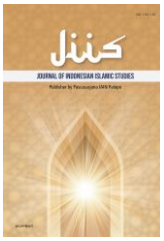
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Translation Techniques and Quality of Arabic–Indonesian Instagram Captions: A Case Study of @Natgeomagarab

Farrah Chaiya Mas[1]✉, Adelia Natasya[2]

[1]Master's Program in Middle Eastern Cultural Studies, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

[2]Bachelor's Program in Arabic Literature, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

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Abstract

Social media captions increasingly require translation to reach multilingual audiences, yet the quality of such translations is rarely examined empirically. This study investigates the sentence types, translation techniques, and translation quality of Arabic-Indonesian captions on the Instagram account @Natgeomagarab, the Arabic edition of National Geographic Magazine. Data comprised 52 Arabic captions and their Indonesian translations uploaded between 1-5 September 2023, analyzed using the eighteen translation techniques of Molina and Albir (2002) and the translation-quality assessment model of Nababan, Nuraeni, and Sumardiono (2012), covering accuracy, acceptability, and readability. Data were collected through observation, note-taking, and questionnaire techniques and analyzed descriptively-qualitatively following Miles and Huberman's interactive model and Spradley's domain analysis. Results show that nominal sentences (jumlah ismiyah) occurred in 33 captions (63.5%) and verbal sentences (jumlah fi'liyah) in 19 captions (36.5%), distributed across four themes: flora and fauna, tourism, astronomy, and advertisement. Ten of the eighteen possible techniques were applied across 550 instances, dominated by established equivalent (69.0%), adaptation (12.2%), and reduction (10.2%). The overall weighted translation-quality score across the three aspects was 2.06, placing the translations in the moderate category rather than fully accurate, acceptable, and readable. The findings suggest that heavy reliance on established equivalent and reduction techniques, while efficient for concise captions, does not automatically guarantee translation quality, indicating the need for more context-sensitive strategies when translating culturally embedded Arabic captions for an Indonesian audience.

✉ Email Correspondent:
farrahchaiyamas4150@gmail.com

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Introduction

Social media has become one of the most popular tools used by the public to interact, share information, and express themselves, and Instagram is among the platforms with the largest number of active users. Dixon (2024) reports that Instagram had approximately two billion active users who upload photographs and videos accompanied by captions describing the content. These captions are frequently taken from various sources, including Arabic-language captions, and translating Arabic captions into other languages such as Indonesian has become common practice. Because most caption translations on Instagram are produced automatically or informally, the resulting translations are not always accurate, acceptable, or readable, which makes the study of caption translation on this platform increasingly relevant.

One account that regularly publishes Arabic-language captions is @Natgeomagarab, the Arabic edition of National Geographic Magazine published by Abu Dhabi Media Network since October 2010 (Schreck, 2010). The account presents scientific and educational content on geography, wildlife, astronomy, and culture, each accompanied by an Arabic caption describing the photograph or video. Captions function not merely as a label for an image but as a reflection of what the uploader intends to convey through the post (Hartini et al., 2017). For an international audience, including Indonesian followers who do not understand Arabic, translation of these captions becomes a key strategy for widening the account's reach, strengthening audience engagement, and maintaining a connection between the content and its global readership.

Several previous studies have examined translation technique and translation quality in various text types. Dhyaningrum, Nababan, and Djatmika (2016) analyzed the translation techniques and quality of satirical sentences in a novel and found that the dominant use of certain techniques was closely related to the acceptability of the translation. Haq (2019) examined the accuracy and translation technique used in an Arabic religious text, while Muchayyaroh (2020) investigated the translation quality of Arabic subtitles in a film, both applying the Molina and Albir (2002) and Nababan et al. (2012) frameworks that remain the most widely used references in Indonesian translation studies. More recently, Pramesti (2023) examined the translation of Arabic-Indonesian captions on the social media platform TikTok, indicating that scholarly attention has begun to move toward social media captions, though studies remain limited in number and platform coverage.

