

An Analysis Of Translation Methods Used By Students In Translating Analytical Exposition Text From English Into Indonesian At Grade Xi Of Sma Swasta Budi Utomo Medan

Analisis Metode Penerjemahan Yang Digunakan Siswa Dalam Menerjemahkan Teks Eksposisi Analitis Dari Bahasa Inggris Ke Bahasa Indonesia Di Kelas Xi Sma Swasta Budi Utomo Medan

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the translation methods used by Grade XI students of SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan and to determine the dominant method in translating an analytical exposition text from English into Indonesian. This study applied Larson's (1984) translation theory, focusing on Form-Based, Communicative, and Idiomatic Translation. A descriptive qualitative design was employed. The data were obtained from the translations of 21 students based on a text entitled The Importance of Learning English, which was divided into 30 segments, resulting in 630 translation units. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (2014). The findings revealed that Form-Based Translation was the most dominant method (352 occurrences; 55.9%), followed by Communicative Translation (240 occurrences; 38.1%) and Idiomatic Translation (38 occurrences; 6.0%). Furthermore, 13 students (61.9%) were categorized as predominantly form-based translators, while 8 students (38.1%) were communicative translators, and none were idiomatic. These findings indicate that students tend to prioritize source language structure rather than natural meaning in the target language, suggesting the need to enhance their communicative translation competence.

Keywords: Translation Methods, Analytical Exposition Text, Form-Based Translation, Communicative Translation, Idiomatic Translation.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi metode penerjemahan yang digunakan oleh siswa kelas XI SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan dan untuk menentukan metode dominan dalam menerjemahkan teks eksposisi analitis dari bahasa Inggris ke bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian ini menerapkan teori penerjemahan Larson (1984), dengan fokus pada Penerjemahan Berbasis Bentuk, Komunikatif, dan Idiomatik. Desain kualitatif deskriptif digunakan. Data diperoleh dari terjemahan 21 siswa berdasarkan teks berjudul Pentingnya Belajar Bahasa Inggris, yang dibagi menjadi 30 segmen, menghasilkan 630 unit terjemahan. Data dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman (2014). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Penerjemahan Berbasis Bentuk merupakan metode yang paling dominan (352 kejadian; 55,9%), diikuti oleh Penerjemahan Komunikatif (240 kejadian; 38,1%) dan Penerjemahan Idiomatik (38 kejadian; 6,0%). Selanjutnya, 13 mahasiswa (61,9%) dikategorikan sebagai penerjemah yang sebagian besar berbasis bentuk, sedangkan 8 mahasiswa (38,1%) adalah penerjemah komunikatif, dan tidak ada yang idiomatik. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa cenderung memprioritaskan struktur bahasa sumber daripada makna alami dalam bahasa sasaran, yang menunjukkan perlunya peningkatan kompetensi penerjemahan komunikatif mereka.

Kata Kunci: Metode Penerjemahan, Teks Eksposisi Analitis, Penerjemahan Berbasis Bentuk, Penerjemahan Komunikatif, Penerjemahan Idiomatik.

1. Introduction

Language is a fundamental medium of communication that allows individuals to express emotions, ideas, and thoughts in various social contexts. In a broader sense, language does not merely serve communicative purposes but also reflects one's cultural identity and intellectual development. Through language, people can exchange knowledge, build relationships, and foster understanding among individuals and societies. Therefore, language is an inseparable part of human life, shaping the way people perceive and interact with the world around them.

In the context of globalization, language proficiency, particularly in international languages such as English, has become a fundamental requirement for academic and professional advancement. Within the Indonesian educational context, English is taught as a foreign language and plays an important role in developing students' communicative competence. As stated in the national curriculum, mastering English involves developing the four core skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, beyond these four skills, translation serves as an essential linguistic bridge that enhances students' comprehension of how meaning operates across languages. Translation allows students to connect English expressions to equivalent forms in Indonesian, deepening their understanding of vocabulary, structure, and contextual meaning.

Translation is a process that goes beyond simply substituting words from one language into another. It requires a deep understanding of meaning, context, and communicative purpose. According to Sipayung (2021) translation is a process of re-expressing or reconstructing meaning from a source language into a target language. It involves transferring ideas in a way that preserves meaning equivalence, making it an activity that goes beyond literal, word-for-word substitution. Similarly, Larson (1984) defines translation as a process of transferring meaning from the source language to the receptor language by reconstructing the message in natural linguistic forms of the target language. In addition, Catford (1965) explains that translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language, emphasizing the principle of equivalence as the foundation of translation. These perspectives collectively demonstrate that translation is both a linguistic and cognitive process that requires understanding of meaning, structure, and communicative context.

At the senior high school level, students are often required to translate English texts into Indonesian as part of reading and writing activities. Through translation, students are expected not only to transfer words from one language to another but also to convey meaning naturally and accurately in the target language.

However, classroom practices show that students often struggle to produce natural and meaningful translations. Many students translate texts word-for-word, focusing primarily on lexical equivalence rather than overall meaning. As a result, the translations often sound unnatural in Indonesian and, in some cases, contain shifts or loss of meaning. This phenomenon is common when students translate analytical exposition texts, which require a clear understanding of arguments, logical reasoning, and relationships among ideas.

