Instagram Translation Machine: Does It Help Arabic Students to Know Arabic-Indonesian Translation Well?

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT

In recent decades, Instagram has launched a translation feature to help its user understand the caption in every Instagram posts. Its presence also has an impact on its users, including Arabic students. The purpose of this study is to identify the students’ perceptions about the use of these features and to know its impact on their understanding. The data collection technique was carried out in two different stages using a screening model. We distributed questionnaires to 24 Arabic students at Indonesia University of Education to find out the students’ experiences while using this feature. The findings show that this feature is convenient, and the translations are quite understandable, but it is not uncommon for them to find translations that do not fit the context because this feature can produce good translations if the source language use the standard language. Most of the students also admitted that this feature affected their insight about translation. It can be used as an interesting learning media to be more creative and increase their motivation and interest in learning Arabic language in daily lives.

Keywords: Machine Translation, Instagram, Arabic-Indonesian Translation

INDONESIAN ABSTRACT

Dalam beberapa dekade terakhir, fitur terjemahan Instagram hadir membantu para penggunanya memahami teks maupun caption di setiap unggahan. Kehadirannya pun berdampak bagi penggunanya, termasuk mahasiswa bahasa Arab. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi persepsi mahasiswa terhadap penggunaan fitur tersebut dan dampaknya terhadap pemahaman dan asimilasi informasi mereka terhadap pembelajaran terjemah. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan dua tahap berbeda menggunakan model screening. Penulis membagikan kuesioner kepada 24 mahasiswa bahasa Arab UPI untuk mengetahui pengalaman mahasiswa selama menggunakan fitur terjemah Instagram. Hasil penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa fitur tersebut dinilai praktis dan hasil terjemahannya pun dinilai cukup bisa dipahami, namun...
Introduction

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a tremendous change in people's lifestyles, which tend to spend more time on various social media platforms (Bakhos, et al., 2021; Luo and Yanhui, 2021; Kaya, 2020). UNESCO research published on the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology's website also proves that 4 out of 10 Indonesians are active on social media, one of which is Instagram (Yanti, 2019). Most of Instagram users are “well-educated”, meaning that they come from college graduates. This was stated by Hansal Savla, a senior director of TNS Indonesia, a market research company.

Instagram is packed with various interesting and useful features that make it easier for users to use it. The translation feature that was released in 2016 is one of them. Instagram users come from various countries; therefore, Instagram adds a new feature where users can translate the text in the bio, posts, and comments into their language. Instagram is trying to help people to spread captions and share everything that can be understood by everyone with the feature. Like other translations machine, this translation feature does not guarantee that all translation results can be fully understood. Arfianti also explained in her research that if the source language uses common words and formal language, Instagram can produce better translations (Arvanti, 2018: 535).

However, several previous research revealed that the translation feature does not always produce an effective translation, it also has some shortcomings in translating some foreign languages. For instance, Sujianti, Simbolon, and Luardini, found that the most dominant translation procedure used in the Instagram mobile application from English to Indonesian version is literal translation because the words and phrases used are simple and must be understood so that it is possible to use literal translation
(Sujianti, et al., 2020: 1-5). Therefore, many of the translations sound unnatural, strange and inaccuracy for users.

This also occurred in Ramadani’s research, who analyzed the equivalence of Japanese-Indonesian translations, and the results of his research revealed that these features cause meanings that are less commensurate because the source language and target language have different meanings, use of loanwords in the source text and the existence of cultural concepts (Rahmadani, 2020). Regarding the culture, Purwaningsih, Shalikhah & Wardani revealed that the Instagram translation feature shows that cultural terms in the source language do not have one-to-one equivalents in the target language (Purwaningsih, et al., 2021: 287-301). This shows that in using translation machine, a human’s idea is also needed to understand the concept of culture in the source text.

Regardless of the results of the translation feature, Instagram remains a social media that is familiar to many people, including Arabic students. Apart from having many features that make it easier for them to use the media, Instagram is often a medium for learning Arabic. They thought that Instagram is a flexible medium, not limited by time, learning is more varied and more active and creative (Audina & Muassonah, 2020). These Instagram features can be used as a new innovation in learning media for Arabic language, literature, and culture to make them more interesting and easier to understand. Gulati, Reid, and Gill revealed approximately 6.3% to 30% of students who involved in Bakhos et al. study reported that Instagram is intended for education because of various features that help them in the learning process (Gulati, et al., 2020; Bakhos, et al., 2021). Like the Arabic account posting feature and stories such as the quiz, question, and answer, also a vote.

