

# The Use of Google Translate in the Translation Class at English Education Study Program Pattimura University

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## Abstract

*This research aimed to discover how students used Google Translate (GT), their refinement efforts, and their perceptions towards using GT in The Translation Class. The research participants were students in The Translation Class of the English Education Study Program at Pattimura University in the academic year 2022/2023. An explanatory sequential mixed method design was used in this study. The qualitative data were obtained from observation and interview and analyzed using thematic analysis. Meanwhile, the quantitative data was obtained from a questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results showed that students mostly used GT to facilitate translation tasks, especially for assignments, learning materials, and new vocabulary. In the classroom, GT was allowed for assignments but prohibited during exams, while students were free to use it at home. Students usually try to translate independently before using GT. They recognized the limitations of GT and made efforts to confirm and improve the translation. Despite these shortcomings, students maintained positive perceptions regarding the usefulness of GT in the Translation Classroom. These findings highlight differences in students' attitudes and perceptions towards GT and its role in translation classrooms.*

*Keywords: Google Translate, students' perception, translation class, translation process*

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## 1. Introduction

In today's globalization era, the development of information and communication technology has occurred very rapidly. The use of technological tools such as laptops, notebooks, and mobile phones has become an activity that cannot be distinguished from daily activities. In the education field, technology integration is applied at various levels of education, providing support for using technology

in the education system (Cancino & Panes, 2021). Along with the development of technological tools, innovations in features and applications have increased drastically. One is the emergence of translator applications. Translator applications have emerged as a solution for people with limitations in communicating in various languages. By using these translator applications, people in different countries can communicate with each other easily because translator tools play a role in changing the language used from the source language to the target language. Tuzcu (2021) said that “Machine Translation (MT) has gained popularity with the incredible improvements in technology in this rapidly changing global environment” (p.40). Rivera-Trigueros (2022) stated that the use of MT is becoming increasingly popular because it can help humans overcome obstacles in translating foreign languages. Many types of translator applications available, some of which are Google Translate, U-Dictionary, Microsoft Translator, Hi Dictionary, iTranslate, Dicit Box, etc.

In the academic world, especially in English Education, translator applications are common. The use of MT in the classroom is driven by the increasing popularity of MT among teachers (Yang & Wang, 2019). Translator applications are not only free and user-friendly but also come with a multitude of features that aid in translation. In particular, students use translator applications because they save more time than manual dictionaries. Habeeba & Muhammad (2020) argued that people have usually used dictionaries in the past, but this is quite time-consuming. By using translator applications, students do not need to look for words one by one from the manual dictionary, because they can directly translate sentences or essays in translator applications. Of course, students can save more time when they do their assignments. Still, despite advances in Machine Translation (MT), achieving good translation results still remains a challenge in the academic world (Rew & Popova, 2021).

Among the many MT service platforms, Google Translate (GT) is one of the most widely used translation applications (Yanti et al., 2019). Alhaisoni and Alhaysony (2017) in their research defined GT as “a free multilingual machine translation service developed by Google to translate text, speech, images, sites, or real-time video from one language into another” (p.73). GT can be accessed through a website, or users can download the application directly. With the features of GT, this application is widely used. It offers the convenience of not only translating languages through text but also audio, images, and videos. It can also assist foreign language students in understanding texts or assignments (Stapleton & Kin, 2019), including language translation for daily conversation, travel, education, or professional purposes. However, the use of GT can be challenging. Sutrisno (2020) pointed out some of the shortcomings of GT, including: 1) as a translator application, GT does not have a human sense of language, so sometimes the translation results are not able to convey the actual meaning; and 2) to obtain good translation results, users need to pay attention to the choice of words and the arrangement of sentences used. Because it can affect the translation result of GT, 3) Related to Grammar, GT sometimes has some grammatical errors in the translation results.

In the fifth semester of the English Education Study Program at Pattimura University, the students took a translation class in which they were taught about the basic theories of translators and how to translate them properly and correctly. Axelia and Setiawan (2021) stated that “translation is a process in which a source language (SL) is translated into the target language (TL) in different stages until it becomes a qualified translation result” (p.1). In the translation process, students had to translate their native language into English; they had to be able to translate the meaning, content, and messages into the target language. Chen (2020) stated that a person is said to have mastered a second language when he can translate the meaning of the language well. To help with this translation process, students sometimes employ employee-translator applications. In this study, the researchers chose to conduct research in the translation class because, according to Alhaisoni and Alhaysony (2017) in their research, one of the purposes of students using GT is to translate the text from Indonesian to English.

