

**THE ROLE OF MACHINE TRANSLATION IN ENHANCING ENGLISH
LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENTS' TRANSLATION
PERFORMANCE AT UNIVERSITAS LANCANG KUNING**

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Dhea Syahrina, 2026 : The Role of Machine Translation in Enhancing English Language Education Program Students' Translation Performance at Universitas Lancang Kuning

The increasing use of Machine Translation (MT) among students has raised questions regarding its role in the translation learning process, particularly whether it supports or hinders the development of translation performance. The purpose of the research is to investigate the role of Machine Translation in enhancing the translation performance of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. This research employed a qualitative research design, with data collected through semi-structured interviews, observation checklists, and analysis of students' translation assignments. The data were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. It was triangulated using the method triangulation technique. The findings indicate that Machine Translation functions as a supportive tool in enhancing translation accuracy, facilitating editing and critical awareness, increasing efficiency and productivity, supporting text comprehension, and strengthening confidence in translation tasks. In conclusion, this research shows that Machine Translation functions as a cognitive and pedagogical support tool when used critically and reflectively, suggesting its potential role as a supplementary resource in translation learning contexts.

Keywords: Machine Translation, Translation Performance, IT-Based Translation, Qualitative Research, English Language Education

ABSTRAK

Dhea Syahrina, 2026 : Peran Mesin Terjemahan dalam Peningkatan Kemampuan Terjemahan Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Lancang Kuning

Meningkatnya penggunaan Mesin Terjemahan di kalangan mahasiswa menimbulkan pertanyaan mengenai perannya dalam proses pembelajaran penerjemahan, khususnya apakah MT mendukung atau justru menghambat pengembangan kinerja penerjemahan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki peran Mesin Terjemahan dalam meningkatkan kemampuan terjemahan mahasiswa pada Program Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Lancang Kuning. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, lembar observasi, dan analisis tugas terjemahan mahasiswa. Data dianalisis menggunakan kerangka analisis data kualitatif yang dikemukakan oleh Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña, yang meliputi tahap kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Analisis ini ditriangulasikan menggunakan teknik triangulasi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa Mesin Terjemahan berfungsi sebagai alat pendukung dalam meningkatkan akurasi terjemahan, memudahkan proses penyuntingan dan kesadaran kritis, meningkatkan efisiensi dan produktivitas, mendukung pemahaman teks, serta memperkuat kepercayaan dalam tugas-tugas terjemahan. Sebagai kesimpulan, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Mesin Terjemahan berfungsi sebagai alat pendukung kognitif dan pedagogis ketika digunakan secara kritis dan reflektif, sehingga berpotensi menjadi sumber pendukung dalam konteks pembelajaran penerjemahan.

Kata Kunci: Mesin Terjemahan, Kemampuan Terjemahan, Terjemahan Berbasis Teknologi Informasi, Penelitian Kualitatif, Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

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PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN TULISAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

The practice of translation has been greatly impacted by developments in digital technology, notably through the use of machine translation (MT) applications like Microsoft Translator, DeepL, and Google Translate. In the field of English language instruction, MT has advanced from a straightforward supporting instrument to a neural machine translation (NMT) based system that is capable of producing more accurate, organic, and contextually relevant translations (Bahri & Mahadi, 2020). Increasingly, English Language Education students are incorporating MT into their study habits as a result of this quick evolution, particularly when translating scholarly and non academic works. Supported by advancements driven by artificial intelligence and universal accessibility through mobile devices, the use of MT in higher education has increased dramatically worldwide over the last five years.

Digitalization has transformed different areas of language learning, especially translation practices with the use of applications or apps, machine translation systems, and search engines. In the context of the education of the English language, these digital tools are important in supporting students' translation tasks and learning processes.

Apps are software programs that have been made to perform predefined functions for the benefit of users through digital means, specifically through the use of mobile phones and computers. In language learning, applications like Google Translate, DeepL, and Microsoft Translator, which are related to translation, give instantaneous access to both bilingual texts and language databases that help students in comprehension and productivity.

According to (Koehn, 2020), MT refers to the automatic process of translating text from one language to another using computation models. More specifically, NMT systems have been developed with deep learning-based architectures that are

able to understand context, idiomatic expressions, and complex structures, producing translations that sound more natural and contextually accurate.