Despite this growing body of research, studies that specifically address the translation of Arabic-Indonesian Instagram captions, particularly on a science-oriented educational account such as @Natgeomagarab, remain scarce. Existing studies on caption translation largely focus on other platforms, such as TikTok (Pramesti, 2023), or on other genres such as novels, subtitles, and religious texts, while few studies connect the grammatical form of the Arabic source sentence, namely nominal sentences (jumlah ismiyah) and verbal sentences (jumlah fi'liyah) (Ni'mah, 2015), together with its thematic content, the translation technique applied, and the resulting translation quality within a single analytical framework.

The number of studies applying Molina and Albir's (2002) framework to Arabic-Indonesian social media captions has grown markedly in the last two years, though findings remain dispersed across platforms and content genres. Ilham, Al Farisi, and Supriadi (2025) combined Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques with Aixelá's (1996)

culture-specific items framework to examine Arabic audiovisual captions on the Instagram account @senmancung, finding that substitution strategies, particularly limited universalization, were favored when no direct Indonesian equivalent existed for a culturally loaded expression. Working with a similarly structured account, Serinastity, Mubarok, Saehudin, Suparno, and Fathalah (2025) evaluated the machine-translated captions of @alarabiya and reported a dominance of literal translation (27.27%) alongside only moderate translation quality across accuracy, acceptability, and readability, a pattern they attributed to the limited cultural sensitivity of automatic translation engines when processing Arabic source texts.

Beyond Instagram, comparable research has extended to TikTok. Mas and Anis (2024) analyzed 463 instances of translation technique in the Arabic-Indonesian news captions of @aljazeera and found that established equivalent (71.71%) was even more dominant than in the present study's preliminary observations, a pattern associated with a comparatively high translation-quality score of 2.59. In contrast, Pratiwi, Mubarok, Maulani, and Suparno (2025), examining the religious-content account @IqraaMedia, found that transposition (32.39%) rather than established equivalent was the leading technique in automatically translated captions, and that overall quality (1.97) was lower than in either the news or general-interest accounts, largely because literal renderings of Islamic terminology distorted culturally embedded meaning. Fakih, Ghassemiazghandi, Fakih, and Singh (2024), evaluating Instagram's built-in neural machine translation of literary texts through a Multidimensional Quality Metrics (MQM) analysis, likewise reported that fluency errors were more frequent than accuracy errors, suggesting that platform-embedded translation tools still struggle to balance naturalness and faithfulness when rendering culturally dense Arabic source material into other languages.

Taken together, these studies indicate that the relationship between translation technique and translation quality on Arabic-Indonesian social media is neither fixed nor platform-independent: the same technique can be associated with markedly different quality outcomes depending on the account's content domain, whether the translation is produced by a human or a machine, and the communicative register of the source captions. However, because @Natgeomagarab captions are translated and uploaded directly by the account's own social media team rather than generated through an automatic translation feature, the present study offers a point of comparison against the largely machine-translation-focused literature described above, allowing the interaction between sentence type, translation technique, and translation quality to be examined under human-translation conditions on a science-oriented educational account.

Based on this gap, the present study addresses three research questions: (1) what sentence types and themes appear in the Arabic captions uploaded by the Instagram account @Natgeomagarab; (2) what translation techniques, based on the eighteen techniques proposed by Molina and Albir (2002), are used in translating the captions from Arabic into Indonesian; and (3) what is the quality of these translations when assessed through the accuracy, acceptability, and readability model proposed by Nababan, Nuraeni, and Sumardiono (2012). Accordingly, this study aims to describe the sentence types and themes of the Arabic captions, to identify the translation techniques applied in translating them into Indonesian, and to assess the resulting translation quality. The novelty of this study lies in examining sentence type and theme, translation technique, and translation

quality together within a single Instagram account, thereby offering an integrated linguistic and translational profile of Arabic science-content captions translated for an Indonesian audience.

Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative case-study design, since the aim is to describe rather than statistically test the translation techniques and quality found in the data. Qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of observed utterances and behavior (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975); it is a means of problem-solving that is not carried out through statistical methods (Subroto, 1992), and although the results can be counted and presented numerically, the analysis itself remains qualitative in nature (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Sugiyono (2016) explains that a case study is contextual research directed toward a comprehensive and detailed description of its object; in this study, the object is the translation of Arabic captions viewed from the technique applied and the quality achieved.

The data consist of 52 Arabic captions and their corresponding Indonesian translations uploaded on the Instagram account @Natgeomagarab between 1 and 5 September 2023, retrieved through the Indonesian-language version of the Instagram application. This period was selected because it was considered to represent sufficient variation in sentence type and translation technique to allow a meaningful assessment of translation quality; captions containing hashtags were excluded from the data set. Each datum was coded using the format 000/CP/IG-1/AR-ID, in which 000 denotes the data number, CP stands for "caption," IG stands for "Instagram," 1 indicates that only one data source (the @Natgeomagarab account) was used, and AR-ID denotes the translation direction from Arabic into Indonesian.

Data were collected through observation and a note-taking technique (teknik simak-catat) used to record and classify the source text (Bsu) and target text (Bsa) according to sentence structure, and through a questionnaire technique used to obtain the translation-quality assessment. Three raters were involved: two graduates of the Arabic Literature Study Program of Universitas Sebelas Maret and one active Arabic-language instructor, all of whom had a basic understanding of Arabic grammar (nahwu-sharaf) and translation studies and were themselves Instagram users familiar with the visual context of the captions. Each rater independently scored all 52 data points on a scale of 1 (low), 2 (moderate), and 3 (high) for the aspects of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, following the assessment instrument developed by Nababan et al. (2012); the scoring sessions were followed by short interviews to obtain supporting justification for each score.

Sampling followed a purposive technique (Sugiyono, 2016), in which source-target text pairs were selected to represent the range of sentence types and translation techniques found in the data. Sentence types and translation techniques were first identified qualitatively using Spradley's (1997) domain, taxonomic, componential, and cultural-theme analysis, and the resulting categories were then quantified into frequencies and percentages, a combination of qualitative and quantitative treatment of data commonly applied in qualitative linguistic research (Citriadin, 2020). Data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification followed the interactive analysis model of Miles and

Huberman (1992). Translation-quality scores from the three raters were averaged for each aspect and then weighted following Nababan et al.'s (2012) formula, in which accuracy is multiplied by three, acceptability by two, and readability by one, and the sum of the three products is divided by six to obtain the overall quality score; the resulting score was rounded using a three-point scale, where 0-1.5 is categorized as low, 1.6-2.5 as moderate, and 2.6-3.0 as high.

The assessment of translation technique and quality in this study is grounded in the broader theoretical understanding of translational equivalence developed by Newmark (1988), who distinguishes semantic from communicative translation, and by Larson (1984), who frames meaning-based translation as the transfer of meaning rather than surface form from the source to the target language. These perspectives complement Molina and Albir's (2002) technique taxonomy, which operationalizes the concrete choices a translator makes at the level of the word, phrase, or sentence, and Baker's (2018) discussion of equivalence at different linguistic levels, which cautions that grammatical or lexical equivalence does not by itself guarantee textual or pragmatic equivalence. Framing the analysis in this way allows the study to interpret the frequency counts in Tables 1 through 4 not simply as a descriptive inventory but as evidence of the translator's underlying strategy for balancing fidelity to the Arabic source with naturalness for the Indonesian audience.

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the qualitative coding, sentence-type and translation-technique classifications were cross-checked twice: first independently by the researcher and then discussed with the three raters during the follow-up interview sessions, so that any disagreement in classifying a borderline case, for instance a nominal sentence containing an implied verbal predicate, could be resolved through discussion rather than being decided unilaterally. This triangulation procedure follows Miles and Huberman's (1992) recommendation that qualitative categorization be verified against multiple sources of judgment before being treated as a stable finding, and it is consistent with the coding-then-verification sequence used in comparable studies of Arabic-Indonesian social media translation (Ilham et al., 2025; Serinastity et al., 2025).

