# Perceptions of Students on the Use of ChatGPT as a Translation Tool

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**Abstract**
This study investigates students' perceptions of using ChatGPT as a translation tool. This study aims to find out the students' perceptions of the use, advantages, and disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool. This study used purposive sampling to find the sample. The total sample for this study was students who use ChatGPT as a translation tool, including 89 out of 109 students. This study used the explanatory sequential mixed method. The data was collected through 21 items of closed-ended questions and five items of open-ended questions. The researchers used descriptive statistical analysis for quantitative data and thematic analysis to find qualitative data. The findings showed that students' overall perception of ChatGPT as a translation tool was high, with a mean score of 3.42. The construct on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool was a moderate score (3.38), indicating that students use ChatGPT selectively to translate words, paragraphs, academic texts, and written assignments. The advantages of ChatGPT were rated high (3.56), indicating that students recognized its benefits in reducing proofreading and editing, saving time, language improvement, efficiency, and flexibility. However, the disadvantages were rated moderate (3.19), with concerns about dependency and translation quality. The study concludes that students positively perceived ChatGPT and recognized its limitations. Students use ChatGPT as a translation tool for only a few uses, and ChatGPT is a valuable tool for translation. However, students do not directly feel the disadvantages of ChatGPT because they use ChatGPT selectively.

**Keywords:** ChatGPT, translation, perceptions, students

**INTRODUCTION**

Many languages spoken worldwide can bridge communication across cultures and nations, which becomes more urgent as the world becomes more connected. In this context, international languages are needed to facilitate intercultural and international communication. According to Shrishthy (2023), English is a global lingua franca, facilitating international relations in many aspects. Given this important role, English has become a primary international language.

In Indonesia, English is considered the first foreign language to be mastered. Learners in Indonesia have been introduced to English as a subject from elementary school until higher education. According to Rahmah (2023), through the 1994 Basic Education Curriculum, which included English as a local content subject, the Indonesian government started introducing English to primary school pupils.

Despite the importance of English, its mastery among students still faces various challenges, including difficulty in understanding and translating texts. According to Puspita et al. (2022), many students in Indonesia have difficulty translating foreign languages due to limited vocabulary. This difficulty can be a barrier for students in accessing and understanding scientific literature, using technology, and other activities in English. As cited in Kasriyati et al. (2019), Translation is crucial because of a decreasing global community and the necessity to collaborate and share knowledge with people from other countries. Through translation, people can benefit from numerous scientific and commercial advantages. In this case the students, especially those who majored in English, are expected to have skills to translate well.

Advances in technology are beginning to offer valuable solutions to improve the need for translation skills in education. Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based technologies such as ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer) have emerged as potential technologies in education. According to Ho (2024), ChatGPT can guide students in self-learning for translation, grammar checking, and asking for initial opinions.

According to Aeni et al. (2024), ChatGPT has changed the conventional role of translators and is a component of AI-generated machine translation, especially Neural Machine Translation. Roza (2023) added that ChatGPT can produce and translate text accurately and appropriately to the subject, comprehend the source text to provide appropriate results, and translate content naturally in the target language using utilization patterns from various languages. Furthermore, ChatGPT can generate translations fast and for free, making it a valuable and cost-effective tool.

However, although ChatGPT has many advantages, this technology is not free from limitations. According to Puppel & Borg (2024), ChatGPT may convey meaning incorrectly. This negative aspect impacts the audience's imagination, emotions, and comprehension of the materials, essentially diminishing the quality of the translation. These limitations could affect the way pupils comprehend the material being covered.

Students often need translation technology to access academic literature, have daily conversations, and understand the material. In addition, translation technology has developed rapidly, such as Google Translate, Microsoft Translate, and others. However, ChatGPT is unique from other machine translations because it provides more nuanced and contextually accurate translations than the literal and sometimes contextually ambiguous ones produced by other machines (Hidayati & Nihayah, 2024).

