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

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Abstract:
The introduction of Machine Translation (MT) tools like Google Translate and DeepL has been a major impact on translation methods in language instruction due to the rapid advancement of digital technology. The goal of this research is to look at how Machine Translation can enhance the translation abilities of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The study used a qualitative descriptive methodology. Students who had finished courses in IT-Based Translation and Translation were interviewed in a systematic manner to gather data. Using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's qualitative analysis approach, which comprises data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion formulation and validation, the data were examined. The results show that machine translation is essential in a number of ways to aid students' translation skills. By helping pupils improve their translation accuracy, develop their editing and critical awareness, boost their efficiency and productivity in completing translation assignments, make complex texts easier to understand, and increase their confidence in translation tasks, MT helps students succeed in their translation studies. Since students are still conducting post-editing and critical analysis of the machine's output, they said that MT is used more as a supplementary aid than as the finished product of translation. When utilized thoughtfully and reflectively in translation instruction, these results suggest that Machine Translation can serve as a valuable cognitive and instructional support tool. As a result, MT integrated as an additional learning tool into university translation classes.

Keyword: Machine translation, Translation Performance, Translation Learning, EFL Students, Technology in Translation

1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of machine translation (MT) systems has brought about significant changes to the way languages are taught and translated. Nowadays, students frequently use translation software like Microsoft Translator, Google Translate, and DeepL. These tools rely on Neural Machine Translation (NMT), which employs deep learning architectures to generate translations that are more accurate and contextually relevant than previous rule-based approaches.

Language education in higher education has seen an increase in the use of digital tools. When working on translation assignments, particularly when dealing with academic writings, English Language Education students often use MT. By providing immediate translation results, MT assists students in comprehending unfamiliar vocabulary, sentence patterns, and contextual significance.

The growing dependence on MT has sparked debate among educators and scholars, notwithstanding its benefits. Some research suggests that by enhancing pupils' vocabulary, grammatical understanding, and editing abilities, MT may help in the learning of translation. For instance, Mundt & Groves (2020) contend that, when paired with guided post-editing exercises, MT may serve as a cognitive scaffold. Tsai (2019) discovered a similar result:

students who used MT wisely were able to enhance their vocabulary selection and sentence construction.

Other academics caution, nevertheless, that an overreliance on MT may have a detrimental impact on students' ability to translate. According to Yamada (2019), pupils frequently accept MT outputs without critically assessing them, which may lessen their analytical interaction with the original text. Consequently, the quality of the translation may suffer if students are unable to spot semantic errors or contextual discrepancies.

The pedagogical use of machine translation is still understudied in Indonesia. Earlier research has mostly looked at students' opinions of MT tools or how well Google Translate can translate certain kinds of texts. Nonetheless, there is still not enough study on how MT enhances students' translation abilities in translation lessons.

This gap is especially important in English Language Education programs, where future English instructors need translation skills. Students are expected to translate texts accurately, preserving semantic and contextual equivalence between the source and target languages. Machine Translation has undergone substantial improvements with the advent of Neural Machine Translation (NMT). Unlike other Machine Translation methods that relied on rules or statistical data to generate translations, NMT employs artificial neural networks to learn from data. According to Koehn (2020), Machine Translation systems employing NMT have the ability to generate translations that are not only fluent but also contextually accurate. This is because NMT systems focus on sentences rather than words when translating. With such improvements, Machine Translation has found widespread use not only in professional settings but also in learning environments.

In learning environments, Machine Translation has increasingly found use not only as a translation tool but also as a learning tool. O'Neill (2019) argues that Machine Translation has the ability to help learners learn through exploring linguistic structures, lexical choices, and even compare translations. Through critical analysis of Machine Translation outputs, learners improve not only their analytical skills but also gain deeper insights into meaning construction.

Moreover, there are also studies that pointed to the pedagogical benefits of Machine Translation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning settings. For instance, Lee (2020) revealed that students who utilized Machine Translation in translation tasks showed positive results in their vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Moreover, according to Niño (2020), Machine Translation can also act as a scaffolding tool to help students comprehend complex reading materials and even create strategies in translating those texts.

However, despite its benefits, it is also important to emphasize that Machine Translation is not a replacement for human translation skills. As Bowker & Buitrago Ciro (2019) explained, although it is possible to immediately produce a translated text using Machine Translation tools, it is still important to evaluate and edit it to ensure that it is of high quality. Hence, it is also important that students learn to evaluate Machine Translation in order to ensure that it is still of high accuracy and appropriateness in a particular context.

