# The Teachers' Perception towards the Use of Google Translate As a Translation Tool

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## Abstract

This study aims to determine teachers' perceptions of the use of Google Translate as a translation tool. The problem of this study is to explain the teachers' perception towards the use of Google Translate as a translation tool. This study uses qualitative descriptive as the research method. The data of this study uses Questionnaire and Interview. The subject is the teachers at Hikmatul Fadhillah and there are 23 teachers. The results of this research showed that teachers can get translation results quickly and easily from Google translate. Almost all teachers realize that Google translate as a translation tool could not be a good tool because the grammar of the translation results is inappropriate. Although this application has weaknesses, teachers still have a positive perception of its use. It is found that all respondents stated they had positive perceptions towards the use of Google translate as a translation tool. Furthermore, the accuracy of Google Translate makes teachers continue to learn and practice grammar while also increasing their translation skills.

**Keywords:** google translate, teachers' perception, translation tool

# Persepsi Guru terhadap Penggunaan Google Translate sebagai Alat Terjemahan

**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi guru terhadap penggunaan Google Translate sebagai alat penerjemahan. Masalah penelitian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan persepsi guru terhadap penggunaan Google Translate sebagai alat penerjemahan. Penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif kualitatif sebagai metode penelitian. Data penelitian ini menggunakan Kuesioner dan Wawancara. Subyeknya adalah guru-guru di Hikmatul Fadhillah dengan jumlah guru sebanyak 23 orang. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa guru bisa mendapatkan hasil terjemahan dengan cepat dan mudah dari google translate. Hampir semua guru menyadari bahwa google translate sebagai alat penerjemahan tidak bisa menjadi alat yang baik karena tata bahasa hasil terjemahan tidak sesuai. Meskipun aplikasi ini memiliki kelemahan, namun guru tetap memiliki persepsi positif terhadap penggunaannya. Ditemukan bahwa semua responden menyatakan persepsi positif terhadap penggunaan google translate sebagai alat penerjemahan. Lebih jauh lagi, keakuratan Google Translate membuat para guru terus belajar dan berlatih tata bahasa sekaligus meningkatkan kemampuan menerjemahkannya.

**Kata Kunci:** google translate, persepsi guru, alat terjemahan

## INTRODUCTION

In this digital era, technology is playing that has a very important role in every aspect of human life. According to Brey (2009), although it is difficult to develop a definition for technology, people do indeed know what it is and can discern between human-made things and those that occur naturally. It is undeniable that technological advancements also have positive effects on the education sector. In this case, the existence of smartphones, the object with all services brings many conveniences that are helpful for learning.

Technology has an affective relationship with English language education. For example, the teacher facilitates a recording of English conversations and speakers to assist students in their listening skills. This relationship really helps students communicate in English. However, Communication in English can be done in 2 ways through spoken and written. When speaking or writing, teachers need translation tools to help them communicate perfectly. Almost every people use the translation tools to help people work on learning a foreign language (Amanda, 2019). Translation tools are not only popular among translators but also among EFL learners. Start with portable dictionaries such as Alfalink and then expand to

more complex translation tools (Mahardika, 2017). But, a first translation tool is a dictionary. Then, technological developments continue to produce a new tool called Google Translate. So the translation tool that is popularly used by users is Google Translate. Since, it can be accessed on all smartphones.

In times of a pandemic like now, where people are connected via smartphones, even teachers are accustomed to using smartphones to help them in teaching. Smartphones are also used to translate English words into Indonesian using Google translate on smartphones. Teachers in schools who prioritize English as the first language daily will certainly not be separated from the English language material. To understand the material, the teachers try to translate the material into Indonesian or vice versa before teaching or looking for the meaning of a word on Google Translate. Sometimes the teachers have difficulty translating English, such as forgetting the meaning of the word in a textbook. One of the main obstacles faced is the ability to translate. (House, 2009) argues that translation is the process of substituting a text in one's language.

