord (2018) emphasizes, text function should inform translators' decision-making throughout the translation process.

Although previous scholars – such as Hurtado Albir (1995), Nababan et al. (2012), Temizöz (2015), Waddington (2001), and Williams (2001) – rightly emphasized aspects such as accuracy,

acceptability, grammatical fluency, and translators' problem-solving ability, the significance of text function in evaluating translation quality should not be underestimated. The call to include text function in TQA emerged in Hurtado Albir's model, which, however, allocated only a marginal weight (around four percent) to it, meaning that a translation could score 96/100 while failing to reproduce the source text's (ST) intended function. According to such a model and some subsequent adaptations (e.g., Waddington, 2001; Williams, 2009), such translation would still be rated as successful, thereby diminishing the importance of functional equivalence.

Recent empirical studies strengthen the argument for functional concerns in TQA. For example, quality assessment on the translation of professional translators (Sofyan & Tarigan, 2020) proposes a function-based TQA model explicitly placing text function among the core evaluative criteria. While that study introduced a conceptual framework and demonstrated its applicability in assessing professional translations, it did not provide detailed descriptive criteria or an empirically based rubric for evaluating functional adequacy. The present study builds that earlier work by further examining how translation experts understand the role of text function in TQA and by proposing a more explicit set of descriptive levels and scoring guidelines for assessing functional adequacy. Other recent studies have also highlighted the relevance of functional analysis in translation evaluation. For instance, a recent study evaluating museum-label translations – translation quality assessment of labels in the NMEC: A Functional Linguistic Model (2024) – investigates differences in textual metafunction between source and target texts, underscoring the necessity of functional equivalence beyond surface-level accuracy (El-Sayed et al., 2024). In the context of educational translation, exploring linguistic competence in academic text translation by professionals (Ningrum et al., 2024) reveals that translators frequently confront challenges not only in grammar or vocabulary, but also at the textual and sociolinguistic levels – domains where functional and textual competence become indispensable for quality.

These more recent investigations reinforce the view advanced by earlier scholars such as Almutairi (2018a), who argued for inclusion of text type/function in TQA. By integrating functional criteria,

TQA models can better capture whether the target text achieves its intended communicative purpose, thereby ensuring that translation quality is not defined by accuracy alone but also by functional appropriateness and textual coherence.

In the function-based TQA model proposed by Sofyan and Tarigan (2018a, 2020), text function is interpreted through a genre-based perspective aligned with Reiss's ([1977] 1989) assertion that every translation should serve a particular communicative purpose. Each genre is associated with a specific social function realized through distinct generic structures and lexicogrammatical features (Derewianka, 1990; Gerot & Wignell, 1994). Thus, translating an analytical exposition, for example, requires reproducing the social function characteristic of this genre in the target language (TL). This observation underscores the need to examine the typical features of analytical exposition texts in the TL. Prior studies have investigated the translation of texts with diverse social functions (Hashemian & Farhang-Ju, 2021; Nurlela et al., 2018; Sofyan & Tarigan, 2018b). For instance, Hashemian and Farhang-Ju (2021) found that failing to reproduce the social function of humorous texts results in diminished appreciation by the target audience, demonstrating that the translation's communicative purpose must be maintained.

While these studies highlight the relevance of text function in translation, they primarily focus on theoretical explanation of functional features in translated texts. The present study extends this line of research by examining how translation experts perceive the importance of text function as an explicit evaluative criterion in TQA. In addition, the present study seeks to operationalize this concept by proposing descriptive quality levels and a tentative scoring rubric for assessing functional adequacy within TQA. In this way, the study contributes not by introducing an entirely new concept, but by providing empirical insights and a more explicit operationalization of text function within translation evaluation practices.

The theoretical foundation of this study draws on two major approaches to TQA: error-based assessment (Hurtado Albir, 1995; Temizöz, 2015; Williams, 2001) and holistic assessment (Almutairi, 2018a; Nababan et al., 2012; Waddington, 2001). Given its broader evaluative scope, the holistic

approach is adopted to develop the present TQA model, with each assessment aspect accompanied by descriptive criteria (Farahzad, 1992). To justify the inclusion of text function, the study employs systemic functional grammar (SFG), which conceptualizes text as a socially situated meaning-making resource (Derewianka, 1990; Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

II. METHODS

This study was conducted using a descriptive method. The data were the results of the closed-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The participants were 10 translation lecturers and 5 professional translators who have met the predetermined criteria, including having translation teaching experience and education background on translation (translation lecturers), being members of the Indonesian Translators Association, and having more than three years' experience in the professional practice of translation (professional translators). Besides, they were chosen because they were very close to the application of TQA. The reason for taking more translation lecturers as the participants was motivated by the fact that TQA is extensively used in an education setting or translation training (Doherty et al., 2018; Sofyan et al., 2023). Nevertheless, TQA is also needed in the professional practice of translation, despite its slightly different criteria (Thelen, 2008). It should be noted, however, the relatively small sample size and concentration of participants in Indonesian academic and professional contexts limit the representativeness of the findings. Consequently, the results should be interpreted as exploratory and context-specific, rather than broadly generalizable. Furthermore, because the data rely on expert perceptions, potential biases related to participants' professional experience and institutional background cannot be completely ruled out.

