

ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATING ARGUMENTATIVE TEXTS FROM ENGLISH TO INDONESIAN AT UIN MATARAM: A STUDY OF LINGUISTIC AND NON-LINGUISTIC FACTORS

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A B S T R A C T S	A R T I C L E I N F O
<p>This study aims to analyze the difficulties experienced by students in translating argumentative texts from English to Indonesian, especially based on linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The research subjects are final semester students of English Education Study Program at UIN Mataram who have taken translation courses. The method used was descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques in the form of translation tests and semi-structured interviews. The results showed that linguistically, students had difficulties in understanding technical vocabulary, idiomatics, and complex sentence structures in argumentative texts. Meanwhile, non-linguistically, the obstacles include limited understanding of cultural context, lack of topic background knowledge, and low self-confidence in dealing with foreign texts. This study concludes that difficulties in translating argumentative texts are multidimensional and demand a holistic learning approach, including strengthening translation strategies, improving cultural understanding, and training critical thinking skills. The findings are expected to serve as a reference in the development of more effective translation curriculum and teaching methods in higher education.</p>	<p>Article History:</p> <p><i>Received: October 17th, 2025</i></p> <p><i>Revised: October 27th, 2025</i></p> <p><i>Published: October 2025</i></p> <hr/> <p>Keywords:</p> <p><i>Argumentative text, Difficulties, English to Indonesian Translation, Linguistic Factors, non-linguistic factors, Students, Translation.</i></p>

INTRODUCTION

In practice, students at UIN Mataram often face various difficulties when translating argumentative texts. These difficulties can be categorized into two main aspects: linguistic and non-linguistic factors. From a linguistic perspective, common problems include limited vocabulary, especially in finding equivalents for technical or idiomatic terms. For instance, words like counterargument, refutation, or logical fallacy often do not have direct equivalents in Indonesian, so students must find creative solutions while maintaining accuracy of meaning. In addition, differences in syntactic structures between English and Indonesian, such as the use of tenses, aspects, and voice, also present challenges. According Sipayung et al, Students often translate literally without considering sentence structure differences, resulting in translations that are stiff or even illogical.

Moreover, cohesion and coherence aspects in argumentative texts are often neglected. The use of connectors such as however, moreover, and on the other hand, which are crucial for building argumentative flow, is often translated inconsistently or omitted. This causes the translated text to lose its argumentative strength and become difficult for Indonesian readers to understand. According Baker argues that translators must be able to capture and maintain cohesive devices in the source text to preserve meaning and communicative purpose.

The problem is especially important at UIN Mataram because students are expected to be proficient in English in order to assist their studies in Islamic studies and other academic subjects. This study is extremely pertinent given the growing significance of foreign language proficiency in the academic setting of UIN Mataram. Improving the standard of language instruction at this school requires a better grasp of the challenges students encounter while interpreting contentious literature. With an emphasis on both language and non-linguistic factors, this study attempts to investigate the difficulties faced by UIN Mataram students when translating argumentative writings from English to Indonesian. It is anticipated that the research's conclusions was help academics, learners, and institutional stakeholders pinpoint important problems and create better plans for improving translation abilities. It is therefore expected that this project was significantly advance language instruction at UIN Mataram.

Based on the results of a survey conducted among students at UIN Mataram, it was found that translation is one of the most difficult subjects to understand, especially before students begin writing, as many of them experience difficulties in translating texts or language due to a limited vocabulary. These difficulties indicate that the problem of translating argumentative texts from English into Indonesian is complex and multidimensional, involving both linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the translation process is needed in order to find appropriate solutions for the development of curriculum and translation learning strategies in higher education. This research is expected to make a significant contribution to improving the quality of graduates who are competent in the field of translation, especially for argumentative texts that are highly needed in today's era of globalization.

RESEARCH METHOD

The approach of the study used the descriptive qualitative method because the data were in the form of words or written language. The descriptive qualitative method is appropriate for this study because it leads to exploring and capturing the social situation to be analyzed thoroughly, broadly, and intensively by the formulation of descriptive problems. In this research, the researcher would use qualitative descriptive research to examine Students' Difficulties In Translating Argumentative Text From English To Indonesian. Data analysis is the process of collecting data systematically to facilitate researchers in obtaining conclusions. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials so that they can be easily understood and the findings can be shared with others. The qualitative data analysis is inductive in nature, that is, the analysis is based on the data obtained. The analysis consists of three activities that occur

simultaneously, including: data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions or verification.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study explored the strategies used by students at UIN Mataram to overcome the mistakes they commonly make when translating argumentative texts from English into Indonesian. The findings, based on in-depth interviews, reveal that students demonstrate a growing awareness of the complexities of translating argumentative texts, which demand not only linguistic accuracy but also the preservation of logical argument structure and persuasive strength.

The data show that one of the major sources of students' mistakes is translating without fully understanding the context and purpose of the source text. Many students admitted that when they neglect this step, their translations tend to be literal, awkward, and fail to convey the intended argument effectively. This aligns with previous translation theories which emphasize that translators must act as mediators of meaning, not just word converters. By consciously reading and analyzing the context first, students aim to maintain the argumentative nature and rhetorical purpose of the text.

