EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE IN UTILIZING GOOGLE TRANSLATE AS A TRANSLINGUAL TOOL FOR ESSAY WRITING

A THESIS

Submitted to fulfill one of the Requirements for *Sarjana Pendidikan* Degree in English Education



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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI

K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN

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Dengan ini mohon agar skripsi tersebut segera dimunaqosahkan.

Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatian bapak/Ibu, saya sampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.

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MOTTO

"Tidaklah mungkin bagi matahari mengejar bulan, dan malam pun tidak dapat mendahului siang. Masing-masing beredar pada garis edarnya"

(Qs. Yasin :40)

"It always seems impossible until it's done."

(Nelson Mandela)

"It will pass, everything you have been through it will pass"

(Rachel Vennya)

"Being late is just an illusion; What is real is the timing of God."

(Rizky Wulan Aprilia)

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi pengalaman mahasiswa EFL dalam menggunakan Google Translate sebagai alat bantu menulis esai. Penelitian ini berfokus pada aspek positif dan negatif yang dialami mahasiswa selama proses menulis. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan disain narrative inquiry yang melibatkan tiga partisipan yaitu mahasiswa semester dua Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris yang diwawancarai untuk mendapatkan gambaran umum tentang pengalaman merka terhadap penggunaan Google Translate. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa merasa terbantu dengan Google Translate dalam mencapai tujuan menulis mereka, terutama saat menerjemahkan dari Bahasa Indonesia ke Bahasa Inggris. Alat ini juga membantu dalam memperluas kosakata dan meningkatkan kesadaran akan keakuratan tata bahasa. Selain itu, penggunaan Google Translate mendukung pembelajaran mandiri jika digunakan secara kritis dan reflektif. Di sisi lain, pengalaman negatif juga ditemukan seperti ketidakakuratan tata bahasa dan struktur kalimat yang kaku. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa Google Translate dapat menjadi alat yang efektif dalam menulis esai Bahasa Inggris jika digunakan secara sadar, kritis, dan sebagai pendukung, bukan sebagai satu-satunya sumber tulisan. Penggunaan yang tidak tepat berisiko mengurangi kualitas tulisan dan menghambat pengembangan keterampilan menulis mahasiswa.

Kata kunci: Google Translate, penulisan esai, siswa EFL, keterampilan menulis, alat penerjemahan, praktik translingual.

ABSTRACT

This study explores EFL students' experiences in using Google Translate as an aid for writing essays. This study focuses on the positive and negative aspects experienced by students during the writing process. The approach used is a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry design involving three participants, namely second semester students of the English Education Department who were interviewed to obtain an overview of their experiences with using Google Translate. The results of the study indicate that students feel helped by Google Translate in achieving their writing goals, especially when translating from Indonesian to English. This tool also helps in expanding vocabulary and increasing awareness of grammatical accuracy. In addition, the use of Google Translate supports independent learning if used critically and reflectively. On the other hand, negative experiences were also found such as grammatical inaccuracies and rigid sentence structures. It can be concluded th<mark>at Google Tra</mark>nslate can be an effective tool in writing English essays if used consciously, critically, and as a support, not as the only source of writing. Inappropriate use risks reducing the quality of writing and hindering the development of students' writing skills.

Keywords: Google Tr<mark>ansla</mark>te, es<mark>say writin</mark>g, EFL students, writing skills, translation tool, translingual practice

PREFACE

Praise and gratitude we offer to the presence of Allah SWT who has bestowed His grace and kinds so that the process of writing a thesis entitled "EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE IN UTILIZING GOOGLE TRANSLATE AS A TRANSLINGUAL TOOL FOR ESSAY WRITING" can be completed. This thesis is submitted to the English Language Education Department of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan to fulfill one of the requirements to obtain a Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan. This thesis can be completed thanks to the support of various parties. Therefore, on this occasion, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Essay writing is a challenging skill for English Education students. Students often have difficulty in using grammar, punctuation, and text structure in their academic writing, which makes their writing less coherent and difficult to understand (Wati et al., 2024). This is difficult because students whose mother tongue is not English have to think in two languages simultaneously. This difficulty often causes students to have difficulty organizing ideas and expressing them into academic writing that meets standards (Hairul, 2023). In addition, students also need to understand academic writing conventions, such as essay structure, proper use of references, and formal language style that meets academic standards. In line with the opinion of (Pasaribu et al., 2024) that the main challenges in academic writing for EFL students are syntactic and morphological errors caused by mother tongue interference. The challenge will be greater when they have to express complex thoughts in a language that is not their mother tongue. As a result, many students feel burdened and have difficulty in writing good essays, so they look for various strategies to help their writing process.