The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions with four options for each (see Appendix 1). The questions have been validated by two translation experts. The participants were asked to choose one of the options for each question. For the purpose of data triangulation, a semi-structured interview (see Appendix 2) was conducted. The data obtained from the interview were particularly intended to support the results of the questionnaire in terms of exploring the true contribution of text function in assessing the translation quality. The

data were then analyzed using an interactive model of data analysis proposed by Miles et al. (2014). This model enabled the integration of quantitative tendencies and qualitative elaborations, providing a comprehensive account of expert judgments regarding the essential role of text function in contemporary TQA practices.

III. RESULTS

The results are presented following the sequence of questionnaire items, with interview data incorporated to deepen interpretation. Overall, the findings consistently highlight participants' awareness of text function and their support for its inclusion as a criterion in translation quality assessment (TQA). The first question asked participants about their experience with using, or at least considering, text function in translation quality assessment (TQA). This question serves to establish whether text function constitutes a quality dimension within a function-based TQA framework. Participants' responses regarding their experience with the text function aspect in TQA are shown in Figure 1.

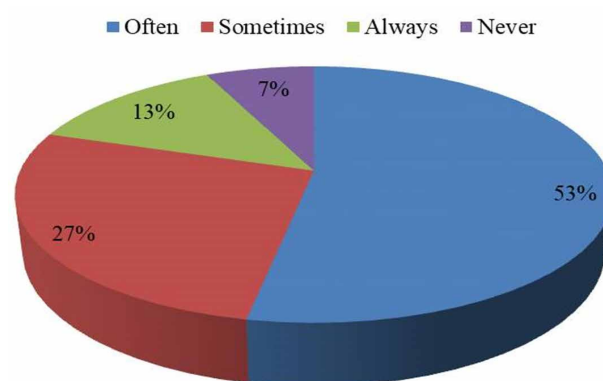


Fig. 1. The experience of using text function in TQA

The results presented in Figure 1 indicate that the majority of the participants have experienced using text function (in different degrees of frequency) as one of the quality aspects in TQA. Only 1 participant (7%) never used or considered text function aspect in TQA. Nevertheless, the results of the interview indicate that the text function is given a very small portion in TQA. Despite its very small role in the previous TQA models, the results have confirmed that text function has been considered as one of the aspects affecting the quality of translation. The results of the questionnaire are confirmed by the interview results revealing the participants' good understanding of the concept of text function. All the texts are constructed to communicate certain

social function; in other words, there is no any single text constructed without any clear function.

Following the first item of the questionnaire, the second item is related to the degree of importance of text function in TQA. This item is particularly important because all of the participants have good knowledge of text function. The results indicate that text function is important to be included in the TQA for several reasons, as shown in Figure 2.

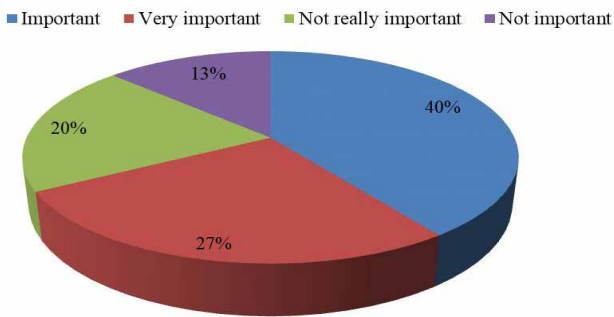


Fig. 2. The importance of text function

Figure 2 shows that most participants perceive text function as an important element to be included in a TQA model. Most respondents rated it as important (40%) or very important (27%), indicating that translation experts generally recognize the role of functional adequacy in evaluating translation quality. The results from the interviews further clarified this perception, revealing that text function requires the translator’s ability to make the TT has the same function as its ST. Besides, the results of the interview also indicate that text function is part of the meaning, and the failure to keep the text function in the TT means the failure to transfer the whole meaning of the ST in the TT. This means that, in addition to accurate meaning transfer of the ST, the TT must reflect the text function in accordance with the TL perspective. One of the criteria of text function can be seen from such textual characteristics of the TT as theme markedness (Sofyan & Tarigan, 2018b) and thematic progression (Rosa, 2007; Zein et al., 2023). English descriptive texts, for example, are characterized by the frequent use of unmarked themes and theme progression with derived themes (hypertheme); however, Indonesian descriptive texts are characterized by the frequent use of marked theme and constant continuous theme progression. Therefore, when translating a descriptive text from English into bahasa Indonesia, a translator has to follow the thematic characteristics applicable in the TL perspective. Study the translation of descriptive

text in (1).

