ENHANCING STUDENT TRANSLATORS' SKILLS: THE INFLUENCE OF TRANSLATION TOOLS

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Abstract

This study investigated the correlation between the use of translation technology and the translation skills of students in the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung. Employing a quantitative correlational research design, the research focused on a sample of 40 students from a Translation and Interpretation course. Data collection involved a translation test to assess students' proficiency and a questionnaire to measure the frequency and reliance on translation tools. Analysis using SPSS revealed a moderate positive correlation of 0.35 between the use of translation technology and translation skills, indicating that while technology aids in improving translation performance, it is not the only factor influencing students' abilities. Other elements, such as individual learning strategies and language proficiency, also play critical roles. The findings suggest that although translation tools are beneficial in language learning, they should be used in conjunction with traditional methods to prevent over-reliance. Educators are encouraged to promote manual translation exercises to foster deeper comprehension and skill development. However, the study's limitations, including its small sample size and focus on a single institution, may limit the generalizability of the results. Future research should consider larger, more diverse samples and explore the long-term effects of translation technology on student proficiency, offering broader insights into its impact on language education.

Keywords: *correlation research; translation; quantitative research*

INTRODUCTION

Language mastery is a multifaceted process, with translation playing a critical role in the comprehension and communication of meaning between languages. For learners, particularly in the context of English language education, the ability to translate between English and Indonesian is a vital skill. This importance highlights that understanding a language encompasses three core components: translating, interpreting, and extrapolating (Aresta et al., 2018). These aspects collectively contribute to a learner's overall language comprehension, making translation proficiency a key indicator of linguistic mastery.

In recognition of the importance of translation, the English Language Education Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung, offers a dedicated course on Translation and Interpretation. This course, targeted at fourth-semester students, is designed to equip learners with the skills needed to translate texts between Indonesian and English. By the time students enroll in this course, they are expected to have completed foundational skills courses, such as listening, speaking, reading,

writing, and grammar, up to at least the third level. These foundational courses are intended to prepare students for the complexities of translation, allowing them to develop this additional competency (Alharbi, 2023).

Despite the structured approach to developing translation proficiency, many students in the English Education Study Program increasingly rely on translation technology as a primary tool for understanding texts. As Morley et al. (2020) suggests, translation proficiency should ideally be cultivated through independent practice, drawing on the student's knowledge, skills, and experience. However, in reality, students often turn to translation tools, even for basic comprehension tasks (Hastomo et al., 2024). This reliance on technology raises important questions about the potential impact on their ability to translate effectively without such aids.

The pervasive use of translation technology in language learning cannot be ignored. Tools such as Google Translator, Microsoft Translator, DeepL Translator, and SayHi Translate have become integral to how students approach translation tasks (Istiara & Hastomo, 2023). These tools, easily accessible via web and mobile applications, allow for the automatic translation of English texts into Indonesian and vice versa, often at the touch of a button. As noted by (S.-M. Lee, 2023), these technologies offer learners an efficient and effective means of enhancing their understanding of foreign languages, potentially more so than traditional methods alone.

Numerous studies have explored the role of translation tools in language learning. For example, Lee (2021) found that these tools positively influence language learners' communication skills, aiding in the comprehension of reading texts and fostering a positive attitude towards learning. Similarly, Sun and Yang (2023) examined the impact of technology on academic translation teaching, concluding that it significantly aids translators in managing various projects, including translation and localization. However, these studies primarily focus on the general benefits of translation technology, without delving into its specific effects on students' translation skills.

Given the widespread use of translation tools, preventing students from relying on them is almost impossible. Initial observations and several studies, such as students prefer using these tools for English assignments due to the speed and convenience they offer compared to manual translation (Musk, 2022). Furthermore, tools like Google Translator are often perceived to provide more accurate translations than manual efforts (Sujarwo, 2020). Despite the mixed opinions on the pros and cons of translation technology, its role in language education is undeniably significant, posing both opportunities and challenges for educators (Oktarin & Hastomo, 2024).

One of the major challenges faced by instructors teaching Translation Courses is the increasing reliance of students on translation technology. The ease of use provided by these tools can lead to a sense of complacency among students (Almusharraf & Bailey, 2023). While some educators argue that this reliance fosters practicality rather than laziness (Fitria, 2021), it is crucial that the convenience of these tools is balanced with the need for students to engage in more traditional learning practices. A strong vocabulary foundation, for example, is essential for producing high-quality translations. Yet, the availability of translation tools may discourage students from memorizing vocabulary, leading to weaker retention and less robust language skills.