This classroom phenomenon was supported by a preliminary observation conducted before the research. Based on an informal review of students' translation tasks in Grade XI at SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan, several students translated English sentences literally into Indonesian. For example, when translating the sentence "Smoking should be banned in public places because it can harm non-smokers," a student produced the translation "*Merokok harus dilarang di tempat umum karena itu bisa membahayakan bukan perokok.*" Although the translation is grammatically understandable, the phrasing sounds unnatural in Indonesian and does not fully convey the intended meaning. The expression "bukan perokok" is unnatural in Indonesian and does not fully reflect the natural equivalent "*orang yang tidak merokok*" or "*perokok pasif.*" This example reflects a form-based translation approach rather than a meaning-

based one. This preliminary observation was not intended to collect research data or to test any translation theory, but solely to support the identification of the research problem.

Ideally, translation should prioritize meaning-based transfer rather than form-based translation. Translation theories emphasize that an effective translation should sound natural in the target language and accurately convey the meaning of the source text. Nevertheless, preliminary observations and classroom phenomena indicate a gap between ideal translation principles and students' actual translation practices. While theory emphasizes meaning-based translation, students tend to rely on literal translation strategies in practice.

This gap between theory and practice is significant because persistent literal translation may hinder students' comprehension of English texts and limit their ability to express ideas accurately in Indonesian. If these translation practices are not analyzed, students may continue to rely on ineffective strategies without recognizing their limitations. Therefore, a systematic analysis of the translation methods students use is necessary to identify dominant patterns and to understand how students translate analytical exposition texts from English into Indonesian.

This study is relevant to English language teaching at the senior high school level, particularly in providing insights into students' translation practices. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically, by illustrating how translation theory can serve as an analytical framework, and practically, by offering useful information to teachers for improving translation-related instruction.

2. Methodology

This study will employ a descriptive qualitative research design. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research aims to explore and understand social or educational phenomena by interpreting meanings derived from participants' experiences and data. Rather than emphasizing numerical measurement, this approach will focus on description, interpretation, and contextual understanding.

In this design, the researcher serves as the primary instrument responsible for collecting, examining, and interpreting the data. In this study, the researcher plans to analyze students' translation products, classify the methods reflected in their work, and examine how meaning is transferred from the source language to the target language. This approach allows the researcher to gain a detailed understanding of students' linguistic choices and meaning-transfer strategies.

Aligned with Creswell's explanation, this research aims to describe and interpret the translation methods that students are expected to apply when translating an analytical exposition text from English into Indonesian. The descriptive qualitative design is appropriate because the study focuses on identifying patterns of translation behavior, particularly whether students tend to use form-based or meaning-based translation methods, as described by Larson (1984).

In line with this perspective, the present study will be designed to describe and interpret the translation methods reflected in students' translation products. This research will not aim to test translation theories on students; instead, translation theory will be used as an analytical tool to interpret students' translation practices. Therefore, a descriptive qualitative design will be considered appropriate because it will allow the researcher to examine translation phenomena as they naturally occur in the classroom context.

3. Literature Review

Nida & Taber (1982) emphasize that an effective translation is not merely the transfer of linguistic forms but must also produce a communicative effect equivalent to that experienced by readers of the source text. In their view, linguistic form may be adjusted as long as the essential meaning is accurately retained.

Meanwhile, Nababan (2012) presents an influential model for assessing translation quality based on accuracy, acceptability, and readability, ensuring that translated texts are not only meaningful but also natural and easy for readers to understand. These concise overviews of previous theories provide general context, but the study's main analytical foundation is Larson's theory, which directly relates to the translation methods used by students.

According to Newmark (1988), translation serves two primary purposes: first, to communicate information or ideas (the informative function), and second, to evoke an emotional or aesthetic response (the expressive function). In academic and educational contexts, translation also serves as a tool for language learning, enhancing students' understanding of linguistic structures, vocabulary, and cultural differences.

According to Newmark (1988), translation can be categorized into several types based on how closely the translator retains the source language's linguistic form or adapts it to meet the communicative needs of the target readers. His classification reflects a continuum: from approaches that remain loyal to the structure and expression of the source text to those that prioritize clarity and naturalness in the target language.

Larson (1984) also emphasizes that translation is not a linear but an iterative process. Translators may revisit earlier stages, rechecking comprehension, adjusting transfer, and refining restructuring to improve clarity and accuracy. This cyclical nature shows that translation requires multiple revisions and continuous evaluation. Overall, Larson's description demonstrates that translation is an intellectual and interpretive activity requiring linguistic competence, cultural sensitivity, analytical skills, and a deep understanding of meaning.

To operationalize her theory, Larson (1984) distinguishes translation into two major orientations: form-based and meaning-based translation. In this study, meaning-based translation is further interpreted through idiomatic and communicative characteristics as analytical indicators to describe how students reconstruct meaning naturally in the target language.

Although Larson (1984) primarily distinguishes translation into form-based and meaning-based orientations, this study operationalizes the meaning-based orientation through idiomatic and communicative characteristics as analytical indicators. These sub-classifications are not intended to introduce a separate theoretical framework, but rather to provide clearer analytical differentiation in identifying students' translation tendencies.

The first study relevant to this research was conducted by Sianturi et al. (2024) in a study entitled *"Translation Method of Students' Narrative Text from English Into Indonesian at SMP Swasta Ben's Group Buntu Bayu Hatonduhan"*.