Several studies have researched about ChatGPT as a translation tool. For example, Sahari et al. (2023) compared ChatGPT and Google Translate for translating Arabic texts and found that ChatGPT offered higher quality and more natural translations. Also,

ChatGPT was slower than Google Translate. Roza (2023) researched the perceptions of students who used ChatGPT to translate English texts into Bahasa Indonesia based on ease of use, usability, effectiveness, and attitudes. The results showed that most students think ChatGPT can help them learn translation, and students also feel happy using it to produce translations. Jiao et al. (2024) defined gradable translation prompts of ChatGPT and found that the more detailed the prompts or commands users convey to ChatGPT, the better the quality of the translation results. Then, according to Deng (2024), ChatGPT's impact on English translation quality highlighted that using ChatGPT in English translation might enhance the complexity of translated information and the variety of terminology.

However, research regarding students' perceptions of the use, advantages, and disadvantages perceived on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool is still limited. This study's research methods and locations have also not been applied in previous studies. Based on the writers' observations, students constantly deal with foreign languages in their courses. They have used ChatGPT as a translation tool. Therefore, it is essential to understand the perceptions of ChatGPT users when using ChatGPT for translation by looking at the level of use and the advantages and disadvantages. Moreover, the researcher is interested in researching the perceptions of English study program students on the use, advantages, and disadvantages of ChatGPT by doing this research.

The formulation of the problem in this research is "How are the perceptions of students on the use of ChatGPT as a Translation tool?" The objective of the study is to find out the perceptions of students on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool. The findings are expected to inform students about ChatGPT's advantages and disadvantages in translation and provide valuable insights for teachers on how ChatGPT affects students, translation work, and how to overcome the problems that arise.

## METHOD

This study used explanatory sequential mixed methods research. Creswell & Creswell (2018) define the explanatory sequential mixed method as a method in which researchers conduct quantitative research, analyze the results, and then develop the results to explain them in more depth using qualitative research. This research population comprised sixth-semester students enrolled in the English Study Program at FKIP Universitas Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia. The researchers have chosen 6th-semester students because they constantly dealt with foreign languages in courses. The population in this research addresses three classes with a total population of 109 students. Moreover, the sampling method used in this research was purposive because it allowed the researchers to select specific participants and students who used ChatGPT as a translation tool by survey. Based on the survey, 89 students became the sample for this research.

This study used both open-ended and closed-ended questions to collect data. Mohammed (2023) provided closed-ended questions with 21 items, and Shahriar (2023) provided open-ended questions with 5 items. Participants were provided with a Google form to complete the data collection. Using the Likert scale, each statement was assigned a numerical value between 1 and 5, where 5 denotes the most positive perception (Strongly Agree), and 1 represents the least negative perception (Strongly Disagree). This way, the agreement level was determined. Table 1 and Table 2 below show the questions' blueprints:

Table 1. Blueprint of the Closed-Ended Questions

| No. | Perceptions | No. of Items | Total No. of Items |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The use of ChatGPT as a translation tool | 1,2,3,4, 5,6,7,8 | 8 |
| 2. | The Advantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool | 9,10,11,12, 13,14,15,16,17 | 9 |
| 3. | The disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool | 18,19,20,21 | 4 |
| | Total | | 21 |

Table 1 demonstrates the blueprint of closed-ended questions, comprising 21 items. This construct has three indicators of students' perceptions: students' perceptions on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool, which contains eight items; students' perceptions of the advantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool, which consists of nine items; and students' perceptions of the disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool, which comprises four items.

Table 2. Blueprint of the Open-Ended Questions

| No. | Personal Experiences | No. of Items | Total No. of Items |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Frequency of use | 1,2,3 | 3 |
| 2. | The Advantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool | 4 | 1 |
| 3. | The disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool | 5 | 1 |
| | Total | | 5 |

Table 2 shows the blueprint of open-ended questions, which consist of 5 items. The indicators of this construct explain students' personal experiences, such as their frequency of use of ChatGPT as a translation tool, their personal experiences of its advantages, and their personal experiences of its disadvantages.

The present study used descriptive statistical analysis to calculate and analyze the quantitative data using Microsoft Excel 2018. The responses were categorized based on a 5-point Likert Scale, with the mean score interpreted by Gatpolintan & Avila (2019). The following table shows the classification.