ST : Ecuador is situated on the equator in the northwest of South America. The economy is based on oil and agricultural products. More oil is produced in Ecuador than any other South American country except Venezuela. Bananas, coffee, and cocoa are grown there. The people are mostly of Indian origin. Several Indian languages are spoken there. The currency is called the Sucre.

TT : *Ekuador terletak di garis khatulistiwa di barat laut Amerika Selatan. Di negara tersebut, ekonomi bertumpu kepada hasil minyak bumi dan pertanian. Ekuador merupakan penghasil minyak bumi terbanyak kedua di Amerika Latin setelah Venezuela. Di sana, banyak ditemukan tanaman pisang, kopi, dan kakao. Penduduknya kebanyakan berasal dari suku Indian sehingga di sana beberapa bahasa Indian digunakan. Di Ekuador, mata uang yang berlaku adalah Sucre.*

Back Translation:

Ecuador is located on the equator in northwest South America. In this country, the economy relies on petroleum and agricultural products. Ecuador is the second largest oil producer in Latin America after Venezuela. There, bananas, coffee and cocoa plants are grown. The people are mostly of Indian origin, so that there several Indian languages are spoken. In Ecuador, the prevailing currency is Sucre.

The ST in (1) shows that the second theme (the economy), the third theme (More oil), the fourth theme (Bananas, coffee, and cocoa), the fifth theme (The people), the sixth theme (Several Indian languages), and the seventh theme (The currency) give some information concerning Ecuador (Rosa, 2007). This means that the ST is built using theme progression with derived themes as the following themes are the sub-themes of the first theme “Ecuador” (see Figure 3). In addition, all of the clause themes in the TT are unmarked themes.

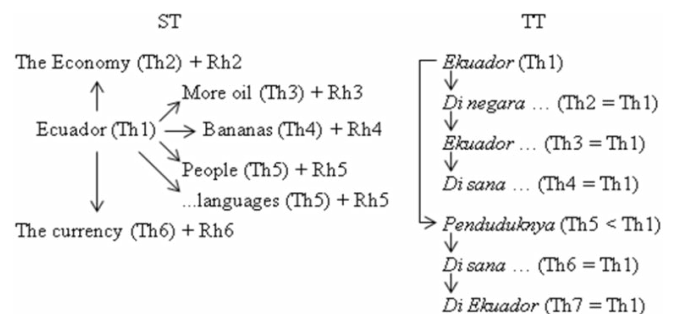


Fig. 3. The thematic progression of the ST and the TT compared (Rosa, 2007)

Meanwhile, as displayed in Figure 3, the themes in the TT are dominated by marked themes because most of the themes are composed of

circumstances (adverbial groups), i.e., “*Di Negara tersebut*” (the theme of the second clause), “*Di sana*” (the theme of the fourth clause), “*di sana*” (the theme of the sixth clause), and “*Di Ekuador*” (the theme of the seventh clause). In addition, the thematic progression in the TT is dominated by constant continuous theme progression. Such different thematic progression of the TT is the result of thematic progression shift (Rosa, 2019).

Furthermore, the results of data analysis displayed in Figure 2 also show that the other participants consider text function not really important (20%) and not important (13%), respectively. This small percentage may reflect differing perspectives on the relative role of functional criteria in translation evaluation. One possible explanation is that some participants were more familiar with TQA models that primarily emphasize linguistic accuracy or equivalence, in which text function is not always treated as a primary evaluative dimension. For example, some established TQA frameworks focus primarily on error identification and linguistic correspondence, while others acknowledge text function but give it a more limited role in the overall assessment (House, 1997; Hurtado Albir, 1995). However, because this present study does not directly investigate the reasons behind participants’ responses, this interpretation should be treated with caution. The responses may also reflect individual professional experience, differing assessment practices, or varying levels of familiarity with functionalist approaches to translation evaluation.

As the follow up of the second item of the questionnaire, to those who consider the importance of including text function in the TT, the next question addressed is relating to the reasons why they think it important or very important. The results of this third question are presented in Figure 4.