Google Translate is a free multilingual neural machine translation service developed by Google, which can translate texts and websites from one language to another. The use of Google translate in the classroom is very helpful for teachers to translate text in books and also accelerates vocabulary mastery, because the translation results can be known directly and practically without the need to carry a thick English dictionary. The translation results using Google Translate can only be translated into general text. Google Translate does not provide accurate translation results. Teachers have also realized this, so most teachers use Google Translate just to look for the meaning of a word for example the word "Slaughtering" which means "menyembelih". And also, the results of Google Translate are analyzed by the teacher in order to get translation results that are equivalent to the target language.

Based on the teacher's experience at Hikmatul Fadhilah that Google Translate has an important role in distance teaching where teachers have to make a learning video for their students in English. In addition, a teacher must follow the development of the curriculum so that it is required to develop textbooks in 2 languages, namely English and Indonesian. Due to the lack of knowledge as translators, teachers use Google Translate to help their work. Then, a researcher found several problems, some teachers only searched vocabulary on Google Translate and the teacher wanted to get results directly and quickly from the online translation. Also, many teachers rely on Google Translate to translate English-

language material to understand the material. So, tools for translating are urgently needed. Another point why the tool is important due to the use of English as a medium of communication and instruction. In relation to the reasons stated in advance, the writer is interested in conducting research dealing with the teachers' perceptions towards the use of Google Translate as a translation tool.

**METHOD**

This research used qualitative research. According to Lincoln (1994), Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Creswell, 1998) states "Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem".

In this research, the data were the answer of questionnaires taken from the teachers in Hikmatul Fadhillah. And the source of data was the teachers in Hikmatul Fadhillah. The researcher conducted this study on 23 Google Translate users at Hikmatul Fadhillah in order to obtain a diverse set of experiences and perspectives for this study. Because people utilize Google Translate to translate text, they have a lot of opportunities to express their experiences and ideas.

This research used Questionnaire, and Interview. Data collection was divided into three steps, namely in the first step the researcher gave a questionnaire by using Google form. Participants complete the agreement to fill out the questionnaire properly and conduct interviews (to several participants). In the second step, participants complete a questionnaire that asks about teachers' perceptions using Google Translate with a focus on goals, perceptions, strengths, weaknesses, problems, and solutions. Then, the last step was interviewing. The researcher interviewed 5 teachers who had been selected based on their responses in the questionnaire. The qualitative data is used in this study to explain in more detail the teachers' perception of the use of Google Translate.

After collecting the data, the researcher is then continued to analyzing the data based on the theory proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018), the steps are:

1. The data collected by distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. The respondents are Teachers in SDIT Hikmatul Fadhillah Medan.

2. The data obtained by researcher by way of distributing questionnaires then summarizing, choosing, and focusing information on issues which can be in accordance with the analysis targets.

3. Presented of data carried out after the info has been summarized. The data obtained from the outcomes of the questionnaires are analyzed after which offered in table.

4. The last part is the conclusion drawn. Conclusion drawing is verified as the analyst proceeds. The result of the analysis of the instruments will be provided in the result of analysis in teachers' perception towards the use of Google Translate as a translation tool.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher found about teachers' perceptions of using Google Translate with a focus on goals, strengths, weaknesses, problems, and solutions. This examination was carried out by interviewing several teachers at Hikmatul Fadhilah. The researcher conducted this study on 23 Google Translate users at Hikmatul Fadhillah in order to obtain a diverse set of experiences and perspectives for this study. Because people utilize Google Translate to translate text, they have a lot of opportunities to express their experiences and ideas.

