INSTAGRAM TRANSLATION MACHINE:
HOW PROBLEMATIC IS IT?

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ABSTRAK

Mesin penerjemah begitu marak akhir-akhir ini. Salah satunya adalah yang terintegrasi dalam aplikasi Instagram. Namun, seperti halnya mesin penerjemah lain, mesin penerjemah pada Instagram ini pun belum berhasil menerjemahkan suatu text sebaik penerjemah manusia. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat seberapa bermasalah hasil terjemahan mesin penerjemah ini dengan melihat teknik penerjemahan apa yang dipakai. Teknik penerjemahan yang dipakai dalam analisis adalah 18 teknik penerjemahan Molina dan Albir. Dengan mengetahui kesalahan pilihan teknik penerjemahan, peneliti kemudian dapat memberikan saran penerjemahan dengan mengaplikasikan teknik yang tepat. Sehingga, focus kedua dalam penelitian ini adalah untuk memberikan saran penerjemahan pada permasalahan terjemahan. Data penelitian ini adalah 48 caption dari akun Instagram @detikhot. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan teknik analisis dokumen sementara teknik analisis data adalah dengan membandingkan teks dalam bahasa sumber dan bahasa sasaran untuk melihat permasalahan yang ada dalam penerjemahan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa hampir keseluruhan hasil terjemahan bermasalah karena penggunaan teknik penerjemahan yang tidak tepat.

Keywords: translation machine, Instagram caption, translation problems

A. Introduction
1. Background of the Study

One of the phenomena in this modern communication era is machine translation (MT). Basically, MT works by changing the source language text into the target language one, similar to any translation done by human translators. The problem arises when linguists or people who know good translation criticize the accuracy of MT. Many of them find that MT ignores the accuracy of the translation. Denkowski (2005: 5) clarifies that MT is unable to directly produce publishable translation. In spite of this fact, this machine has been found to help many internet users with their language problems.

Nowadays, one of the very popular applications, *Instagram*, provides MT service in its newest update. This translation button is added to facilitate *Instagram's* users who vary in language mastery. *Instagram* wants its users to have broader knowledge on the other users' captions written in languages they do not master. *Instagram's* translation machine works by translating the caption into the language used in setting and vice versa.

2. Program Limitation

This research focuses on the *Intragram* TM with consideration mostly on the error of the resulted translation. As any other TM does, *Instagram* TM often results in misleading translation. Therefore, the analysis of the research deals with the errors occurring in the translation of *Instagram* TM. It includes the error of word choice, structure, and most importantly, meaning distortion.

The data of the research are every words, phrases, clauses, and sentences of *Instagram* users' caption which have been translated by *Instagram* TM. The data are all taken from the status of @detikHOT *Instagram* account.

3. Problem Statement

Releted to the issues stated on the above background of the study, the research is going to discuss some problems as the following:

a. What techniques are used by *Instagram* TM to translate *Instagram* caption?
b. What is the suggested translation for the translation errors?

4. Study Objektive

The research aimed at:

a. Describing the techniques of translation used by by *Instagram* TM to translate *Instagram* caption.
b. Providing suggested translation for the translation errors.

5. Study Significances

The readers of the research are hoped to know how *Instagram* TM, and mostly other TMs, works. By showing the errors in the result of TM translation, readers are hoped to be aware and not depend too much on TM translation especially when the translation deals with education or other formal cases. Further researchers, hopefully, can take this research as the starting point for other researches on translation, translation techniques, or translation machine.

B. Theoretical Review

This section clarifies the theories used to answer the stated problems in brief. The theories include translation definition, translation techniques, and translation machine.

1. Translation Definition

Bassnet (2002:12) believes that two languages will never be totally the same. This is stated as follows:

> *Translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted.*

The above explains that translation is an activity of rendering or transferring source language to target language. But, in doing translation, a translator should not only consider the meaning transfer but also the structure or the form of the transferred information. In this respect, translator should put meaning as the priority when structure needs to be preserved. In other words, translation is the activity of

preserving meaning first and structure, at the second place, of the SL to the TL as much as possible.