Along with the many uses of Instagram as a medium for learning Arabic, students will often find Instagram pages and several Arabic-language accounts. However, based on several previous studies, the translation feature provided by Instagram is not sufficient to provide effective translation results in several foreign languages, and research on Arabic translation results with this feature is also still rarely found. Some of these things might cause students to misunderstand the Arabic text they encounter on Instagram. Because of this background, the authors consider it necessary to analyze whether students have encountered translation problems made by the Instagram
This study aims to identify student perspectives regarding the Instagram translation feature in translating some Arabic text or captions into Indonesian language. In addition, we also investigate students’ views about the use of these features and how this Instagram affects their understanding and use this information in translation learning. The significance of this research is theoretically expected to contribute to translation theory, especially translation machine found on Instagram. In practical terms, the results of this study are expected to provide a new insight, especially regarding aspects that are important for the students so that they will be more careful to understand the Instagram translation feature.

Methods

This study employed a descriptive method with quantitative as the approach because we will examine the perspectives of Arabic students on the quality of Arabic-Indonesian translation by Instagram translation feature. In this regard, about 24 Arabic language students were chosen using a non-probability purposive sampling technique with certain characteristics. Questionnaires with likert scale were distributed in order to collect the primary data. In the first section, a closed question was asked from students to find out whether Arabic students follow Arabic accounts on Instagram and use the translation feature to understand the captions on those accounts. In the next section, there are several open questions including the perspectives of Arabic students regarding the translation results of the Instagram feature. The data analysis techniques included 1) editing, which is to re-examine the data obtained from the results of the questionnaire, 2) coding, classifying data from respondents’ answers by providing codes and scores using a Likert scale to measure student opinions or perceptions, 3) tabulation, which is processing data in tabular form by calculating the frequency of each category.

Result and Discussion

Instagram is familiar among teenagers or millennial generation (Budenz, et al., 2020: 1-10), including the Arabic students. The authors examine the perspectives of students regarding Instagram translation feature on the quality of Arabic-Indonesian
translations and their opinions about the feature. There were 24 Arabic students who participated in this study. Below table shows the students' profile:

### Table 1. Student Profile

| Gender         | Total | %  |
|----------------|-------|----|
| Male           | 12    | 50 |
| Female         | 12    | 50 |

| Age            | Total | %  |
|----------------|-------|----|
| 18-20          | 8     | 33 |
| 21-28          | 16    | 67 |

| Educational background | Total | %  |
|------------------------|-------|----|
| Islamic Senior High School (Boarding School) | 3 | 13 |
| Islamic Senior High School Non-Boarding School | 3 | 13 |
| Senior High School (Boarding School) | 8 | 33 |
| Senior High School Non-Boarding School | 11 | 46 |

| Semester | Total | %  |
|----------|-------|----|
| 1-4      | 8     | 33 |
| 5-8      | 16    | 67 |

About 12 male and 12 female students participated in this study. Among them, most of them (67%) of them were aged between 21 to 28 years old, while another 33% aged between 18 to 20. Faiza & Firda (2018) explained that those students aged 18 - 20 are more familiar with Instagram. As for the educational background of 24 students, there were 3 students from Islamic Senior High School (Boarding School) (13%), 3 of them from Islamic Senior High School Non-Boarding School (13%), 8 of them from Senior High School (Boarding School) (33%), and 11 students from Senior High School Non-Boarding School (46%). It is known that most of Arabic language students in this study were graduates from Senior High School Non-Boarding School or public schools,
as many as 11 students so they lacked knowledge of Arabic. Kaefer mentioned in the research of Albantani, et al. that educational background is one of the important factors in achieving learning objectives (Albantani, et al., 2021). Therefore, this profiles should be taken into consideration throughout this study.

There were 2 respondents from second semester, 5 respondents from third semester, 1 person from fourth semester, 3 people from fifth semester, 3 people from sixth semester, 6 people from seventh semester, and 4 of them from eight semester. Their semester can also show their knowing of translation learning because the higher their semester, the more translation subject they have enrolled in. And the most respondents in 7th semester are 6 students, which in 7th semester, Arabic-Indonesian translation learning has been studied.