**Findings**

After the research was conducted by distributing questionnaires, in the close-ended questionnaire, the researchers used Agree, Neutral, and Disagree questions. What is meant by Neutral is that the respondent uses the translation tool "rarely and sometimes" and then analyzes the data according to the research method. The following findings from the questionnaire responses are presented in the form of the table below:

Table 1. Google Translate Use In Daily Life

| No. | Questions | Responses |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Do you use Google Translate? | MM, said, "Agree, I always use Google translate." |
| | | AH, said, "Agree, I always use Google Translate to help me translate a text." |
| 2. | Do you often translate a text? | AH, said, "Neutral, I do not translate text very often; instead, I do so when I'm curious about its meaning." |
| | | SW, said, "Agree, I frequently use Google Translate to translate text, particularly to |

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| | | better understand teaching materials for students." |
| 3. | Do you have Google translate the application in your gadget? | MM, said, "Agree, I use Google Translate as my translation tool, and I also use an offline dictionary that I downloaded from the Play Store as a machine translator." |
| | | AR, said, "Agree, I've never used another machine translator because Google Translate is all I've ever known. So, I just download the Google translate app." |
| 4. | Do you use other machine translators? | MM, said, "Neutral, I use another translation tool. On my phone, I use Google Translate and an offline dictionary application." |
| | | AH, said, "Disagree, I'm just familiar with and utilize Google Translate." |
| 5. | Do you often translate spoken texts? | MM, said, "Disagree, she use Google Translate more frequently as a teacher to translate written texts, particularly on teaching materials." |
| | | AR, said, "Neutral, I often translate spoken texts rather than written texts, in my opinion. When I need to grasp the content of someone's speech but the intonation is too quick, I turn to Google Translate right away." |
| 6. | Do you often translate written texts? | MM, said, "Agree, As I previously stated, I frequently translate written texts to make my teaching materials more understandable." |
| | | SW, said, "Neutral, Although I typically translate written texts, this does not rule out the possibility of me interpreting spoken ones. I translate spoken text when I wish to interpret music. I also translate written texts when translating teaching materials. So, I translated both types of text." |
| 7. | Does using Google translate to make your works easier? | MM, said, "Agree, It was helpful. Google Translate can greatly assist them in their work. It helped me a lot because I needed quick results so that my task could be completed quickly." |
| | | FA, said, "Agree, It was quite helpful in completing my work." |
| 8. | Does Google translate help you improve your translation skills? | MM, said, "Agree, Yes, Google Translate does assist me in strengthening my translating abilities." |
| | | FA, said, "Agree, in my perspective, Google translate is really helpful in strengthening my translation abilities. However, several sentences/words in the translated text do not have the same meaning as the source text." |
| 9. | Does Google translate can translate text perfectly? | MM, said, "Neutral, when translating word for word, the results of the translation from Google translate according to its meaning, but when |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | translating sentence by sentence, the meaning differs from the source text. As a result, Google Translate can accurately translate word for word." |
| | | AR, said, "Disagree, since I translated the text sentence by sentence in order to complete my job quickly, but the results do not correspond to the meaning of the source text." |
| 10. | Do you translate text from Google translate word by word? | MM, said, "Neutral, Depending on the deadline of my work, I sometimes translate texts from word to word, and other times from sentence to sentence or paragraph to paragraph." |
| | | AH, said, "Disagree, I do not translate word by word, I use Google Translate to translate paragraph by paragraph so that my task is completed quickly and efficiently." |
| 11. | Do you translate text from Google translate sentence by sentence? | AH, said, "Agree, I translate English text sentence by sentence in order to complete my work quickly." |
| | | AR, said, "Neutral, I often translate by one sentence, even per paragraph. but sometimes I also translate word by word when I want to know the meaning of that one word." |
| 12. | Do you translate text from Google translate paragraph by paragraph? | MM, said, "Agree, I just want to know the meaning of a text so I translate paragraph by paragraph." |
| | | AH, said, "Agree, To make my job easier to understand, I translate the text as a whole, namely paragraph by paragraph, as I stated previously." |
| 13. | Can you understand the text without Google Translate? | MM, said, "Disagree, It's really difficult for me to understand a text because of my poor vocabulary." |
| | | AH, said, "Neutral, Some texts can be comprehended, but others cannot, according to Google Translate users. To find out the meaning of a text that you don't understand, you'll need to use Google Translate." |
| 14. | Does Google Translate make you lazy to open a dictionary? | MM, said, "Neutral, Although Google Translate is more practical than a dictionary, I still use a dictionary to double-check the translation results." |
| | | AH, said, "Agree, Because google translate is easier to use than a dictionary, users are less likely to utilize it because the dictionary takes longer to get translation results." |
| 15. | Do you use Google Translate to check the meaning of unknown words? | MM, said, "Neutral, depending on which one I bring, if I bring a dictionary when translating and find difficult words in the text, I use a dictionary. but if I don't bring a dictionary, so I just use Google translate." |
| | | SW, said, "Agree, Google Translate can quickly |