Considering these perspectives, the integration of Machine Translation into translation pedagogy requires a balanced approach. Students should be encouraged to use MT as a learning support tool while still developing their linguistic competence and analytical thinking skills. This study therefore aims to investigate the role of Machine Translation in enhancing the translation performance of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

As a result, the purpose of this study is to examine how Machine Translation improves the translation proficiency of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. Integrating technology more successfully into translation pedagogy may be aided by comprehending the function of MT in language acquisition.

Another important aspect related to the use of Machine Translation in language learning is the development of digital literacy among students. In modern educational environments, students are expected not only to master linguistic competence but also to be able to use digital

tools effectively. Machine Translation tools provide learners with opportunities to interact with language data in a digital format, which encourages them to explore multiple translation alternatives and evaluate linguistic accuracy. According to Lee (2020a), the integration of translation technologies into language education can enhance students' digital literacy while also supporting the development of translation competence.

Furthermore, the availability of Machine Translation tools has significantly changed students' learning behavior in translation activities. Instead of relying solely on dictionaries or traditional reference materials, students increasingly consult online translation tools to obtain immediate linguistic support. While this practice can improve learning efficiency, it also requires students to develop critical evaluation skills. Fredholm (2019) argues that students who actively analyze machine-generated translations are more likely to develop a deeper understanding of language structures and translation strategies.

In addition, Machine Translation can also contribute to the development of learner autonomy in language learning. Autonomous learning refers to students' ability to take responsibility for their own learning process by utilizing various learning resources. Machine Translation allows students to independently explore vocabulary meanings, sentence structures, and contextual interpretations without relying entirely on teacher guidance. As a result, MT can support independent learning practices that are essential in higher education settings.

Another perspective emphasizes the role of Machine Translation in improving students' awareness of cross-linguistic differences. When students compare the machine-generated translation with the original text, they become more aware of differences in grammar, syntax, and meaning between the source and target languages. This comparative analysis helps students develop a more sophisticated understanding of translation processes and linguistic equivalence. Consequently, Machine Translation can serve as a useful pedagogical tool for raising students' metalinguistic awareness.

Despite these potential benefits, the successful integration of Machine Translation into translation learning largely depends on how educators guide students in using the technology. Teachers play a crucial role in helping students understand the limitations of Machine Translation and encouraging them to apply critical thinking when evaluating translation outputs. Therefore, investigating how students actually use Machine Translation in translation tasks becomes essential for understanding its pedagogical impact. This study seeks to explore the role of Machine Translation in enhancing the translation performance of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

2. METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive research design in order to explore students' experiences in using Machine Translation in translation tasks. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows researchers to understand participants' perceptions and cognitive processes in depth.

The research was conducted in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The participants were students who had completed both Translation and IT-Based Translation courses. These students were selected because they already possessed theoretical knowledge and practical experience in translation activities.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling. Five students were chosen as research participants because they met the criteria and were able to provide relevant information about the use of Machine Translation in translation tasks. Data were collected through structured interviews. The interview questions were developed based on five indicators of translation performance: accuracy support, editing and critical awareness, efficiency and productivity, ease of understanding, and confidence and learning support.

The collected data were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The analysis process consisted of three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. To ensure the credibility of the findings, triangulation techniques were applied during the analysis process.

In addition, the interview method was carried out individually in order for the participants to freely express their experiences and opinions. The interview sessions were based on the experiences of the students in using the Machine Translation tools such as Google Translate and DeepL in the performance of the translation task. The interview was carried out in a semi-formal atmosphere in the field of academia in order to create a comfortable atmosphere for the participants to freely express themselves in relation to the interview questions based on the use and performance of the translation task.

The interview questions were broken down into thematic categories that were relevant to the study goals. Each category covered a different aspect of translation performance, such as efficiency and productivity, editing awareness, accuracy support, confidence in translation work, and ease of comprehension. The purpose of the questions was to find out how students utilize Machine Translation software when doing translation work and how this software affects their learning of translation.

Participants were asked in interview sessions to discuss their experience using Machine Translation technologies like Google Translate and DeepL to translate academic materials. Additionally, they were urged to describe the methods they employ to assess and modify the translation output produced by these tools. By using this method, the researcher was able to gather comprehensive data about students' translation techniques and their opinions of the usefulness of Machine Translation.

Each interview lasted anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes. The interviews were structured in a way that allowed participants to expand on their answers and provide more information about their translation experiences. This enabled the researcher to gather more complete and detailed information about the function of Machine Translation in learning translation.

In order for the accuracy and precision of the data collected through the interview method to be maintained, the responses obtained from the interview sessions were recorded and transcribed. The responses were analyzed in order for the meaningful statements in relation to the use and performance of the Machine Translation in the field of translation learning to be identified. This helped the researcher to categorize the responses based on the indicators such as accuracy support, editing and critical awareness, efficiency and productivity, ease of understanding, and confidence in the performance of the translation task.