2. Translation Techniques

In producing good translation, a translator should be able to use the most appropriate translation techniques. The misuse of translation technique will bring misleading of information in translation. Since this research criticizes the error resulted by *Instagram* TM, researcher needs to see if the error arises from the misuse of translation technique. In this respect, Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques are chosen as the reference. There are 18 techniques all together proposed by those two experts. They are adaptation, amplification, borrowing, calque, compensation, description, discursive creation, established equivalent, generalization, linguistic amplification, linguistic compression, literal translation, modulation, particularization, reduction, substitution, transposition, and variation.

3. Translation Machine

Translation machine (TM) provides a gist of information about the text by its translation. It means that even though some of the translations are considered improper and inaccurate, people still can guess the whole information by using the clues given by TM. Therefore, it also requires the users' careful attention on the possibilities of the real meaning of the text.

TM as it is defined by Cheragui refers to translation from one natural language (source language (SL)) to another language (target language (TL)) using computerized systems and, with or without human assistance (2012: 160). This means that TM is a computer based tool which helps the work of translator. It might be with or without human rearrangement.

The definition given by Cheragui is in line with Alawneh's (2011: 95) opinion on TM. TM is the process that utilizes computer software to translate text from one natural language to another. This definition, once again, talks about the nature of TM which is related to computer software. This software is furthermore explained as the one that can assist human in delivering the message of the unknown language into the understandable language.

On his paper, Alawneh also explained in a brief explanation about how the TM works. He explained that in translating the text, TM accounts the grammatical structure of each language and using rules, examples, and grammars to transfer the grammatical structure of the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). It means that TM uses the already recorded rules, examples and grammars in translating from SL to TL.

C. Research Method

This research is qualitative in nature. It means that the data that are analyzed are all in the form of words, sentences, or picture but not in the form of number. This research's data are all words and sentences containing the captions of @detikhot and the *Instagram* translation. This research also makes use of translational theories,

especially machine translation. This kind of approach focuses mainly on finding the closest equivalent for the text in source language to the target language.

1. Source of Data and Data

Source of data is the origin of the data obtained. This research makes use of document and informant source of data. The sources of data from document are the caption of *Instagram*'s account @detikhot. The data from informant, hence, are collected by the help of some rater who evaluate the quality of translation produced by machine translation.

The data that are used in the research are both primary and secondary data. Primary data are information which is collected specifically for a research. In this research, the primary data is the English and Indonesian version of the 48 @detikhot account's caption on *Instagram*. Whereas, the secondary data of the research are all information and documents that are related to the topic of the research.

2. Sampling

Purposive sampling is used in this research to determine the data of the research. Here in this research, which is categorized as qualitative research, the sample of the research is taken based on the objective of the research. Purposive sampling is done by purposing some criteria for the data to be. The criteria determined for the data are the Instagram status of @detikhot written in Indonesia. The captions in Indonesian are chosen because the Instagram TM will automatically translate them into English. The source caption written in Indonesian and the *Instagram* TM translation are then considered as the data of the research.

3. Data Collection Technique

The technique that is used in collecting the data for this research is document analysis. The data from document analysis are obtained by collecting the *Instagram*'s caption of @detikhot. The @detikhot account mostly writes its caption in Indonesia. By pressing the translation button, *Instagram* machine translation will automatically translate the caption into English. Those captions written in Indonesia will be the source language and the translations produced by the machine translation are the target language.

4. Data Analysis Technique

1. The data that have been collected will then be analyzed following these steps below:
2. Comparing the two versions of the *Instagram* caption to classify based on the translation techniques found in the *Instagram* machine translation.
3. Evaluating the *Instagram* machine translation's quality weather it is trustworthy or not.
4. Drawing conclusion from the whole research and giving some suggestions both for translator practitioners and for the next researcher in the same field of discussion.

D. Result and Discussion

This research analyzes the error of translation by going first to check the misuse of translation techniques found in the translation. Then, researcher give suggested translation and explain what technique is better to be used in translating parts of the caption.