Before conducting this research, the researchers conducted a preliminary study with 39 students in the translation class in the English Education Study Program at Pattimura University in the academic year 2022/2023. A preliminary study was conducted to determine which translator application was most

commonly used by students in translation classes. The researchers employed a questionnaire to collect the data. The results showed that 26 out of 39 students said that they used GT in Translation class. Therefore, GT is the most commonly used translation application by students in translation classes. Based on the results above, the translator application that will be studied in this research is Google Translate. Based on the above explanation, the researchers were interested in exploring the process, refinement efforts, and student's perceptions of the use of GT in the translation class of the English Education Study Program at Pattimura University.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Google Translate**

Alhaisoni & Alhaysony (2017) in their research defined GT as “a free multilingual machine translation service developed by Google to translate text, speech, images, sites or real-time video from one language into another” (p.73). Because it is a free translator app, GT is widely used by people worldwide. This is supported by Munthe (2019), who said that almost all circles of society use Google Translate for translation purposes. People can use GT for everyday conversations, tourism, schools, and work. To achieve this, people can directly download Google Translate applications for smartphones and PCs, or use websites to access GT.

Apart from being a translation application, GT has many other functions. Maulida (2017) in her study stated that Google Translate has several benefits, including 1) As a Translator, 2) As an Online Dictionary, 3) As an Online Thesaurus, 4) As a Spell Check, and 5) As a Learning Tool. Wisdayansyah (2019) said that as an application that helps in translating, GT is able to translate text quickly. Thus, when students use GT, they can save time during translation. Martina (2021) stated that students admitted that GT is helpful, easy to use, and can be used anytime, anywhere. According to Chandra and Yuyun (2018), the GT is simple, easy to access, and has many features. This is supported by Murtisari et al. (2019), who explained that GT is useful because it can improve vocabulary, provide convenience, help comprehend reading texts, help with writing, and help pronounce words.

In addition to its advantages, GT also has some disadvantages. Sutrisno (2020) pointed out some shortcomings of GT, including the following: 1) In the translation results, as a translator application, GT does not have a human sense, and sometimes, the translation results cannot convey the actual meaning of the text. 2) To obtain good translation results, users must pay attention to the choice of words and the arrangement of sentences used. If the selected words and sentences that are arranged from the source language to the target language are not properly arranged, the translation results will be messy and random. 3) GT sometimes has grammatical errors in translation results.

### **2.2 The Use of Google Translate in EFL Classroom**

In the EFL Classroom, the use of GT is difficult to avoid because students who are in the process of learning a second language sometimes face obstacles that make use of GT. In EFL classrooms, instructors often allow the use of translation tools such as GT, despite the shortcomings of this application. However, the use of translation tools such as GT is usually limited because of concerns regarding their relevance, especially related to the limitations of translation results by the application (Stapleton & Kin, 2019). According to Sukkhwan (2014), students found GT useful in their EFL learning process. Another study on the use of GT in EFL essay writing classes (Chandra & Yuyun, 2018) showed that most students used GT to translate words (68.07%), followed by phrases (20.17%), sentences (5.88%), spelling (5.04%), and the last one is grammar (0.84%). Sukkhwan (2014) also showed that students mostly use GT to translate general words, followed by technical terms. In the academic world, with technological developments, translation tools such as GT can be an aid in translating for students because they have increased their grammatical and lexical abilities (Groves & Mundt, 2015)

Chen (2020) stated that students usually used GT to translate words, sentences, paragraphs, and entire source texts. In his study, it was also found that students used GT only to translate words because they were not sure of GT's ability to translate long sentences. Generally, they only use GT to check the

vocabulary they do not know. Two of his Participants attempted to translate on their own and then used GT for comparison and editing. Other students used GT to translate whole sentences to obtain an initial view of the contents of the text and save time. Martina (2021) mentioned that students mostly used GT to check and translate their translation results; they often used GT to translate unknown words. Wisdayansyah (2019) found in her study that some students did not translate on their own and relied heavily on GT translation results. Students became highly dependent on GT to the point where they did not read the text; thus, they had difficulty increasing their vocabulary. The use of translation applications can cause L2 students to lose the motivation to try to translate using their own abilities. (Stapleton & Kin, 2019).

### **2.3 Students' Perception of the Use of Google Translate**

Sukkhwan (2014) explained that students view GT as a tool to help them learn a second language. On the other hand, students also realized that Google Translate has drawbacks, and sometimes, the use of GT also affects their abilities, where they pay less attention to the text being translated. However, students still think that GT has more positive than negative impacts. Yanti (2019) also said that students perceive GT as a learning medium in translation classes, which provides more benefits than disadvantages. In addition, he stated that using GT makes it easier and faster for students to translate their translation tasks. Murtisari et al. (2019) stated that although there are concerns about inaccurate translations, which can hinder learning, from another perspective, translation tools can have a positive impact on the development of students' writing skills.

In contrast, Chen (2020) argued that GT could be a threat to improving students' translation skills. This is because, when students become too dependent on using GT, they will be too lazy to try to translate on their own. This will have an impact on their progress in translation. They became accustomed to translating without the help of GT. Mulyani and Afina (2021) in their study found that some of their students thought that GT is unhelpful because it does not provide good models because the results are not usually correct, 2) it makes students become lazy, 3) it makes students become dependent on it, and 4) it gives chances to cheat if GT is prohibited from being used by students. Murtisari et al. (2019) stated that students felt embarrassed and dependent on using GT.