Table 3. Mean Score Interpreted

| No. | Score | Category Level |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1.00 to 1.80 | Very Low |
| 2 | 1.81 to 2.60 | Low |
| 3 | 2.61 to 3.40 | Moderate |
| 4 | 3.41 to 4.20 | High |
| 5 | 4.21 to 5.00 | Very High |

The study employed thematic analysis to analyze the qualitative data. According to Christou (2023), the process of thematic analysis included familiarizing with research data, searching for and reviewing themes, redefining themes, creating a conceptual diagram, and producing the final report.

The study instruments were tried out with 37 students to ensure the instrument were reliable and valid. With SPSS 27, it was determined that every item in the survey

was reliable because the r-value was higher than the r-table value of 0.320. Moreover, the reliability test produced a good reliability score of 0.898.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
### Findings
This section shows the results, which include three constructs: the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool, its advantages, and its disadvantages. Additionally, the open-ended data was collected to support the quantitative data.

### *Students Perception on the Use of ChatGPT as a Translation Tool*
Students' perceptions on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool related to their experiences and their views of its usefulness.

Table 4. The Use of ChatGPT as a Translation Tool

| No | Items | Mean | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I use ChatGPT to check the meaning of unknown words. | 3.61 | High |
| 2. | I use ChatGPT to translate a paragraph. | 3.60 | High |
| 3. | I use ChatGPT to translate an essay or paper from English into Indonesian to enable me to understand the meaning. | 3.34 | Moderate |
| 4. | I use ChatGPT to translate texts from English into Indonesian. | 3.21 | Moderate |
| 5. | I use ChatGPT to assisst me in writing. | 3.28 | Moderate |
| 6. | I use ChatGPT to assist me in reading. | 3.78 | High |
| 7. | I use ChatGPT to translate an essay, article or paper from Indonesian to submit it to the lecturer. | 3.11 | Moderate |
| 8. | I use ChatGPT to write assignments/papers in Indonesian, and then translating them into English. | 3.09 | Moderate |
| | Average | 3.38 | Moderate |

Table 4 shows that the overall mean score for this construct was 3.38. This score is categorized as a moderate level, where students used ChatGPT for translation only for certain purposes. The table shows that the highest score was item 6, with an average of 3.78, which falls into the high category, while the lowest score was item 8, which falls into the moderate category. Furthermore, the students also wrote their opinions regarding the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool, which were grouped into two themes.

*Theme 1: Translation of Simple Words, Paragraphs, and Academic Text*
These students' response theme support items 1, 2, and 3.
S36: *"Occasionally, I use ChatGPT sometime to translate words or phrases that I don't know."*
S78: *"Sometimes, When I need to find the meaning of a word that is difficult to find."*
S87: *"I usually use ChatGPT to translate text or short paragraphs only."*
S71: *"Sometimes I use ChatGPT translating Indonesian into English especially for long text or paragraphs"*
S80: *"When I have to make a review of international journal, and it's hard to understand the meaning, so I use Chatgpt to help me to translate it using simple vocabulary."*
S49: *"anytime I'm working with Indonesian text and need to translate it into English for my assignment, or if i'm assissting someone who needs that translation, I often use ChatGPT's capabilites."*

These students' responses indicated they used ChatGPT as a translation tool for simple words, long texts or paragraphs, and academic texts such as international journals and assignments.

*Theme 2: Translation of Written Assignments*
These students' response theme support item number 8.
S9:    *"Usually <u>I use ChatGPT when I have assignments that need to be translate."</u>*
S26:   *"ChatGPT is quite helpful for me, because <u>it help me with my task and assignment, especially when it deals with translating resources.</u>"*
S58:   *"Like I said, chat gpt is eassy to use, and also can provide me doing my assignment, but <u>I often use it when i didn't understand the meaning of the sentence."</u>*

These students' response indicated that they used ChatGPT as a translation tool for written assignments, such as when assignments need to be translated and when the students do not understand the sentence's meaning.

