

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GOOGLE TRANSLATE AS A TOOL
FOR ASSISTING STUDENTS IN DOING EXERCISES IN ENGLISH
SUBJECT CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Keywords:

Google Translate, the role of technology, the effectiveness

This research was conducted to find out whether Google Translate is effective or not in assisting students doing their exercises in English subject classroom. The method used was Classroom Action Research (CAR). The population of this research was the 31 active students of XI MIPA class in one of Batam's private senior high school; SMA Kartini Batam. Before conducting a thorough research, an observation was conducted in order to understand the students' behaviour and their opinions regarding the use of gadget and Google Translate in English subject classroom. Afterwards, students were given a pre-test in a form of exercise for their English class. They were not allowed to use anything in working on their exercise. The required score was 77 to be marked as pass. The total mean score was 81.9 for the pre-test. It can be concluded that they are still knowledgeable even though they were not utilizing the machine translation. After reviewing and giving feedback to the students, the post-test was commenced with 92.9 as the result. It can be said that the use of Google Translate in assisting students doing their exercises in English subject classroom is effective and enhanced students' knowledge.

Kata Kunci:

Google Terjemahan, peran teknologi, keefektifan

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah Google Terjemahan efektif atau tidak dalam membantu siswa mengerjakan latihan mereka di kelas mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Metode yang digunakan adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK). Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah 31 siswa aktif kelas XI MIPA di salah satu SMA Swasta Batam; SMA Kartini Batam. Sebelum melakukan penelitian secara menyeluruh, observasi dilakukan terlebih dahulu untuk mengetahui perilaku dan pendapat siswa tentang penggunaan gawai pintar dan Google Terjemahan di kelas mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Setelah itu, siswa diberikan

pre-test berupa latihan untuk kelas Bahasa Inggris mereka. Mereka tidak diperbolehkan menggunakan apapun dalam mengerjakan latihan mereka. Skor yang harus diraih adalah 77 untuk ditandai sebagai lulus. Total skor rata-rata adalah 81,9 untuk *pre-test*. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa mereka masih berpengetahuan meskipun tidak memanfaatkan mesin terjemahan. Setelah meninjau dan memberikan umpan balik kepada siswa, *post-test* dilaksanakan dengan hasil 92,9. Dapat dikatakan bahwa penggunaan Google Terjemahan dalam membantu siswa mengerjakan latihan di kelas mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris sangat efektif dan meningkatkan pengetahuan siswa.

INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, technology in education has been growing, especially technologies related to learning a language. A technology can take any form, and nowadays everyone is very active on the internet. One of them that is often used by people on the internet and is able to overtake current technology is Google Translate, a web-based machine translation (MT). With the site address translate.google.com, Google Translate (GT) provides translation features from various languages and has a system that translates per phrase, not per word because GT itself is a statistical-based translation tool. Not only that, GT also has an adjustment feature, where users can correct some inaccurate translations and insert them into Google Translate data. That way, the data loaded by GT will continue to be updated (Groves & Mundt, 2015). According to Hutchins (2003) cited in Karnal (2013), Google Translate has undeniable impact on language learners. This is evidenced by advancements in machine translation every year. Gradually the language variety is increased and getting more and more accurate.

The role of technology in English classes is one of the potentials for assisting to build students' comprehension and motivation. This potential made some educators sceptical and hesitant. It is important for teachers to consider the positive impact of technology as it can create new avenues for students in literacy (Clifford et al., 2013). In some cases, many foreign language educators have a lot of doubts about allowing students to use Google Translate because it is considered to be detrimental to the actual language acquisition process (Groves & Mundt,

2015). This, however, does not rule out the possibility that we can use technology smartly. We do not accept the existing results, but re-check and revise according to knowledge is always advised. A study by Ducar & Schocket (2018), they stated that the problem with using technology in language learning is not from the teacher or lecturers preventing their students from using it, but the teacher must also help every student understand about our advanced technology; because using technology ethically is one of the most important 21st century skills.

Kai & Hua (2021) state that Google Translates itself provides general definitions of words, that's why it's practical when used in teaching and learning English as a tool to help find definitions of unfamiliar words. The experience of the researchers in teaching English to grade 11 students in one of Batam's private senior high school varies widely, but what stands out the most is their comprehension in an English word or sentence. Due to the lack of understanding of a word or sentence, they increasingly do not understand what they are doing. Context is also difficult to understand because they do not know the meaning. Therefore, most of the students opened their gadgets, be it smart phones or laptops, and opened their browser to look for Google Translate's site. They typed the word that they do not understand, and the results automatically appears on the site. Giving them the answers that they are looking for.