### **2.4 Students' Efforts in Refining The Translation Results**

As previously explained, GT as a translator application has several shortcomings that can affect the translation results; namely, it does not have a human-like feeling, so the translation results sometimes do not make sense because it presents no exact meaning, and it also produces grammatical errors (Sutrisno, 2020). In this case, if students, as translators, use GT to help them translate their assignments, they need to confirm and correct the translation results from GT before they submit it. This is supported by Yanti (2019), who stated that, due to its lack, students need to confirm the translation results from Google Translate. Llitjós (2004) defined automatic refinement of translation rules as "the process of modifying inaccurate translation rules in both learned and hand-crafted grammars and lexicons to reflect user corrections" (p. 7).

Zulkifli (2019) reported that there are several ways for students to refine the translation results from GT, including 1) reviewing the source language before doing the translation, which means that students need to pay attention to the choice of words they use in their first language. They have to make sure that the vocabulary they use is correct and that there are no mistakes in sentence construction because if there is an error, the GT translation will also be wrong. 2) To understand the text being translated, in this case, students need to read the translation from GT to fully understand whether the meaning of the target language matches the source language. 3) Reviewing the results of the grammar-translation, because not all GT translation results are grammatically correct, the students need to confirm the results. Students confirm whether there are grammatical errors in the text, and if there are, students will try to fix them. By confirming and refining the translation results from GT, students can overcome the shortcomings of GT in producing translation results so that the results can make more sense and convey the actual meaning of the translated text. Chen (2020) stated that to refine their translation, students use

dictionaries and Google to search for some words or terms that they do not understand. The students also tried to understand the text better, and some of them repeated the process of revising it to produce good translation results. They also performed word selection to avoid repeating words and using nonstandard words.

### **3. Research Methods**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

In this study, the researchers employed an explanatory sequential mixed method to explore the process, refinement efforts, and students' perceptions of the use of GT in the translation class. Creswell (2018) describes the explanatory sequential mixed method as a two-step process. Initially, the researcher performed quantitative research and analyzed the findings. Based on these results, the researcher conducted more detailed qualitative research to provide further explanation. Creswell (2018) stated that the results of the quantitative data will inform the types of participants to be selected for the next phase, namely qualitative and the types of questions to be asked.

#### **3.2 Participants**

Participants in this study were students in the translation class of the Pattimura University English Education Study Program who were selected through purposive sampling based on the use of GT in this class. Of the 39 students, 26 were identified as GT users in the preliminary study. Nine participants were then selected for the interview based on different levels of frequency of GT use, representing the highest, middle, and lowest values. The selection criteria were derived from quantitative data analysis, specifically focusing on purpose, frequency, usage patterns, effort, and perception. The participants were categorized into three groups: Participants 1, 2, and 3 with the highest frequency; Participants 12, 13, and 14 with medium frequency; and Participants 24, 25, and 26 with the lowest frequency of GT use.

#### **3.3 Instruments**

Three instruments were used to collect the data: observations, questionnaires, and interviews. By using observations, the researcher aimed to observe how GT was used in class, whether students were allowed to use it, and whether there were certain restrictions on its use of Google Translate in class. The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Sukkhwan (2014), and several modifications were made to collect quantitative data. It consisted of four parts: students' purpose and frequency of using GT, how GT was used by students, students' efforts to refine their translation results using GT, and students' perception of using GT. For the interview, the researchers used semi-structured interviews to ask open-ended questions. Triangulation of the data from the three instruments and expert validation from the lecturer of translation were used to validate the data obtained in this study.

#### **3.4 Data Analysis**

In this study, qualitative data were analyzed using the thematic analysis method adapted from Braun & Clarke (2006), which consists of four steps: understanding data, generating codes, identifying themes, and reporting findings. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis in the SPSS 20. The researchers analyzed the data to find the percentage and mean value from the results of the students' questionnaires.

### **4. Results**

#### **4.1 The Use of GT by Students in the Translation Class**

##### **4.1.1 Students Reasons' in Using GT**

Students' explained that the reason they used GT was because GT helped them in translating. Participants 2, 3, and 24 said that GT helped them to translate new vocabularies. They also added that GT was practical, easy to use, fast, and could be used offline. Participant 2 stated that "*GT really helps*

when there is a new vocabulary that I don't know. In addition, GT can be used without an internet quota. GT application is also easy to use". Others stated "because there are some words that I do not know, so I use GT. Apart from that, GT is also fast and easy to use" (Participant 3). In addition, Participants 1 and 26 stated that using GT could help them better understand the content of the text. Participant 6 said that "it's better to use GT to help know an overview of the contents of the text." Furthermore, participants 13 and 25 thought that GT was better than other translation applications, "I think GT is better than other translation apps" (Participant 13), "because GT translation results are better than other translation applications" (Participant 25). Participants 1 and 2 also added that they often used GT because they were not sure about their own translation, and they felt that their English ability was still not good. "The reason I used the GT application in the Translation class was because I wasn't sure about my own answer" (Participant 1) and "I always use it when doing assignments, because my English skills are still not good, I use GT to help" (Participant 2).

