

Google Translate in Perceptions of German Language Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to inquire the experience and the perception of students of German Department, FPBS UPI in using Google Translate. This study used a descriptive case study method. The subjects were 89 students of the German Language Education Department from the various semesters. This study used a questionnaire to collect the data needed. The result showed: 1) the students' experience of using Google Translate is good because they were quite intense in using Google Translate. All forms of translation and features have been used by students. Also, Google Translate helps them learn German; 2) the students' perception of Google Translate is also good because they considered that the speed and accuracy of Google Translate in translating were good and effective, and they also indicated that they would continue to use Google Translate in the future. Students work around incorrect translation results by making improvements manually. Thus, it can be concluded that students' perception of Google Translate is good. Their experience and perception show that Google Translate is still appropriate to be used as a translation tool. For further research, it is advisable to analyse and compare the translation results of each feature owned by Google Translate.

Keywords: *Google translate, machine translations, perceptions*

1. INTRODUCTION

The translation is a learning process in language. This process can be possible with the assistance from translation machine. As an example, the dictionary is a book containing words from a language that is arranged alphabetically. The dictionary transformed into something that makes it easier for users, namely translations machine and one of them is Google Translate. Google Translate is a service Google Inc company. Google Translate can translate various phases of translation with multi-features that makes the translation process easier and faster. Even though it is widely used by German learners, the result is still limited and frequently erroneous. The structure of the language and its equivalence often affect translation results. The repeated words will make the translation result less accurate. The length of the sentence or text and inappropriate punctuation also something that must be considered. The shorter the sentences, better the translation result will be.

Lack of terms adopted in target language is another reason for inaccuracy of translation machine. However, language will continue to develop and

create new terms. Thus, this study aims to inquire about the experience and the perception of students of German Language Education Department FPBS UPI by using Google Translate.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Perceptions

Particularly, a perception has the same meaning as perspective. But indeed, perception comes after perspective. Robbins (as cited in Simbolon, 2007) argues that a process to give meaning to environment which doing by individuals who organize and interprets their sensory impression is perception. Kinichi and Kreitner (as cited in Simbolon, 2007) have a similar opinion that a cognitive process which enables someone to interpret and understand one's surroundings is perception. From these two definitions, it can be seen that perception is an interpretation from perspective. With perception, we can interpret and give an impression of the perspective that has been obtained previously.

Walgito (as cited in Thahir, 2014) introduces that there are two factors that affect perception are, namely internal and external factors. Internal factors affect perception related to psychological needs, educational background, sensory organs, nerves or nervous system centres, personality, and experiences of self-acceptance and individual circumstances at a certain time. External factors are used for objects that are perceived by people and circumstances, the intensity of stimuli, the environment, the strength of the stimuli, which will determine whether or not these stimuli are based. Internal and external factors such as individuals, other people, and circumstances, are related to what Dishon and Kafai (2020) described regarding perspective-taking, which has been recognized as an important component of interpersonal interaction and communication between different social groups. Dishon and Kafai also state that this perspective-taking is considering the mental states and subjective experiences of others.

2.2. Google Translate

Google Translate is a statistical machine translation service developed by Google in 2006. Google translate can translate various forms of text and media such as words, phrases, and web pages, but translation results from Google Translate is not always as good as human translation. When the structure of the text is good, using formal language, or a simple sentence form, the translation results can be similar to human translation results. However, the accuracy of the translation results may decrease as the length of the sentence increases or the text is translated using literary language. It can be concluded that Google Translate is a machine translator that has many uses in language learning. This is why many dictionary users change over machine translators such as Google Translate even though the translation results will not be as good as human translations.