Additionally, to make the findings more reliable, the researcher used data triangulation, which involved comparing the findings of different participants as well as looking for common themes in the findings. This ensured that the findings were not based on a single point of view but were based on a common pattern among all the participants. This helped the researcher to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the role of Machine Translation in enhancing students' translation skills in the English Language Education Program.

The researcher created an interview protocol prior to gathering the data to guarantee that the study procedure was carried out methodically. Numerous questions about students' experiences utilizing Machine Translation tools in translation assignments were included in the interview guideline. Participants were encouraged to offer thorough answers about their use of machine translation, the advantages they saw, and the difficulties they faced when translating texts using these questions.

The researcher also informed the participants of the study's objective before conducting the interviews. It was crucial to take this action in order to guarantee that participants were receptive to openly sharing their experiences and that they had a clear grasp of the study's

goals. The participants were also told that their names will be kept private during the study and that their answers will only be utilized for academic purposes.

Additionally, the researcher made sure that the interview setting encouraged open discussion. To reduce distractions and encourage participants to express their ideas openly, the interviews were held in a calm, pleasant environment. In order to elicit more genuine and insightful answers from the study participants about their experiences with using Machine Translation tools, the researcher attempted to establish a laid-back interview environment.

The researcher meticulously read the interview transcripts numerous times in order to better comprehend the participants' responses after they had been transcribed. The researcher emphasized crucial statements pertaining to the research emphasis during this phase. The statements were then classified according to the indicators of translation performance that had been previously established.

The categorized data were then arranged into themes that reflected the study's main conclusions. The researcher was able to spot patterns and correlations between the responses of the study subjects because of the thematic structure. This approach allowed the researcher to examine how Machine Translation helps students improve in different areas of translation, such as accuracy, editing awareness, efficiency, comprehension, and confidence.

Lastly, the findings of the data analysis were explained by connecting them to pertinent theories and prior research on Machine Translation and translation learning. The purpose of this stage was to make sure that the research conclusions were not just descriptive but also analytically linked to current academic debates in the fields of language instruction and translation studies.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed several roles of Machine Translation in enhancing students' translation performance. First, Machine Translation functions as a linguistic accuracy support tool. Students reported that MT helps them identify grammatical structures, appropriate vocabulary choices, and contextual meanings when translating texts. However, they emphasized that MT outputs still require evaluation and editing before being used as final translations.

Second, MT supports the development of editing skills and critical awareness. The interview results indicate that students regularly review and revise the translation output generated by MT. This process encourages them to analyze translation errors and improve the quality of their translations. Third, Machine Translation increases efficiency and productivity in translation tasks. Students explained that MT helps them produce an initial translation draft quickly, which reduces the time needed to consult dictionaries. As a result, they can focus more on refining and improving their translations.

Fourth, MT facilitates comprehension of complex texts. Many participants reported that MT helps them understand unfamiliar vocabulary and complicated sentence structures. This support allows students to grasp the meaning of the source text more easily before producing their translations. Finally, MT contributes to students' confidence in translation activities. Students stated that the availability of MT reduces anxiety when translating difficult texts. It also helps them learn new vocabulary and grammatical structures through contextual examples.

These findings support previous studies that highlight the pedagogical potential of Machine Translation in language learning environments. When used critically and reflectively, MT can function as a cognitive support tool that enhances translation learning rather than replacing human translation skills.

In addition, the use of Machine Translation also encourages students to engage in reflective learning during the translation process. Instead of relying entirely on the machine-generated output, students tend to compare the MT results with the source text and analyze whether the translated meaning accurately reflects the original message. This reflective practice helps students develop a deeper understanding of translation strategies and linguistic structures. As a result, MT becomes not only a translation tool but also a learning resource that stimulates students' analytical thinking.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that Machine Translation can serve as a form of cognitive scaffolding in translation learning. By providing an initial translation draft, MT helps students process complex linguistic information more easily. This support allows students to focus on higher-level translation activities such as editing, evaluating meaning equivalence, and adjusting the translation to match contextual requirements. Consequently, students can gradually improve their translation competence through guided interaction with MT outputs.

Another important aspect revealed in the findings is the role of MT in supporting vocabulary acquisition. Students reported that they frequently encounter new words and expressions when using Machine Translation tools. By observing how these words are translated within specific contexts, students are able to expand their vocabulary knowledge and understand how certain expressions function in different linguistic environments. This process contributes to the development of their overall language proficiency.