| 16. | Does Google Translate enrich your vocabulary? | and accurately find these difficult words." |
| | | MM, said, "Agree, I can remember the new vocabulary from the translation once I translate the text with Google Translate." |
| | | AH, said, "Agree, I agree, however in adding to using Google Translate to translate text, I can also expand my vocabulary by reading the meaning of my translation." |
| 17. | Do you use Google Translate to get results directly and quickly? | MM, said, "Agree, I use Google Translate for quick and accurate results." |
| | | AR, said, "Agree, Google Translate is an online translation tool with a lot of features and the ability to interpret quickly." |
| 18. | Can Google Translate make your work easier? | MM, said, "Agree, As I previously stated, Google Translate can quickly produce translations, which makes my job easier." |
| | | AH, said, "Agree, This translation tool improves and simplifies my work." |
| 19. | Do you always recheck the Google Translate's result before you submit it? | MM, said, "Neutral, I sometimes double-check the results of Google Translate to ensure that there are no grammatical errors or differences in meaning." |
| | | AH, said, "Agree, The Google Translate results must be double-checked to ensure that the meaning is correct." |
| 20. | Do you feel more confident using Google Translate in producing a text in class? | MM, said, "Neutral, Depending on who I talk to in class, if it's just my students, I'm confident in the results of the Google Translate translation, but if there are other teachers in the room, I'm not so sure." |
| | | AH, said, "Neutral, Because I am not confident in the translation, I always double-check it with a dictionary before speaking in class." |

In the open-ended questionnaire, there are 5 questions related to the strengths, weaknesses, problems and solutions when using Google Translate. The following findings from the questionnaire responses are presented in graphic form below:

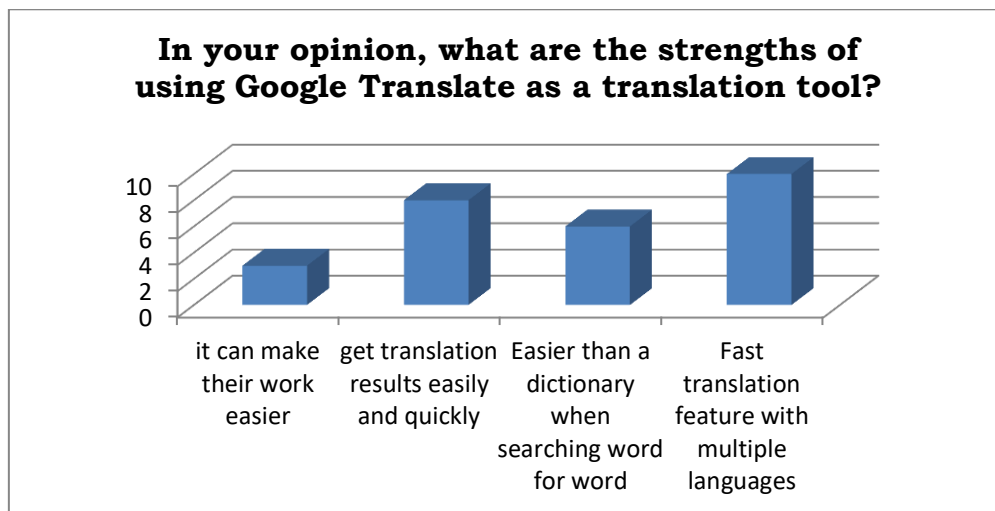**The strengths of Google Translate**



Figure 1. The Strengths of Google Translate

The purpose of this first question is to learn more about the advantages of utilizing Google Translate as a translation tool. Respondents to this question have some answers in common with others. According to the responses, "it can make their work easier" was chosen 3 times, and "get translation results easily and quickly" was chosen 8 times. "Easier than a dictionary when searching word for word" was selected 6 times, and "Fast translation feature with multiple languages" is selected 3 times. "Getting translated results quickly and easily" and "Easier than a dictionary when searching word by word" are the two choices with the most results. They explained:

> MM, said, "In my perspective, the strengths of using Google Translate are to make it easier for me to translate text and to give me more flexibility in terms of time so that I don't spend time translating text."

> AH, said, "The strengths of using Google Translate are that it saves time when translating a word or sentence, and it can also translate into a variety of languages other than English."

**The weaknesses of Google Translate**

**According to you, what are the weaknesses of using Google Translate as a translation tool?**
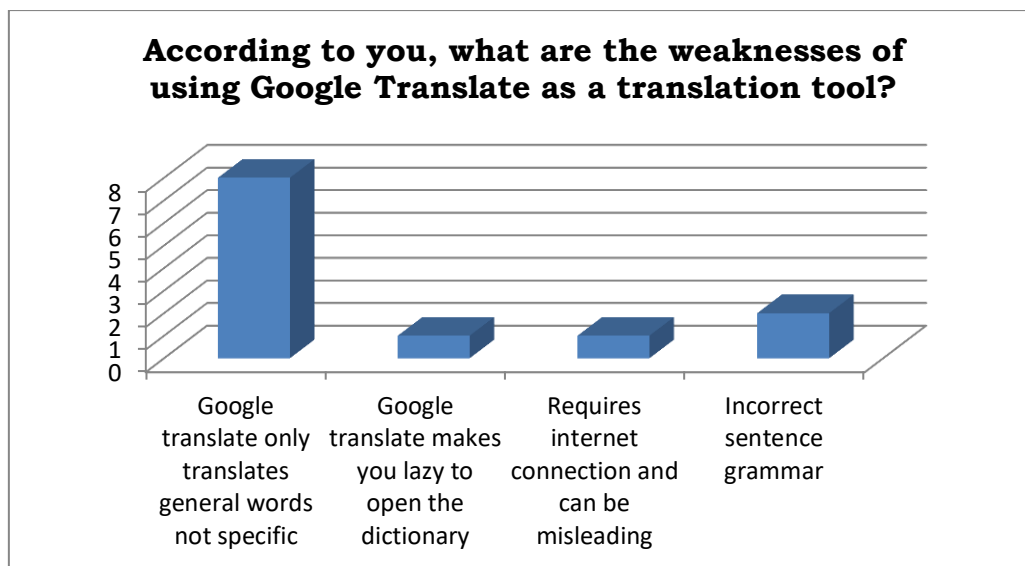
Figure 2. The Weaknesses of Google Translate

This second question is intended to learn more about the disadvantages of utilizing Google Translate as a translation tool. Some of the responses to this question were similar to those of others. According to the responses "Google translate only translates general words not specific" was chosen 8 times, while "Google translate makes you lazy to open the dictionary" was chosen 1 time, "Requires internet connection and can be misleading" was chosen once, and "Incorrect sentence grammar." was chosen 10 times. The two options with the most results are "the grammar of the statement is incorrect" and "Google translate only translates generic words, not specific words." They go on to say:

> MM, said, "Google Translate's weakness is that it can only translate in general terms, not in specific terms."

> AH, said, "Google Translate has a weakness in grammatical constructions."