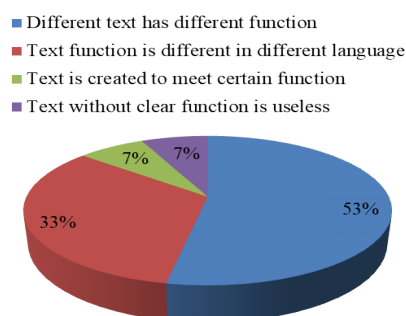


Fig. 4. The reasons for including text function in the TQA model

As presented in Figure 4, the results indicate that the majority of the participants consider that the inclusion of text function in the TQA model is important because different text has different function (53%). The results of the questionnaires are supported by the results of the interview which indicate that all of the texts are created for certain communicative function. This is confirmed by several previous studies that each text has its own function (Kanwal et al., 2021; Sofyan & Tarigan, 2018b, 2020; Zein et al., 2023). This also indicates that the TT has to achieve the same social function of the ST although reconstructed by using different generic structures and lexicogrammatical features. Furthermore, the results of the data analysis also show that the importance of including text function is because a text in different language has specific social function (33%). Other reasons – text is created to meet certain function (7%) and text without clear function is useless (7%) – are not very important according to the participants. The results are confirmed by the inter-view results revealing that every text has its specified function.

The next item concerns with the contribution of text function in assessing translation quality. The results are displayed in Figure 5.

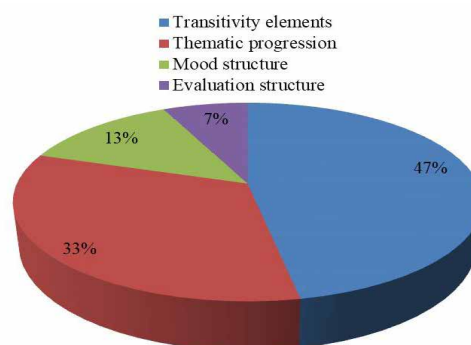


Fig. 5. The language elements contributing to text function in TQA

The results presented in Figure 5 show that transitivity is the language element with the highest contribution (47%) to the text function aspect in TQA. The results of the interview confirm that transitivity elements are the basic categorization of dictions used in building a text. Transitivity represents the ideas to share in a text, whether to tell, describe, report, persuade, and so forth. Different representations have different functions, and usually use different dictions. This finding supports the previous findings indicating that transitivity can characterize certain text function (Nurlela et al., 2018; Ong’onda, 2016). Certain

text function requires certain types of processes and circumstances (Derewianka, 1990; Gerot & Wignell, 1994). In addition to transitivity element, thematic progression has also been confirmed to contribute to distinguishing certain social function of a text from other texts (Rosa, 2007). In this study, thematic progression has the second highest contribution to identify certain social text function. This is also supported by the results of the interview, confirming that thematic progression shows the logical presentation of information structure in a text. A text with different function usually uses different thematic progression.

Furthermore, the results of data analysis on the next item of the questionnaire (What is the objective of including text function as one of the criteria in TQA?) are presented in Figure 6.

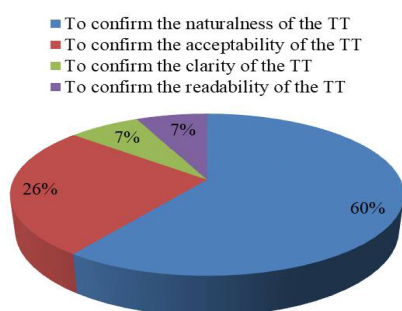


Fig. 6. The objective of including text function in the TQA model

The findings shown in Figure 6 suggest that the text function aspect is closely associated with the naturalness of the target text (TT). This supports the view that text function varies across languages, as 60% of participants indicated that it contributes to ensuring the naturalness of the TT. This means that the naturalness of the TT can be seen from how the TT achieves the text function corresponding to the text function of the text originally written in the TL. Therefore, TL readers are unable to identify that the text they read is a translated text. In addition, Figure 4 also shows that the text function aspect is helpful to make the TT acceptable as 26% of the participants' responses believe that text function confirms the TT acceptability. This is quite logical since a text function is one of the reasons why the text is composed. Meanwhile, clarity and readability are two items that are not really helpful in characterizing certain text function.

The results of the questionnaires are supported by the interview results. Most of the participants argued that the TT achieves its function when it is read as a text originally written in the TL. The TL

readers do not find it strange reading the TT as it follows the natural way of conveying information in their native language. Thus, the results confirm how text function needs to be included as one of the quality aspects in a TQA model.

The next item of the questionnaire is related to the contribution of text function aspect to the translation quality. The participants' responses to such question are presented in Figure 7.