#### 4.1.2 Students' frequency in using GT

The data showed that students used GT most frequently to translate sentences ( $m = 2.92$ ), words ( $m = 2.81$ ), and paragraphs ( $m = 2.77$ ). For vocabulary learning, students used GT most frequently to translate parts of speech ( $m = 2.69$ ), followed by technical terms ( $m = 2.65$ ), and names of places or institutes ( $m = 2.54$ ). However, for common words, students rarely used GT ( $m = 2.38$ ). For Translation, students used GT mostly to translate academic texts ( $m = 3.00$ ) and idioms ( $m = 2.88$ ), followed by literary texts ( $m = 2.81$ ), and general and easy texts ( $m = 2.69$ ). However, local dialect texts are rarely translated by students using the GT because the meanings are not easy to negotiate.

Based on the interview results, Participant 3 and 4 stated that they often used GT to translate assignments, materials, and new vocabulary, "I often used GT. For almost all assignments in the translation class, I always used Google Translate. Also to translate material. Especially for vocabulary that I don't know" (Participant 3). On the other hand, participant 25 said that he often used GT to translate assignments but not too often used GT to translate learning materials, "when translating assignments, I often used Google Translate. But I usually did not use it too often when translating materials." Participants 12, 24, and 26 said that they usually used GT to translate new vocabularies. Participant 26 said that he only used GT to translate new vocabulary because he was quite confident in his English skills, "I do not often use Google Translate. I am pretty confident in my translation skills, so I only use it for advanced vocabulary that I do not know."

#### 4.1.3 Students' Purpose in Using GT

Based on the questionnaire results, it was shown that students mostly used GT with the purpose of translating learning materials ( $m = 3.04$ ), followed by assignments in class ( $m = 2.77$ ) and taking-home exercises ( $m = 2.73$ ). Regarding students' purposes in using GT, the interview results showed that all students generally used GT with the purpose of translating assignments and materials and especially translating new vocabulary. Some participants said, "I usually use GT to translate assignments and materials, but only for vocabulary that I do not know" (Participant 13), while others said, "I usually used GT to translate unknown vocabulary when translating assignments. Also to translate material" (Participant 14). Besides that, Participants 2 and 24 also mentioned that they used GT to translate words that the lecturer said, but they did not understand, "I also use GT when the lecturer asks something in English, and I don't understand it" (Participant 2). Moreover, participants 1 and 12 also added that they used GT to compare their translation results with GT's translation, "I also used it to compare my translation results with GT" (Participant 1) while another participant said, "Because the results of the GT translation can be used as a comparison with our translation results" (Participant 12).

#### 4.1.4 Students' Attitudes in Using GT

Based on these observations, the researchers observed that most students used GT to help them translate. However, the researcher observed that some students tried to translate using their own abilities

first, and only occasionally used GT. Some students used GT immediately. Students translated their text using the GT app and the GT Web. Some of them were seen using GT to translate the entire text immediately, and there were also some who only translated each sentence using GT. Some of them also used GT to translate vocabulary that they did not know. When working in groups, students discussed with each other when they found difficulties in translating and asked each other's opinions.

Regarding students' attitudes toward using GT, the questionnaire results showed that most students usually tried to translate text on their own and then used Google Translate ( $m = 3.42$ ), and only a few of them directly used Google Translate without translating the text by themselves ( $m = 2.04$ ). The data also showed that students mostly used GT to translate unknown words, but they rested on text by themselves ( $m = 3.12$ ), followed by using GT to directly translate one sentence at a time ( $m = 2.65$ ), and directly translated the whole text at a time ( $m = 2.50$ ).

Based on the interview results, all participants said that they usually translated using their own abilities first, and then translated using GT. Participants said *"I usually translate more on my own than I use GT to confirm my answer if there are sentences that are difficult to translate"* (Participant 1), *"I usually prefer to translate to my ability first, then I use GT only for vocabulary that I don't know"* (Participant 12). However, there are also certain situations in which students would immediately translate using the GT. According to the participant, *"If the time to do the task is limited, I will use GT to translate the entire text to make it faster"* (Participant 2). Participants 2, 12, 13, and 26 also said that they would usually translate per sentence if the sentences were long and difficult. Participants stated that *"for me, usually if the text is long, I will translate it per sentence"* (Participant 12), *"sometimes if the sentence is long and difficult, I'll use GT and if the text only consists of one paragraph, I would prefer to translate per sentence"* (Participant 13). There are also situations when students would translate per paragraph, such as one of the participants' opinions, which said that *"if the sentence consists of several paragraphs, I usually translate per paragraph"* (Participant 13). On the other hand, students sometimes directly translate whole sentences using GT. Participants said that *"if the text is long and difficult I will immediately translate the whole text"* (Participant 14), *"if the time to do the task is limited, I will use GT to translate the entire text to make it faster"* (Participant 2). In addition, Participants 3 and 25 said that they usually translated the entire text to use it as a comparison with their own translation results, *"I will use GT to translate the entire text as a comparison with my translation results"* (Participant 25).