On the other hand, search engines, like Google Search or Bing, are online systems that provide users with an instant way to retrieve information and reference materials in multiple languages (Croft et al., 2015). In translation learning, search engines support students in exploring contextual references, equivalent terminology, and authentic examples from real texts, complementing their use of MT and translation apps.

Regardless of these advances, studies show a gap regarding their pedagogical integration as apps, MT, and search engines to improve translation performance. Students are highly dependent on them, but there is still no clarity about their added value for the acquisition of linguistic accuracy, contextual equivalence, and analytical competence. The study will thus endeavor to provide an overview of how machine translation, part of a wider range of translation technology, within a higher education context, supports or restricts students' translation performances.

Previous studies highlight a research gap regarding how MT improves students' translation performance, despite its increasing usage. According to several academics, when employed pedagogically, such as in structured post editing, vocabulary enrichment, noticing grammatical structures, and increasing students' understanding of translation shifts, MT may aid learning (Mundt & Groves, 2020; Tsai, 2020). With proper guidance and integration into teaching, these results indicate that MT might serve as a cognitive framework that improves pupils' linguistic analysis.

On the other hand, other researchers warn against the passive and unguided dependence on MT, as this might lessen students' analytical interaction with the source material. For instance, Yamada (2019) discovered that students who use MT often miss sophisticated syntactic and semantic aspects, which results in lower translation accuracy and a poorer understanding of language. The limitations of MT in dealing with cultural allusions, idioms, and genre-specific norms, which human translators must acquire through intentional practice, exacerbate this issue.

Research on the use of MT in English Language Education programs in Indonesia is still sparse and fragmented. Previous research has primarily focused on students' attitudes toward MT (Fitriani, 2021), the correctness of Google Translate for various text types (Setyowati, 2019), or the function of MT in assisting academic writing assignments (Hapsari & Rachmawati, 2022). But there are few studies that have looked at how MT affects students' translation skills in translation classes, especially when it comes to textual coherence, contextual appropriateness, meaning equivalence, and accuracy. This gap is important because translation skills are core competencies in English language education programs, particularly for aspiring teachers who will need to translate instructional materials with accuracy.

This issue is further highlighted by an initial study conducted among pupils in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. Despite the fact that the majority of pupils said they used MT nearly every time they finished translation assignments, lecturers noticed significant disparities in their capacity to evaluate source texts, modify meaning based on context, and choose the right linguistic counterparts. The discrepancy between frequent MT usage and uneven translation quality implies that the mere existence of MT does not ensure better educational results.

Additionally, universities are under more pressure to figure out where MT belongs in the field of translation pedagogy as artificial intelligence becomes more and more integrated into education. A lack of explicit teaching criteria may cause students to become reliant rather than proficient, which could impair their future professional preparation. This matter emphasizes how important it is to do research on the potential application of MT as an educational resource that promotes cognitive growth, linguistic analysis, and post-editing competence, in addition to its use as a translation aid.

Consequently, it is imperative that this study fill the current gap in the literature about the function of MT in Indonesian higher education, especially in translation courses. By examining how MT improves or restricts translation performance among English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang

Kuning. This study, aims to provide a thorough understanding that will help educators create more successful MT integrated translation learning methods.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the research background, the researcher identified that:

- a. Students are becoming increasingly reliant on machine translation programs, but it is still unclear how effective these tools are at fostering translation skills.
- b. Since MT can either improve or impair translation performance depending on how it is used, its effect on translation performance is uncertain.
- c. There is still little research on the Indonesian higher education system, which leaves a knowledge gap about how MT helps students improve their translation skills.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This study is limited to examining the role of machine translation in enhancing the translation performance of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The focus is restricted to neural machine translation (NMT) based tools such as Google Translate and DeepL, and the aspects of translation performance analyzed include accuracy, coherence, contextual equivalence, and lexical appropriateness. The research adopts a qualitative approach and involves students who have completed translation courses, ensuring that the investigation remains aligned with the issues identified in the background and problem identification.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitation above, the problems of this research are formulated as follows:

How does machine translation enhance English Language Education Program students' translation performance at Universitas Lancang Kuning?

E. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study are to find out:

The purpose is to describe comprehensively how MT contributes to enhancing the translation performance of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

F. Significance of the Research

a. Theoretical Significance

This study is anticipated to make a significant contribution to the theoretical development of translation studies, especially in the expanding area of higher education technology assisted translation. There is a need for a greater theoretical understanding of how machine translation (MT) tools are changing translation learning and skill development as they become more and more integrated into academic environments. By looking at MT not just as a technological product but as a pedagogical and cognitive tool inside the translation classroom, this research addresses that demand.