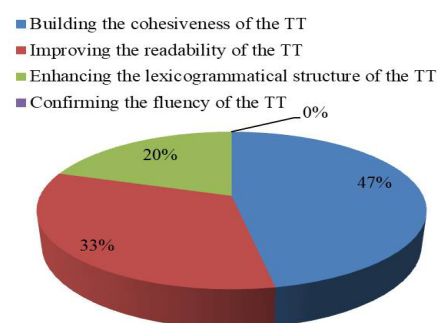


Fig. 7. The contribution of text function aspect to the translation quality

The results of data analysis presented in Figure 7 show that building the cohesiveness of the TT or a well-organized TT is the highest contribution (47%) of the inclusion of text function in a TQA model. The cohesiveness of the TT is related to the interaction of the ideas presented in the text, realized in the progression of theme and rheme in the TT. A well-organized TT facilitates the TL readers' understanding of the text; in other words, it improves the readability of the TT, the second highest contribution of text function to translation quality (33%). Bailin and Grafstein (2016) argue that readability is the ability of an author to (i) link the units of information, (ii) avoid ambiguity, and (iii) provide background knowledge that can be used by readers to make inferences from a segment of the text. This means that readability refers to the clarity and identifiable flow of ideas in a text. Such readability certainly needs to be supported by the ability to use good lexicogrammatical structure of the TT, which, according to the participants, contributes 20% of meeting the TT function. Meanwhile, none of the participants believes that the fluency of TT contributes to achieve the TT function. This means the proficiency in the two languages involved in translation is not enough to make someone a good translator because translation is not merely a demonstration of language proficiency.

In addition, based on the interview results,

building the text cohesiveness is the pure translator's skill, which cannot be replaced by machine translation or other computer-assisted translation tools. Lack of vocabulary does present a problem in translation, but a number of printed or online sources facilitate solutions to such a problem.

The other question in the questionnaire is related to how much text function contributes to the translation quality compared with the contribution of accuracy. This question is particularly important in defining the weight of assessment on text function in a TQA model. The results of data analysis concerning this question are presented in Figure 8.

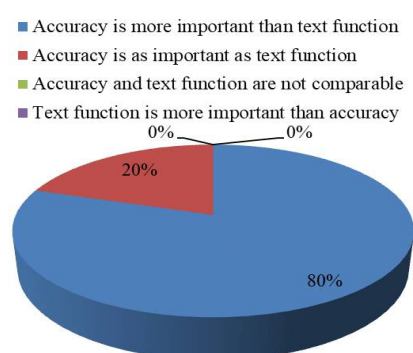


Fig. 8. The comparison of contribution of text function and accuracy to translation quality

Figure 8 illustrates that the majority of participants perceive accuracy as a more important criterion than text function in assessing translation quality. This supports the previous TQA models (Farahzad, 1992; Khanmohammad & Osanloo, 2009; Nababan et al., 2012) regarding accuracy as the aspect with the highest contribution to the translation quality. Accuracy is related to the complete representation of the ST meaning in the TT. Referring to the V-principle proposed by Newmark (1988), accuracy is closely related to ST-oriented translation, meaning that translation should be faithful through word by word transfer of meaning from the ST to the TT. Nevertheless, accuracy is not absolute as other factors such as text function also contribute to the translation quality. This is the reason why 20% of the participants argue that accuracy is as important as text function; in other words, the quality of translation cannot be solely determined by the accuracy. In addition, some translation scholars also argue that the quality of translation also depends on the function of the TT (Nord, 1991, 1992; Williams, 2009). The important role of text function is also mentioned by Nord

(1992), who believes that meaning is assigned to a text by the recipient in light of the given function. It is then concluded most of translation scholars agree that accuracy should be the criteria with the highest contribution to translation quality, but its dominance should not be absolute. In addition, the results of data analysis displayed in Figure 8 show that all of the participants disagree that text function plays a more important role than accuracy and that accuracy and text function are not comparable.

In addition, the interview results also indicate that accuracy is much more important than text function, since the main activity in translation is rewriting the whole meaning of the ST in the TT accurately. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, some participants argued that text function is a part of meaning; therefore, they also consider text function as important as accuracy.

The other question in the questionnaire is related to how the text function aspect helps reduce subjectivity and relativity in TQA. The results of this question are presented in Figure 9 below.

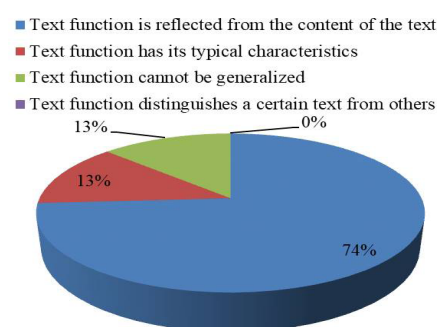


Fig. 9. Text function against subjectivity and relativity

The results shown in Figure 9 indicate that the majority of the participants (74%) believe that including text function as an evaluative aspect can reduce subjectivity and relativity in TQA. According to these participants, the communicative function of a text is closely related to the ideas and meanings conveyed in its content, which can provide evaluators with a clearer reference point when evaluating whether the target text (TT) adequately fulfills the intended communicative role of the source text (ST). From this perspective, the existence of text function in the TQA model has the potential to guide evaluators in assessing whether the TT meets the communicative purpose of the ST. However, this finding reflects participants' perceptions rather than direct empirical evidence of reduced subjectivity in assessment practices. This cautious interpretation is also supported by

the interview data. Several participants are not certain about the contribution of text function in reducing subjectivity and relativity in TQA. They suggested further empirical studies to prove that the inclusion of text function in a TQA model can reduce subjectivity and relativity.

