

A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF GOOGLE TRENDS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to explore the trends in the field of Translation Studies as reflected on the Google Trends website. The methodology employed is Thematic Analysis, utilizing Google search data dating back to 2004. The findings indicate a substantial rise in searches for topics such as translation study reference books, academic contexts, literature, language, and theory. There was also an increase in queries relating to the definition and introduction of Translation Studies and the popular tool, Google Translate. The study also highlights the results of comparative searches across different regions.

Keywords: *Translation Studies, thematic analysis, trends analysis*

Introduction

Translation studies have been studied from various scientific perspectives. Venuti in his introductory book on translation studies mentions at least five fields that also influence the development of translation studies, namely "linguistics, literary criticism, cultural studies, philosophy, and sociology" (Venuti, 2012). The linguistic perspective tends to look at the aspect of language, literary criticism on the interpretation of literature, cultural studies on the cultural aspect, philosophy on the fundamental nature of knowledge in the translation process, and sociology on the social context of translation studies. One example of translation studies research in the field of literary criticism, for example, is related to the ideological aspect of a novel that talks about feminism (Irshad, 2022).

Research on translation studies utilizing Google Trends as a data source for analysis has been relatively scarce, with studies on trends in translation studies focusing more on diverse perspectives within the field. Therefore, this paper aims to elucidate the trends in translation studies by utilizing Google Trends and further explore the trends based on the geographical location of the searches.

Literature Review

Research on translation studies related to the use of technology and computer applications has been carried out by many researchers around the world. If computer users search for research using the keywords "translation studies, google trends" in the Publish or Perish software (Harzing, 2007) they will find many studies in this field. One is conducting research comparing the accuracy of translation sites such as Google Translate with 'computer-assisted translation software' such as Wordfast (Xu, 2001). Other research is still related to the Google translation site which discusses its use as a tool in the learning process (Pham, 2022).

Research Methodology

This study uses a trend analysis approach by utilizing the Google Trends website. The keyword used is "translation studies" (Google Trends, n.d.) by taking data from all countries. The data obtained from the largest search engine is then analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative research method that identifies, analyses, and reports patterns or themes within a dataset. Two notable papers that have utilized this method include Braun and Clarke's (2006) article on successful qualitative research and Vaismoradi et al.'s (2013) paper on content analysis and thematic analysis.

Findings and Discussion

The topic that increased sharply and was ranked first about the keyword "translation studies" was the topic of "culture". These results show that the perspective of cultural studies is dominant at least in society in general in the digital space. These topics can be included in a large theme called "academic contexts". Results on topics that increased sharply on the big theme "academic contexts" which entered the top twenty-three besides the topic "culture" were masters, doctoral of philosophy, courses, scholars, students, writings, institutes, analysis, and academic journals. These results indicate that the search for translation studies in an academic context tends to be in formal learning at the university level and the popularity of informal learning is still below formal learning.

Topic results that can be categorized under a broad theme called "reference books" are *Introducing Translation Studies*, Jeremy Munday, *The Translation Studies Reader*, Susan Bassnett, *Descriptive translation studies and beyond*, Routledge, and *Portable Document Format*. Results on the topic of reference books related to the title of the reference book, book author, publisher, and the most popular digital book format are pdf. The conclusion of the results of this theme also shows the popularity of introductory book authors in the field of translation studies and the field of descriptive translation studies in particular.

Other topics that have risen sharply can be categorized under the "language" theme, namely the topics of *Translating and Interpreting, Translation, Urdu, and English*. These results show that the topic of translation is not only seen as a process of transferring from one language to another but also as a process of interpreting meaning from one culture to another. Then the language that is popular besides English in the translation process is Urdu which shows that Muslim users from India and Pakistan are active internet users studying this field.

A topic that can be included in a separate theme is the topic of "literature". Translation studies in this field is a topic that can be discussed separately considering that the sub-discipline of literary translation studies covers a wide range of discussions starting from cultural, social, psychological, and cognitive aspects (Kaindl, Schlager, & Kolb, 2021).

A search using google trends with the keyword translation studies based on geolocation shows that the countries that use this word the most are Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran, and Hong Kong. These results indicate that apart from Pakistan which uses the keyword "Urdu", it is likely that the languages studied in translation studies by other countries use the keyword "English". Meanwhile, Indonesia is ranked 28th using the keyword "translation studies". This indicates that translation studies have not become popular at least in the digital space.

Conclusion

Research on trends in translation studies using Google Trends as a data source has not been widely used. This preliminary study shows that translation studies are at least based on the use of the keyword "translation studies" in Google Trends which is popular in South Asian countries. This field of study is not very popular in Indonesia. Major themes that can cover rapidly increasing topics include reference books, academic contexts, literature, language, and theory. The themes obtained show that translation studies tend to be popular in formal compared to non-formal educational institutions and are also popular in academic circles in universities.

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