The third relevant work was carried out by Rachmayanti (2021) entitled *"An Analysis of Students Ability in Translating Analytical Exposition Text at English Study Program of Universitas Islam Riau"*.

4. Results And Discussion

1.1 Data

The primary data for this research consist of written translation products collected from 21 Grade XI students at SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan during the 2025/2026 academic year. Each student was individually assigned to translate an English analytical exposition text titled "The Importance of Learning English" into Indonesian. To enable systematic analysis, the source text was divided into 30 meaning-based units, resulting in a total of 630 translation units to be analyzed.

The source text was specifically selected because its argumentative structure comprising a thesis, arguments, and reiteration provides a suitable basis for identifying the translation methods applied by the students based on Larson's (1984) framework. These translation products serve as the primary evidence to determine the dominant translation method used by

the students, whether they prioritize the linguistic form of the source language (form-based) or the reconstruction of meaning in the target language (meaning-based).

2.1 Data Analysis

In this section, the researcher conducts a comprehensive analysis of the translation products collected from twenty-one students. Adhering to the interactive model of data analysis by Miles and Huberman (2014), the data underwent a reduction process wherein the source text was systematically partitioned into 30 granular units or segments. This high level of segmentation, specifically splitting phrases at commas and clausal boundaries, ensures that each unit remains a distinct meaning-based component, thereby providing a microscopic view of the students' linguistic choices and preventing the analysis of overly complex structures.

The analysis focuses on identifying the translation methods based on Larson's (1984) framework, specifically focusing on the distinction between Form-Based (FB), Idiomatic (ID), and Communicative (CM) methods. Form-Based Translation is identified when students prioritize the structural and formal properties of the Source Language (SL), often resulting in literal word-for-word substitution and rigid syntax. Idiomatic Translation is strictly applied when an idiom or metaphor in English is reconstructed into a natural and equivalent idiomatic expression in Indonesian (metaphor-to-metaphor equivalence). Meanwhile, Communicative Translation is identified through a functional shift, where the student adapts the expression to ensure the clarity, accessibility, and persuasive impact of the message for the target reader.

The following table, Table 1. Identification of Translation Methods presents the consolidated findings of the 30 segments across all 21 students. In accordance with systematic data presentation, identical translations are listed once, while every distinct variation is recorded to illustrate the diversity of translation behavior within the research subjects.

Table 1. Identification of Translation Methods

No	Source Language (SL)	Target Language (TL)	Methods	Analysis
1	In the era of globalization,	<i>Di era globalisasi ini</i>	CM	Focuses on a natural and communicative opening for the target reader.
		<i>Di era globalisasi</i>	FB	Rigidly follows the SL phrase structure word-for-word.
		<i>Pada era globalisasi</i>	CM	Uses a natural Indonesian prepositional phrase to ensure fluency.
2	English is the most widely spoken language	<i>Bahasa Inggris sangat dibutuhkan</i>	CM	Functional Shift: Changes "spoken" to "needed" to emphasize the impact for the reader.
		<i>Inggris Adalah Bahasa paling sering digunakan</i>	FB	Rigid: Adheres to the SL copula "is" by using "Adalah," which is stilted.
		<i>bahasa yang paling banyak diucapkan</i>	CM	It serves as a clear, reader-oriented delivery of the author's thesis statement without being bound to the stilted structure of the source language.
		<i>English Adalah Bahasa paling luas</i>	FB	Borrowing: Retains the SL term and mirrors the copula structure.
3	in the world.	<i>Didunia</i>	FB	Literal translation of the prepositional phrase without grammatical adjustment.
		<i>di dunia</i>	CM	Standard natural equivalent focusing on clear communication.
4	It is not just a school subject	<i>Bahasa itu bukan hanya mata pelajaran sekolah</i>	CM	Replaces the pronoun with a clear subject to ensure communicative clarity.