The next item concerns with the participants' agreement or disagreement regarding achieving text function as one of the translation skills. This question is helpful in composing the descriptive criteria to be included in the TQA model. The results are presented in Figure 10.

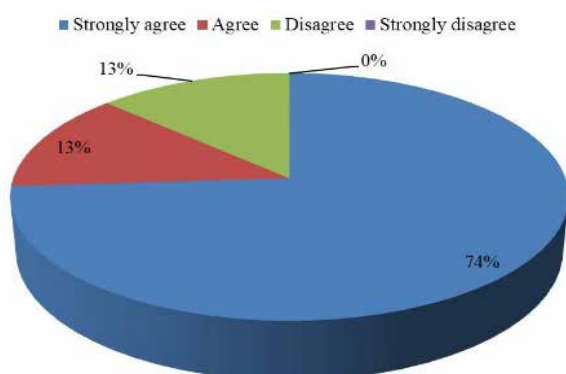


Fig. 10. Achieving text function as a translation skill

The results displayed in Figure 10 indicate their agreement that achieving text function is one of the skills in translation. 11 participants (74%) “strongly agree” with this statement, and the other 2 participants (13%) “agree” with it. This is particularly intended to make texts with different languages have the same social function. Therefore, language will not become a barrier to express the same text function in different languages. The results of the questionnaires are confirmed with the interview results revealing that a translator should have a certain skill to make the TT achieve its function based on the TL perspectives.

The last question is related to the participants' agreement to recommend or not to recommend text function to be included in the TQA. The results of the questionnaires are presented in Figure 11.

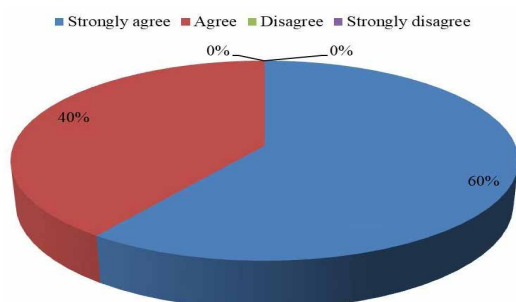


Fig. 11. Including text function in TQA

As presented in Figure 11, the results show that all of the participants agree to recommend text function to be included in the TT as 60% of them responded “Strongly agree” and the other 40% responded “Agree”. Meanwhile, none of them responded “Disagree” or “Strongly disagree”. Such results have sufficiently supported the inclusion of text function as one of the evaluated aspects in TQA. In addition, the interview results also recommend the inclusion of text function in a TQA model.

IV. DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis from the questionnaires and the interviews indicate several points that need to be considered in creating the quality descriptions related to text function. The need for quality descriptions is confirmed by Nord (1991), claiming that there is a possibility of establishing grades of required types of translation on a scale running from extreme fidelity to extreme liberty. Nord's statement supports the idea of equivalence proposed by Nida (1964) and V-principle proposed by Newmark (1988), arguing that there will always be two poles of translation: the one oriented to the ST and the one oriented to the TT. In addition, such quality descriptions are needed in order to grade the level of quality achieved by the translated text assessed; therefore, it would be much easier for anyone who is going to assess the quality of the translated text based on whether it meets the text function desired by the ST. Furthermore, such quality descriptions are also expected to eliminate the problems of subjectivity (Almutairi, 2018a, 2018b; House, 1997; Riazi, 2003) and relativity (Mossop, 2001) in TQA. The results of data analysis develop the descriptive criteria of text function in the TQA model developed by Sofyan and Tarigan (2018a) as shown in Table 1.