2.2.1. Google Translate Feature

Google Translate has additional features that also make it easier for translators to translate. Quoted from <https://support.google.com/translate/>, there are other features issued by Google Translate:

- a. Translate text in other applications
- b. Translate images
- c. Translate by speech
- d. Translate bilingual conversations
- e. Translate pages and documents
- f. Translating by writing

2.2.2. The Superiority of Google Translate

Google Translate can translate various languages because there are dozens of languages from various countries in the world that can be translated. Maulida (2017) state that google translate is able to translate vocabulary quickly. Many words that were not previously found in a dictionary of meaning can be found on Google Translate. It also allows users to translate into multiple languages. It makes the translation process faster and users don't need to use a book dictionary for translation.

2.2.3. Weaknesses of Google Translate

Google Translate has a number of weaknesses, such as unexpected error that necessitates users to be aware of from the beginning of using the tool, and limitation that can result in inaccurate translation (Santoso, 2010). The quality of translation is not the same depending the length of the text. The translated text sometimes has exactly different meaning than that of the original. Sentence translation is more recommended in order to result in more desirable translation than translating directly into a complete text.

3. METHODS

The research used qualitative analysis design with a descriptive case study method. The case analysis in this study describes the perceptions of German language students as the users of Google Translate. Direct data from the source (primary data) was used in this research because the data is obtained through a questionnaire which is a research instrument. German language students (human) as research objects as well as sources who provide information related to research. This research aims to describe the experiences and perceptions of the object of research in order to obtain different or new points of view.

The stages of data analysis in this study were collecting data for analysis, editing data, classifying questions on the instrument used to collect data based on the variables being studied, testing data quality in terms of validity and reliability of the research instrument, and making conclusions from the research results. From the results of validity calculations assisted by the SPSS V.24 program were found 10 invalid question items because the R-value is smaller than the R-table. In the calculation of reliability which was also assisted by the SPSS V.24 program, the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.878, which means that all question items were reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha value was more than 0.60.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Experience Using Google Translate

In learning, it can be said that students use two different translation machines. But Google Translate is becoming a translation machine that is used more often. Through a questionnaire, it was found that almost all of students often use Google Translate in the translation process. As we can see in Figure 1, the percentage of 0% proves that there are no students who have never used Google Translate. Aside from Google Translate, students also use other translation machines as translation tools but with lower intensity. In fact, 6.8% of students answered that they never used another translator. Angi (2019) revealed in his research that compared the translation results of Google Translate with other translation machines (I-translate) that overall, Google Translate produces translations with fewer errors than I-Translate. From this opinion, it is natural that students tend to use Google Translate. The results of the translation are still convenient to understand and there are not too many mistakes. So, it can be said that all students have used Google Translate for the translation process compared to other translation machines. Google Translate can be used in smart phones and personal computers (PCs). In smart phones, Google Translate is an application where users only need to download from the Play Store on Android or the App Store on iOS. While on a PC, users are required to open a website in order to use Google Translate. Here is the comparison between used on smart phones and personal computer (PCs).

As many as 78.4% of students frequently use Google Translate via smart phones, which can be seen in Figure 2. Then there were three out of 88 students who answered that they never used Google Translate on a PC, which can be seen in Figure 3. But the students stated that they use Google Translate more often on smartphones than on personal computers (PCs). Particularly for fourth-semester students. Generally, the German vocabulary learned in the fourth semester has started to enter a rather difficult level. The students need translation aids in order to be able to follow the learning process well. Google Translate, which is a device in the form of an application, is effective for students to use compared to a dictionary in the form of a book because they don't have to look dictionary for translating but just type it in.

Google Translate has many features for translation namely offline translation (a feature that does not require an internet connection for translation), online translation (a feature that requires an internet connection for translation), website translation (a feature that can translate the entire contents of a page

or internet site), write to translate (a feature that detects handwriting users), instant camera translation (a feature that points the smartphone camera at the text you want to translate), speak to translate (a feature that translates simply by saying a word or sentence), and tap to translate (a feature that can translate a word or sentence when the application is not open).

On average, all students know and have used these features, but they use the online translations feature more than the offline translations.