Another common challenge is limited vocabulary, especially for academic and context-specific terms. Mistakes in word choice often weaken the argument or create ambiguity in the target text. The findings show that students try to tackle this issue by carefully selecting vocabulary that fits both the intended meaning and the appropriate level of formality. They avoid literal translations that might distort nuance and instead adapt terms to align with Indonesian rhetorical norms. This supports Hatim and Mason's notion that successful translation must consider both semantic and pragmatic equivalence.

Cultural and structural mismatches between English and Indonesian also lead to frequent mistakes. English argumentative texts tend to use complex, long sentences and idiomatic expressions that cannot be directly transferred into Indonesian. The students' strategy of adapting cultural references and restructuring sentences helps them reduce these errors. For example, students break long, complicated English sentences into shorter, clearer Indonesian ones and replace idiomatic phrases with culturally relevant equivalents. This aligns with Larson's principle that cultural adjustment is crucial for an acceptable translation.

The step-by-step method, where students begin with a word-for-word translation and then reconstruct sentences, is a practical strategy for beginner translators. Although literal translation is not ideal for the final product, this phased approach helps students understand the base meaning before focusing on fluency and coherence. This reflects a gradual learning process that combines bottom-up and top-down skills in translation.

Revision and self-review emerged as another important strategy to minimize mistakes. Many students stated that they review their translations to ensure clarity, logical flow, and a persuasive tone. This metacognitive strategy shows that students do not consider their first draft final but are willing to refine and improve their work. This finding resonates with Schmitt's (2002) emphasis on the importance of monitoring and evaluating one's translation choices.

Critical thinking and argument analysis were also highlighted as strategies to reduce mistakes. By analyzing whether the translated argument remains strong and persuasive, students avoid blindly following the source text's surface form and instead reconstruct the argument to suit the target readers' expectations. This confirms that translation, especially for argumentative texts, is an active process that requires interpretation, reorganization, and sometimes reformulation.

Overall, the discussion indicates that students at UIN Mataram actively implement various strategies to cope with the mistakes they often make in translation. These strategies understanding context, selecting appropriate vocabulary, adjusting cultural elements, restructuring sentences, revising drafts, and applying critical thinking demonstrate an evolving competence and awareness of the translation process's multidimensional nature.

However, despite these efforts, the findings also suggest that these strategies are not always applied consistently and effectively. Some students still rely too heavily on literal translation, while others struggle to adjust complex arguments to the Indonesian rhetorical style. This highlights the need for more targeted translation practice, explicit training in discourse-level adaptation, and continuous feedback to help students refine their strategies and reduce common mistakes.

Based on the analysis of several journals examining the difficulties faced by university and school students in translating texts, particularly argumentative texts, it can be concluded that interviews are an effective qualitative instrument for exploring participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the translation process. Although the contexts, translation directions, and educational levels of the participants differ, there are several important similarities and differences that emerge from the interview results in each study.

In general, the main similarity found in interviews across almost all journals is that linguistic difficulties, especially those related to vocabulary (lexical) and grammar (grammatical), are the most dominant obstacles. In the studies by Dini Kurnia Putri and Dedek Sugi Hariati, both university and school students expressed that limitations in vocabulary mastery and difficulties in understanding sentence structures significantly contributed to poor translation quality. Students tend to translate literally or word-for-word without considering the context and overall meaning of the text.

Similar findings also appeared in the research by Kammer Tuahman Sipayung et al., although the translation direction in this journal was different, namely from Indonesian to English. Interviews revealed that students struggled to construct sentences with correct English structures and tended to make grammatical errors, especially regarding tenses and appropriate subject-predicate usage. The use of online translation tools without understanding the context also became a source of errors.

However, compared to other journals, the study by Sibuea, Daulay, and Ramadhan featured a broader scope of interviews, as it not only discussed linguistic aspects but also non-linguistic factors such as self-confidence, psychological pressure, and learning motivation. The interviewed students admitted that anxiety and lack of confidence often made it difficult for them to understand the text as a whole, even though they had a fairly

good grasp of the grammatical or lexical content. This indicates that affective factors also play an important role in translation ability.

Meanwhile, the journal written by Pasaribu and Hutahaeon has a slightly different context because the research subjects were junior high school students, and the focus was on narrative texts. However, the interview results still reinforced the finding that limitations in vocabulary comprehension and the tendency to translate literally are common problems also faced by lower-level students. This confirms that translation difficulties do not only occur at the higher education level but also begin to emerge from elementary and secondary education levels.

From the overall comparison, it can be concluded that interviews contribute significantly to revealing the real difficulties faced by students directly, both from linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. The interview results also strengthen the need for a holistic approach in translation teaching, which not only emphasizes linguistic aspects but also psychological factors and appropriate learning strategies. Thus, the findings from these five journals provide a deeper understanding of the challenges students face in translating texts, especially argumentative texts, as well as a strong basis for developing more effective translation teaching strategies in the future terms of conceptual understanding and translation practice. Therefore, your interview findings contribute significantly to enriching the understanding of students' difficulties and strategies in translating argumentative texts from English into Indonesian.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the challenges faced by students at UIN Mataram in translating argumentative texts from English to Indonesian, it can be concluded that the translation process is complex and influenced by both linguistic and non-linguistic factors.

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