#### **4.1.5 The Difference Between Using GT inside and outside the Classroom**

Students noted differences in their use of GT both inside and outside the classroom. At home, they have unrestricted access and can freely use the GT. In class, while lecturers generally permit GT for assignments and practice, its use is restricted during midterm and final exams. During the first meeting in the translation class, the lecturer assigned a translation task without using a translator application to assess the student's individual abilities. Participant 3 highlighted that *"In class, GT is allowed, except during Midterm and Final exams. At home, there are no restrictions, so I am free to use GT if I want."* However, Participant 26 expressed personal reluctance, fearing judgment from the lecturer regarding frequent GT use, stating, *"I'm afraid the lecturer will judge my skills if I use GT too often, even though it is not strictly forbidden."* Participant 14 also added, *"At home, I am more careful in checking GT results due to longer assignment deadlines, but in class, due to shorter time frames, I am in a hurry and not very thorough."*

#### **4.2 Students' Efforts to Refine Their Translation Result in Using GT**

Based on the data, most students said that in pre-Using GT, they tended to read the text before using GT ( $m = 3.73$ ) and tried to understand the text before using GT ( $m = 3.73$ ). In While-Using GT, students usually tried to see other possible meanings of words that they were unsure of the translation results on GT and chose the word whose translation was most appropriate according to them ( $m = 3.38$ ). They also tried to change the source language or looked at the synonyms of the words ( $m = 3.27$ ). For After-Using GT, most students confirmed the translation results from GT after using it ( $m = 3.08$ ). Students also usually corrected the translation results from GT, which they thought were not

grammatically correct ( $m = 3.19$ ), and found that the results did not make sense or were still inappropriate ( $m = 3.19$ ). To improve the translation results from GT, most students used Grammarly or other grammar checkers to refine the translation results ( $m = 3.38$ ), followed by trying to find the synonyms of the words ( $m = 3.15$ ). Some of the students also refined their GT translation results by discussing with friends ( $m = 2.96$ ) and using other translator applications ( $m = 2.73$ ).

The interview results showed that all students said that they usually confirmed the translation results from GT. Students commonly refined them using various methods: refining with personal abilities (Participants 1, 2, 3, 12, and 14), consulting friends and seniors (Participants 1, 12, 14, and 24), using Grammarly (Participants 2, 12, 24, and 26), seeking assistance from the lecturer (Participant 26), and utilizing other translator applications (Participant 13). Participants mentioned refining GT by elaborating on GT's results, replacing inappropriate words with new vocabulary, and seeking feedback from peers and tools. Participant 3 stated *"I usually try to refine it with my own ability by replacing words that I feel are not quite right with new words so that the results are better."* Moreover, translating assignments into regional languages requires an initial translation to Bahasa Indonesia before using GT for English translation, as explained by Participant 2. Participants 3 and 25 also emphasized the need for careful word selection to avoid errors caused by GT's literal translations.

### 4.3 Students' Perception in Using GT

#### 4.3.1 Students' Perceptions of The Effectiveness of GT

Based on the questionnaire, it was shown that many students thought that they could rely on the accuracy of texts translated by GT from English to Indonesia ( $m = 3.04$ ) and from Indonesia to English ( $m = 3.00$ ). Based on the interview results, some students said that GT's translation result was accurate, whereas others said it was inaccurate. Participants 2, 13, and 25 indicated that GT had good accuracy. Participant 2 stated that *"when translating per word, the results would be accurate."* However, participants 1, 3, 12, 14, 24, and 26 argued that GT has not been able to translate the whole text accurately because sometimes GT's translation was different from the actual meaning of the text, and it also translated the text literally. Participant 1 said *"GT does not yet have good accuracy because when GT is used to translate the entire text, the results do not match the context of the actual text. The translation results from the GT also become unnatural. For example, when translating proverbs and idioms like 'son of onions,' 'GT will translate it literally or words so that the results are not correct"* (Participant, 12).