**The problems faced by users of Google Translate**



**What are the problems faced by users of Google Translate as a translation tool?**
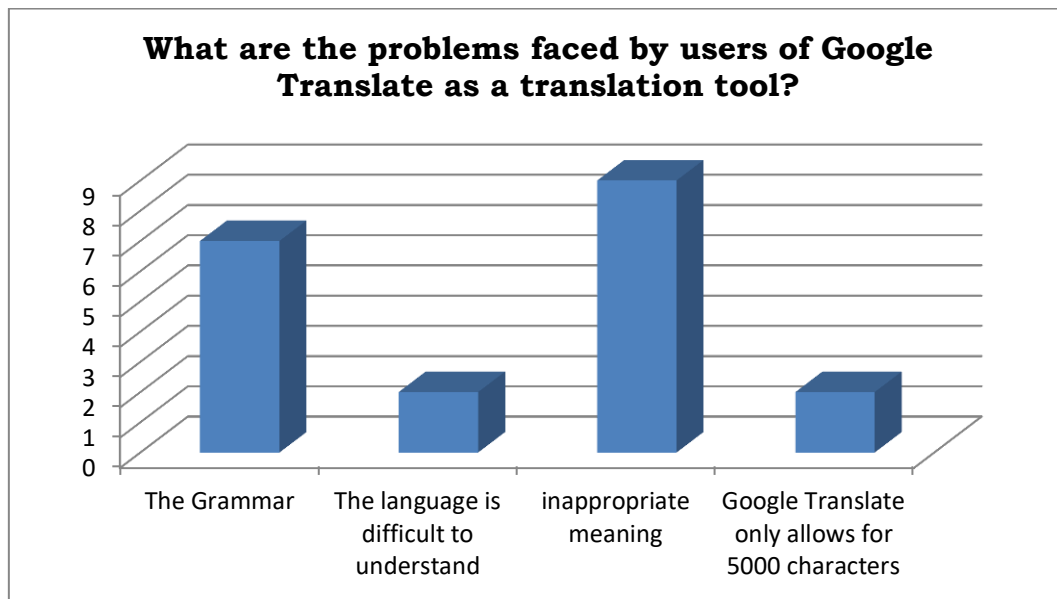
Figure 3. The Problems Faced by Users

This third question aims to learn more about the problems that Google Translate users face as a translation tool. Some of the responses to this question were similar to those of others. According to the replies "Grammar" was chosen 7 times, while "The language is difficult to understand" was chosen twice, 9 times of "inappropriate meaning" was chosen. And "Google Translate only allows for 5000 characters" was selected twice. The two choices with the most results were "inappropriate meaning" and "grammar." They go on to say:

> MM, said, "The problem faced by users of Google Translate as a translator tool is that sometimes the arrangement or grammar is wrong and also some words are not appropriate."

> AH, said, "One of the problems I face is translating the meaning of long sentences or paragraphs; sometimes the translated meanings do not correspond to the target language."

**The solution to the problems faced by users with the translation results from Google Translate**
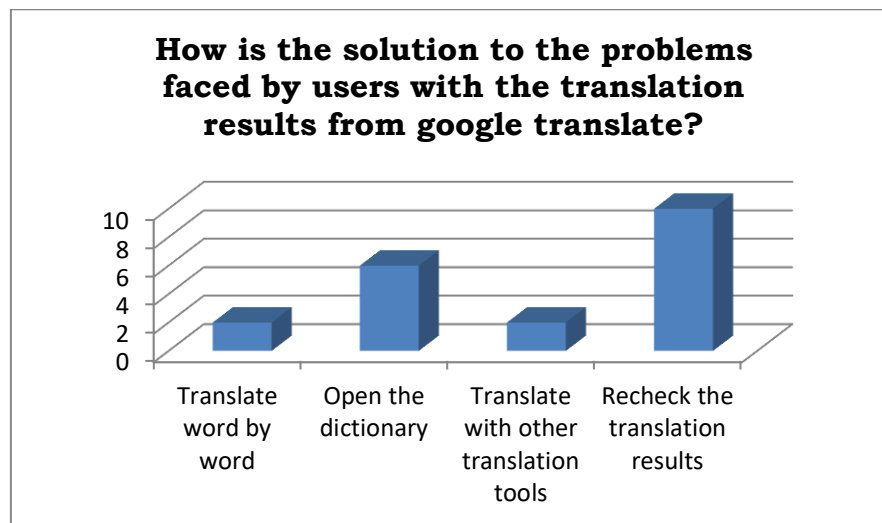