Results

This section presents the findings for the three research questions of this study, namely the sentence types and themes, the translation techniques, and the translation quality of the Arabic captions uploaded on the Instagram account @Natgeomagarab.

Sentence Types and Themes in the Arabic Captions

Of the 52 Arabic captions analyzed, nominal sentences (jumlah ismiyah) were found in 33 captions (63.5%) and verbal sentences (jumlah fi'liyah) in 19 captions (36.5%), as presented in Table 1. This indicates that @Natgeomagarab predominantly relies on nominal constructions when composing captions, which is presumably related to their capacity to describe the content of a photograph or video more concisely and effectively than verbal constructions.

Table 1. Sentence Types in the Arabic Captions of @Natgeomagarab

Sentence Type	Frequency	Percentage
Jumlah Ismiyah (nominal)	33	63.5%
Jumlah Fi'liyah (verbal)	19	36.5%
Total	52	100%

Within the nominal sentences, 28 captions (84.8%) begin with isim mu'rab (a declinable noun) and 5 captions (15.2%) with isim mabni (an indeclinable noun), suggesting that the account favors grammatically flexible nominal openings suited to descriptive, image-anchored captions (Ni'mah, 2015).

With respect to themes, the captions in the observation period could be classified into four categories: flora and fauna, tourism, astronomy, and advertisement, as summarized in Table 2. The advertisement theme consisted of a single recurring caption format re-posted twelve times during the period, which is treated as one representative unit in the thematic distribution but is counted individually within the overall 52-caption data set used for the technique and quality analyses in the following sections.

Table 2. Thematic Distribution of Captions (n = 41 unique caption forms)

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Flora & Fauna	27	65.9%
Tourism	11	26.9%
Astronomy	2	4.9%
Advertisement*	1	2.4%
Total	41	100%

*Re-posted twelve times within the observation period.

Flora and fauna clearly dominate the thematic content, consistent with @Natgeomagarab's identity as the Arabic edition of a nature- and science-focused magazine. Within this theme, present-tense verbal sentences (fi'liyah mudhari') are relatively frequent, which is well suited to describing ongoing animal behavior or natural phenomena, whereas tourism captions are distributed more evenly between nominal and verbal forms.

Translation Techniques Applied in the Captions

Analysis of the 52 Arabic captions and their Indonesian translations yielded 550 instances of translation-technique application, comprising ten of the eighteen techniques proposed by Molina and Albir (2002), as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency of Translation Techniques in the Captions of @Natgeomagarab

No.	Technique	Frequency	Percentage
1	Established equivalent	380	69.0%
2	Adaptation	67	12.2%
3	Reduction	56	10.2%
4	Borrowing	17	3.1%
5	Discursive creation	11	2.0%
6	Transposition	5	1.0%
7	Amplification	4	0.7%
8	Calque	4	0.7%
9	Linguistic compression	4	0.7%

10	Particularization	2	0.4%
	Total	550	100%

The established equivalent technique is by far the most frequently applied, accounting for 69% of all technique instances. This technique replaces a source-language term or expression with a target-language term or expression that is commonly recognized as its equivalent by dictionary or everyday-language convention (Molina & Albir, 2002); its dominance indicates that the translator generally prefers natural, familiar Indonesian wording over more literal renderings when translating the captions. Adaptation (12.2%) and reduction (10.2%) are the next most frequent techniques: adaptation is used to replace a source-culture element with a comparable element in the target culture when no direct equivalent is available, while reduction omits information implicit in the source text, such as repeated subject markers or discourse particles that are grammatically obligatory in Arabic but redundant in Indonesian, in order to preserve the brevity expected of an Instagram caption.

