

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the foundational components of the research design. It begins with the background of the study, which outlines the contextual framework and rationales for investigating students' perceptions of utilizing Google Translate. Following the background, the research problem is formulated to define the core questions this study aims to answer. Consequently, the objective of the study is clearly stated to specify the direct goals of this investigation. Finally, the significance of the study is detailed to highlight the practical and theoretical contributions of the research findings for students, lecturers, and future researchers.

1.1 Background

Nowadays, technology has become an important part of education. The development of technology has changed the way students learn, access information, and complete academic tasks (Hubbard, 2021; Jones, 2019). Various digital tools and applications are widely used to support the learning process because they provide easy access to information and help students learn more efficiently (Shyamlee & Philomina, 2012).

In the field of education, technology functions as a learning tool that assists students in understanding learning materials and developing their knowledge and skills (Blake, 2013). Technology also serves as a mediating tool between learners and learning resources (Vygotsky's theory in modern contexts, see Warschauer,

2007). Through technology, students can access information, practice skills, and solve learning problems more effectively. As a result, technology has become an essential component of modern learning activities.

In language learning, technology provides many opportunities for students to improve their language abilities (Chinnry, 2014). Students can use various digital applications to learn vocabulary, practice pronunciation, understand grammar, and access learning materials (Stockwell, 2013). The integration of technology in language learning enables students to learn independently and obtain immediate assistance whenever they encounter difficulties during the learning process (Reinders & White, 2016).

Despite its popularity, the utilization of Google Translate in higher education, particularly within the English Education Study Program, remains a highly discussed topic. In recent years, Google Translate has evolved from a basic word-to-word dictionary into a sophisticated tool driven by Neural Machine Translation (NMT) and artificial intelligence. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing classes, recent studies indicate that students receive Google Translate favorably because it helps them translate complex ideas, expand academic vocabulary, and overcome translation difficulties efficiently.

However, the integration of Google Translate in language learning is not without controversy. While many students perceive it as a highly useful tool for comprehension and time saving, some educators express concerns regarding student dependency and potential grammatical inaccuracies (Putri, 2023). Other studies have shown that while Google Translate facilitates quick access to English texts, its limitations in handling specific contextual genres or advanced linguistic

structures can still hinder in-depth language acquisition if used without critical supervision (Rahman & Unsiah, 2025). This dualism of perceptions highlights the importance of investigating how pre-service English teachers evaluate the tool's effectiveness versus its drawbacks.

Investigating this phenomenon among English education students is crucial since they are trained to become future language educators who must balance technology integration with authentic learning practices. At Artha Wacana Christian University Kupang, students frequently utilize digital translation tools to navigate academic references and complete coursework. Exploring their specific viewpoints offered valuable insights into how future English teachers accept and integrate machine translation into their learning strategies. Therefore, this study aims to explore English education students' perceptions of the use of Google Translate in English language learning at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang.

Students may have different perceptions regarding the use of Google Translate in English language learning. Robbins and Judge (2017) state that perception is a process by which individuals organize and interpret sensory impressions to give meaning to their environment. In the learning process, students' perceptions are critical because they can influence their attitudes and behaviors toward a particular learning tool.

Several previous studies have investigated students' perceptions of Google Translate. Nurhayati and Lahete (2024) found that students generally held positive perceptions of Google Translate because it helped them understand vocabulary and complete assignments more easily. Similarly, Alhaisoni and Alhaysony

(2017) reported that students viewed Google Translate positively as it provided quick translations and supported their comprehension of English learning materials. In addition, Samad, Farahdiba, and Sunra (2023) highlighted that students maintained positive perceptions of Google Translate because it facilitated quick and easy text translation. However, the students also realized that the translation results still needed to be checked for accuracy.

Although previous studies have shown that students generally have positive perceptions of Google Translate, most of those studies primarily focused on its basic benefits and were conducted in different educational settings with different student demographics. Given the ongoing debate regarding grammatical inaccuracies and dependency mentioned earlier, the findings from previous studies may not fully represent the unique experiences and perspectives of pre-service teachers at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang. Therefore, this study is conducted to investigate English education students' perceptions of the use of Google Translate in English language learning at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang.

English Education students have different learning experiences because they study English more intensively and use English in various academic activities. As future English teachers, their perceptions of Google Translate are important to understand because they may influence how they use technology in the learning process and how they integrate technology into future teaching practices (Kurniawan & Fitriani, 2024; Benson, 2023).

Based on the researcher's preliminary observation, many students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang

use Google Translate when learning English. They use the application to understand vocabulary, translate texts, complete assignments, and support their learning activities. However, their perceptions regarding the use of Google Translate in English language learning have not been systematically investigated.

Based on previous studies reviewed by the researcher, there has been no study specifically investigating English Education students' perceptions of the use of Google Translate in English language learning at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang. Therefore, this study is conducted to investigate their perceptions and provide detailed information about the use of Google Translate in the context of English language learning at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "**English Education Students' Perceptions of the Use of Google Translate in English Language Learning at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang.**"

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background above, the research problem of this study is formulated as follows: What are the perceptions of English Education students at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang regarding the use of Google Translate in English language learning?

1.3 Aim of the Study

Based on the problem formulation above, the aim of this study is to investigate the perceptions of English Education students at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Kupang regarding the use of Google Translate in English language learning.

1.4 Significance of Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical significance.

1.4.1 Implication

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of knowledge related to the use of technology in English language learning, especially the use of Google Translate. This study may also provide additional information about students' perceptions of Google Translate and enrich previous studies related to technology-assisted language learning. Furthermore, the findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis (1989) and the concept of perception

proposed by Robbins and Judge (2017) in the context of English language learning.

1.4.2 Application

For Students:

This study is expected to help students understand both the advantages and limitations of Google Translate in English language learning. The findings may encourage students to use Google Translate more effectively and wisely in supporting their learning activities.

For Lecturers:

This study is expected to provide information about students' perceptions of Google Translate. The findings may help lecturers understand how students use Google Translate and consider appropriate ways to integrate technology into the learning process.

For the English Education Study Program:

The findings of this study are expected to provide useful information for the English Education Study Program regarding students' use of technology in language learning. The study may also support efforts to improve technology-assisted learning activities.

For Future Researchers:

This study is expected to serve as a reference for future researchers who are interested in conducting studies related to Google Translate, students' perceptions, and technology-assisted language learning.