

Translation Equivalence of Plenger in Instagram Captions

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Abstract: Since last year, plenger has become a common expression on social media, especially among Indonesian users. According to a post by Balaibahasaprovincintb, plenger refers to someone who behaves strangely, carelessly, foolishly, or absent-mindedly. Although plenger is generally described as having a negative connotation, it can also refer to a positive condition, such as someone who is fully devoted to their hobbies, interests, or areas of expertise (Popbela.com). This study describes the English translations of plenger. Five instances of plenger (71%) are translated into English, while two instances (29%) were retained as plenger in the translation. The types of translation equivalence identified for plenger are pragmatic equivalence (57%), formal equivalence (29%), and denotative equivalence (14%).

Keywords: plenger, translation, equivalence.

INTRODUCTION

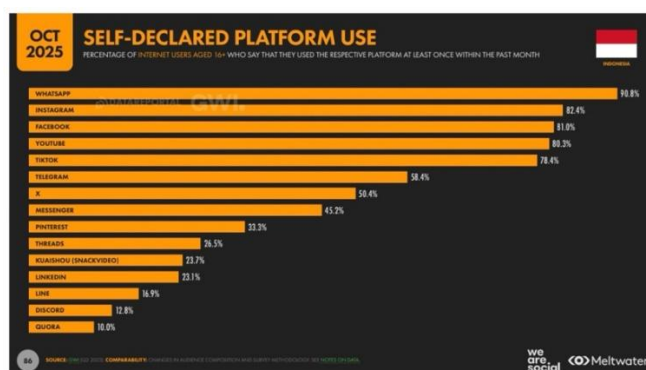
Since last year, *plenger* has become a common expression on social media, especially among Indonesian users. According to a post by Balaibahasaprovincintb, *plenger* refers to someone who behaves strangely, carelessly, foolishly, or absent-mindedly. According to an article published by RRI, the term first appeared in a TikTok video posted by the user @BANGDO7. In the video, a child named Dono was asked to describe someone's face, and he used the word *plenger*. Dono later explained that the term was inspired by a young child who lived near his home and whom he considered unusual or "not cute." According to Dono, the child behaved differently from other children, often acting oddly or randomly, which led him to use the word *plenger* to describe the child.

Although *plenger* is generally described as a word with negative connotations, it can also describe a positive characteristic, such as someone who is fully dedicated to their hobbies, interests, or areas of expertise (Popbela.com). Popbela.com also states that *plenger* is believed to have been inspired by two Javanese words: *plengeh*, meaning "an innocent grin," and *blenger*, meaning "discomfort caused by overconsumption." The combination of the sounds and meanings of *plengeh* and *blenger* is thought to have resulted in the word *plenger*.

Based on these characteristics, people typically use the term *plenger* in informal contexts. Its use reflects a relaxed and casual style of communication. Therefore, the researcher selected social media as the source of the research data, as users generally express their thoughts more casually on these platforms.

According to the *Digital 2026: Indonesia Report*, produced through a collaboration between We Are Social and Meltwater, Indonesians spend an average of 21 hours and 50

minutes per week on social media, including watching online videos. This amounts to more than three hours of daily social media use. The report also shows that WhatsApp is the most widely used and most preferred social media platform in Indonesia, followed by Instagram.



source: <https://wearesocial.com/id/blog/2025/11/digital-2026-top-digital-and-social-media-trends-in-indonesia/>

Besides its visual features, Instagram also provides an automatic caption translation feature. This feature can translate words used in informal contexts, such as *plenger*, making it easier for readers to understand their meanings.

A number of studies have examined the translation of words used in informal contexts. These include *An Analysis of Slang Words and Translation Techniques in the Spider-Man: Far From Home Movie Subtitle* (2025), *Translation Strategies for Slang in the Subtitles of My Stupid Boss 2* (2025), and *An Analysis of Slang Types and Subtitling Strategies of Slangs in Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse Movie from English to Indonesian* (2025). These studies demonstrate the growing interest in translating informal language across different media.