Table 2. Students’ Comprehension of Arabic Translation into Indonesian

|                        | Total | %  |
|------------------------|-------|----|
| Knowing some translation techniques |       |    |
| Yes                    | 11    | 46 |
| No                     | 13    | 54 |

| Students' difficulties in translating Arabic-Indonesian texts | Total | %  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----|
| Vocabulary mastery                                            | 9     | 37 |
| Adjustment to the context of the sentence                     | 10    | 42 |
| Understanding of translation patterns                         | 2     | 9  |
| Understanding of the equivalent of Arabic and Indonesian terms| 3     | 12 |

In this study, 24 students have different understandings in the world of translation, especially in terms of techniques for translating Arabic text into Indonesian. Judging from the data in the table above, as many as 46% (11 students) know some translation techniques, while 54% (13 students) of them do not know. This is due to the different semester levels of students. Based on these data, students are considered to know quite a few types of translation techniques. Understanding of this translation technique is one of the important aspects for students to pay attention to in standardizing translation. This is in line with Hanifah’s research which states that to translate various types of texts, such as religious, literary, scientific, cultural texts with varying degrees of difficulty, students need to master all aspects of translation (Hanifah,
Regarding mastery of aspects in translation such as techniques in translating a text, students will have difficulty if they have not been able to master it. This condition is also owned by students when translating Arabic-Indonesian texts. From the results of observations through this survey (table 2), it was found that some of the difficulties faced by students including 42% (10 students) had difficulty adjusting the translation to the context of the sentence, 37% (9 students) said that the lack of vocabulary, the rest 12% (3 students) have difficulty understanding Arabic terms that are equivalent to Indonesian, and 9% (2 students) have difficulty understanding translation patterns. Based on this, the difficulties faced by Arabic students are mostly due to the lack of mastery of vocabulary. Baso, et al (2016) also mentioned in their research that the level of reading comprehension of Arabic texts was influenced by 68% by mastery of vocabulary. However, it does not mean that mastery of vocabulary is the only factor that causes students to have difficulty understanding translation. Students also need to have skills related to aspects of translation as described previously.

### Table 3. Students’ Experience Using Social Media Instagram

| Have you ever encountered or followed an Arabic Instagram account? | Total | %  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----|
| Yes                                                           | 23    | 96 |
| No                                                            | 1     | 4  |

| Have you ever used Instagram’s translation feature to translate Arabic text/captions? | Total | %  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----|
| Yes                                                                                                              | 13    | 54 |
| No                                                                  | 11    | 56 |

Instagram has a high popularity among teenagers to adults. Various interesting and easy-to-use features on Instagram are the main attraction for its users, including academics. In Jeffrey et al’s research it was found that Instagram appears to be a portal to access a professional affinity space where educators can exchange ideas with some other users (Carpenter, et al., 2020). Instagram also might increase their self-confidence,
knowledge, and pedagogy, all of which can affect their students' teaching and learning (Lantz-Andersson, et al., 2018).

In line with several previous studies, the authors examine several Arabic students who actively use Instagram and the various features in it, especially the Instagram translation feature. From the results of these observations, it is known that as many as 96% of students have encountered or followed Arabic Instagram accounts, while only 4% of students did not find.

**Students' Perceptions on the Arabic-Indonesian Translation by Instagram Translation Feature**

The results of observations from this research show that most of the respondents, namely Arabic students of UPI have encountered or followed Arabic Instagram accounts. Instagram itself has a translation feature to make it easier for its users to understand the text/caption uploaded by other users from various countries. Therefore, this feature also has an important role for Arabic students to understand text or captions on various Arabic-language accounts.

**Table 4. Student' Perceptions on Instagram Translation Machine Effectiveness in Translating Arabic into Indonesian**

| Instagram's translation feature is effective in translating Arabic-Indonesian text/captions | Total | % |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Strongly disagree                                              | 0     | 0 |
| Disagree                                                        | 2     | 8 |
| Somewhat disagree                                              | 5     | 20 |
| Somewhat agree                                                 | 16    | 70 |
| Agree                                                           | 1     | 2 |
| Strongly agree                                                 | 0     | 0 |

The table above described a positive response of 70% students who stated that they somewhat agree that Instagram translation feature was effective in translating Arabic-Indonesian text/captions. Meanwhile, 8% of students disagreed, 20% of students somewhat disagreed, and 2% of students agree. Based on these results, the Instagram
The Instagram translation feature is considered effective in helping students to understand Arabic text/captions. Although the results of this data cannot make this translation feature a benchmark for the most effective machine translation among others, at least the translation results are easy for students to understand. However, Ginting's research explains that only 7.98% are categorized as equivalent translations, and 47.82% are categorized as disproportionate translations. In conclusion, although the translation of the Instagram feature is not fully effective, the feature is considered a sufficient translation, there are some literal translations that are not in context but not more than 15% (Ginting, H., 2017).