There are several studies that talk about similar topic, such as findings by Chompurach (2021) with the title "Please Let me Use Google Translate": Thai EFL Students' Behavior and Attitudes toward Google Translate Use in English Writing, a study by Maghsoudi & Mirzaeian (2020) about Machine versus human translation outputs: Which one results in better reading comprehension among EFL learners?, from Wongsuriya (2020) about Improving the Thai students' ability in English pronunciation through mobile application, a research from Luef et al. (2019) about Language Proficiency and Smartphone-Aided Second Language Learning: A Look at English, German, Swahili, Hausa and Zulu, and then another study from Herlina et al. (2019) about Google Translate as an alternative tool for assisting students in doing translation : A Case Study at Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia. Studies about using Google Translate in

doing English exercises as an assisting tool is yet to be found, thus this paper aims to investigate whether using Google Translate is effective as an assisting tool for SMA Kartini Batam students in doing their English subject exercises.

The process and studies made the researches wanted to investigate the effectiveness of the GT itself as a tool in assisting the students; to provide answers and perspectives regarding the topic. Josefsson, (2011) did a study regarding the use of Google Translate in the learning strategies of vocational training students, she found that Google Translate performs much better than a regular dictionary. She also states that GT gives the desired accuracy and speed. There are several stages in implementing this investigation, first, observing the behaviour of the students in doing their exercises for English classes. Secondly, students will start to work on a pre-test, in which they did the usual exercises without using their phone or any help at all. They must do it alone and with their own knowledge. Third, post-test with an increased level of an exercise that includes mostly reading and determining words' definition. Lastly, teacher will give feedback and provide them with several online dictionaries such as Cambridge English Dictionary as another tool that they can utilize and combine it in order to achieve the desired knowledge. This will show how effective Google Translate in helping students to maximize their exercises.

METHOD

This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR), which based on Aqib et al., (2016) and Sani et al., (2018) cited in Hasugian et al., (2020) is a study conducted by teachers at every level to seek information which is useful for solving a problem, strengthening, or improvement for the class and their students. There are several models in CAR, the researcher used Kurt Lewin's model and Delphie, (2014) states that it consists of (1) Planning, (2) Acting, (3) Observing, and lastly, (4) Reflecting, in order. The participants of this research are the students of class XI MIPA 3 in one of Batam's private high school; Kartini SMA Batam. There are 31 active students enrolled in the class and actively learning English lessons each semester. Each student always brought their gadgets due to it

being a necessity these days in Indonesia, the main purpose of it is used for study or a tool to help in learning.

The researcher used a test that includes pre-test and post-test, and observation as an instrument. The pre-test and post-test aim to evaluate each student when using Google Translate in doing exercises during learning activities. For observation, it is carried out during class; both before class, during class, and until class ends. Observation aims to monitor the behaviour and opinions of class students on the use of Google Translate itself as a tool.

For the observation, the class XI MIPA 3 was observed thoroughly through their behaviour in learning, doing exercises, their teamwork, and how do they use their gadgets in the classroom. The result was most of the class uses their phone in the class to open Google Translate when it's English subject time. There are several questions were asked to the students regarding their use of Google Translate. In the pre-test, students will have to do an exercise in the form of Google Form without having to use any kind of tool. Phones and internet are prohibited, they are not allowed to cheat. In the post-test session on the next meeting, they are going to do another exercise with the same Google Form platform to instantly show their scores. Students are allowed to use their phones only to open Google Translate, opening other websites and any form of cheatings are prohibited. After collecting the data, the researcher needs to analyse them in order to determine whether Google Translate is effective for the students as an assisting tool or not.

In this research, the success criteria that is determined by the researcher is based on the class' subject minimum completeness criteria or *KKM*. The average or mean per test shows different numbers, in this case for both tests, if XI MIPA 3 achieves score above 77 per individual, then it will be considered that each student do not require any form of assistance for their English exercises and their comprehension is already good enough. If they score below 77, it can be concluded that their comprehension is still below average and needs assistance in doing their English exercises. However, if XI MIPA 3 as a whole class doesn't reach the average (mean) score of 77 for their pre-test, it can be concluded that

they need assistance for doing their English exercises and using GT should be considered. If XI MIPA 3 as a whole class achieves the average score or above, it can be concluded that Google Translate plays an important part and effective for them to use as an assistance. On the contrary, if they score lower, it means that Google Translate does not play an important part for them. In the future, this data can be accessed by teachers for them to consider the use of technology in class especially for English.