In facing these challenges, many students utilize translation tools to help them in the essay writing process. Translating tools are technology-based tools used to translate words or phrases, understand texts in foreign languages, and check grammar and sentence structure in academic writing (Hidayat, 2024). In line with that, Tsai (2020) said that translation tools can help find more appropriate equivalents of words or phrases in the target language, so it is very helpful to compose texts better and in accordance with the academic context. In addition, translation tools also reduce the time needed to write academic texts in English, and help them produce better writing (Wisudawati et al., 2018). With the development of artificial intelligence technology, translation tools are increasingly accurate and become effective tools for students in writing essays.

Among the various translation tools available, one of the most widely used by students is Google Translate, which in this research will be referred to as Google Translate. Ghorianfar et al. (2023) revealed that Google Translate has become a popular tool among students to bridge the gap between their mother tongue and English, especially in academic contexts. This tool is easily accessible, free, and continuously updated with more advanced features. Google Translate uses Neural Machine Translation (NMT), which produces more accurate translations by considering the overall context rather than simply translating word by word (Santosa et al., 2024). In addition, Google Translate also offers voice input, camera, and integration with various digital platforms, which makes it easier for users to practice translingualism. Tsai (2020) stated that Google Translate helps EFL students to compose better academic texts, improve the use of more complex vocabulary, and reduce spelling and grammatical errors. Despite offering convenience and efficiency, students' experiences show that they face various challenges in using Googe Translate

effectively. Moelyono et al. (2023) found that excessive use of Google Translate can hinder students' vocabulary development and grammar skills, thus leading to dependency. In addition, Orfan (2023) stated that this dependency can reduce students' motivation to build linguistic skills independently, potentially leading to errors and misunderstandings in essay writing. Therefore, it is important to understand how English Education students utilize this tool in their essay writing process, as well as the challenges they face in using it.

Essay writing is a very important skill for English Education students because it is closely related to their academic and professional abilities in the future. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), writing essays becomes crucial because students often require this ability for academic tasks and career development. Many students in EFL settings need strong essay writing skills to meet academic standards and to communicate their ideas effectively (Bhowmik, 2021). However, many EFL students face obstacles in writing essays due to a lack of understanding of grammatical structures and essay organization, which affects the clarity and coherence of their writing (Jamoom, 2021). Therefore, students need to develop effective strategies to improve their essay writing skills, one of which includes the use of technology such as translating tools. These tools can assist them in understanding the target language better and help them produce more structured and academically appropriate essays (Talebi, 2024).

As an EFL learner, the researcher often observes that many of her peers experience significant difficulties when asked to write in English. To overcome this challenge, most students rely on translation tools to assist them in their writing process. Among the various tools available, Google Translate is the most frequently used option due to its ease of access. This high frequency of use makes Google Translate an important phenomenon to study, especially in understanding how EFL students' writing experiences are affected by the use of the tool.

This research is conducted to explore the experiences of English Education students in using Google Translate as a translingual tool in essay writing. Although many students rely on Google Translate, there is still a gap in understanding about the extent to which this tool actually helps in improving the quality of their academic writing. Azima and Fithriani (2024) found that EFL students utilize Google Translate not only to translate texts but also to enrich their vocabulary and speed up the writing process. However, there are still concerns about the accuracy and over-reliance on this tool, which can hinder the development of independent writing skills (Fatkhurozi and Hidayat, 2024). Therefore, this research also aims to identify the challenges they face in using Google Translate and its impact on the development of their writing skills. Thus, the results of this research are expected to provide insights for students, lecturers, and translation technology developers in increasing the effectiveness of the use of translating tools in English language learning.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

To explore EFL students' experience in utilizing Google Translate for essay writing, the researcher aims to elucidate how these students perceive its usage, particularly within the context of essay writing classes, by addressing primary research question:

1. How do the EFL students' experience in utilizing Google Translate for essay writing?

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

This study specifically highlights the experiences of English Education Study Program students in using Google Translate as a translingual tool in the essay writing process. The scope of the study is limited to students at one of the universities in Pekalongan who are taking essay writing courses. This study is not intended to assess the accuracy level of Google Translate or compare it with other translation tools. In addition, the focus of the study is only on the students' experiences in utilizing Google Translate, without conducting an indepth analysis of the linguistic aspects or the quality of the translated essays. Thus, the results of this study are not intended to be generalized to all EFL students in different educational settings.

1.4 Operational Definitions

To prevent misunderstandings regarding the terms used in this research, the researcher provides several definitions that are relevant to this research as follows: 1. Experience

Experience is something that changes us deeply by involving us personally, resulting in changes that make us never go back to being the same as before (Roth and Jornet, 2014).