As mentioned earlier, the clear distinguishing quality criteria shown in Table 1 are helpful to reduce the subjectivity and relativity in TQA, the two main problems in TQA. This is in line with Almutairi (2018a) who argues that subjectivity in TQA cannot be eliminated. Similarly, House (1997) claims that it is hard to obtain the completely objective TQA results. In addition, the scoring rubric provided for each level of quality descriptions contributes to the objectivity in TQA as Riazi (2003) argues that a rubric serves as an

Table 1. The rubric containing the aspect of text function (Adapted from Sofyan & Tarigan, 2018a, 2020)

Score range	Quality descriptions of text function
13-15	Meeting the text function of the ST; creative inventions and skillful solutions to achieve the function of the ST; corresponding to the text function based on the TL perspective; reflecting good thematic progression of clauses in the TT
10-12	Almost meeting the text function of the ST; some inventions to achieve the function of the ST; corresponding to the text function based on the TL perspective; reflecting good thematic progression of clauses in the TT
7-9	Inconsistency in meeting the text function of the ST; awkward structure in achieving the ST function; not fully corresponding to the text function based on the TL perspective; reflecting awkward thematic progression of clauses in the TT
4-6	Paying less attention to the text function of the ST; not corresponding to the text function based on the TL perspective; reflecting awkward thematic progression of clauses in the TT
1-3	In contrast to the text function of the ST; not corresponding to the text function based on the TL perspective; reflecting poor thematic progression of clauses in the TT

attempt to represent consistent assessment criteria. He further emphasizes that such rubric allows not only teachers but also students to assess criteria which are complex and subjective and also provide a basis for self-evaluation, reflection, and peer review. Meanwhile, the issue of relativity is voiced by Mossop (2001), who argues that there is no absolute quality in translation since relativity of translation quality is obvious.

As presented in Table 1, the highest score (15) can only be achieved by the TT if it fulfills the criteria of “meeting the text function of the ST; creative inventions and skillful solutions to achieve the function of the ST; corresponding to the text function based on the TL perspective; and reflecting good thematic progression of clauses in the TT”. This description means that the TT has to meet the text social function desired by the ST in terms of its generic structure and lexicogrammatical features. This does not mean that the TT should be written in the exactly similar way the ST is composed, but it only needs to have the same social function. For example, if the ST is a narrative text, whose social function is to entertain readers through vicarious or fictitious story (Gerot & Wignell, 1994), the TT will have to be a narrative text as well. Nevertheless, the TT should not always agree with the generic structure of a narrative text applicable in the ST. On the other hand, the TT should correspond to the social function of a narrative text based on the TL perspectives. Therefore, the TT will not look awkward to the TL readers; in other words, the TT does not seem like the result of translation.

It should be noted that the scoring rubric presented in this study is intended as a proposed and provisional framework for incorporating

text function into TQA. The rubric has not yet undergone extensive empirical validation, such as inter-rater reliability testing or systematic application across different translation tasks and genres. Therefore, the descriptors should be viewed as an initial attempt to operationalize functional criteria in translation evaluation. Further research involving larger datasets, comparative testing with existing TQA frameworks, and assessments of evaluator agreement would be necessary to refine and validate the proposed model.

In addition to the generic structure, the assessment on text function also includes how the lexicogrammatical features used in the TT help achieve the social function of the text. Different types of texts use different lexicogrammatical features (Dereiwanka, 1990; Gerot & Wignell, 1994) because they have different social functions. A narrative text certainly has different lexicogrammatical features from, for example, an analytical exposition text whose social function is to persuade the readers that something is the case. In addition, the same type of text in different languages might have different lexicogrammatical features. From the point of view of experiential metafunction of language, English narrative texts are dominated by the use of material, relational and mental processes (Dereiwanka, 1990; Gerot & Wignell, 1994); however, Indonesian narrative texts are dominated by material, relational and verbal processes (Nurlela et al., 2018). In addition to transitivity elements, other studies also include thematic structure of the same text type in different languages (Sofyan & Tarigan, 2018b; Rosa, 2007; Zein et al., 2023).

Therefore, the inclusion of text function is

mainly intended to evaluate the naturalness of the TT, one of the criteria of TQA model developed by Nababan et al. (2012). Naturalness plays a very important role in assessing the TT because the main objective of translation is to provide a text which can be understood by TL readers. This means that the text should not be unnatural that provide difficult understanding for TL readers. Difficulty in understanding a text may lead to the inability to catch the meaning of the text; and if it happens, the translation will be useless.

Furthermore, the results of the analysis also define the scoring system where text function is considered to contribute as much as 15% of the translation quality. This definition is generated from the results of the questionnaire concerning the role of text function (compared to the role of accuracy) in grading the quality of the TT. Using the 0 to 100 scoring system, the highest score given to the TT that fulfills the criteria of text function is 15; in other words, the highest score for the quality of translation that does not meet the text function of the ST is 85.