Moreover, the integration of Machine Translation into translation tasks reflects the increasing role of technology in modern language education. Digital tools have become essential resources for students who need quick access to linguistic information and translation references. In this context, MT supports students' learning efficiency while still requiring them to apply critical thinking skills when evaluating translation accuracy. Therefore, the use of MT aligns with current trends in technology-assisted language learning.

These results are consistent with earlier studies that emphasized the role of Machine Translation in language acquisition settings. For example, O'Neill (2019) demonstrated that MT can increase students' understanding of grammatical and lexical patterns when they evaluate the machine-generated result. In a similar vein, Lee (2020b) discovered that kids who employed MT as a component of their translation learning activities exhibited increased linguistic knowledge and enhanced editing abilities.

Furthermore, the findings of this study support Bowker & Buitrago Ciro (2019) hypothesis that Machine Translation can be a helpful tool when used in conjunction with human evaluation and post-editing methods. In this research, students checked and edited the machine-produced translation to make sure it accurately represented the meaning of the source text, rather than just relying on it.

The integration of digital technology into translation education is another significant result of this research. Educators must teach students how to utilize digital resources ethically and efficiently as their availability rises. Including MT in translation classes might assist students in developing digital literacy skills while also enhancing their proficiency in translation. Furthermore, the use of Machine Translation promotes a more reflective approach to learning among students. Students learn more about translation issues like lexical ambiguity, grammatical distinctions, and contextual meaning by comparing the machine-generated translation to the original text. In translation learning, this introspective technique fosters the development of students' critical thinking abilities.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Machine Translation has a multifaceted role in translation learning. It functions not only as a linguistic aid but also as a pedagogical tool that

supports comprehension, efficiency, confidence, and critical awareness. When students use MT responsibly and combine it with analytical evaluation and post-editing practices, the technology can significantly enhance their translation performance and learning experience.

This study also discovered a significant link between students' knowledge of translation correctness. Students pay closer attention to grammatical structures and word choices while translating texts when using Machine Translation tools. Even with an initial translation from MT, students still need to check if the meaning of the translated phrase aligns with the original text. Students' translation performance improves as a result of this process, which fosters greater attentiveness and analysis while analyzing the outcomes of their translations.

Furthermore, the data also suggests that Machine Translation aids pupils in spotting translation mistakes more accurately. Students can identify errors or unnatural phrasing in the target language by comparing the machine-generated translation to their own comprehension of the source text. By comparing the translation output, students are encouraged to make changes to it and come up with a translation that is more accurate and contextually appropriate. Consequently, employing MT may indirectly improve students' ability to edit in translation activities.

In addition, machine translation may serve as a learning resource for pupils throughout the translation process. When they struggle to comprehend the source material, students claimed that they frequently utilize MT to verify the meaning of specific terms or sentences. Students learn about different translation options by seeing how the machine translates certain phrases. This experience helps them become more proficient at selecting the right language and gain a deeper understanding of translation techniques.

This research also demonstrates that machine translation enhances students' motivation to learn during translation exercises. Some participants said that the accessibility of MT tools makes translation activities less frightening since they have access to instantaneous linguistic assistance. Students are encouraged by this assistance to participate more actively in translation learning exercises and feel more confident when facing difficult texts.

Additionally, the use of Machine Translation can promote cooperative learning among students. Sometimes, students talk about the output of MT with their classmates in order to figure out the best translation for a given statement. Students share ideas and assess various translation options throughout this collaborative process. Students can improve their comprehension of translation concepts and develop their critical thinking skills about linguistic choices through such interactions.

Lastly, the results indicate that Machine Translation has the potential to revolutionize traditional translation education by making it more interactive and facilitated by technology. Students learn about contemporary translation technologies commonly used in professional translation contexts by incorporating MT into translation activities. This exposure not only enhances students' translation skills but also equips them to adjust to the technological advancements in language instruction and translation.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Machine Translation plays a significant role in enhancing the translation performance of students in the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The findings show that MT supports translation accuracy, improves editing skills and critical awareness, increases efficiency and productivity, facilitates comprehension of source texts, and strengthens students' confidence in translation tasks. In addition to that, it is worth mentioning that the current study's findings underscore the significance of

incorporating digital technologies into translation pedagogy in higher education contexts. For instance, it is recommended that translation pedagogy in higher education contexts should promote and encourage students to use Machine Translation tools in a critical and responsible manner in order for translation technologies to complement translation skills instead of replacing them. By employing a combination of Machine Translation and analytical evaluation and editing techniques, students may be able to acquire better translation competence and knowledge of cross-linguistic communication. However, the effectiveness of Machine Translation depends on how students use it. Students who critically evaluate and edit MT outputs are more likely to improve their translation competence. Therefore, Machine Translation should be integrated into translation pedagogy as a supportive learning tool rather than a replacement for human translation skills.

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