		<i>Ini hanya bukan mata Pelajaran sekolah</i>	FB	Literal: Follows SL word order ("not just") unnaturally.
		<i>Itu bukan hanya subjek sekolah</i>	FB	Literal: Substitutes "subject" into " <i>subjek</i> " literally instead of using natural terms.
5	but also a key	<i>Tetapi juga merupakan kunci</i>	FB	Maintains the formal additive structure of the source text.
		<i>Tetapi Adalah kunci</i>	FB	Mirrors the SL structural transition literally using a copula.
6	to achieving a successful life.	<i>untuk meraih kesuksesan dalam hidup</i>	CM	Prioritizes the communicative message of achieving success for the reader.
		<i>untuk menuju kesuksesan hidup</i>	CM	Functional Shift: Focuses on the "path" toward success for impact.
		<i>kunci mendapatkan kehidupan yang sukses</i>	CM	Reconstructs the phrase to emphasize the communicative outcome.
7	I personally believe	<i>Aku percaya</i>	CM	Simplifies the stance for direct communicative intent.
		<i>Saya pribadi percaya</i>	FB	This reflects a rigid reliance on the linguistic form of the source text, specifically through borrowing the English word "personal" without adapting it to natural Indonesian adverbial patterns
		<i>Saya personal</i>	FB	Borrowing: Rigidly uses the SL word "personal" without adaptation.
10	First of all,	<i>Pertama kali,</i>	FB	Literal: Mirrors "First" word-for-word, creating an unnatural transition.
		<i>Pertama-tama,</i>	CM	When rendered as " <i>Pertama-tama</i> " The student prioritizes the logical flow and coherence of the argumentative structure, ensuring the reader can easily follow the transition between the thesis and the first supporting argument.
		<i>Yang pertama dari semuanya,</i>	FB	Literal: A redundant word-for-word translation of the source phrase.
12	It is used by millions of people	<i>Digunakan oleh jutaan orang</i>	FB	Rigid: Follows SL plural logic literally without natural Indonesian markers.
		<i>Ini telah dipakai oleh jutaan orang</i>	CM	Functional Shift: Uses " <i>dipakai</i> " to emphasize the functional usage of the language.
16	across the globe	<i>diseluruh dunia</i>	CM	Simplifies the metaphor to ensure reader understanding and accessibility.
		<i>lewat dunia</i>	FB	Literal: A rigid substitution that distorts the geographic concept.
		<i>lintas dunia</i>	ID	Metaphor-to-Metaphor: Matches the SL metaphor with a natural TL idiom.
17	and make new friends easily.	<i>Dan membuat teman baru dengan mudah</i>	CM	Focuses on the clarity and benefit of social connection for the audience.
		<i>Dan berteman dengan mudah</i>	CM	Simplifies the phrase into a functional verb for better impact.
		<i>Dan dengan gampang</i>	FB	Literal: Adheres rigidly to the English word order for the adverbial phrase.

		<i>menemukan teman baru</i>		
21	we might feel isolated	<i>kita merasa terisolasi</i>	FB	Literal: Relies on a loanword that mirrors the English form "isolated."
		<i>kita akan kalah kekuatan</i>	CM	Functional Shift: Adapts "isolated" to describe a loss of power for impact.
		<i>merasa terasingkan</i>	CM	Chooses a functional term to ensure the negative consequence is clear.
24	English is very important	<i>inggris adalah sangat penting</i>	FB	Rigid: Mirrors the SL copula "is" as "adalah," which is unnatural.
		<i>inggris sangat penting</i>	CM	Omits unnecessary words to emphasize the message clearly.
27	are written in English.	<i>ditulis didalam bahasa inggris</i>	FB	Literal: Mirrors the passive "written in" structure word-for-word.
		<i>tertulis dibahasa inggris</i>	CM	Focuses on the communicative state of the information for the reader.
		<i>pakai bahasa English</i>	CM	Functional Shift: Simplifies the passive structure into a functional verb.
28	It is like a golden ticket for our future	<i>Itu seperti tiket emas</i>	FB	Literal: Preserves the English metaphor without idiomatic adaptation.
		<i>seperti peluang emas</i>	ID	Metaphor-to-Metaphor: Reconstructs the metaphor into a natural TL idiom.
		<i>golden tiket</i>	FB	Borrowing: Directly uses the SL phrase, ignoring any adaptation.
29	we can gain more knowledge	<i>Kita bisa lebih mengetahui pengetahuan</i>	FB	Literal: Mirrors "more knowledge" as a redundant and rigid phrase.
		<i>"meningkatkan pengetahuan"</i>	CM	Prioritizes the communicative benefit of "improving" knowledge.
30	to achieve their dreams.	<i>"Untuk meraih mimpi mereka"</i>	CM	Prioritizes the communicative impact of reaching personal goals.
		<i>"Untuk mewujudkan cita-cita mereka"</i>	CM	Functional Shift: Focuses on the ultimate impact/intent of realizing goals.
		<i>"Untuk mencapai mimpi"</i>	FB	Literal: Word-for-word substitution failing to reach naturalness.
		<i>"untuk arsip mimpi mereka"</i>	FB	Literal: Misinterprets "achieve" as "archive" based on formal similarity.

Based on the comprehensive display in the table, the analysis of the translation across 30 units reveals a significant methodological hierarchy in the students' translation products. With a total of 630 translation units analyzed from 21 students, the results indicate that Form-Based Translation (FB) is the most dominant method, accounting for 55.9% (352 units) of the data. This is followed by Communicative Translation (CM) at 38.1% (240 units), while Idiomatic Translation (ID) is the least frequent method, occurring in only 6.0% (38 units) of the total units.

In many segment units, specifically units 10 and 24, the tendency toward Form-Based translation is distinctly observable through the students' reliance on structural imitation. For instance, in unit 10, the rhetorical transition "First of all" was frequently rendered as "Pertama kali," which represents a rigid word-for-word substitution that distorts the logical function of the text into an unnatural temporal marker. Similarly, in unit 24, students often maintained the English copula "is" by producing the stilted Indonesian phrase "adalah sangat penting," illustrating a persistent reliance on the linguistic surface of the source language as a structural safety net.

Conversely, the application of Communicative Translation in 38.1% of the segments highlights the students' efforts to prioritize reader-oriented clarity through functional shifts. This is particularly evident in unit 2, where the phrase “most widely spoken” was reconstructed as “*sangat dibutuhkan*” (greatly needed) to emphasize the practical necessity of English for the Indonesian audience rather than providing a literal translation of the spoken form. Additionally, in unit 7, students rendered the personal stance “I personally believe” as “*Saya percaya*” or “*Aku percaya*,” ensuring the persuasive conviction of the argumentative text is delivered naturally without being hindered by literal formal equivalence.