Cancino and Panes (2021) advocates for the benefits of manual translation, suggesting that the repetitive process of searching for the meanings of words, phrases, or idioms can significantly aid memory retention. On the other hand, students have reported that translation technology assists them in mastering vocabulary (Alshaikhi, 2022), highlighting the dual nature of these tools as both a potential crutch and a means of refinement. This duality raises the central question of this research: "Is there any correlation between the use of translation technology and the translation skills of students in the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung?". This study seeks to address this question by exploring the relationship between translation technology use and translation proficiency among students in the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung. Through this research, the aim is to provide insights that could inform educational strategies, ensuring that translation technology is used in a way that enhances, rather

than detracts from, the development of essential translation skills.

METHOD

This research aimed to determine whether translation technology significantly impacts the translation skills of student translators at UIN Raden Intan Lampung. The study was designed as correlational research, following the approach described by Ary et al. (2010), where data from two or more variables are collected to explore potential relationships. In this case, the independent variable was Translation Tools, and the dependent variable was the students' translation skills. The objective was to identify any correlation exists between the use of Translation Technology and students' translation abilities.

The study was conducted with a specific population: the 450 students of the English Education Study Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, UIN Raden Intan Lampung. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 40 students who were enrolled in a single Translation and Interpretation course. This method ensured that the sample was representative of students who were actively engaged in translation studies.

To gather data, the researchers employed two primary instruments: a test and a questionnaire. The test aimed to evaluate the students' translation skills to suit the study's requirements. The questionnaire was designed to assess the students' use of Translation Technology when translating English texts. It featured closed-ended questions with answer options ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire comprised twelve statements regarding the use of translation tools, which were carefully validated and tested for reliability before being distributed.

The data collection process began with administering the translation test, during which students were allowed to use a manual dictionary to aid their understanding of unfamiliar vocabulary. The test results were then evaluated, scored, and analyzed. Subsequently, the questionnaire was distributed to all participants via Google Forms. The responses were analyzed to determine the relationship between students' use of translation technology and their translation skills. For data analysis, the correlation between the questionnaire responses and test scores was examined using the SPSS application, which helped to identify any relationships between the variables under study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study set out to examine the impact of translation technology on the translation skills of students in the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung. The research employed a sample of 40 students from a Translation and Interpretation course, utilizing both a translation test and a questionnaire to gather data.

Table 1. Translation Test Results

Number of Students	Mean	Standard Deviation	Lowest Score	Highest Score
40	76.9	9.273065490426754	55.0	90.0

According to Table 1, the translation test results exhibited a considerable range of proficiency levels among the students, underscoring the diversity in their translation capabilities. The mean score was 75 out of 100, with individual scores spanning from as low as 55 to as high as 90. This wide distribution highlights the presence of both strengths and weaknesses within the cohort. Students who scored closer to 90 demonstrated a strong command of translation techniques, reflecting their ability to effectively convey meaning across languages. On the other hand, those with scores near 55 struggled with the nuances of translation, indicating potential deficiencies in their understanding of both source and target languages.

The analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed that 80% of the students regularly utilized translation technology as part of their translation process. A significant portion, around

50%, reported using tools like Google Translator, DeepL Translator, and similar applications on a daily basis. Another 30% admitted to using these tools occasionally, primarily when faced with complex or unfamiliar texts. The high frequency of technology use suggests that translation tools have become an integral component of the students' translation practices, offering a convenient solution to overcome linguistic challenges.

Table 2. Result of Correlation

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Strength of Correlation	Interpretation
Translation Technology Use	Translation Skills	0.35	Moderate Positive	Translation technology use is positively associated with translation skills, but the relationship is not particularly strong.

Despite the prevalence of technology use, the correlation analysis conducted via SPSS yielded a moderate positive correlation of 0.35 between the use of translation technology and the students' translation skills. This correlation indicates that while there is an association between the use of these tools and improved translation performance, the relationship is not particularly strong. It suggests that while translation technology can be a helpful aid, it is not the only factor contributing to the students' translation abilities. Other variables, such as individual learning strategies, language proficiency, and familiarity with translation practices, also play critical roles.

The findings of this study offer a nuanced understanding of the role of translation technology in the development of translation skills among students in the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung. The moderate positive correlation between translation technology use and translation proficiency suggests that while these tools can enhance translation performance, they are not a panacea for all challenges faced by student translators.