**Students Perceptions on the Advantages of ChatGPT as a Translation Tool**
Students' perceptions on the advantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool focus on the benefits they have experienced using ChatGPT for translation. The findings are presented in the table below:

Table 5. The Advantages of ChatGPT as a Translation Tool

| No | Items | Mean | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9. | ChatGPT is beneficial to translating without lot of editing and proofreading. | 3.19 | Moderate |
| 10. | ChatGPT is beneficial because it can save time. | 3.83 | High |
| 11. | ChatGPT is beneficial because it has more advantages than disadvantages. | 3.65 | High |
| 12. | ChatGPT is beneficial for translating English into Indonesian. | 3.65 | High |
| 13. | ChatGPT is beneficial for improving my English language by transalting different types of texts. | 3.58 | High |
| 14. | ChatGPT is beneficial for translating Indonesian into English. | 3.56 | High |
| 15. | ChatGPT is beneficial for translating documents related to my field. | 3.52 | High |
| 16. | ChatGPT is beneficial for doing assignments given by the lecturer. | 3.69 | High |
| 17. | ChatGPT is beneficial in doing translation successfully. | 3.38 | Moderate |
| | Average | 3.56 | High |

Table 5 shows the results regarding perceptions of the advantages on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool. The overall mean score in this construct was 3.56, with the high-level category. Based on the results, students' perceptions of the benefits of ChatGPT as a translation tool indicated that ChatGPT was helpful for translation. The highest mean score was 3.83 on the tenth item regarding ChatGPT beneficial because it can save time. The lowest mean score was 3.19 on item nine, at a moderate level, with ChatGPT being useful for translating without much editing and proofreading. In addition, the results of students' written perceptions on the advantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool were divided into five themes.

*Theme 1: Reducing Editing and Proofreading*
These students' response theme supported item number 9.
S12: *"ChatGPT has a lot of advantages as a translation tool. One of the biggest is that it understand context, so <u>it doesn't just translate word for word but actually make sense of the whole sentence.</u>"*
S62: *"ChatGPT as a translation can <u>make the text into gramatical correct.</u>"*

This theme enabled ChatGPT to understand the context, not translate word for word, and make the text grammatically correct, which gave ChatGPT the advantage of reducing editing and proofreading.

*Theme 2: Time Saving*
These studens' response theme supported item number 10.
S16: *"<u>Using ChatGPT really save my time while translating</u>."*
S28: *"<u>Translating using ChatGPT save my time and practice</u>."*
S65: *"One of the advantages is <u>it can safe more time and practice</u>."*

This theme in students' responses resulted in ChatGPT saving their time to translate and practice to use.

*Theme 3: Language Improvement*
These students' response theme supported item number 13.
S33: *"<u>ChatGPT for translating have beneficial in my experience when I want to improve my English.</u>"*
S79: *"Yes, because <u>easy to understand, help me to learn more about new words, and free to use.</u>"*

This theme in students' responses resulted in ChatGPT being beneficial for improving their English and helping them learn more about new words.

*Theme 4: Efficiency and Clarity*
These students' response theme supported in item number 17.
S6: *"This AI very helpful <u>especially to do the task and very effiecient time.</u>"*
S13: *"<u>It can translate idioms and informal language more accurately.</u>"*
S17: *"First, <u>ChatGPT are accurate and natural, unlike some other tools that just tranlate word of word.</u> Second, ChatGPT can understand the context, so sentences make sense and don't come out awkward. Third, ChatGPT also versatule, it can handle both formal and informal language, makin it useful whether you're translating a professional document ot just having a casul conversation. Fourth, fast and accessible, ChatGPT can give instant translation without needing any extra software. And the last, ChatGPT did great job idioms and expressions, it provides something that actually sound natural in the target language."*
S25: *"<u>Can give the alternative meaning of the words.</u>"*
S32: *"In my experience using ChatGPT to translate between English and Indonesian, <u>the translation result are quite accurate and easy to understand.</u>"*
S89: *"<u>Translate using ChatGPT is easy and can help me use a language that is easier to understand.</u>"*

This theme in students' responses resulted in ChatGPT being helpful as it was efficient in time, translated idioms and informal language, had accurate and natural translation results, gave alternative meanings of the words, and helped them use language that was easier to understand.