There are five steps of action research process in this research:

Step 1: Issue Identification

The researcher observed the classroom(s), in each classroom that the researcher responsible to teach of. After a few classes of observing, researcher can conclude that there's one class that is categorized as very active and uses Google Translate, and it's XI MIPA 3. When doing exercises or reading, they always open their phones to open the Google Translate site. The students usually write all the sentences in the site or just a couple of words that they don't understand. When asked to students about why they open Google Translate, they answered with how they don't understand the context of the sentences sometimes or a word that is very hard to comprehend. From this, researcher wants to investigate the use of technology, in this context it's machine translation with the use of sites like Google Translate and how effective is it for assisting students.

Step 2: Data Collection

First, the researcher will construct an exercise on the materials that will be taught. Next, researcher will re-check the exercise, questions, key answers, and specifically the choice of words/sentence in the exercise that will require the students to think. The exercise includes long-paragraph or guessing the meaning of a word. Afterwards, researcher will conduct a pre-test with said exercise without using any tools or help. For example, dictionary book, online dictionary, Google Translate, etc. that involves the technology. After the pre-test is concluded, the result will show how well they do the exercise without having to use Google Translate. Next step is the post-test that includes the same exercise but with different questions—still the same template of question. For the post-test,

students must use Google Translate. Lastly, after conducting both of the test, the data will be processed and analyzed by the researcher to confirm whether the Google Translate is effective enough for assisting the students or not.

Step 3: Action Planning

In planning, discussion with cooperating teacher is a must. Suggestions on how and when to conduct the tests will be asked to make sure that everything is planned carefully. Any kind of exercises is compatible with the materials that will be taught to the class. It will be a direct instruction while lecturing and it includes specific time of the class. Google Form will be distributed to all of the students with a predetermined time. The post-test should be distributed on next week's class in order for the researcher to have time to analyze the result of the pre-test. Investigating in between results can create an accurate data. When the data is ready, the researcher will make suggestions for students before making a conclusion. Lastly, after everything concluded, researcher will give suggestions for students to use online dictionaries such as Oxford dictionary or Cambridge dictionary to understand the English context itself instead of instantly comprehend it from Bahasa Indonesia.

Step 4: Plan Activation

The researcher will be giving the students instruction on how to do the pre-test and post-test, the tests include 15 objective questions. On both tests, the rules are the same. No teamwork, cheating is not allowed, and everything must be done on time. In doing pre-test, they are not allowed to use anything especially Google Translate. They must depend on their own comprehension. While working on the post-test, they must utilize the site Google Translate diligently. Cheating will always be prohibited. This is conducted to measure their comprehension and how effective these tools are for the students.

Step 5: Outcome Assessment

On the last step, data should be processed and analysed. The experiences and perspectives should be reflected upon the data that has been obtained. The data will determine whether the tool is effective for assisting or vice versa. For the outcome, conclusion will be put out and to see if the tool (Google Translate)

should be a requirement or not for the students. They must also be reminded to not rely on technology because not everything is absolute. The purpose of this was to remind them as well to work hand-in-hand together with the technology for them to enhance their skill and knowledge.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

For the pre-test, there are total of 31 respondents out of 31 students in XI MIPA 3. Their age ranges from 15-18 years. Individually, they must do the pre-test exercise that consists of 10 questions according to the material that day. The questions include mostly reading with a score of 77 as minimum criteria or *KKM*. Without having to use anything to help them in doing their exercises, the score results can be seen below:

Table 1: Result of Students' Pre-Test

No.	Name of Students	Score
1.	Student 1	90
2.	Student 2	60
3.	Student 3	90
4.	Student 4	80
5.	Student 5	100
6.	Student 6	80
7.	Student 7	80
8.	Student 8	90
9.	Student 9	100
10.	Student 10	70
11.	Student 11	90
12.	Student 12	90
13.	Student 13	90
14.	Student 14	80
15.	Student 15	80
16.	Student 16	80
17.	Student 17	80
18.	Student 18	90
19.	Student 19	80
20.	Student 20	50
21.	Student 21	80
22.	Student 22	70
23.	Student 23	100
24.	Student 24	70
25.	Student 25	70
26.	Student 26	100
27.	Student 27	100
28.	Student 28	100

29.	Student 29	80
30.	Student 30	50
31.	Student 31	70
Total		2540
Mean score		81.9

From this result, it can be concluded that 8 out of 31 students did not get to the required minimum score of 77, though the mean score (81.9) is still above of it. These results describe that even without the use of Google Translate, students have sufficient knowledge to do the English exercises given by teacher.