Table 5. Students’ Perceptions on The Advantages and Disadvantages of The Arabic-Indonesian Translation by Instagram Translation Feature

| The advantages of Instagram translation feature in translating Arabic-Indonesian text / captions | Total | %  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----|
| Practical and efficient                                                                         | 7     | 50 |
| It makes students understanding Arabic text / captions easier                                   | 6     | 43 |
| It makes students practice translation easier                                                   | 1     | 7  |

| The disadvantages of Instagram translation feature in translating Arabic-Indonesian text / captions | Total | %  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----|
| The accuracy of the translation is doubtful                                                      | 4     | 23 |
| The translation does not fit the context                                                        | 11    | 65 |
| It only could translate other people’s text/caption                                              | 1     | 6  |
| Original text disappears when translated                                                        | 1     | 6  |

The table above shows that there are several advantages according to the learners. The experience of Arabic students in using Instagram translation feature has various impressions. Apart from the perception of Arabic students that Instagram translation feature is considered an adequate translation, students also have several obstacles that make them less comfortable when using the feature. Among them, 50% of the students said that the feature was considered practical and efficient. Students feel that this feature makes it easier for them to translate the text/caption quickly, so they
don't need to open another application to translate it. Another 43% of the students said that this feature made it easier for them to understand the text. And 7% of them felt that this feature made it easier for them to practice translation.

However, Instagram translation feature also has some drawbacks. According to 65% of the students, the resulting translation does not fit the context. This is due to its literal translation. This is in line with the results of research by Ginting, Setia & Lubis which said that one of the errors in the feature was due to many rigid literal translations (Ginting, et al., 2018). Then the feature was also difficult to translate figurative languages, poetry, and special Arabic terms. The remaining 23% of the students thought that the accuracy of the translation results is doubtful. They felt that this feature is not fully accurate because there are some Arabic terms that are translated not commensurate with Indonesian language. 6% of them said that this feature can only translate other people’s text/captions. This feature does not work like other translation machines, because this feature cannot translate the text/caption itself before uploading it to the Instagram page. Another disadvantage is that 6% of them felt uncomfortable when translating with this feature, the text/original disappears, making it difficult to understand the translation with the original text. This deficiency is also conveyed in the research of Larassati et al. that Instagram does not save the original text format. Entire paragraphs that format such spacing of the original text are missing. As a result, it affects the readability of the translated text (Larassati, et al., 2019).

**Table 6. Students’ Perceptions on Translation Results by Instagram’s Translation Feature is Easy to Understand**

| Instagram translation feature are easy to understand | Total | %  |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|----|
| Strongly disagree                                   | 1     | 4  |
| Disagree                                            | 2     | 8  |
| Somewhat disagree                                   | 4     | 17 |
| Somewhat agree                                      | 15    | 63 |
| Agree                                               | 2     | 8  |
| Strongly agree                                      | 0     | 0  |
The translation produced by the Instagram translation feature shows that the Arabic to Indonesian translation produced is easily understood by Arabic students. In table 6, there are 15 students who answered somewhat agree (63%), 2 students answered agree (8%), 4 students answered somewhat disagree (17%), 2 students answered disagree (8%) and 1 student answered strongly disagree (4%). So as many as 17 Arabic students can easily understand and 7 other Arabic students don't easily understand the Instagram translation results.

**Table 7. Students’ Perceptions about Instagram Translation Feature Can Help Arabic Students Understand Arabic Text/Captions**

| Instagram translation feature can help Arabic student understand Arabic text/captions | Total | %   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Strongly disagree                                                                  | 0     | 0   |
| Disagree                                                                            | 2     | 8   |
| Somewhat disagree                                                                  | 3     | 13  |
| Somewhat agree                                                                     | 16    | 67  |
| Agree                                                                              | 2     | 8   |
| Strongly agree                                                                     | 1     | 4   |

In table 7, it is showed that 2 students answered disagree (8%), 3 students answered somewhat disagree (13%), 16 students answered somewhat agree (67%), 2 students answered agree (8%), and 1 student answered strongly agree (4%). This data shows that 19 Arabic students were helped in understanding Arabic text/captions through the Instagram translation feature. This means that Instagram translation feature can make it easier for users to translate foreign languages, especially Arabic into Indonesian, so that users can understand the content of the text/caption they want to read. It is also revealed in his research that translation technology has developed so rapidly that it can replace human translation in the near future. This artificial intelligence-based translator machine is increasingly human-like in translation. This feature for example, has shown great improvement in translating the captions of photos posted by its users (Putri & Setiajid, 2021).
Table 8. Students’ Perceptions about Instagram Translation Feature Can Help Arabic Students Understand Arabic-Indonesian Translation Patterns

| Arabic translation feature can help Arabic students understand Arabic-Indonesian translation patterns | Total | % |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Disagree | 4 | 17 |
| Somewhat disagree | 5 | 21 |
| Somewhat agree | 13 | 54 |
| Agree | 1 | 4 |
| Strongly agree | 1 | 4 |

Based on table 8, it is known that there are 4 students who answered disagree (17%), 5 students answered somewhat disagree (21%), 13 students answered somewhat agree (54%), 1 student answered agree (4%), and 1 student answered strongly agree (4%). The data shows that as many as 15 Arabic students can understand the Arabic-Indonesian translation pattern through Instagram translation feature.