Data analysis has shown that the translation technique which dominates the translation of *Instagram* TM is pure borrowing. The result of the analysis is shown in the diagram and the discussion follows it:
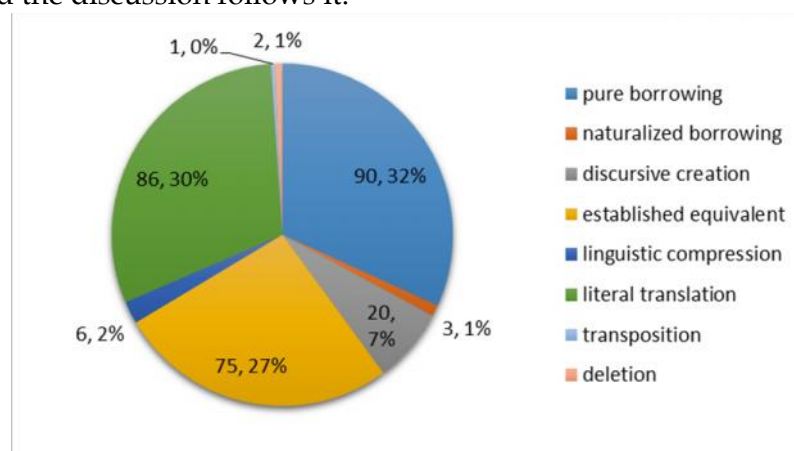
1. Pure Borrowing Technique

Pure borrowing is mostly used in *Instagram* TM. This technique borrows the source language term(s) without any change or adjustment to the target language. The data are at the following:

(01/IGTM) SL   : **#RirinEkawari** tampil **cetaaar** dengan lipstik merahnya.
            TL   : **#RirinEkawari** *performing* **cetaaar** *with his red lipstick.*

Two pure borrowings are found in the data above. The first one is #RirinEkawari which is translated as it is at the target language. The second one is the word cetaaaar which is also translated without any change in target language. The two are clearly pure borrowings. For the first pure borrowing case, it is normal to translate someone's name with pure borrowing, which is also happen to most of the data where someone's name occurs. While the second case, pure borrowing happens because the machine fails to understand the meaning of the word cetaaar which can be translated into gorgeous, very beautiful, or pleasant. The TM also fail to understand Instagramer's writing style which duplicate spoken language in writing caption by repeating word(s) to give emphasis or to show a great degree of something. When the *Instagramer* writes cetaaaar, he/she may mean extremely gorgeous. In fact, TM fails to understand this writing style which is specially found in social media writing.

Suggestion for this translation is **#RirinEkawari** *looks* **so damn gorgeous** *with her red lipstick.* So, for improvement, I suggests to have pure borrowing for *#RirinEkawari* and adaptation to translate *cetaaar* into *so gorgeous.* Pure borrowing is

chosen because it deals with personal name that I believe it does not need any changes. On the other hand, *cetaaar* which somehow a specific term in Indonesian slang is adapted into English slang used to praise someone, *so damn gorgeous*.

2. Literal Translation Technique

Literal translation is a technique which translates utterances literally and it is out of context. In other words, literal translation is the technique which has similar characteristic as word for word translation. It means that every single word is translated based on its literal meaning without observing the relationship within words in the construction.

(32/IGTM) SL : Mesra banget **ya** #Desta dengan putrinya. **Mirip nggak** gengs?

TL : *So lovingly **yes** #Desta with his daughter. **Like not** gengs?*

Data number 32 accommodates literal translation technique. The first literal translation is the translation of *ya* into *yes* in English. TM fails to understand that the function of *ya* in source language is for tag question. *Instagram* TM translates it as casual *yes* functioned as the answer of alternative questions. Therefore, it is called as literal translation. The other part of the status which is also translated by literal translation technique is the phrase *mirip nggak* into *like not*. Here in the case of translating the phrase, TM literally translates *mirip* into *like* and *nggak* into *not*. In this case, the translations of the single words are okay. The problem arises when it is seen as a complete construction; the meaning is no longer grammatical. The message of the original is, therefore, destructed.

The researcher suggested to translate the caption into *they are just so loveable, #Desta and her daughter. **Do they look alike**, guys?*. In my suggestion, the first literal translation of the data, the word *ya*, is deleted for the sake of grammatical sentence. While in the second case, to render *mirip nggak* to Indonesian, I suggest to use the linguistics amplification method.

3. Established Equivalent Technique

Established equivalent is a technique which use a term or expression recognize by dictionaries or language in use as an equivalent in the TL. Below is the further discussion about the technique.

(17/IGTM) SL : *#PevitaPearce mengaku tak kapok main film horor. **Walaupun**, baginya genre itu diakui **lebih menantang**.*

TL : #PevitaPearce claims not to play horror movies. **Although**, for him the genre is recognized **more challenging**.