Literature Review

Translation Equivalence

Koller proposed five categories:

- 1) Denotative equivalence refers to preserving the factual or literal meaning of the source text in the translation.

Source Text : The library is closed on Saturday and Sundays.

Target Text : *Perpustakaan tutup pada hari Sabtu dan Minggu.*

- 2) Connotative equivalence focuses on conveying the same stylistic qualities, emotional tone, and implied associations as the original text.

Source Text : He is as brave as a lion.

Target Text : *Dia pemberani seperti singa.*

- 3) Text-normative equivalence ensures that the translation follows the conventions and expectations of the target language for a particular text type or genre.

Source Text : No Smoking

Target Text : *Dilarang merokok*

- 4) Pragmatic equivalence aims to meet the needs and expectations of the target audience by making the message clear and appropriate in its new context.

Source Text : Mind the gap.

Target Text : *Hati-hati saat melangkah.*

- 5) Formal equivalence seeks to maintain the original text's form, artistic features, and stylistic characteristics as closely as possible.

Source Text : To be, or not to be, that is the question.

Target Text : *Menjadi atau tidak menjadi, itulah pertanyaannya.*

METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology

This study examines the English translations of *plenger* found on Instagram. According to Neuman (2014), descriptive research aims to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon, social setting, or relationship by systematically examining, documenting, and analyzing the characteristics of the subject under investigation. Similarly, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018) state that descriptive research involves collecting data to describe existing conditions, behaviors, beliefs, or perspectives within a particular group or context. Therefore, a descriptive research approach is appropriate for this study because it focuses on identifying and describing the characteristics of the English translations of *plenger* without manipulating the data.

The data for this study consist of Instagram captions containing the word *plenger* shared in 2025 and 2026. The data are in the form of written texts.

Procedure of the Research

The research procedures involve several stages as follows:

1. Collecting and compiling the English translations of *plenger* found in Instagram captions.
2. Examining, analyzing, and describing the collected English translations.
3. Formulating conclusions and providing recommendations based on the results of the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Translation found for *Plenger*

Five (5) instances of *plenger* (71%) were translated into English, while two (2) instances (29%) were retained as *plenger* in the translation.

- Translated to English

Five instances of *plenger* were translated into English as **accept it**, **bored**, **dizzy**, and **tired**. Among these translations, three are adjectives: **bored**, **dizzy**, and **tired**.

source text : *sekian terima plenger*   

target text : that's all, **accept it**   

source text : **plenger** banget 🤪

target text : so **bored** 🤪

source text : **plenger** nyaa natural banget

target text : I'm so **bored**, it's natural

source text : ga cintaan aja uda **plenger**, apalagi cinta cinta tambah **plenger** dah 🤪🤪🤪

target text : not even in love it's already **dizzy**, moreover love is getting **dizzy**



source text : **plenger** banget udah masuk kerja

target text : So **tired** already going to work

- Remain *plenger*

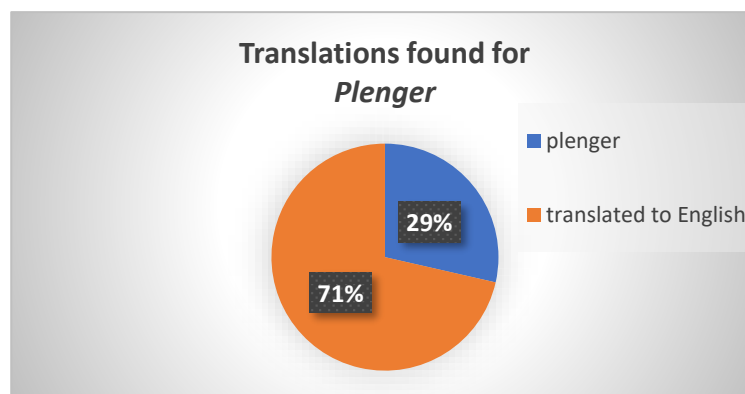
The remaining two (2) instances of **plenger** were retained as **plenger** in the English translations.