#### 4.3.2 Students' Perceptions of The Accuracy of GT

Based on the questionnaire, it was shown that many students thought that they could rely on the accuracy of texts translated by GT from English to Indonesia ( $m = 3.04$ ) and from Indonesia to English ( $m = 3.00$ ). Based on the interview results, some students said that GT's translation result was accurate, whereas others said it was inaccurate. Participants 2, 13, and 25 indicated that GT had good accuracy. Participant 2 stated that *"when translating per word, the results would be accurate."* However, participants 1, 3, 12, 14, 24, and 26 argued that GT has not been able to translate the whole text accurately because sometimes GT's translation was different from the actual meaning of the text, and it also translated the text literally. Participant 1 said *"GT does not yet have good accuracy because when GT is used to translate the entire text, the results do not match the context of the actual text. The translation results from the GT also become unnatural. For example, when translating proverbs and idioms like 'son of onions."*

#### 4.3.4 Students' Perceptions of The Grammar Used in GT

Regarding grammar, only a few students agreed with the statement that GT can help them learn grammar and structure ( $m = 2.35$ ). Based on the interview results, most students said that GT's translation was correct, but there were still some mistakes. Participant 3 said, 'I think it is quite correct. However, there are still some errors.' Participant 24 also explained that "sometimes when translating

one sentence, the result of the GT translation is correct, but when translating one paragraph, the grammar is often wrong." Thus, it can be concluded that students thought the Grammar on GT was acceptable, but not completely correct.

#### **4.3.4 Students' Perceptions of the Advantages of Using GT**

The questionnaire results showed that most students agreed that GT was free and easy to access ( $m = 3.69$ ), and it provided fast translation results ( $m = 3.38$ ). Some of them also stated that the quality of translated text from GT was better than their translation ( $m = 2.81$ ); they could translate better with the assistance of GT ( $m = 2.73$ ), they could better understand an English passage with the assistance of GT ( $m = 2.58$ ), they gained a lot of vocabulary knowledge when using GT ( $m = 2.88$ ), they felt more confident when using GT in translating ( $m = 2.73$ ), and GT helped both students with poor and good English competency ( $m = 2.85$ ). However, only a few of them agreed with the statements that, by using GT, they did not need to remember new vocabulary or guess the meanings of words ( $m = 2.23$ ).

Based on the interview data, students reported that, in general, the advantages of using GT in the translation class were that it could help them to translate new vocabulary and save time. In addition, they also said that GT was easy to use, free, had many features, and could also be used offline. Participant 3 stated that *"by using GT, I can save more time and help me when translating. GT is also easy to use. The results also came quickly. It also has many features; it can be used via text, photos, and audio."* Participants 1 and 12 also mentioned that by using GT, they could compare the translation results on GT with their own translation results. Participant 12 stated that *"the advantage is that the results of GT translation can be compared with our own translation results, besides that it also shortens the time when translating."* Participants 1 and 14 also added that by using GT, they could understand the text better. Participant 14 said *"GT helps me understand the meaning of the text that I want to translate. Also, it helps translate vocabulary I do not know."*

#### **4.3.4 Students' Perceptions of the Disadvantages of Using GT**

The questionnaire results showed that most students agreed that GT was free and easy to access ( $m = 3.69$ ), and it provided fast translation results ( $m = 3.38$ ). Some of them also stated that the quality of translated text from GT was better than their translation ( $m = 2.81$ ); they could translate better with the assistance of GT ( $m = 2.73$ ), they could better understand an English passage with the assistance of GT ( $m = 2.58$ ), they gained a lot of vocabulary knowledge when using GT ( $m = 2.88$ ), they felt more confident when using GT in translating ( $m = 2.73$ ), and GT helped both students with poor and good English competency ( $m = 2.85$ ). However, only a few of them agreed with the statements that, by using GT, they did not need to remember new vocabulary or guess the meanings of words ( $m = 2.23$ ).

Based on the interview data, students reported that, in general, the advantages of using GT in the translation class were that it could help them to translate new vocabulary and save time. In addition, they also said that GT was easy to use, free, had many features, and could also be used offline. Participant 3 stated *"by using GT, I can save more time, and it helps me when translating. GT is also easy to use. The results also came quickly. It also has many features; it can be used via text, photos, and audio."* Participants 1 and 12 also mentioned that by using GT, they could compare the translation results on GT with their own translation results. Participant 12 stated that *"the advantage is that the results of GT translation can be compared with our own translation results; besides that, it also shortens the time when translating."* Participants 1 and 14 also added that by using GT, they could understand the text better. Participant 14 mentioned that *"GT helps me understand the meaning of the text that I want to translate. Also, it helps translate vocabulary I do not know."*

#### **4.3.5 Students' Perceptions of Using GT in Translation Class**

Answering the last question about students' perception of whether they thought that GT was useful for them in the translation class, all students said that GT was useful for their translation process. Despite the shortcomings of Google Translate, students still thought that GT helped them in the translation class, especially in translating vocabulary they did not know, helped them better understand

the contents of the text, and saved time. Participant 3 said “*GT is very useful because it helps translate unknown vocabulary. It also saves time.*” Participant 14 also added “*GT is useful for me because it helps translate vocabulary that I don't know, it also helps me understand the text.*”

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 The Use of GT by Students in The Translation Class

Students mainly used GT because it helped them translate, especially for new vocabulary, and offered convenience. This was supported by Wisdayansyah (2019), who highlighted GT's time-saving translation capability of GT. Moelyono et al. (2023) also mentioned that increasing self-confidence, providing convenience, and its role as language support are some of the reasons students use GT. In this study, students also found that GT is easy to use, free, and usable offline, with multiple translation features (text, audio, photo, and synonym), which aligns with Chandra and Yuyun (2018), who mentioned in their study that GT is simple, easy to access, and has many features. In addition, this study found that students used GT primarily for translating assignments, complex sentences, and unfamiliar words and for comparing translations with GT. This is in accordance with Chen (2020), who found that some students first attempted translation on their own and then used GT for comparison and editing.