Less frequent techniques include borrowing (3.1%), used mainly for proper nouns and specific terms without an Indonesian equivalent; discursive creation (2.0%), applied when a temporary, context-bound equivalence is established that would not hold outside the caption; and transposition, amplification, calque, linguistic compression, and particularization, each occurring in fewer than five percent of instances. Because most captions combine more than one technique within a single sentence, a given caption is typically translated through a chain of established equivalent, adaptation, and reduction working together to keep the target text both natural and concise for a social media context.

Translation Quality of the Captions

Translation quality was assessed by three raters across the three aspects of accuracy, acceptability, and readability for all 52 data points, following the weighted formula of Nababan et al. (2012), as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Average and Weighted Scores of Translation Quality

Aspect	Weight	Mean Score	Weighted Score
Accuracy	3	2.05	6.15
Acceptability	2	2.03	4.06
Readability	1	2.13	2.13
Overall (Σ ÷ 6)	-	-	2.06

The overall weighted score of 2.06 falls within the moderate category (1.6-2.5) on the three-point scale used in this study, indicating that the Arabic-Indonesian caption translations of @Natgeomagarab are, on average, moderately accurate, moderately acceptable, and moderately readable rather than of consistently high quality. The three aspects show relatively similar mean scores (2.05, 2.03, and 2.13, respectively), suggesting that the moderate quality is distributed fairly evenly across accuracy, acceptability, and readability rather than concentrated in a single weak aspect, even though accuracy carries the greatest weight in the overall formula and therefore has the strongest influence on the final score.

Discussion

Sentence Form and Thematic Function of the Captions

The dominance of nominal sentences (jumlah ismiyah) over verbal sentences (jumlah fi'liyah) in the @Natgeomagarab captions can be explained through the grammatical function of jumlah ismiyah itself, which in Arabic is typically used to state a condition, description, or identity without requiring a verb (Ni'mah, 2015). This structure aligns naturally with the communicative purpose of an Instagram caption, which functions primarily to describe or comment on an accompanying photograph or video rather than to narrate a sequence of actions (Hartini et al., 2017). Consistent with this pattern, the flora-and-fauna theme, which is the most frequent theme in the data, favors present-tense verbal sentences (fi'liyah mudhari') when describing ongoing behavior, such as an animal in motion, but favors nominal sentences when simply labelling a species or scene, indicating that sentence-type choice is closely tied to what is being depicted rather than being random.

This finding is consistent with Rakanda's (2020) observation that Instagram captions serve an identity- and image-forming function for an account, in which concise, descriptive language is preferred over elaborate narration. As an official account representing the Arabic edition of an international science magazine, @Natgeomagarab appears to favor a caption style that quickly orients the reader toward the visual content, a communicative strategy that is well served by the brevity and descriptive strength of Arabic nominal sentences.

Dominance of Established Equivalent and Its Implications for Translation Quality

The dominance of the established equivalent technique (69%), followed by adaptation (12.2%) and reduction (10.2%), mirrors patterns identified in earlier Indonesian translation-quality studies. Dhyaningrum et al. (2016) similarly found that the dominant use of established equivalent and reduction in translating satirical sentences in a novel was associated with moderate-to-high acceptability, since natural target-language wording tends to read fluently even when some nuance of the source text is not fully preserved. Muchayyaroh (2020), examining Arabic film subtitles, likewise found that reduction and established equivalent were favored because of the strict spatial and temporal constraints of subtitling, a constraint that closely parallels the character-length and skimmability expectations of an Instagram caption. Pramesti (2023), in the most directly comparable study on Arabic-Indonesian caption translation on TikTok, reported a similar reliance on established equivalent and literal techniques driven by the brevity demanded by short-video captions, suggesting that platform-specific brevity, rather than the source text's genre, may be the stronger determinant of technique choice in social media translation.