Figure 4. The Solutions to the Problems Faced by Users

The fourth question aims to learn more about how to solve problems that users have with Google Translate translations. Some of the responses to this question were similar to those of others. According to the responses, "Recheck the translation results" was chosen 10 times, and "Open the dictionary to adjust the Google translate translation results" was chosen 6 times. "Translate word by word" was chosen twice, as was "Translate with other translation tools" twice. The two choices with the most results are "Recheck the translation results" and "Open the dictionary to adjust the results of the Google translate translation." They said:

> MM, said, "The solution is that after I translate, I double-check the grammar to see if it is correct, and if it is, I can accept the translation results."

> AH, said, "I usually try to improve the translation of some words that don't seem to suit."

**Discussion**

After presenting data from the questionnaire, the researcher will present data related to determining respondents' perceptions of the use of Google translate as a translation tool. This assessment was carried out by the author on the responses of respondents in part 1 of the questionnaire. The questions given are

20, 18 positive questions and 2 negative questions. Each respondent who chooses 'Agree' will be given a score of 3, 'Neutral' with a score of 2 'Disagree' with a score of 1.

Table 2. Results of the Assessment

| Respondents | Positive Question | Negative Question | Result |
|---|---|---|---|
| MM | 46 | 2 | Positive |
| AH | 31 | 4 | Positive |
| M | 40 | 4 | Positive |
| KL | 48 | 4 | Positive |
| SW | 40 | 3 | Positive |
| ARL | 49 | 4 | Positive |
| FH | 40 | 5 | Positive |
| N | 49 | 4 | Positive |
| DA | 24 | 3 | Positive |
| EW | 46 | 4 | Positive |
| R | 45 | 4 | Positive |
| AM | 45 | 2 | Positive |
| MD | 42 | 2 | Positive |
| NSD | 42 | 3 | Positive |
| KA | 45 | 4 | Positive |
| MR | 44 | 4 | Positive |
| H | 43 | 4 | Positive |
| LSN | 40 | 3 | Positive |
| AIP | 32 | 4 | Positive |
| SN | 39 | 4 | Positive |
| EY | 40 | 4 | Positive |
| AA | 32 | 4 | Positive |
| MV | 32 | 4 | Positive |

According to the researcher's manual calculation of the value, all respondents have positive perceptions toward the use of Google Translate as a translation tool.

**CONCLUSION**

This study aims to determine teachers' perceptions of the use of Google Translate as a translation tool. There is a conclusion drawn from the findings and discussion of the previous chapter. Based on the results of research on 23 respondents who are teachers at Hikmatul Fadhilah, the teachers have stated that the teacher's purpose is to use Google Translate to translate both spoken and written texts. In their opinion, Google Translate cannot perfectly translate a text; hence they simply translate word by word in a text. Moreover, teachers can get translation results quickly and easily from Google translate. Almost all teachers

realized that Google translate as a translation tool could not be a good tool because the grammar of the translation results is inappropriate. Although this application has weaknesses, teachers still have a positive perception of its use. It was found that all respondents stated they had positive perceptions towards the use of Google translate as a translation tool. Furthermore, the accuracy of Google Translate made teachers continued to learn and practice grammar while also increasing their translation skills. So, Google translate is not a recommended application but it is still an alternative application in translation.

After completing the writing of this research, the teacher's perception towards the use of Google translate is positive, so it is recommended that further research be able to analyze in-depth the results of the teacher's translation with Google translate. It is advisable to provide feedback and take these perceptions in consideration.

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