source text : SIAPA YANG KANGEN COUPLE **PLENGER** INI? 🤪

target text : WHO MISSES THIS **PLENGER** COUPLE? 🤪

source text : Sedikit tanda tanda pertemanan mu baik atau mungkin agak **plenger**

target text : A little sign of your friendship is good or maybe a little **plenger**



Graphic 1. Translation found for *Plenger*

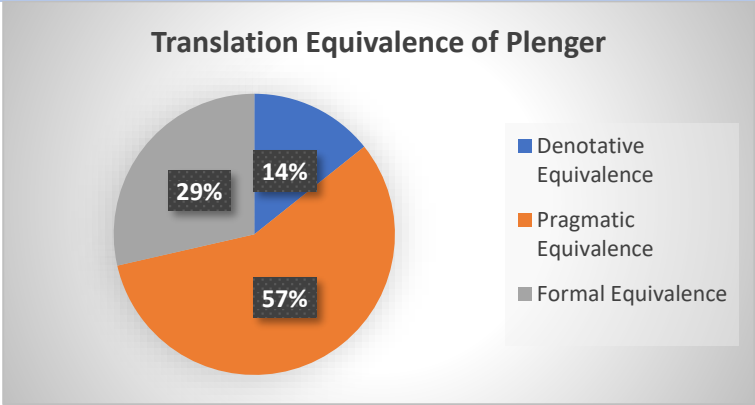
B. Translation Equivalence of *Plenger*

The types of translation equivalence identified for **plenger** are **pragmatic equivalence** (57%), **formal equivalence** (29%), and **denotative equivalence** (14%).

Table 1. Translation Equivalence of *Plenger*

Source Text	Target Text	Koller's Equivalence	Description
<i>sekian terima plenger</i> 🍷🍷🍷	that's all, accept it 🍷🍷🍷	Pragmatic equivalence	The word <i>plenger</i> is not translated literally. Instead, " accept it " adapts the expression so that the target audience can understand the intended communicative meaning.
<i>plenger banget</i> 🙄	so bored 🙄	Pragmatic equivalence	The word <i>plenger</i> is translated to bored to make the message meaningful and natural for English readers, prioritizing audience understanding over literal meaning.
<i>plenger nyaa natural banget</i>	I'm so bored, it's natural	Pragmatic equivalence	The translation interprets <i>plenger</i> as bored rather than retaining the original slang, making the expression accessible to the target audience despite the shift in meaning.
SIAPA YANG KANGEN COUPLE PLENGER INI? 🙄	WHO MISSES THIS PLENGER COUPLE? 🙄	Formal equivalence	The original structure and even retains the word <i>plenger</i> , maintaining the source text's stylistic form rather than explaining its meaning.
ga cinta aja uda <i>plenger</i>, apalagi	not even in love it's already dizzy,	Denotative equivalence	The translation attempts to preserve

cinta cinta tambah <i>plenger</i> dah 👤👤👤	moreover love is getting <i>dizzy</i> 👤👤👤		the literal meaning by rendering <i>plenger</i> as <i>dizzy</i> and following the original sentence structure closely, although the English is not entirely natural.
<i>Sedikit tanda tanda pertemanan mu baik atau mungkin agak <i>plenger</i></i>	A little sign of your friendship is good or maybe a little <i>plenger</i>	Formal equivalence	The source sentence structure is largely maintained, and <i>plenger</i> is left untranslated, preserving the original lexical form.
<i>plenger banget udah masuk kerja</i>	So <i>tired</i> already going to work	Pragmatic equivalence	The word <i>plenger</i> is translated to <i>tired</i> to fit the context of starting work, making the message more understandable and appropriate for English readers.



Graphic 2. Translation Equivalence of *Plenger*

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Through this study, the words *plenger* are mostly found in pragmatic equivalence. In other words, the translation aims to meet the needs and expectations of the target audience by making the message clear and appropriate in its new context. This study is expected to enrich the knowledge of *plenger* among a worldwide audience.

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