However, it should be noted that this weighting should be interpreted as a preliminary estimate derived from participants' perceptions in this exploratory study, rather than as a fixed or universally applicable standard. The relative contribution of text function to overall translation quality may vary depending on assessment contexts, text types, and evaluative frameworks. Therefore, further empirical research—particularly studies applying the proposed weighting in actual translation assessment tasks—would be necessary to determine whether the 15% proportion is appropriate or requires adjustment.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the function of the target text does not always have to be identical to that of the source text. From a functionalist perspective, translation is guided not only by the source text but also by the intentions of the initiator or client (Nord, 1991). In certain contexts, the target text may be required to fulfill a different communicative purpose, and deviations from the source text's function may therefore represent purposeful adaptation rather than a deficiency in quality. Accordingly, the assessment of text function in TQA should take into account the intended function of the translation within its specific context of use.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it is concluded that many participants consider text function an important criterion in translation quality assessment (TQA). The responses suggest that evaluators view functional adequacy as a useful complement to accuracy in determining whether the target text (TT) appropriately represents the communicative purpose of the source text (ST). In this sense, assessing text function may help evaluators consider whether the TT performs a comparable communicative role for the target audience while maintaining naturalness within the target language (TL). At the same time, achieving the same function does not necessarily require the TT to reproduce the ST in an identical form, since differences in generic structure and lexicogrammatical realization across languages may lead to different textual configurations in the TL.

Building on earlier functionalist approaches to TQA, which have emphasized the importance of communicative purpose and text type (e.g., House, 1997; Nord, 2018; Williams, 2009), the present study contributes by examining expert perspectives on the role of text function in translation evaluation and by proposing an initial operationalization of this aspect through descriptive quality levels and a tentative scoring scheme. Rather than introducing text function as an entirely new dimension of translation quality, the present study offers an exploratory attempt to clarify how functional criteria might be incorporated more explicitly into practical assessment procedures. In particular, the proposed rubric and the suggested weighting aim to illustrate one possible way of translating functionalist principles into evaluative guidelines.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study should be interpreted in light of several limitations. The empirical evidence is based on a relatively small number of participants drawn primarily from the Indonesian academic and professional translation context, and the conclusions rely largely on expert perceptions rather than direct testing of the proposed model in real assessment settings. Therefore, the proposed rubric and weighting should be viewed as preliminary and context-bound, requiring further validation through studies involving larger and more diverse participant groups, comparative testing with existing TQA frameworks, and analyses of inter-rater agreement. Future research

could also investigate more systematically whether the inclusion of text function in TQA contributes to greater consistency in translation evaluation. Despite these limitations, the study provides empirical insights that may inform ongoing discussions about how functional criteria can be operationalized in translation quality assessment.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The relevant informed consent was obtained from all participants. Prior to data collection, each participant was informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

Rudy Sofyan: Conceptualized the research; designed the study; developed the questionnaire and interview guidelines; conducted data collection; performed data analysis; drafted the manuscript; and coordinated revisions.

Rusdi Noor Rosa: Contributed to the refinement of the research design; assisted in validating the research instruments; participated in data interpretation; and reviewed and revised the manuscript for intellectual content.

Bahagia Tarigan: Provided methodological oversight; contributed to literature review and theoretical framework development; assisted in interpreting findings; and reviewed the final manuscript for accuracy and coherence.

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DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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APPENDIX A**LIST OF ITEMS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Did you ever use text function as one of the quality aspects in your previous assessment on translation quality?
 - Always
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Never
2. How important is including the aspect of text function in a assessing the translation quality?
 - Very important
 - Important
 - Not really important
 - Not important
3. Why do you think it is important to include the aspect of text function in a assessing the translation quality?
 - Text function is different in different language
 - Text is created to meet certain function
 - Text without clear function is useless
 - Different text has different function
4. Which of the following language elements has the largest contribution to indicate certain text function?
 - Mood structure
 - Evaluation structure
 - Transitivity elements
 - Thematic progression
5. What is the objective of including text function as one of the aspects in translation quality assessment?
 - To confirm the acceptability of the TT
 - To confirm the naturalness of the TT
 - To confirm the readability of the TT
 - To confirm the clarity of the TT
6. What is the contribution of text function in the quality of translation?
 - Enhancing the lexicogrammatical structure of the TT
 - Improving the readability of the TT
 - Building the cohesiveness of the TT
 - Confirming the fluency of the TT
7. How do text function and accuracy contribute to the quality of translation?
 - Text function is more important than accuracy
 - Accuracy is more important than text function
 - Accuracy is as important as text function
 - Accuracy and text function are not comparable
8. How does text function help reduce subjectivity and relativity in TQA?
 - Text function is reflected from the content of the text
 - Text function distinguishes a certain text from others
 - Text function has its typical characteristics
 - Text function cannot be generalized

9. How do you agree to include achieving text function as one of the translation skills?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10. Do you agree to recommend text function to be included in TQA?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

APPENDIX B

LIST OF QUESTIONS IN THE INTERVIEW

1. How well do you understand the concept of text function?
2. Have you ever used a TQA model using text function as one of its quality aspects?
3. What are the language elements that help build function of the text?
4. How will text function aspect contribute to the quality of translation?
5. Do you agree to include text function as one of the aspects evaluated in a TQA model?