One of the key insights from this study is the significant reliance on translation technology among the students. The majority of respondents reported using tools such as Google Translator and DeepL Translator regularly, reflecting a broader trend observed in language learning contexts globally. This reliance on technology aligns with previous research, which has shown that students often turn to these tools for their efficiency and accessibility (Sun & Yang, 2023). The convenience of being able to quickly translate text, especially when faced with difficult or unfamiliar material, undoubtedly plays a role in the widespread adoption of these tools.

However, the moderate correlation found in this study suggests that the benefits of translation technology may be limited by how these tools are used. While they can certainly facilitate the translation process, particularly by providing immediate access to translations of words and phrases, they may not be sufficient to foster deep translation skills. This is particularly evident in the lower-performing students, who, despite frequent use of translation tools, still struggled with their translation tasks. This could indicate that these students might be using translation technology as a crutch, relying on it to compensate for gaps in their language proficiency rather than as a tool to enhance their skills (Tsai, 2022).

The diversity in test scores also points to the importance of individual learning strategies and prior language knowledge in developing translation skills. Students who performed well on the translation test may have been those who, in addition to using translation technology, also engaged in more traditional methods of language learning, such as memorization of vocabulary, practice of sentence structure, and contextual understanding. These students might be leveraging translation technology as a supplementary tool rather than a primary means of translation, allowing them to refine their skills while still relying on their foundational knowledge.

This observation is consistent with the findings of Alshaikhi (2022), who argues that manual translation practices, such as looking up words and phrases in a dictionary, help reinforce memory retention and deepen understanding of language nuances. The repetitive nature of manual translation can aid in solidifying vocabulary and comprehension, which are crucial for producing

accurate and contextually appropriate translations. By contrast, students who rely heavily on translation technology may miss out on these benefits, leading to weaker retention of vocabulary and a less nuanced understanding of the languages they are translating between.

The implications for teaching practices in translation courses are significant. While it is clear that translation technology can be a valuable asset in language learning, educators must encourage students to use these tools judiciously. Rather than relying solely on technology, students should be guided to integrate manual translation exercises into their study routines. This could involve tasks that require them to translate texts without the aid of technology, thus forcing them to engage more deeply with the language. Additionally, educators should emphasize the importance of developing a strong vocabulary foundation, as well as the ability to understand and convey meaning within different cultural and linguistic contexts.

Moreover, the findings suggest that future research should explore the specific ways in which different types of translation tools influence various aspects of translation skills. For instance, comparing the effectiveness of basic translation tools like Google Translator with more sophisticated tools like DeepL or professional translation software could provide deeper insights into how these technologies can be best utilized in an educational setting. Additionally, research could investigate the long-term effects of relying on translation technology, particularly in terms of how it impacts language retention and the ability to translate complex or culturally specific texts.

In conclusion, while translation technology undoubtedly has a place in modern language learning, its use must be balanced with traditional translation practices to ensure that students develop comprehensive and effective translation skills. The moderate correlation observed in this study indicates that technology alone is not sufficient to guarantee high translation proficiency. Instead, a holistic approach that incorporates both technological tools and manual translation practices is necessary to fully equip students with the skills they need to succeed as proficient translators.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the correlation of translation technology on the translation skills of students in the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung. The findings revealed a moderate positive correlation between the use of translation tools and students' translation performance. This suggests that while translation technology can serve as a valuable aid in enhancing translation skills, it should not be relied upon exclusively. The findings imply that integrating translation technology with traditional language learning practices can help students develop a more robust set of translation skills. Specifically, while these tools can enhance efficiency and comprehension, they may also lead to over-reliance, which could hinder the development of deeper language proficiency and critical translation competencies.

However, this research is not without its limitations. The sample size was relatively small, consisting of only 40 students, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study focused on a single institution, which may not capture the diversity of student experiences and technological proficiency found in broader educational contexts. The reliance on self-reported data for the frequency of translation tool use also introduces the potential for bias, as students might not accurately reflect their true usage patterns.

Given these limitations, future research should consider expanding the sample size and including multiple institutions to enhance the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, longitudinal studies that track the impact of translation technology use over time would provide deeper insights into its long-term effects on translation proficiency. Researchers should also explore the specific impacts of different types of translation tools, as well as investigate the balance between technology use and traditional learning methods to develop a comprehensive approach to translation education.

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