Compared to a study by Moelyono et al. (2023), which found that the percentages of students using GT to translate paragraphs and entire essays are higher, in this study, students more frequently used GT for translating words, sentences, and paragraphs, especially for materials and assignments. This is related to Chen (2020), who stated that students usually use GT to translate words, sentences, paragraphs, and entire source text. Based on the interview results, most students said that they often used GT to translate material and assignments but only to translate vocabulary that they did not know. Martina (2021) also confirmed that students often use GT to translate unknown words. Based on the data, the differences in GT usage between students who used it frequently and those who used it less were due to their frequency of using GT and their confidence in their abilities.

Regarding students' attitudes toward using GT, they typically started translations on their own before using GT, primarily for unknown words. They might have resorted to GET immediately for long and difficult texts, and they would usually translate per-sentence because they thought that translating per-sentence GT would produce better results than translating per-paragraphs and whole sentences. Chen (2020), also noted students using GT for initial understanding and time-saving. Medvedev (2016) found that inaccuracies and errors in grammar can often occur if students translate long texts at once. Some students also stated that they used GT to check and compare their translations, which aligns with Moelyono et al. (2023), who stated that to cross-check their tasks, students also used GT.

The data also showed that the differences in using GT inside and outside the classroom were at home when the students used GT freely at any time. In this study, students said that in the classroom, GT was generally allowed, but restricted during exams. Some students felt embarrassed using GT in class because of their expectation of independent learning. Similarly, Martina (2021) stated that students admitted that GT was helpful and could be used anytime, anywhere. Stapleton and Kin (2019) stated that in EFL classrooms, instructors often allow the use of translation tools such as GT despite the shortcomings of this application; however, in some EFL classrooms, the use of translation tools such as GT is still limited due to concerns regarding its relevance, especially related to the limitations of translation results by the application. Murtisari et al. (2019) also mentioned that students who were dependent on GT could feel embarrassed because, as language students, they are expected to be able to translate using their own abilities.

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sentence, GT would produce better results than when translating per paragraphs and whole sentences. Chen (2020), also noted students using GT for initial understanding and time-saving. Medvedev (2016) found that inaccuracies and errors in grammar can often occur if students translate long texts at once. Some students also stated that they used GT to check and compare their translations, which aligns with Moelyono et al. (2023), who stated that to cross-check their tasks, students also used GT.

The data also showed that the differences in using GT inside and outside the classroom are that at home, students used GT freely anytime. In this study, students said that in the classroom, GT was generally allowed but restricted during exams. Some students felt embarrassed using GT in class due to the expectation of independent learning. Similarly, Martina (2021) stated that students admitted that GT was helpful and could be used anytime anywhere. Stapleton & Kin, (2019) in their study stated that in EFL classrooms, sometimes instructors often allow the use of translation tools such as GT despite the shortcomings of this application. However, in some EFL classrooms, the use of translation tools such as GT is usually still limited due to concerns regarding its relevance, especially related to the limitations of translation results by the application. Murtisari et al. (2019) also mentioned that students are dependent on GT and feel embarrassed because, as language students, they are expected to be able to translate with their own abilities.

### **5.2 Students' Efforts in Refining GT's Result**

The data collected showed that all students usually confirmed the translation results from GT because they thought the GT results were not entirely correct. Some students also noted that GT lacked feelings, leading to occasionally inaccurate translations. Sutrisno (2020) similarly mentioned GT's limitations of GT, including its inability to understand like a human, resulting in nonsensical translations and grammatical errors.

After confirming the translation results, all students stated that they always refined the translation using various methods such as relying on their own interpretation, seeking input from peers and seniors, using Grammarly, consulting the lecturer, or using other translation apps. Students typically refined GT results by first translating them on their own and then reading and understanding the text. This aligns with Zulkifli's (2019) view, explaining that there are several ways for students to refine the translation results from GT, including reviewing the source language, comprehending the text, and assessing the grammar-translation results.

After obtaining the GT translation results, students usually re-read the results, elaborated the text using their own words, and replaced the words that they felt were not appropriate. Sometimes, when students translated their assignments to local languages, they needed to translate the text to Bahasa Indonesian before using GT for English translation. This finding is in parallel with Chen's (2020) study, in which students used dictionaries and Google to find unfamiliar words, revised their translations repeatedly for better results, and carefully selected words to avoid repetition and nonstandard terms. Some students also mentioned that errors often occurred because of their word choice mistakes during translation, emphasizing the need for careful word selection. Zulkifli (2019) also stressed the importance of correct writing in the first language to ensure accurate GT translation into the second language.