The pattern of Arabic-Indonesian translation uses foreignization, namely with translation results that are in accordance with the expectations of readers by presenting the culture of the source language. Understanding of collocation, knowledge of translation techniques, translation strategies as well as language knowledge and translation skills (Junining & Kusuma, 2020) will have an impact on translation quality based on message accuracy (accuracy in content), acceptability, and translation readability (Perdana, 2017; Nababan, et al., 2012). From the results of Instagram translation feature, the pattern of Arabic-Indonesian translation can be easily understood if the Arabic language used is accurate, accepted and readable by the Instagram translation tool.
Table 9. Students Perception about Instagram Translation Feature is an Easier Tool to Understand than Other Translation Tools

| Instagram translation feature is an easier tool to understand than other translation tools | Total | %  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Strongly disagree                                                                      | 1     | 4   |
| Disagree                                                                                | 5     | 21  |
| Somewhat disagree                                                                      | 12    | 50  |
| Somewhat agree                                                                         | 5     | 21  |
| Agree                                                                                  | 0     | 0   |
| Strongly agree                                                                         | 1     | 4   |

The table 9 above shows that 1 student answered strongly disagree (4%), 5 students answered disagreed (21%), 12 students answered somewhat disagree (50%), 5 students answered somewhat agree (21%), and 1 student answered strongly agree (4%) that Instagram translation feature is easier to understand than other translation tools. A total of 18 Arabic students did not choose Instagram translation feature as a translation tool that is easy to understand from other translation tools. Because this translation feature is only used in captions on Instagram. The same statement was also expressed in Bestari’s research, three disadvantages of using Instagram as a medium in teaching English including internet connection problems, low levels of student engagement on Instagram, and language barriers. So some students still use Google Translate (GT) to make sure that their sentences are correct (Bestari, 2020).

Table 10. Students Perceptions about Instagram Translation Feature Can be Used as A Translation Learning Medium

| Instagram translation feature can be used as a translation learning medium | Total | %  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Strongly disagree                                                        | 1     | 4   |
| Disagree                                                                 | 2     | 8   |
| Somewhat disagree                                                        | 4     | 17  |
| Somewhat agree                                                           | 13    | 54  |
In Table 10, it is known that 1 student answered strongly disagree (4%), 2 students answered disagree (8%), 4 students answered somewhat disagree (17%), 13 students answered somewhat agree (54%), and 4 students answered agree (17%) to the Instagram translation feature as a translation learning medium. This Instagram translation feature is an alternative as an interesting and fun Arabic translation learning medium. Because Instagram media is able to make students think creatively (Utami, 2020) and it is proven to increase students’ motivation and interest in learning and provide flexibility in the learning process because it is not limited by space and time (Linur & Mubarak, 2020). Then, Instagram is an effective learning medium for teenagers (Khalitova & Gimaletdinova, 2016).

**Table 11. Students Perceptions about Instagram Translation Feature Can Produce Better if Written in Formal Language**

| Instagram translation feature can translate well if using formal language | Total | % |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Disagree | 3 | 13 |
| Somewhat disagree | 5 | 21 |
| Somewhat agree | 9 | 38 |
| Agree | 7 | 29 |
| Strongly agree | 0 | 0 |

Instagram translation feature can produce good translations if the source language is written in formal language. As described in Table 9, it is known that there are 3 students who answered disagree (13%), 5 students answered somewhat disagree (21%), 9 students answered somewhat agree (38%), and 7 students answered agreed (29%). Therefore, as many as 16 Arabic students agreed that Instagram translation feature can produce good translations if the source language used formal language. Arvanti (2008) added that if the source language uses common words and formal
language, Instagram translation feature can produce better translations than human translations because machine translation is able to produce effective language.

Conclusion

Instagram translation feature makes it easy for Arabic students to understand the text or caption uploaded. This study also reveals that the translations produced by Instagram feature are considered quite understandable for Arabic language students, although all texts or captions aren’t always translated well. Most of the students also agreed that Instagram provided good insight regarding learning translation patterns. However, this study only focuses on students' perceptions of the Instagram translation feature and has not been able to assess whether the feature is accurate or not in translating Arabic-Indonesian text or captions.

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