Furthermore, the minimal frequency of Idiomatic Translation at 6.0% suggests that students rarely reach the idiomatic pole of Larson's continuum unless they encounter familiar figurative expressions. As seen in unit 16, the geographic metaphor “across the globe” was successfully translated into the idiomatic Indonesian equivalent “*lintas dunia*” or “*diseluruh dunia*”. This low frequency is consistent with the nature of the Analytical Exposition genre, which relies primarily on logical reasoning and abstract arguments rather than heavy idiomatic or metaphorical language.

Overall, the synthesis of these findings proves that the Grade XI students of SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan are largely source-language oriented novice translators. While they demonstrate the ability to apply communicative strategies to ensure message clarity, their collective behavior remains anchored in the formal properties of English when navigating the complex clausal structures of an argumentative text. These results confirm a significant gap between the ideal principles of meaning-based translation and the reality of literal, structurally bound classroom practices.

2.1.1 Display of Translation Method Frequencies per Student

After the segments were displayed in the microscopic analysis above, the researcher calculated the frequency of each translation method utilized by the individual students. This quantification is based on the analysis of **30 segments** within each student's translation product, totaling **630 units of analysis**. The frequency count identifies how many times a student applied Form-Based (FB), Idiomatic (ID), or Communicative (CM) methods as defined by the operationalization of Larson's (1984) framework.

The distribution of frequencies for each student is presented in the table below:

Table 2. Frequency of Translation Methods per Student.

Student	FB	ID	CM	Total Segments
Student 1	19	1	10	30
Student 2	20	1	9	30
Student 3	18	2	10	30
Student 4	6	4	20	30
Student 5	21	1	8	30
Student 6	22	1	7	30
Student 7	21	1	8	30
Student 8	9	4	17	30
Student 9	20	1	9	30
Student 10	5	6	19	30
Student 11	17	2	11	30
Student 12	10	4	16	30
Student 13	23	0	7	30
Student 14	21	1	8	30
Student 15	8	3	19	30
Student 16	18	2	10	30
Student 17	7	3	20	30
Student 18	22	0	8	30

Student 19	6	2	22	30
Student 20	5	1	24	30
Student 21	25	0	5	30
Total	352	38	240	630

Table 2. provides the quantitative basis for understanding how translation methods are spread across individual participants. The researcher analyzed 630 units in total, gathered from the 30 segments translated by each of the 21 students. This table is crucial because it illustrates the significant variation in translation behavior among students within the same classroom environment. By categorizing each segment into Form-Based (FB), Idiomatic (ID), or Communicative (CM), the researcher can identify the consistency or inconsistency in how each student navigates the transition from the source language structure to the target language meaning.

The frequency count highlights a clear divergence in linguistic performance and methodological orientation. For instance, Student 21 exhibits the highest reliance on the Form-Based (FB) method with 25 units, indicating a rigid adherence to the source text's grammatical structure, such as the literal use of the copula "*Adalah*" and the preservation of English word order. Conversely, students such as Student 20 demonstrate a significant orientation toward the communicative pole, recording 24 units of Communicative (CM) translation. This shift reflects an ability to employ functional shifts, such as adapting "widely spoken" into "*sangat dibutuhkan*" or "I personally believe" into "*Saya percaya,*" to ensure the persuasive intent of the analytical exposition text is accessible to the target reader. This individual display proves that while students are exposed to the same source text, their internal cognitive processes for transferring meaning vary based on their lexical competence and their tendency to rely on literal substitution versus functional reconstruction.

2.1.2 Distribution of Translation Methods

To answer the first research question regarding the types of translation methods used by the students, the researcher aggregated the total frequency of all **630 units** across the entire sample. The distribution reveals the extent to which students relied on source-oriented (form-based) versus target-oriented (meaning-based) strategies. This macroscopic view is essential for understanding the collective methodological orientation of the participants.

The overall distribution of the translation methods is summarized in the table below:

No	Translation Method	Total Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Form-Based (FB)	352	55.9%
2	Communicative (CM)	240	38.1%
3	Idiomatic (ID)	38	6.0%
Total		630	100%

The data presented in Table 3. provides a comprehensive overview of the students' collective translation tendencies. With **55.9% (352 units)** of the total translations identified as **Form-Based (FB)**, it is statistically evident that the majority of meaning-transfer activities are still heavily bound to the formal properties of the English language. This high percentage suggests that students frequently perceive translation as a mechanical process of "matching words" rather than "reconstructing messages". This behavior is particularly prevalent in segments where students prioritize structural similarity, such as using the copula "*adalah*" to represent the English "is" or rendering rhetorical transitions like "First of all" as the literal and stilted "*Pertama kali*", which serves as a structural safety net when navigating complex argumentative logic.

Conversely, the significant presence of **Communicative (38.1%)** and **Idiomatic (6.0%)** methods indicates that the remaining translation efforts involved an attempt to reach a natural, receptor-oriented form. The **Communicative method**, now the second most dominant strategy

at **38.1%**, reflects instances where students successfully abandoned the source form to prioritize clarity and persuasive impact. This is observed through **functional shifts**, such as adapting "widely spoken" into "*sangat dibutuhkan*" or "I personally believe" into "*Saya percaya*", ensuring that the author's intent is accessible to the Indonesian reader.