### **5.3 Students' Perception of Using GT in Translation Class**

In this study, GT is found to be effective for translating per-words and common sentences. However, many students believed GT could not effectively translate text, especially proverbs and long texts. Students also thought that GT did not have a human-like impression of the process of meaning negotiation; thus, they often found some issues like errors, unnatural sentences, and literal translations in GT. Sutrisno (2020) emphasized that as a translation tool, GT lacks a human sense of language, resulting in occasional misinterpretations. Another finding showed that GT often made mistakes when translating some cultural-driven words from Indonesian to English. In a similar vein, Medvedev (2016) also highlighted GT's shortcomings, including literal translations, grammar errors (especially in long sentences), and errors in translating cultural elements.

Many students believed they could rely on GT's accuracy for translations from English to Indonesia ( $m = 3.04$ ) and from Indonesia to English ( $m = 3.00$ ). Some interviewees agreed with GT's accuracy, especially for individual words (Participants 2, 13, and 25). However, others (Participants 1, 3, 12, 14, 24, and 26) argued that GT couldn't accurately translate entire texts, often resulting in differences from the intended meaning and literal translations. This aligns with Chandra and Yuyun's (2018) observation that students preferred using GT for vocabulary translation due to inaccuracies in translating long sentences. Sukkhwan (2014) also noted GT has contextual and accuracy issues when translating paragraphs. Only a few students agreed that GT helped them learn grammar and structure ( $m = 2.35$ ). In interviews, most students mentioned that GT's translations were generally accurate but still contained some errors. Participant 24 noted that translating per sentence yielded correct results, but translating per paragraph often resulted in inaccuracies. This aligns with Medvedev's (2016) observation that translating long texts at once can lead to grammar inaccuracies and errors. The accuracy of translations from GT is often compromised, particularly due to errors in word choice, sentence structure, and omissions of words (Groves & Mundt, 2015).

In this study, students stated that there are several advantages to using GT in the translation class, such as it helps them with translation and saves time. GT also expanded their vocabulary and boosted their confidence in translation. This aligns with Murtisari et al.'s (2019) explanation of how GT improves vocabulary, offers convenience, aids in reading comprehension, and supports writing and pronunciation. GT helps students translate especially in areas such as the use of prepositions and articles (Groves & Mundt, 2015). Additionally, in this study, students found that GT was easy to use, free, and usable offline. They appreciated its various features, including text, audio, photo, and synonym options for word-by-word translation. Some students, like Participant 1 and 12, used GT to compare their translations with GT's results, while others, like Participant 1 and 14, felt it enhanced their understanding of the text. As discussed by Chandra and Yuyun (2018), GT is simple, easy to access, and has many features.

In contrast to the findings of Moelyono et al. (2023), who discovered that while most students in their research were aware of the potential negative consequences of using GT for their language skills, many failed to grasp the impact of overreliance on it. This study reveals that many students realized that using GT too often in translation class could make them lazy and too dependent on GT, thus causing addiction because of the instant results. Excessive use also impacted their translation skills negatively. Wisdayansyah (2019) also found that some students didn't translate independently, relying on GT entirely, even neglecting to read the text and struggling to improve their vocabulary. Chen (2020) argued that excessive GT use threatened students' translation skills by making them unwilling to translate on their own. Additionally, GT exhibited weaknesses such as occasional grammar errors, unnatural content, and inaccuracies, especially offline. Unlike other translation apps, GT lacked references to verb forms and had errors in error analysis.

Based on the results, students positively perceived GT in the translation class. Despite GT's shortcomings, students found it useful for translating unfamiliar vocabulary, enhancing text comprehension, and saving time. This aligns with Yanti's (2019) and Chen's (2020) views that students perceive GT as a valuable learning tool in the translation class, offering more benefits than disadvantages and giving the students more confidence to translate the texts into the target language.

## **6. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, the researchers concluded that students mostly employed GT to translate assignments and learning materials, especially new vocabulary. They tried to translate on their own first and then used GT, but they might translate the whole text if the text was difficult or long. In the classroom, the lecturer had influences on students' frequency of using GT. Students would not use GT if the lecturer prohibited them. Whereas at home, students were free to use

GT. Students believed that the results of GT were not entirely correct, so they needed to confirm and refine the results using their own or based on the feedback from others. Despite drawbacks, students positively perceived using GT in Translation class to translate new vocabulary, understand the text, and save time.

Based on the findings, the researchers propose some suggestions. First, teachers should train the students how to use GT effectively and avoid overusing it, which can lead to dependency and laziness, and negatively impact their learning independence. Second, teachers should train the students to pay attention to word selection in their native language before using GT and always perform post-editing after using GT. Third, teachers should control students' GT usage in the classroom to encourage independent translation skills. Last, future research could focus on using GT for translating proverbs and idioms based on contextual and cultural forms and compare the meanings of GT-assisted translation with non-assisted translation as a way to train students' translation skills.

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