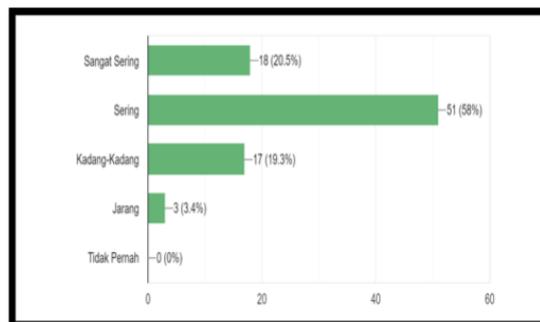


Figure 1 Percentage of intensity of use google translate. Note: *sangat sering* = frequently, *sering* = often, *kadang-kadang* = sometimes, *jarang* = sometimes, *tidak pernah* = never.

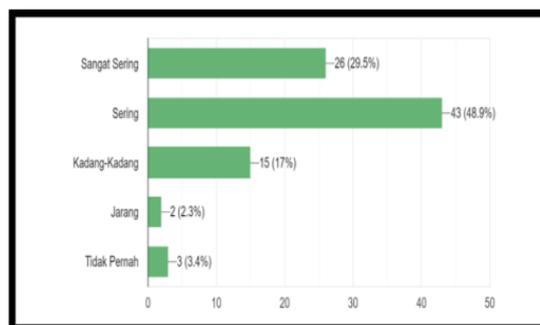


Figure 2 Percentage of use of google translate on smart phones.

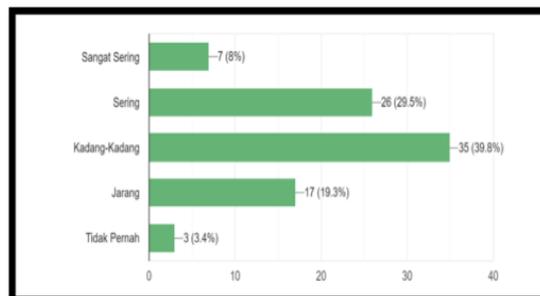


Figure 3 Percentage of use of google translate on personal computer (PCs).

The Offline Translations feature in Google Translate in smartphones made students download each language they want to translate. The file size of each language is large enough and it will cause the internet quota to be used a lot during the file download process.

Another Google Translate feature that is also widely used by students is the Instant Camera Translations feature. As much as 83% of students have used the Instant Camera Translations feature. This feature can translate text directly from the source such as books, posters, and others. All sixth-semester students have used the instant camera translation feature in the translation process. Sixth semester students use the feature because they need to translate long texts. However, more accuracy is needed when translating using this Google Translate feature. Not all words in the text captured by the camera produce the correct translation. The meaning of the first word could be the meaning of the next word. The suitability of the camera position with the text to be translated should be as precise as possible in order to get an understandable translation.

The intensity of students using Google Translate is often and higher than other translation machines, particularly in translating German into Indonesian. As much as 48.9% of students often translate Indonesian into German. Meanwhile, translating Indonesian into German has a fairly large percentage 63.7%. The introduction of lectures and teaching materials that use German makes students often need translation aids to interpret words they have not understood.

Various form of translation that can be translated by Google Translate is not only in the form of the word for word, but in the form of sentences, phrases, paragraphs, text or articles, and pages/websites. On average, students have translated all these forms of translation. However, for the page/site, students said that sometimes they even rarely translated the form of translation. Pages/sites are rarely used in learning German because the teaching materials used are mostly books.

Google Translate can be a learning media the German language. More than 50% of students think that Google Translate helps them in learning German. Starting from vocabulary and translation skills, to lecture assignments. However, students felt more helped by Google Translate in carrying out lecture assignments as evidenced by a percentage of 79.6%. Bayu (2020) argues that we can accelerate vocabulary mastery without using a dictionary by using of google translate, because it can be used directly and practically. But this statement is unacceptable for eighth-semester students because they stated that they do not get helped by Google Translate. Eighth-semester students learn German with a difficult

language structure. This is proven in one of the courses in the German Language Education Department, namely Deutsche Literatur, with the teaching material used in the form of B2 level German books. This book contains material on literacy learning such as poetry, romance, and etc, which Google Translate is still difficult to translate figurative words. Google's machine translator has difficulty translating words that have figurative meanings (Santoso, 2010). Figurative words are words with meanings that are not always standardized and will be difficult to translate by machine translation even if the word equivalents of each language are not always upgraded.