Furthermore, the **Idiomatic method (6.0%)** is identified as the least frequent approach. This finding is highly consistent with the characteristics of the **Analytical Exposition genre**, which prioritizes logical reasoning and abstract evidence over figurative or metaphorical language. The low frequency of ID suggests that students primarily reached the idiomatic pole only when encountering highly familiar English metaphors, such as "*across the globe*" being rendered as "*lintas dunia*".

Overall, the distribution reflects a significant struggle among students to detach themselves from the linguistic surface of the English text. While there is a notable effort to be communicative, the majority of the work remains anchored in **Form-Based** strategies, illustrating the "gap" between the ideal goal of meaning-based translation and the reality of literal classroom practices at the senior high school level.

2.1.3 Distribution of the Dominant Translation Methods

To address the second research question, the researcher determined the dominant method for each individual student. A method is classified as dominant if it holds the highest frequency within a student's translation product. Identifying the dominant method allows the researcher to classify each student's overall translation profile and understand their primary orientation—whether it leans toward the source-language form or the target-language meaning.

The summary of the dominant translation methods among the 21 participants is presented in the table below:

Table 4. The Dominant Translation Methods

No	Dominant Translation Method	Number of Students (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Form-Based (FB)	13	61.9%
2	Communicative (CM)	8	38.1%
3	Idiomatic (ID)	0	0.0%
Total		21	100%

Table 4. provides the definitive answer to the second research problem by identifying the methodological "profile" of the student group. By isolating the dominant method for each of the 21 participants, the researcher found that 13 students (**61.9%**) are predominantly **Form-Based translators**. This dominance is not merely a numerical result; it represents a psychological tendency where the majority of students equate "accuracy" with "formal equivalence". This suggests that for most Grade XI students, the primary concern when translating is to ensure that every English word has an Indonesian "label," regardless of whether the resulting phrase sounds natural in the target language.

The remaining 8 students (**38.1%**) are categorized as **Communicative translators**, representing a group that has developed a higher level of "translation awareness" or linguistic flexibility. These students are able to navigate Larson's continuum more effectively, shifting toward the receptor-oriented pole to ensure that the persuasive tone and logical clarity of the analytical exposition text are maintained. Unlike the dominant group, these students prioritize functional shifts—such as rendering "I personally believe" as a natural expression of conviction—over literal structural preservation.

Notably, the analysis reveals that **0.0%** of the students are predominantly **Idiomatic translators**. This lack of idiomatic dominance is consistent with the genre of the source text, as analytical exposition focuses on logical argumentation rather than heavy figurative language. It further confirms that while some students can produce idiomatic units in isolation, they do not

yet possess the consistent lexical competence to reconstruct an entire argumentative text through idiomatic equivalents.

Overall, the synthesis of these findings proves that the Grade XI students of SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan are largely Source-Language oriented novice translators. The data shows that while students are capable of producing communicative translations for specific segments, they frequently revert to form-based strategies when encountering the complex argumentative structures of the English text. This pervasive reliance on the Form-Based method results in translation products that mirror the English linguistic form more closely than the natural norms of the Indonesian language. Consequently, this study verifies that there is a significant need for pedagogical interventions that encourage students to focus on meaning reconstruction and communicative impact rather than literal word-for-word substitution.

3.1 Findings and Discussion

3.1.1 Findings

This section presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of the students' translation products. The findings are derived from the classification of translation units using Larson's (1984) framework, which includes Form-Based Translation, Idiomatic Translation, and Communicative Translation. A total of **630 translation units** from 21 students were analyzed in this study, reflecting the division of the source text into 30 granular meaning-based segments.

The analysis shows that all three translation methods were applied by the students in varying proportions. Among them, **Form-Based Translation** emerged as the most frequently used method, with **352 occurrences or 55.9%** of the total data. This finding indicates that the students tended to preserve the grammatical structure and lexical form of the source language when translating into the target language. Such a tendency reflects a strong reliance on structural equivalence, where the students prioritize the form of the source text rather than restructuring the meaning into more natural expressions in Indonesian.

The second most frequently used method is **Communicative Translation**, which appeared **240 times or 38.1%** of the total data. This result suggests that students frequently attempted to convey the meaning of the source text by prioritizing clarity and persuasive impact through functional shifts. Through this method, students demonstrated an ability to detach from rigid structural transfer to ensure the message was accessible to the target reader.

Meanwhile, **Idiomatic Translation** was identified **38 times or 6.0%** of the total data, making it the least frequently used method. This low frequency is consistent with the nature of the Analytical Exposition genre, which relies more on logical argumentation than figurative language. It indicates that students only reached the idiomatic pole when encountering specific metaphors with established equivalents in the target language.

In addition to frequency distribution, the analysis of dominant translation methods per student shows that Form-Based Translation is the dominant profile for the majority of participants. A total of **13 out of 21 students (61.9%)** predominantly used Form-Based Translation, while the remaining **8 students (38.1%)** predominantly applied Communicative Translation. Notably, no student (0.0%) was identified as a predominantly idiomatic translator, reinforcing the finding that most students are more comfortable maintaining the structure of the source language or focusing on basic communicative clarity rather than complete idiomatic reconstruction.