*Theme 5: Flexible*
These students' response theme supported in item number 15.

S17:  *"First, ChatGPT are accurate and natural, unlike some other tools that just tranlate word of word. Second, ChatGPT can understand the context, so sentences make sense and don't come out awkward. Third, ChatGPT also versatule, <u>it can handle both formal and informal language, makin it useful whether you're translating a professional document ot just having a casual conversation.</u> Fourth, fast and accessible, ChatGPT can give instant translation without needing any extra software. And the last, ChatGPT did great job idioms and expressions, it provides something that actually sound natural in the target language."*

S38:  *"Yes, <u>we can customize how we would like it to be translated as for example in much more formal way or the other way around.</u>"*

S71:  *"<u>Translating into Indonesian on ChatGPT may be a little formal, but ChatGPT can turn informal if we want.</u>"*

This student response theme resulted in ChatGPT's ability to handle both formal and informal language, translate a professional document or casual conversation, and give instant translation without needing extra software.

### Students Perceptions on the Disadvantages of ChatGPT as a Translation Tool

Students' perceptions about the disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool were focused on students' experiences or comprehension of its shortcomings. The findings are presented in the table below.

Table 6. The Disadvantages of ChatGPT as a Translation Tool

| No | Items | Mean | Level |
|----|-------|------|-------|
| 18. | ChatGPT can discourage me from developing my own translation. | 3.25 | Moderate |
| 19. | ChatGPT can make me not self-confident in English. | 3.04 | Moderate |
| 20. | ChatGPT can have a negative impact on the clarity and quality of language structure in translations. | 3.27 | Moderate |
| 21. | ChatGPT can make me dependent on it every related to my study. | 3.20 | Moderate |
|  | Average | 3.19 | Moderate |

Table 6 shows the results of students' perceptions of the disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool. The overall mean score in this construct was 3.19 in the moderate-level category. The results showed that although students knew some disadvantages of utilizing ChatGPT for translation, they did not consider it significant. It suggested that students were still wary of ChatGPT's effects on language development and translation skills. The highest mean score was 3.25, with a moderate level category on the eighteenth item regarding ChatGPT, which could discourage them from developing their translation. The lowest mean score was 3.09 on item nineteenth, at a moderate level regarding ChatGPT, which affected the clarity and quality of language

structure in translations. In addition, the results of students' written perceptions on the disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool were divided into two themes.

*Theme 1: Creates Dependency*
These students' response theme supported in item number 21.
S21:    *"The disadvantages is make students lazy to translate manually."*
S37:    *"Yes, make student dependent on ChatGPT."*
S40:    *"Yes, especially it can make us dependent on it and make us feel English doesn't special anymore."*
S55:    *"Discourages me to not try by my own firstly to do the translation. Makes me no effort and get depending to the AI."*

This theme emerged from the students' statement that ChatGPT could make students lazy to translate manually, dependent on it, and discourage them from trying by themsleves first.

*Theme 2: Affects Quality*
These students' response theme supported in item number 20.
S5:     *"The translation is stiff and not smooth."*
S11:    *"It's very good to use, but errors often occur in translation."*
S8:     *"The use of idioms in English is often difficult to translate accurately by ChatGPT into Indonesian"*
S18:    *"It's very good to use, but errors often occur in translation."*
S31:    *"Many if the words it translated into is too formal, and needed to be paraphrase."*

This theme emerged from the students' statement that ChatGPT translation results could be stiff and not smooth, difficult to translate accurately from English to Indonesian, often containing errors, and too formal, which need to be paraphrased.

**Discussion**

This study aimed to find out students' perceptions on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool. The research results showed that students' perceptions on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool were in the high category.