Next process is post-test, which was done with a criterion to determine the effectiveness of Google Translate, and to compare the mean score to the pre-test. The criteria are below:

Table 2: The Criteria for Post Test

GRADES	SCORE	CRITERIA
Very Poor (VP)	< 20	Does not show knowledge on doing the exercise nor in using Google Translate.
Poor (P)	21-40	Limited knowledge on doing the exercise nor in using Google Translate.
Quite Good (QG)	41-60	Fair knowledge on doing the exercise or in using Google Translate.
Good (G)	61-80	Acceptable knowledge, and somehow understood how to utilize Google Translate as an assisting tool which equals to effectiveness of the platform.
Very Good (VG)	>81	Knowledgeable, and understood how to utilize Google Translate as an assisting tool which equals to effectiveness of the platform.

For the post-test, the rules still apply the same in this section. The only difference is they are free to use their gadget only to open the Google Translate. After doing the post-test exercise, the results can be seen below:

Table 3: Result of Students' Post Test

No.	Name of Students	Score
1.	Student 1	90 (VG)
2.	Student 2	100 (VG)
3.	Student 3	90 (VG)
4.	Student 4	70 (G)
5.	Student 5	100 (VG)
6.	Student 6	80 (G)
7.	Student 7	100 (VG)
8.	Student 8	100 (VG)
9.	Student 9	80 (G)
10.	Student 10	100 (VG)
11.	Student 11	100 (VG)

12.	Student 12	100 (VG)
13.	Student 13	100 (VG)
14.	Student 14	80 (G)
15.	Student 15	100 (VG)
16.	Student 16	90 (VG)
17.	Student 17	100 (VG)
18.	Student 18	100 (VG)
19.	Student 19	100 (VG)
20.	Student 20	100 (VG)
21.	Student 21	90 (VG)
22.	Student 22	90 (VG)
23.	Student 23	80 (G)
24.	Student 24	90 (VG)
25.	Student 25	100 (VG)
26.	Student 26	100 (VG)
27.	Student 27	90 (G)
28.	Student 28	100 (VG)
29.	Student 29	100 (VG)
30.	Student 30	70 (G)
31.	Student 31	90 (VG)
Total		2880
Mean score		92.9

From this result, it can be concluded that only 2 out of 31 students who's below average required score. Individually, around 7 students achieved the Good (G) result and the rest achieved Very Good (VG) result. An increased mean score of 92.9 for the post-test shows that Google Translate plays an important part and effective for them to use as an assistance and passed the success criteria. These results describe that with the use of Google Translate, the students could achieve a better score and reached the desired criteria.

Discussion

From the findings, researchers found out that the use of technology and the internet, especially in the classroom during English subject as an assisting tool can help students in their studies. In here, Google Translate is used wisely, which means it is used according to the circumstances and needs of the class. With an observation during the tests, whereas the teachers monitor students as they do the exercises, most of the students uses Google Translate to help them with words or sentences that they do not know and it will eventually affect their pace in learning. This also helps students whose knowledge of English is still average to enhance their knowledge. Students, who face confusion such as reading long paragraphs,

determining the meaning of a word, as well as the context of the sentence, of course need help. Teachers who cannot take care of many students can be helped by the GT platform itself. In language learning, the translation produced by a machine translator can be a reference for students to project their grammatical knowledge. In another sense, they can use Google Translate, receive the results, and then compare their knowledge (García & Pena, 2010). In this way, their work is completely not relied only to the translation engine itself, hence a collaboration is created.

It is noticeable that the findings were in line with previous studies conducted by Herlina et al., (2019), they found that 75.8% of the students believe is very helpful for them during their lecture process. Google Translate can be used as a complementary tool to assist students, though somehow it can be unreliable hence why teachers and students should coordinate with each other regarding the usage of the machine translation.

CONCLUSION

From the Findings and Discussions, there are several things that can be highlighted to be the conclusion of this study. First, the average improvement from 81.9 to 92.9 is noteworthy, because the difference proves that the use of Google Translate is useful when used in doing exercises as an assisting tool. The purpose of the practice itself to increase their knowledge, with the addition of aids, will certainly be balanced. Second, the results of this study can convince teachers to make more use of gadgets and the internet in the classroom. Using gadgets were never a bad thing, that is why we, teachers, must be strict and do a clear communication with students regarding the use of gadgets and internet. Remind them that any platform especially online machine translation and online dictionary will be benefit to students to enhance their knowledge, therefore their pace in learning will increase. Third, students can also be reminded not to rely entirely on the internet because everything is unreliable. In this study, the students are given strict and clear instructions on their post-test section, reminding them that Google Translate can be unreliable, hence why there's dictionary and students'

own knowledge and make it as a collaboration. There is room for improvement, for both students and teachers.

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