Established equivalent is used in translating conjunction *walaupun* into *although*. The word *although* is English conjunction which works the similar way as *walaupun* in Indonesia. It is used to show contrast between the previous and the later statement. The same technique is also used to translate *lebih menantang* into *more challenging*. Here, the comparative degree in Indonesia is translated by its equivalent in English which also shows comparative degree.

The data of the above discussion can be improved into #*PevitaPearce claims that she will not stop playing horror movies*. **Although**, *for her the genre is* **more challenging**. The improvement on the data does not affect the translation of established equivalent technique because it is considered appropriate for the part. The changes are done to the other part of the caption which is more problematic. It can be said that the establish equivalent has been used at the very best place.

4. Discursive Creation Technique

        Discursive creation is another technique found in the data. It is the technique which is done by making temporary equivalent. It is usually used in translating the title of movie or book, but lately, it is also found in caption translation.

(14/IGTM)   SL   : *Wajah* **Syahrini** *glowing banget ya. Tak lupa busana bulu-bulu dipakainya.*

                    TL   : **Linkin Park's** face is so glowing. Don't forget her fur-fur dress.

Discursive creation is shown in the data above. It is used to translate *Syahrini* into *Linkin Park*. In fact, *Syahrini* is the name of female Indonesian singer while *Linkin Park* is a rock band name. The source and target language of the data above show no correlation. Therefore, it can be said that the data above is translated by discursive creation.

        The discursive creation is not properly used in translating the caption because it really ruins the meaning of the caption. Therefore, the improvement that I suggest is **Syahrini's** *face looks so glowing, right? The fur-covered dress is also worn as always.* Here in the suggested translation, I choose to preserve the word *Syahrini* because it is naming word which I believe do not need to be translated.

5. Linguistic Compression Technique

        Basically, linguistic compression works by compress or reduce the linguistic element/s of the translation of source language into target language. In the case of Instagram status translation, linguistic compression is also found, and it is discussed in the following.

(05/IGTM)   SL   : #*Iqbaal* **baru saja menyelesaikan** *sekolahnya di luar negeri. Ia pun menantang para fans untuk mengikuti jejaknya. Ayoo siapa berani?*

                    TL   : #Iqbaal **Just finished** his school abroad. He challenged the fans to follow his tracks. Come on who dare?

One of the data talks about a young actor who had finished his study abroad by saying *baru saja menyelesaikan* and this phrase is translated into *just finished*. At glance, there is no problem with the translation, but in a closer look, the translator, in this case the Instagram translation machine, compresses the linguistic element of the status. The phrase *baru saja menyelesaikan* means that the actor had done the process of studying in the time this status is written. It can be said that the event being talked about has been done in the previous time. Therefore, the translation should be *has just finished* instead of *just finished*. It proves that there is linguistic compression in the translation.

        The above translation is considered problematic because of the reduction on meaning by having linguistic compression in the bold-part. The suggested

translation is #*Iqbaal* **had just finished** *his study abroad. He, then, challanged his fans to follow suit. Come on! Who dares?*. There used established equivalent in the suggested translation to preserve both meaning and grammatical aspect of the caption.

6. Naturalized Borrowing Technique

Naturalized borrowing is another kind of borrowing besides pure borrowing. The difference lies in how translation modifies the source language in target language. Naturalized borrowing is the one which accommodates modification and adjustment to target language while pure borrowing does not do.

(13/IGTM) SL : *Hannah Al Rashid mengaku sakit hati dilabeli sebagai **artis** bule.*

TL : Hannah Al Rashid claimed to be heartache labeled as a bule **artist**.

The data above contains naturalized borrowing technique. Instagram machine translation translates *artis* into *artist* in English. Historically, the word *artis* in Indonesia was an English naturalized borrowing. The modification is at the writing of the word borrowed. Since the naturalized borrowing does not problematic, the researcher will just suggest the translation for the other part of the caption. The suggested translation will be *Hannah Al Rashid claimed that she's annoyed being labbeled as 'bule' **artist**.*

7. Deletion Technique

Deletion is a technique which deletes the whole word, phrase, clause or even a sentence of a construction in the target language. The data is at the following.

(12/IGTM) SL : **Meski lahir di antara dua budaya**, *Hannah Al Rashid mencintai kultur Indonesia. Simak terus artikelnya di #celebofthemonth detikHOT*

TL : Hannah Al Rashid loves Indonesian culture. Tune in to the article at #celebofthemonth detikhot.