2. Google Translate

Google Translate is an automatic translation technology that can help users to translate text from one language to another quickly and easily (Medvedev, 2016).

3. Translingual Tool

Translingualism is an approach in which individuals use their various language resources flexibly without separating rigid language boundaries. In this context, translingual tools can be tools or strategies, such as automatic translation software (Canagarajah, 2013).

4. Essay Writing

Essay writing is defined as the process of organizing and developing ideas through organized paragraphs, where each section supports the main theme or argument of the essay (Langan, 2011)

1.5 Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are to investigate the use of Google Translate by EFL students in essay writing. Specifically, this study aims:

 To explore the experiences of EFL students in utilizing Google Translate for essay writing.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The results of this research are expected to be used theoretically, empirically, and practically:

1. Theoretical Use

The results of this research provide a new perspective on the development of writing skills using technology in an academic environment. This research supports the Appraisal theory proposed by (Martin and White, 2005), which is applied to interpret the emotional experiences of participants through an assessment system that creates a framework of interpersonal meaning.

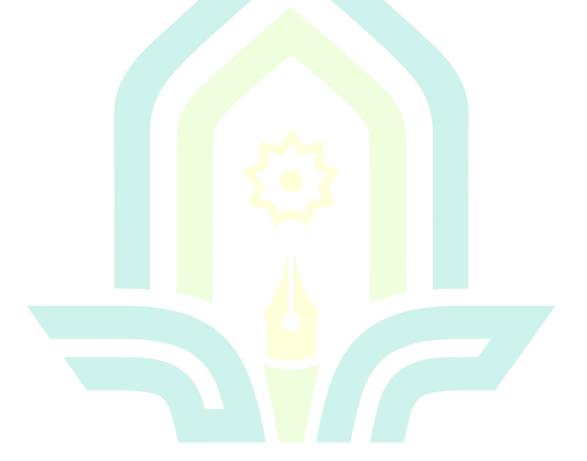
2. Empirical Use

This research presents empirical evidence on the function of Google Translate in supporting EFL students' academic writing assignments. This evidence can be a basis for further

research that focuses on the integration of technology in language learning.

3. Practical Use

The results of this research help educators recognize how students utilize Google Translate. This allows educators to develop more appropriate and effective teaching strategies.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the research results that have been described in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the use of Google Translate in the process of writing essays by EFL students provides two sides of the experience, namely positive and negative experiences. The positive experience is that students find it easier to achieve their writing goals, especially when they have difficulty composing sentences directly in English, in achieving the writing goals, and this indicates a sense of inclination. In addition, the use of Google Translate also expands vocabulary and increases students' grammatical awareness, which shows the feeling of happiness experienced by students because they get diverse language input and a deeper understanding of correct sentence structure. They also not only accept the translation results, but also actively revise and refine the sentence structure to suit the academic language style. This shows support for independent learning and the development of linguistic awareness. In addition, the act of revising the translation results provides a sense of security for students, because they feel that with these improvements, the resulting answers will be better and more accurate

However, there were also negative experiences felt by students. Some of the obstacles that emerged included translations that felt stiff and unnatural, as well as doubts about the accuracy of grammar and sentence structure. Students felt the need to recheck the translation results because they were not entirely in accordance with the academic context. This shows that they have feelings of insecurity about the quality of the translation, thus encouraging them to be more careful and critical in using Google Translate as a writing tool. Even so, the critical attitude and caution shown by students were actually an indication of the development of self-evaluation skills and responsibility for the quality of their academic writing. Google Translate is not merely an automatic translation tool, but can also function as a reflective tool in translingual practice and the development of independent learning, as long as its use is carried out consciously and responsibly.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the results and discussions in this study, the researchers offer several key recommendations for relevant stakeholders. Most notably, EFL students, educators, and future researchers are encouraged to use Google Translate carefully and responsibly, treating it not only as a translation tool, but as part of an independent, reflective, and engaged learning process. Students should develop skills to critically evaluate, revise, and improve their translations to ensure that their writing aligns with academic conventions. Complementary tools such as Grammarly or DeepL can also be used to improve linguistic accuracy and fluency. Educators are encouraged to support students in developing critical awareness when using such digital tools and to foster reflective thinking during the writing process. Future research is encouraged to expand its scope by including participants from various educational backgrounds to produce more representative findings.

Furthermore, further investigation can focus on how integrating various writing technologies when applied with conscious reflection can improve academic writing proficiency and foreign language acquisition.



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