

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a description of the study. In this chapter, the background of the study and formulation of the problem will be explored to provide insight into the context and urgency of the issue under study. Following this, operational definitions, the aim of the research and its significance will be discussed, thus clarifying the research objectives and the benefits derived from this study.

A. Background of the Study

Advances in technology and artificial intelligence in the context of EFL learning have recently become more widespread. According to Wu et al. cited in Tsai (2022) “to learn English in today's world with artificial intelligence, EFL students should use modern technology tools such as software.” As technology and digital tools have improved, it has become simpler to teach and learn English (Santiana & Fatimah, 2017; Santiana, et al., 2022). Therefore, the facilities or technological advances that have developed rapidly in this era of artificial intelligence can certainly provide many conveniences and benefits for students to help their learning process. According to Grovs and Mundt (2015) “Google Translate is a free online service that translates between many languages and has a mobile app too.” This technology can help students to translate the source language into the target language and can also improve vocabulary acquisition for students. Google Translate (GT) is one of the translator applications that is currently often used by students to help translate from one language into another. Therefore, the Google Translate (GT) application can facilitate students in learning a language by using translation technology.

Google Translate (GT) is easier to use for translating the source language into the target language than using traditional dictionaries because it is faster in translating phrases, vocabulary, and multiple sentences (Bahri, 2016). This study investigates the possible impact of Google Translate on EFL preparation enhanced

by the Google Neural Machine Translation system. Therefore, students' perceptions in this study certainly play a very important role. According to Qiong (2017), "learning begins with perception when individuals attend to the stimulus in their sensory memory, thus influencing the data that reaches working memory." So, it is very appropriate to conduct this research with the students, especially the students in the writing class. Because, they perceive and use google translate as a medium to help their independent learning.

O'Neill (2019) stated that in a global context, the use of Google Translate is often used in the context of English language learning, especially English as a Foreign Language. Thus, the use of Google Translate is described by students as an effective, easy-to-use, fun, and non-threatening way for students to express themselves in the target language. Mentally students can change their thinking about a language that they do not fully understand and comprehend into a native language for them. To understand a material, students usually translate their material into Indonesian. With the development of technology, sometimes students always depend on machine translation software. According to Lee (2020), computer-assisted translation helps students to produce faster and more fluent writing with fewer errors.

This research examines how the use of Google Translate improves students' writing skills and what students' perceptions of this approach are in the Indonesian EFL Context. Remembering previous action research related to Google Translate conducted by Tsai (2022) Using Google Translate for its effectiveness in improving students' writing abilities. Based on this phenomenon, the researcher became interested in examining students' perceptions of using Google Translate in writing skills. This idea was inspired by the results of the researcher's pre-observation of students in one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya while teaching practicum or FKIP EDU. The researchers administered a pilot questionnaire to a class of eighth-grade students enrolled in a junior high school in Tasikmalaya, Indonesia. Findings indicated that students recognized various benefits from engaging with Google Translate. Certain phenomena revealed from the data indicated great improvements in English

writing skills, as reflected in open-ended responses in which students expressed enjoyment and excitement in the project (e.g., “enjoyment” and “creativity”) and valued the freedom to visualize their ideas in written text format. Several students also expressed deep satisfaction in putting their ideas into English text, which made the learning process enjoyable and meaningful. This aligns with research by Tsai (2019), who found that students benefited from Google Translate because it met their needs as writing learners who require writing motivation. Therefore, students who learn most effectively when presented with writing-engaging technology may benefit from the writing-stimulating materials presented by Google Translate. Thus, this pilot questionnaire highlights the educational potential of Google Translate and informed the researchers' decision to investigate students' perceptions of the writing benefits of Google Translate use in a more detailed and structured study.

The researcher wanted to get an overview of students' perceptions of using Google Translate as a tool to help students in their writing skills. Previously, many researchers have conducted research on Google Translate (Tsai, 2019; Prates, Avelar & Lamb, 2020; Organ, 2023; Perdana & Arifani, 2024). Nonetheless, most of them conducted research using quantitative research design, and in previous studies have also addressed the issue of Google Translate usage in EFL contexts. To fill the gap in previous research, this study attempts to uncover the students' perceptions in the use of Google Translate on writing skills in EFL context by students in junior high school, by using the analytical perspective of qualitative research design: descriptive case study. This study, conducted with junior high school students, found that using Google Translate made vocabulary learning more enjoyable and engaging, as students were more motivated by the multimedia elements that created a more stimulating learning environment for writing and translation. However, while it demonstrated the motivational benefits of Google Translate, the study was limited to vocabulary learning in young learners.

To conclude, although several previous studies have discussed the benefits of Google Translate in English language learning, most have focused on learning

outcomes or general academic achievement. Google Translate is increasingly being implemented in language classes to encourage active student participation. However, few studies have specifically explored how Google Translate benefits writing skills, especially from the students' perspective. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by exploring students' perceptions of the writing skills benefits of using Google Translate in English learning within the context of a descriptive case study of English language learning in a junior high school in Indonesia. This study is significant because it offers a new perspective, viewing Google Translate not only as a learning strategy but also as a means to build internal competence, self-expression, and personal relevance in English learning, all of which significantly impact the long-term quality of learning.

B. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the background above, in this study the researcher addresses the following question, how do students perceive using Google Translate in terms of writing skills?

C. Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding the terminologies utilized on this research researcher provided some definitions related to this study as follows:

1. Students' Perceptions

Students' perceptions refer to their subjective perspectives, attitudes, and feelings about their experiences with using Google Translate, particularly regarding the benefits to their writing skills in learning English.

2. Google Translate

Google Translate is a machine translation tool frequently used by school students that is designed to engage students in English learning by allowing them to combine translation with digital tools.

3. Writing Skills

Writing skills refer to their experiences with grammar, sentence structure, and vocabulary in using Google Translate, specifically regarding the benefits of improving their learning in English language learning writing skills.

D. Aim of the Study

This Research aims to find out the students' perceptions of the using Google Translate in writing skills.

E. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical use

Theoretically, this research will extend the pedagogical approach of using Google Translate to support students in improving their English writing skills. Therefore, it can provide some information for other researchers.

2. Practical use

Practically, this research could help educators or teachers to utilize Google Translate to improve students' writing skills in institutions.

3. Empirical use

Empirically, this research will provide empirical insights into how students perceive the use of Google Translate in writing skills.