To illustrate how the data were categorized based on Larson's (1984) framework, the following representative examples are presented in a systematic narrative format. These examples detail the linguistic evidence found in the students' products, addressing the dominant method (Form-Based), the second dominant method (Communicative), and the final method (Idiomatic).

The dominant translation method identified in this research is **Form-Based Translation**, which occurred in 352 units (55.9%) and was the primary method for 13 students. This dominance is exemplified by ten distinct data points where students prioritized structural

preservation over natural meaning. First, in segment 2, Student 21 rigidly mirrored the English copula by using *“Adalah”* and borrowed the term *“English”* directly (*“English Adalah Bahasa...”*), creating a stilted structure. Second, in the same segment, Student 5 and Student 6 translated “widely” literally as *“luas”* (*“bahasa yang paling luas”*), adhering to the formal properties of the source adjective. Third, in segment 3, Student 2 followed the English word order so rigidly that the negation resulted in the unnatural phrase *“hanya bukan”*. Fourth, the transition “First of all” in segment 10 was rendered literally by Student 1, Student 9, and Student 21 as *“Pertama kali,”* which distorts the rhetorical function into a temporal marker. Fifth, the phrase “is very important” in segment 24 was maintained by Student 1 and Student 9 as *“adalah sangat penting,”* showing a persistent reliance on source syntax. Sixth, in segment 28, Student 1 followed the prepositional use literally as *“ditulis didalam,”* which reflects a form-oriented approach. Seventh, the idiom “good command” in segment 29 was translated by Student 1 and Student 13 as *“bahasa inggris yang baik,”* a word-for-word substitution that fails to capture the nuance of mastery. Eighth, in segment 16, Student 9 followed the English structure of “more knowledge” literally, resulting in the redundant phrase *“lebih mengetahui pengetahuan”*. Ninth, in segment 26, Student 14 and Student 21 translated “take... seriously” literally as *“membawa... dengan serius,”* mirroring the English verb “take” (*membawa*) incorrectly in this context. Finally, in segment 30, Student 14 mis-translated “achieve” as *“arsip”* (archive) based on formal similarity, failing to reach idiomatic naturalness.

The second dominant method is **Communicative Translation**, occurring in 240 instances (38.1%), where students prioritized clarity and the impact of the message. Three representative data points illustrate this method. First, in segment 2, Student 1 and Student 9 adapted “widely spoken” into *“sangat dibutuhkan”* (greatly needed), shifting the focus to the functional importance of English for the audience. Second, in segment 7, Student 20 rendered the personal stance “I personally believe” as *“Saya percaya,”* ensuring the persuasive conviction is delivered naturally without literal word matching. Third, in segment 21, Student 2 and Student 3 employed a functional shift by translating “isolated” as *“kalah kekuatan”* (losing strength), emphasizing the communicative consequence for the target reader.

The final method identified is **Idiomatic Translation**, which appeared 38 times (6.0%) and reflects the students' ability to find natural equivalents. Five data points represent this method. First, in segment segment 6, Student 3 and Student 15 reconstructed “achieving a successful life” into the natural collocation *“kesuksesan hidup,”* prioritizing semantic flow. Third, in segment 16, Student 8 and Student 19 successfully found the idiomatic equivalent *“lintas dunia”* for the geographic metaphor “across the globe”. Fourth, the idiom “broadens our horizons” in segment 18 was translated by numerous students (e.g., Student 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 19) using the standard Indonesian equivalent *“memperluas wawasan,”* demonstrating a focus on target language norms. Fifth, in segment 19, Student 16 successfully employed the natural Indonesian idiom *“jalan pikiran”* to translate “ways of thinking,” capturing the professional tone of the original text.

3.1.2 Discussions

This section discusses the findings of the research by interpreting the results obtained from the data analysis. The discussion connects the findings presented in the previous section with the theoretical framework used in this study, particularly the translation methods proposed by Larson (1984). The interpretation focuses on answering the two research problems formulated in Chapter I, namely the translation methods used by the students and the dominant translation method applied in their translations.

The discussion of the research findings provides a comprehensive interpretation of how Grade XI students at SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan navigate the process of translating analytical exposition texts. Based on the systematic analysis of **630 translation units**, this study reveals that the students utilized all three translation methods proposed by Larson (1984), yet with a distinct hierarchy of frequency. The data confirms that **Form-Based Translation (FB)** is

the most pervasive method, occurring in **352 instances or 55.9%** of the total units. This finding is further strengthened by the individual student profiles, where **13 out of 21 students (61.9%)** were identified as predominantly form-based translators. This dominance suggests that students tend to prioritize structural correspondence over meaning reconstruction, often perceiving translation as a mechanical process of matching words rather than an interpretive task of transferring communicative intent. The frequent use of the copula "*adalah*" to represent the English "is" and the rigid preservation of English word order, even in complex argumentative segments, indicate that these students are largely source-language oriented novice translators.

In contrast to the dominant form-based trend, the **Communicative Translation (CM)** method emerged as the second most frequent strategy, accounting for **38.1% (240 units)** of the data. This significant percentage indicates that students often attempt to detach themselves from the linguistic surface of the English text to prioritize the functional impact of the message. For example, when students translate the factual superlative "widely spoken" into "*sangat dibutuhkan*" (greatly needed) or render the stance marker "I personally believe" as a natural expression of conviction like "*Saya percaya*," they are performing **functional shifts**. These choices demonstrate an effort to ensure that the persuasive tone and logical clarity of the analytical exposition are accessible to the target reader, moving away from literal word matching toward a receptor-oriented pole.