The study also provides empirical insights into the cognitive processes that occur when students use neural machine translation (NMT) software. The study emphasizes the instructional roles of MT and its capacity to aid in meaning negotiation, linguistic problem solving, and analytical thinking by analyzing how students interpret, assess, and modify MT outputs. These discoveries enhance the theoretical discussion about the impact of digital technologies on learners' cognitive engagement and translation techniques.

Furthermore, the results of this research could improve current models of translation proficiency, particularly those that deal with the relationship between human translators and automated translation machines. Theoretical frameworks must evolve to include the role of MT in influencing translators' decision making as the line between human and machine translation continues to blur. By determining the degree to which MT improves, changes, or restricts essential aspects of translation ability, the findings of this study are anticipated to aid in this theoretical refinement.

b. Practical Significance

In practice, this study has important ramifications for students, instructors, and potential scholars in the field of translation education. The study provides students with a better understanding of how to use machine translation responsibly and strategically as a cognitive support tool to improve accuracy, contextual awareness, and post editing abilities. The results offer instructors helpful advice on how to incorporate MT into their teaching methods, enabling them to improve students' linguistic awareness, analytical thinking, and revision skills. This research lays the groundwork for potential investigations by future researchers into MT based pedagogy, comparative evaluations of MT tools, or longitudinal analyses of the development of translation proficiency in technology enhanced learning environments. These practical contributions, taken as a whole, help improve the relevance and caliber of translation training at the postsecondary level.

G. Defenition of Key Terms

For clarity and to establish a common understanding of the major concepts discussed in this research, certain key terms are defined as follows:

a. Machine Translation (MT)

Using computer-based systems, machine translation automates the process of translating text between languages. In this study, MT refers exclusively to neural machine translation (NMT) technology, which uses deep learning models to produce translations that are more contextually relevant, coherent, and natural than those produced by earlier rule-based or statistical methods. (Koehn, 2020) claims that NMT systems learn linguistic patterns from massive datasets, allowing them to generate translations that are very similar to human language. In this study, MT is seen as both a digital instrument and a cognitive aid that might impact a student's analytical and decision-making skills during translation assignments.

b. Translation Performance

The linguistic and cognitive skills necessary to effectively communicate meaning between a source language and a target language are known as translation performance. This skill encompasses the capacity to utilize appropriate lexical and grammatical structures, maintain semantic correctness, guarantee contextual and cultural appropriateness, and attain coherence in the translated text. Translation performance, according to Molina & Hurtado (2018), is a representation of a translator's ability to comprehend the source text, evaluate its subtleties, and create an equivalent message in the target language. The main metric in this research for assessing how well pupils translate texts and how the use of machine translation technologies may either help or hinder the growth of these skills is translation performance.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

This study concludes that Machine Translation (MT) plays a significant and supportive role in enhancing the translation performance of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The findings show that MT contributes positively to multiple aspects of translation performance, including accuracy, editing and critical awareness, efficiency and productivity, ease of understanding, and confidence and learning support.. In this regard, students have been found to use MT as a tool that supports their understanding of a text, as well as a tool that supports their translation process. In addition, students have been found to use MT as a tool that supports their checking of grammar. However, it was also clear that students have not used MT as a replacement tool but rather as a tool that supports their translation process through their analytical engagement with it.

B. Suggestion

On the basis of the findings of this research, some recommendations are made for the concerned stakeholders. For students, the use of Machine Translation as a learning tool instead of a final translation tool is recommended. Students should continue to enhance their critical awareness skills through the evaluation of MT output, post-editing, and critical reflection on translation decisions to enhance their translation competence skills. For lecturers, the use of Machine Translation in translation and IT-Based Translation courses should be done in a planned manner. Lecturers are advised to train students on the proper use of Machine Translation, especially in post-editing, critical evaluation of MT output, and awareness of contextual and semantic accuracy.

For educational institutions, it is recommended that guidelines and support for the use of MT be incorporated into the curriculum. This will help ensure that MT is used for good and in a productive manner as part of technology-enhanced translation learning. For future researchers, further research may be conducted

using different research approaches, larger participant samples, or different levels of proficiency. Future research may also be conducted to compare the effectiveness of different MT tools or the long-term effects of MT on translation competence development.

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