

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter discusses the general information of the study, such as the background of the study, research question, research objective, significance, and scope and limitation.

Background of Study

Writing is one of the language skills that an English Department state university of Gorontalo student needs to master. According to Tied (1989, p.6), writing is the most difficult language skill to learn; it is a hard task or maybe an assignment for the students. It is because writing is the skill that requires learners to produce a correct written language (Brown, 2007, p. 391).

Similarly, (Harmer 2011, p. 52) states that writing is a complex skill that requires some steps and takes more time. Therefore, many students are unable to accomplish writing tasks.

Fulwiler, Gorman, and Gorman (1986, pp. 21-23), and Griffin (1985, pp. 202-203) define writing as a process that needs learning and involving practice (as cited in Day, 1989, p. 458). Students can improve their writing skills by practicing and working on their assignments. The majority of the students in the English Department find it difficult to make their writing text since English is not their first language. Students in the English Department always write their text in Bahasa Indonesia then translate it into English.

This is because the students are unable to produce grammatically-correct sentences. Therefore, they start it with their language, which is the Indonesian language. However, if the translation is in the form of sentences or even paragraphs, the translation results are difficult to understand. Based on the researcher's experiences from the first to third semesters, it was revealed that many students opted to translate sentences even paragraphs to ease and speed up the translation process. Thus, they use machine translation as a tool to help them translate a text.

According to Milam Aiken and Shilpa Balan (2011), machine translation is now being used by many translators to aid their work. Many others use machine translation to get a quick grasp of foreign text from email, web pages, or other computer-based material that they would not otherwise understand. Freeweb-based machine translation services are available to assist with this task, but relatively few studies have analyzed their accuracies in particular.

One of the popular machine translation tools in the world is Google Translate. Google Translate is an online translation tool product from Google. It is a tool which helps people to translate sentences or word from the first language to the target language. It is very easy to be used and can be accessed as long as the computer connected to the internet. Google Translate is also a multilingual machine translation service provided to translate a text easier and to help many people, including students who have difficulty in translating a language.

All students regarding Google Translate as a service to translate from one language to another. But they forgot that apart from translating, it could also be used to learn pronunciation. They are very helped by this application to understand lecture material in English which to understand it they must first translate.

Google Translate in the form of an application is of course much simpler than having to carry a dictionary. Some students know how to use the Google Translate application correctly, namely by entering the vocabulary to be translated then translating manually with considerations regarding grammar, word choice, and so on. To translate sentences, they also keep entering by word, not one sentence. So, if they have to translate a paragraph then they translate by looking for the meaning of the unknown word then combining it by paying attention to grammar, and so on. However, some students still do not understand the Google Translate application working system. They do not understand that this application's working system is translating words.

the Google Translate application is about the speed of this service to find the meaning of the word you want to translate. Also, because this is an application, of course, it is simpler than carrying a dictionary. Meanwhile, regarding the shortcomings of this application, namely the translation results that are sometimes inaccurate, students claim to work around this by reconciling the translation results with the context.

As the preliminary study that the researcher has done before on July 2019, the use of Google Translate as a translation tool becomes popular among the third-semester students in the English Education Department, State University of Gorontalo. There are two major reasons why they prefer to use Google Translate as their translation tool. First, they do not have to pay some money when they want to use the tool because it is all free. The only thing that they need is an internet connection. Second, the access to use Google Translate is very easy and accessible. They only write the sentences, and the translation will show up right away. Therefore, it is not surprising that many of those use Google Translate as a medium to translate a language because the benefit of Google Translate, includes the students also can use the machine for doing their assignment.

This was also the same written in a study by Mega Megataviana Kusuma Dewi (2016) in her research title "The Students Perception on the Use of Google Translate in Writing Analytical Exposition Text: A Study at SMA N 1 Banguntapan". In her research, the students found that Google Translate was not helpful and not reliable. This is because the translation result was difficult to understand even the students know that Google Translate does not have the correct structure when translating the Indonesian language into English. However, Google Translate helped the students to enrich their vocabulary.

But, Sometimes the results of the translation of a language have a very different meaning compared to the original understanding, so this is what makes users make mistakes. If it is only translating the vocabulary, Google Translate results produced good translation because many vocabularies that were not previously in the dictionary can be found meaning when using Google Translate. The function of the English translator Google Translate is only to translate vocabulary, so if there is an error when the user translates a sentence, then it is very natural to happen. Therefore, from this case, the researcher will examine students' perceptions on the use of Google Translate as a medium to help them in writing text, especially students in the English Department, since the students always use it in the English class. Moreover, the researcher wants to figure out the students' perception as the students keep using Google Translate as a medium to working on their homework or maybe their assignments even though they already know that Google Translate is not always correct.

Research Question

Based on the basic consideration above, problem statement, what are the students' perceptions on the use of Google Translate to help them in writing?

Research Objective

The study is conducted to figure out the perception of third semesters students in the English Education Department, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, on the use of Google Translate as a tool to help in their writing for professional context.

Research Significances

Here are some significances of this study:

- For students

This research is expected to provide benefits for students to use Google Translate in learning English and can be a further reference in implementing it related papers or research.

- For Lecturers

With this research, the research expects other English Department lecturers, in particular For those who teach writing to pay more attention to the results that students translate when doing assignments given in class.

The Scope of Study

This research will focus on finding students' perceptions about the use of Google Translate in English language learning, but this research will only focus on Students of the Gorontalo State University English Department, especially those in the third semester, learn to write in a professional context. Therefore, the observed indicators are According to BimoWalgito (1990, p. 54-55), namely; absorption, understanding, and evaluation. These indicators will be the benchmarks of this study on student perceptions