The **Idiomatic Translation (ID)** method was identified as the least frequent approach, occurring in only **38 units or 6.0%** of the total data. While students demonstrated an ability to find natural equivalents for specific metaphors, such as "*lintas dunia*" for "across the globe" or "*memperluas wawasan*" for "broadens our horizons," the majority of the class struggled to maintain idiomatic naturalness throughout the text. The low frequency of idiomatic reconstruction is consistent with the nature of the **Analytical Exposition genre**, which relies primarily on logical reasoning and abstract evidence rather than heavy figurative or metaphorical language. The findings suggest that students typically reach the idiomatic pole only when encountering highly familiar English expressions that have established, natural counterparts in Indonesian.

When comparing these findings to previous research, a notable divergence emerges. Specifically, the results of this study present a sharp contrast to the research conducted by Sianturi et al. (2024), where communicative translation was found to be the most dominant method among junior high school students. The disparity can be attributed to the **difference in text genre**. Narrative texts, which were the focus of Sianturi's study, follow a chronological sequence that is often easier for students to rephrase naturally. In contrast, the analytical exposition text used in this research is heavily reliant on complex clausal structures and logical markers. The higher cognitive load required to translate argumentative logic likely forced the Grade XI students in this study to cling to the formal structures of the source text as a "**safety net**," leading to the prevalence of form-based methods.

Ultimately, the implications of this research highlight a significant "**gap**" between the ideal principle of meaning-based translation and the reality of classroom practices. The pervasive reliance on form-based translation indicates that students equate "accuracy" with "structural similarity," a misconception that often leads to unnatural and rigid translations in Indonesian. This study verifies that while students possess the linguistic potential to produce communicative translations, their collective behavior remains anchored in the source language's formal properties. Therefore, these findings reinforce Larson's (1984) theory that translation is an iterative cognitive process requiring comprehension, transfer, and restructuring stages that many students performed only partially. For future academic practices, it is essential to move students along the Larson continuum from form-based toward more receptor-oriented, meaning-based methods to ensure the communicative and persuasive essence of texts is effectively preserved.

5. Conclusion

This research aimed to analyze the translation methods used by the eleventh-grade students of SMA Swasta Budi Utomo Medan in translating an analytical exposition text from English into Indonesian. The study was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach, and the data were analyzed using the interactive model of data analysis proposed by Miles & Huberman (2014), which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis focused on identifying the translation methods applied by the students based on (Larson, 1984) framework, focusing on the distinction between Form-Based and Meaning-Based (Idiomatic and Communicative) orientations. Based on the comprehensive analysis of **630 translation units** derived from 21 students and 30 segments, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Regarding the translation methods used by the students, the findings reveal that the participants applied three distinct methods within Larson's (1984) framework: Form-Based Translation, Communicative Translation, and Idiomatic Translation. Out of the 630 units analyzed, **Form-Based Translation** emerged as the most frequently used method, appearing **352 times (55.9%)**. This high frequency indicates a significant reliance on the formal properties and syntactic structures of the English source text. Students predominantly prioritized structural correspondence, often using the source language as a "safety net" to navigate the complex argumentative logic of the exposition text. The second most frequent method was **Communicative Translation**, occurring **240 times (38.1%)**. This represents a notable effort by students to prioritize reader-oriented clarity and functional impact, particularly through **functional shifts** in persuasive segments. Finally, **Idiomatic Translation** was the least frequent method, identified in only **38 units (6.0%)**. This minimal occurrence is consistent with the characteristics of the **Analytical Exposition genre**, which relies on abstract reasoning rather than figurative language, confirming that students only achieve idiomatic naturalness when encountering familiar metaphors with established target-language equivalents.
2. Concerning the dominant translation method used by the students, the analysis of individual methodological "profiles" identifies a clear inclination toward source-language orientation. Out of the 21 students involved in this research, **13 students (61.9%)** were identified as predominantly **Form-Based translators**. This dominance suggests a prevailing psychological tendency among novice translators to equate "accuracy" with "structural similarity," resulting in products that mirror English syntax even when it produces stilted Indonesian phrasing. Conversely, **8 students (38.1%)** were classified as predominantly **Communicative translators**. These students demonstrated a higher level of translation awareness by detaching themselves from the linguistic surface of the English text to ensure that the persuasive tone and logical clarity were effectively delivered to the receptor. Notably, **0% of the students** were identified as predominantly idiomatic translators, reinforcing the conclusion that while students can produce isolated idiomatic units, they struggle to maintain a consistent meaning-based orientation throughout an entire academic text.

Overall, the findings of this research indicate that Grade XI students are largely **source-language oriented novice translators**. While there is a substantial attempt to apply **Communicative** strategies to enhance message impact, the collective behavior remains anchored in **Form-Based** strategies. This pattern illustrates a significant "gap" between the ideal goal of meaning-based translation and the reality of literal, structurally bound classroom practices. The study verifies that students frequently revert to literal word-for-word substitution when faced with the complex argumentative structures of analytical exposition texts, emphasizing the need for a pedagogical shift toward meaning reconstruction and functional naturalness in translation instruction.

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