At the same time, the moderate overall quality score of 2.06 indicates that a high frequency of established equivalent does not by itself guarantee high translation quality, a pattern also noted by Haq (2019) in translating an Arabic religious text, where literal and established-equivalent techniques preserved surface meaning but occasionally reduced accuracy when Arabic-specific cultural or religious nuance had no direct Indonesian counterpart. In the present data, similar risks appear in captions that rely heavily on adaptation and reduction: when culturally specific elements are adapted too freely, or when grammatically implicit information is reduced excessively, the target text can become difficult for the Indonesian reader to fully understand, contributing to the only-moderate

scores obtained for both acceptability (2.03) and readability (2.13). Because accuracy is weighted most heavily in Nababan et al.'s (2012) formula, and because the accuracy score (2.05) is itself only moderate, improving the precision with which established equivalent, adaptation, and reduction are combined, rather than reducing their frequency of use, would likely be the most direct way to raise the overall quality of Arabic-Indonesian caption translation on this and similar accounts. This analysis was made possible by cross-checking the identified sentence structures and lexical equivalences against standard Arabic grammar and dictionary references (Munawwir, 1984; Ni'mah, 2015) as well as Indonesian-language references (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 2008), which helped ensure that the linguistic classification underlying the technique and quality analysis in this study, guided methodologically by Kesuma (2007) and Sudaryanto (1993), remained both systematic and empirically grounded.

Comparative Perspective from Recent Arabic-Indonesian Social Media Translation Research

Positioning the present findings alongside recent Arabic-Indonesian social media translation research clarifies what is distinctive about @Natgeomagarab's captions. Table 5 summarizes the dominant technique and overall quality score reported in five comparable studies, including the present one. The 69.0% dominance of established equivalent and the moderate overall quality score of 2.06 obtained here sit between the pattern found by Mas and Anis (2024) for the Arabic-Indonesian news captions of @aljazeera on TikTok, where an even heavier reliance on established equivalent (71.71%) was associated with a notably higher quality score of 2.59, and the pattern found by Pratiwi et al. (2025) for the religious-content account @IqraaMedia, where transposition rather than established equivalent dominated (32.39%) and overall quality was lower (1.97).

Table 5. Comparative Overview of Dominant Translation Technique and Quality Score in Recent Arabic-Indonesian Social Media Caption Studies

Account / Platform	Dominant Technique	Overall Quality Score	Source
@Natgeomagarab (Instagram, human translation)	Established equivalent (69.0%)	2.06 (moderate)	Present study
@alarabiya (Instagram, machine translation)	Literal translation (27.27%)	2.43 (moderate)	Serinastity et al. (2025)
@aljazeera (TikTok, machine translation)	Established equivalent (71.71%)	2.59 (moderate-high)	Mas & Anis (2024)
@IqraaMedia (TikTok, machine translation)	Transposition (32.39%)	1.97 (moderate)	Pratiwi et al. (2025)
@senmancung (Instagram, human translation)	Substitution / limited universalization	Not quantified (qualitative)	Ilham et al. (2025)

This gradient suggests that the proportion of established equivalent use is not by itself the decisive factor in translation quality; rather, quality appears to track how well established equivalent is combined with context-sensitive techniques such as adaptation and amplification when the source content carries cultural or religious weight, a pattern also observed by Serinastity et al. (2025) for @alarabiya and consistent with Ilham et al.'s (2025) finding that substitution strategies dominate precisely where Arabic culture-specific items have no direct Indonesian counterpart. Because the captions analyzed by Mas and

Anis (2024) are drawn from general-interest news content, while those examined by Pratiwi et al. (2025) involve Islamic preaching material rich in doctrinally specific vocabulary, the contrast in quality scores further indicates that content domain, rather than platform alone, shapes how forgiving a given reliance on established equivalent and reduction will be for the resulting translation.

Unlike the four comparison studies, which all analyze machine-translated captions produced automatically by Instagram's or TikTok's built-in translation feature, the @Natgeomagarab captions in the present data are translated by the account's own editorial team. This human-translation condition may explain why established equivalent and adaptation, rather than the literal or transposition techniques that typically dominate machine output (Fakih et al., 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2025), together account for over 80% of technique instances in the present data: a human translator is more able to recognize when a source expression requires cultural adjustment rather than direct correspondence. Even so, the moderate rather than high overall quality score obtained here indicates that human translation of Arabic-Indonesian captions is not automatically superior to machine translation in every respect, particularly when brevity constraints specific to Instagram captions push the translator toward reduction at the expense of completeness.