4.2. Perceptions of Google Translate

Google Translate still produces translations that sustain errors. The translation results of Google Translate are not always as good as the results of human translations, this is according to Maulida's (2017) research, that the weakness of this application (Google Translate) is that the translation results are sometimes inaccurate. This is what makes students often make improvements to the translation results manually, which can we see in Peris and Casacuberta (2019) who state that human agent must revise the output of the translations if the quality is insufficient for the translations.

Second-semester students at the German Language Department have the highest level of intensity in improving the translation results of Google Translate from other semesters. Generally, there are always students who have never studied German before. They have to learn more and carefully interpreting a word or sentence. Google's machine translator can be said to be unable to produce correct sentences according to German grammar rules (Santoso, 2010). Manual correction of the translation results is very necessary to obtain an appropriate translation. The use of other translation aids naturally is carried out as a comparison to minimize errors in the translation results from the machine translator.

75% of students think that the translation speed at Google Translate was going well. The built-in machine learns the words to be translated very quickly like the nervous system in humans. Google Translate is able to translate vocabulary quickly. Many words that were not previously found in the dictionary whose meanings can be found on google translate (Maulida, 2017).

The translation speed on Google Translate is generated by a translation machine that works automatically like a human's nerves. According to KantanMT (2016), Neural Machine Translations or NMT basically attempts to utilize recurrent neural

network (RNN) to improve the quality of translations and seeks to use a Recurrent Neural Network (RNN) or artificial nervous system to improve the quality of translation. It utilizes the neural network in the human brain to be used as artificial neural network technology in studying language structures. This makes the translation from the source language to the target language a very fast process like the nerves in the human brain.

Regarding the accuracy of the translation results, students are of the opinion that Google Translate translation results have good accuracy though 67% of students think "neutral". As expressed by Aiken and Balan (as cited in Alawi 2019) through their research entitled *An Analysis of Google Translate Accuracy*, they stated that translation of European languages using GT is very good. Also, Maulida (2017) argues that the use of Google Translate must be followed by mastery of grammar and knowledge of the context of the translated text. Even the translation results are still good and acceptable, Google Translate should not be too fixated on the translation tool. Understanding the translated text is very necessary in order to get the translation results in accordance with the context and content of the source language.

More than 85% of students said that Google Translate is a translation machine that is easy and practical to use. Thus, they no longer need to carry heavy dictionaries for study. Also, the students download google translate on their smart phone. So, when it is necessary to open the dictionary, they only need to open their smartphone. Furthermore, the students also prefer to use Google Translate in the future. 70.5% of them will continue to use Google Translate in the future. As for the use of other translation machines, 42% of students said it was "possible" to use them again in the future.

5. CONCLUSION

The research on students' perception of the use of Google Translate has come up with the following findings: (1) In general, students use Google Translate on smartphones more often because it can translate various forms of translation. They have used all Google Translate features with online translations and instant camera translations as the most used features. Translation activities that are often carried out are German into Indonesian because they are related to lectures. (2) In general, the translation speed on Google Translate is good or fast even though the translation results are still in error. Students work around this by making manual improvements to suit the context and content of the source language. The accuracy of the translation results is good so that it is still easy to understand. Google Translate is a very

effective translation machine for students to use, so they will continue to use it in the future.

From the conclusions that have been presented, it can be said that students' perceptions of Google Translate are quite good because of the resulting deficiencies they can handle well. Their experiences and perceptions also show that Google Translate is still worth using as a translation tool now or in the future.

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