The bolded clause in the beginning of the *Instagram* status is seen to be missing in the target language. *Instagram* translation machine did not translate the whole clause. It is the subordinative clause which is not translated into the target language. *Instagram* translation machine has only translated the main clause of the first sentence of the construction. Therefore, it can be said that deletion technique is used in translating this part.

Deleted information in translation is the same as having loss in translation. The meaning is consequently reduced when deletion takes place. To make the information whole again, I suggest the translation to become "**Though she was born with two cultures**, *Hannah Al Rashid loves Indonesian culture. Read the article in #celebofthemonth detikHOT*". In the suggested translation I proposed, the missing information is brought back so that there is no missing information in the translated caption.

8. Transposition Technique

Transposition includes the changes of grammatical category of the source language in the target language It covers the changes of noun into verb or vice versa,

verb into adjective or vice versa, and many other more. The following is one of the data.

(03/IGTM) SL   : **Sempat berkarier** di dunia tarik suara, #JessicaMila memutuskan untuk kembali ke dunia akting. Apa alasannya, ya?

TL   : ***Had a career*** *in the world pull sound, #JessicaMila decided to go back to the acting world. What's the reason, huh?*

The phrase *sempat berkarir* which is a verb in Indonesia is translated into *had a career* which is included into noun category. This means that there is grammatical category change in translating this part of the status. So, it can be clearly stated that transposition is used in translating this part of the status.

The use of transposition in this caption is not really problematic. It is because *berkarir* has no verb form in English. Therefore, changing it into noun is the best decision. The problem occurs when TM translate the other part of the caption. So, here is the suggested translation for the caption "***Ever had a career*** *in singing, #JessicaMila prefers acting. What's her reason?*".

E. Conclusion and Suggestion
1. Conclussion

The result of the analysis shows that *Instagram* TM cannot be made the only reference if we need to look at the translation. It is due to the fact that *Instagram* TM still produces many problematic translations. It can be seen from the data analysis at the previous section of this article. Most of the problems occur because *Instagram* TM makes use translation techniques improperly. It does not mean that translation technique is the cause of the problems, but it is the TM which does not properly choose the best translation technique for certain part of the text. For instance, when it comes to the naming word which does not need to be translated, TM translates it and causes problems. Besides, *Instagram* TM also applies literal translation in most of the data that finally causes problems. It is because literal translation is the same as doing word-for-word translation without considering the context of the text.

Problems in *Instagram* TM also occur because of the random analysis done by TM that do not clearly analyze the who or what is being translated. This also causes many misinterpret of information in the translation. For example, the misinterpreting of personal pronoun translation has happened in almost all part of the data. *Instagram* TM does not have knowledge on the subject of the caption and so it fails to translate well. One of the instances is when TM has to translate *dia* into English. Theoretically, when a translator needs to translate *dia* into English, he/she should know who is going to be given that pronoun. If the subject is male, so translator should use *he*. If the subject is female, so translator must use *she*. However, TM does not have such analysis that it causes problems in translation.

The data analysis also shows how *Instagram* TM fails in translating Indonesian slang like *gengs,* and *cetar*. TM has also failed in translating exclamatory remark like *duh, ciee,* and *eiittss*. In most of the data, TM borrows purely those kinds of

expression. Therefore, there are some meaning losses in the translation. It is actually better to find the closest equivalent to those words whether it is close in meaning alone or both in meaning and style.

Finally, it can be concluded that *Instagram* TM should be considered as supplementary information for those who want to translate something. It is just a supplement because it still needs much reshaping and reediting to have the best result. It is because *Instagram* TM only previews the surface translation that still can help readers who do not know source language. It implies that *Instagram* TM has actually translated the surface information of the text but ignores the deep meaning and also the style or the structure in the target language. So, it still can help readers of target language to understand the information. But, for language learners, *Instagram* TM cannot be a trustable resource of learning for it totally ignores the target language's structure.

2. Suggestion

Suggestion for language learners, it is better to consult the dictionary or human translators to translate any kind of text. It is because human translator will do many researches in order to understand the text carefully to finally reproduce the closest equivalent for the text. This article is a proof that TM is problematic and should not be the only reference.

Further researches are suggested to analyze deeper the various translation machine. It will be more valuable if the other researchers can create a better translation machine in collaboration with the IT experts. It must be a huge advantage for people needing translation service.

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