Grammatical Typology and Theoretical Implications for Caption Translation

The interaction between Arabic sentence typology and translation outcome observed in this study can also be situated within a broader theoretical account of equivalence. Newmark's (1988) distinction between semantic translation, which stays close to the syntactic and lexical structure of the source text, and communicative translation, which prioritizes the effect on the target reader, helps explain why nominal sentences (jumlah ismiyah) translate comparatively smoothly into Indonesian: because jumlah ismiyah already encodes a state or description rather than an action, a communicative rendering into Indonesian rarely requires restructuring the clause. Verbal sentences (jumlah fi'liyah), by contrast, more often require the transposition or modulation described by Molina and Albir (2002) to align Arabic's verb-initial order with Indonesian's subject-initial norm, which increases the likelihood that some nuance of aspect or emphasis is lost in translation, consistent with Larson's (1984) observation that meaning-based translation across typologically distant languages inevitably involves some degree of structural adjustment.

This typological account also helps explain why translation quality in the present data is only moderate rather than high despite the predominance of established equivalent. Baker (2018) notes that grammatical equivalence, such as correctly rendering a nominal sentence as a nominal-like Indonesian construction, does not guarantee textual or pragmatic equivalence, since an Instagram caption must also function as a concise, visually anchored unit of communication rather than a grammatically faithful rendering alone. In this respect, the present findings echo Fakih et al.'s (2024) MQM-based observation that platform translation tools, and by extension human translators working under similar brevity constraints, tend to prioritize fluency and conciseness over the full preservation of source-text nuance, a trade-off that appears to account for the only-moderate acceptability and readability scores obtained for @Natgeomagarab's captions despite their generally accurate core meaning.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of 52 Arabic captions and their Indonesian translations on the Instagram account @Natgeomagarab, three conclusions can be drawn. First, regarding sentence type and theme, the captions predominantly use nominal sentences (jumlah ismiyah, 63.5%) over verbal sentences (jumlah fi'liyah, 36.5%), and are thematically dominated by flora and fauna (65.9%), followed by tourism (26.9%), astronomy (4.9%), and a single recurring advertisement caption (2.4%). Second, regarding translation technique, ten of Molina and Albir's (2002) eighteen techniques were identified across 550 instances, led by established equivalent (69.0%), adaptation (12.2%), and reduction (10.2%), indicating a strong preference for natural, concise Indonesian wording over literal rendering. Third, regarding translation quality, the captions obtained an overall weighted score of 2.06 on Nababan et al.'s (2012) three-point scale, placing them in the moderate category for accuracy, acceptability, and readability alike, which shows that frequent use of established equivalent and reduction techniques does not automatically translate into high-quality results.

This study is limited to a single Instagram account and a five-day observation period, which may not capture the full variation of Arabic captions posted by @Natgeomagarab over time. Future researchers are therefore encouraged to examine accounts on other social media platforms, such as TikTok, Facebook, or YouTube, that have not yet been studied as objects of Arabic-Indonesian translation research; to extend the thematic scope beyond nature and science content to themes such as news or education; and to investigate other formal aspects of translation, such as translation method or translation ideology, that were not addressed in the present study.

From a practical standpoint, these findings suggest that translators and social media teams managing Arabic-Indonesian accounts would benefit from treating established equivalent and adaptation not as default, low-effort choices but as techniques whose effectiveness depends on actively checking whether the resulting Indonesian caption preserves the pragmatic force, and not merely the propositional content, of the Arabic original, particularly for culturally or religiously loaded vocabulary of the kind highlighted by Pratiwi et al. (2025) and Ilham et al. (2025). For researchers, the comparison summarized in Table 5 points to content domain and translation mode, human versus machine, as two variables that future studies should manipulate or control for explicitly, since both appear to influence translation-quality outcomes as much as the choice of technique itself.

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