The first indicator, which focused on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool, was in the moderate category and revealed several important themes. As the theme, most students reported using ChatGPT to translate simple words, paragraphs, and academic text. According to Abidah *et al.* (2024), ChatGPT performs well when translating short and simple words. Similarly, Aeni *et al.* (2024) noted that ChatGPT successfully translates most paragraphs and academic text without errors with excellent categories. Another theme reported was ChatGPT to translate written assignments relevant to the study of Nugroho *et al.* (2023); students benefit from ChatGPT, especially acting as a virtual language assistant for practice and improving writing quality through tasks, especially translation.

The second indicator has the highest value regarding the advantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool. Many students agreed as the themes in this indicator that ChatGPT saves time and reduces editing and proofreading, aligned with the research of Andrade Preciado et al. (2025), integrating AI tools such as ChatGPT can optimize the translation process, reducing the time spent on basic tasks and allowing students to concentrate on

more complex aspects. Therefore, the time saved helps students proofread and edit texts, as ChatGPT can correct the translated text when given that prompt. In addition, based on another theme, ChatGPT was beneficial for language improvement, align with research from Roza (2023), Students can efficiently use ChatGPT to enhance their language proficiency. This technology can be used for both educational and social purposes. It has the power to completely transform how people learn and teach. Additionally, ChatGPT was efficient from another theme relevant to Deng (2024), which states that ChatGPT has higher translation efficiency and accuracy in English translation. Another advantage of ChatGPT revealed in the theme was ChatGPT's flexible translation tool, the same as the research of Jiao et al. (2024); ChatGPT can generate translations in both formal and informal styles, depending on the design of the prompts.

The third indicator focused on the disadvantages of ChatGPT as a translation tool in a moderate category level. Several themes emerged from students' responses. As the theme, many students admitted that ChatGPT made them depend on it, which makes them too lazy to translate manually and discourages them from trying alone. Zhang et al. (2024) also conveyed these findings, which include five adverse effects of dependence on ChatGPT, including decreased critical and independent thinking, increased laziness, spread of false information, and a lack of originality. Another theme that emerged was the quality of ChatGPT, which was stiff and not smooth, and sometimes errors occurred. This advantage was also discussed in research by Sarwanti *et al.* (2024); the consequences of using ChatGPT to generate content can result in inaccuracies such as misleading information, emphasizing concern regarding fake sources, the quality of responses depending on the instructions given, and the sentences and phrases provided by ChatGPT are pretty sophisticated and complex to understand.

In conclusion, students' perceptions on the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool were high. Although the indicator of the use of ChatGPT as a translation was in the moderate category because students did not use ChatGPT for all translation tasks, students have highly positive perceptions of ChatGPT's advantages, which showed that students see many benefits in its use. However, students were also aware of the limitations of ChatGPT. However, the disadvantages did not directly affect them, which was reflected in the moderate category of the disadvantages of using ChatGPT as a translation tool. As Roza (2023) stated, students must clearly understand ChatGPT to use it effectively in language learning. ChatGPT is not a substitute for human teaching, so students must critically evaluate their translation results. That way, students seem to have understood the usefulness of ChatGPT by considering its advantages and disadvantages.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the results and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that students' perceptions of the use of ChatGPT as a translation tool were generally positive. This statement is evidenced by the overall mean score of 3.42, which falls into the high-level category. Regarding the construct of ChatGPT use, the mean score was categorized as moderate, indicating that students used ChatGPT for translation in a limited range of situations. Furthermore, students rated the advantages of ChatGPT highly, showing that even though its use was selective, they still experienced its benefits, such as saving time, improving efficiency, and enhancing language quality. Meanwhile, students were also aware of the disadvantages, which were rated at a moderate level. Although they recognized potential drawbacks such as dependency and reduced translation skill development, these were not strongly felt due to their infrequent use of the tool. Overall,

students found ChatGPT a helpful translation aid for specific purposes. They acknowledged both the benefits and limitations of the tool. To use ChatGPT more effectively and avoid overdependence, students are encouraged to balance its use by first attempting translations independently and discussing their work with lecturers, teachers, or peers before relying on ChatGPT for additional support. By using ChatGPT critically and responsibly, students can maximize its advantages while minimizing its disadvantages.

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