

# TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING GOOGLE TRANSLATE IN THE TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate and describe teachers' perceptions toward the use of Google Translate as a medium for teaching English pronunciation. This study applies a qualitative method, with data collected through observation and interviews. In getting data, the writer examined three English teachers from different schools in Yogyakarta who have used Google Translate in their classrooms. The result of this study showed that teachers have both positive and negative perspectives on using Google Translate as a medium for teaching pronunciation. The positive points of using Google Translate as a learning medium are that it is suitable and effective for helping students improve their pronunciation and ease of access and use. They believe that using Google Translate as a learning media has a good effect on students, increasing their interest in and motivation to learn pronunciation. In addition, the negative points of using Google Translate are that it depends on an internet connection, and using smartphones to access Google Translate in the classroom can be a distraction for students. Although there are some negative perceptions, it can be concluded that teachers have more positive perceptions towards using Google Translate as a learning medium to teach English pronunciation.

Keywords: Google Translate, Learning Medium, Pronunciation, Teacher's Perception.

## INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is commonly called the era of technology. According to (Eady & Lockyer, 2013) technology plays an important role in education, allowing teachers to design meaningful learning experiences involving technology. To maximize the learning process, it is essential to utilize technology as an appropriate learning medium. The use of learning mediums by teachers facilitates the attainment of learning objectives. One of the most famous and widely used technologies by the public and education is Google; one of its features is Google Translate (Septiadi, 2019).

In English, there are four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to (Leong et al., 2017), speaking is one of the most important skills to develop and enhance for effective communication. Good speaking skills involve various aspects, including articulation, pronunciation, fluency, use of vocabulary, grammar, and non-verbal communication. English pronunciation is one of the most challenging skills to learn, and

learners should spend a lot of time improving their pronunciation (Gilakjani, 2016). According to (Khasanah et al., 2022) one media that can be used to learn pronunciation is Google Translate. In addition, Google Translate has a text-to-speech feature that enables users to hear how a word or phrase is pronounced in the target language, which enables students to practice pronouncing words in the foreign language they are learning. In this research, the researcher observed one English class at SMA PGRI 1 Kasihan. From the observations, it can be identified that certain students have difficulty with pronunciation due to a lack of habituation and appropriate medium in learning English.

Regarding this issue, several studies have been conducted by scholars including (Khasanah et al., 2022) who investigated students' perception of the use of Google Translate in learning pronunciation, and found that students' perception of using Google Translate as a medium for learning pronunciation was positive because students can learn practically and independently. Then, (Sain & Cobar, 2023) studied the improvement in students' pronunciation in word stress through the TTS (Text to Speech) feature: on a Google Translate application, the results showed a significant improvement in students' pronunciation after the use of text-to-speech software. In addition, (Lestari et al., 2023) investigated the students' perceptions towards Google Translate as a supporting media to learn English. The results indicated that the students held a positive perception of Google Translate as a supplementary learning tool for English, the majority of their responses indicated that they agreed that Google Translate assisted them in their English language learning including translation, pronunciation checking, spelling correction, and synonym identification.

The researcher realized that most students use Google Translate to learn English pronunciation at school, and they have positive perceptions toward using Google Translate in English language learning. Based on the above, the author concludes it is crucial to ascertain teachers' perceptions regarding using Google Translate to teach pronunciation to students. This research aims to investigate and describe English teachers' perceptions regarding using Google Translate as a medium for teaching English pronunciation. This research was conducted due to the limited existing literature on teachers' perceptions of using Google Translate as a medium for teaching English pronunciation. Therefore, the researcher is interested in examining the teachers' perceptions of using Google Translate to teach pronunciation.

## **METHODS**

### ***Study Design***

According to the research question, "What are teachers' perceptions of using Google Translate as a medium for teaching English pronunciation?" a qualitative methodology was used in this study. Qualitative research is the study of how individuals perceive their environment; 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 (Aspers & Corte, 2019). The researcher used a qualitative methodology because this study aimed to discover and explore teachers' perceptions of using Google Translate in

teaching pronunciation. The findings of this study will be presented verbally rather than through numerical data, and the form of the data is in words.

### ***Research Setting and Participant***

The research was conducted in January 2024 in several middle schools in Yogyakarta. The researcher observed one of the classes in SMA PGRI 1 Kasihan and interviewed three English teachers from different educational institutions who had previously employed Google Translate as a learning medium in their classroom as respondents.

### ***Instruments of the Study***

In conducting this study, the researcher used some instruments to collect data. They are observation and interview.

#### ***Observation***

To gather varied information on the data, the researcher observes teaching and learning activities in the classroom. In this case, the researcher focuses on the learning process, especially the teacher's use of Google Translate to teach pronunciation skills. The researcher's findings will be examined as data to be analyzed. First, the researcher made introductions and explained the purpose of the observation. Then, researchers conducted observations to obtain data.

#### ***Interview***

An interview is a methodical approach to talking and listening to individuals; it is an additional way of acquiring data from people through conversation (Utibe Monday, 2020). This instrument was used to obtain spoken data from the participants on teachers' perceptions of using Google Translate in the teaching English pronunciation medium. This instrument consists of 10 questions that will be asked of English teachers.

### ***Technique of Collecting Data***

To collect the data, the researcher used observation and interviews as the instruments. The following steps will be undertaken in conducting the study:

1. This study chose three English teachers from different educational institutions in Yogyakarta who had previously employed Google Translate as a learning medium in their classrooms.
2. Preparing the observation sheets and interview guidelines as the instruments of the study.
3. Observing the English class in SMA 1 Kasihan.
4. Conducted interviews with three English teachers to obtain data.
5. Analyzing the obtained data from observation and interview.
6. Interpreting the findings from those instruments.
7. Drawing a conclusion based on the obtained data.

### ***Technique of Data Analysis***

This study used a qualitative data analysis technique. To analyze the data, the researcher followed the Thematic analysis steps (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

#### ***Understanding the data***

To comprehend the interview's content, researchers must familiarise themselves with the data. This means that researchers must be deeply involved in understanding the data by repeatedly reading and listening to it to gain a comprehensive understanding.

#### ***Coding***

The researcher will code the main themes from the interviews that have been obtained Which involves identifying and evaluating relevant and irrelevant themes.

#### ***Finding a Theme***

The researcher should group the codes into potential themes and collect all the data that is relevant to each potential theme, each theme will be evaluated to determine how it relates to the question.

#### ***Reviewing Theme***

This stage involves two levels of review and refinement of themes. Level one consists of reviewing at the level of the coded data extracts. Level two consists of a process similar to that of the whole data set, where the researcher considers the validity of each theme concerning the data set.

#### ***Defining and naming the theme***

The researcher defines and identifies the central aspects of each theme, determining which data is captured by each theme. It is essential to assign concise and catchy names to the final analyses that immediately convey the themes' essence to the reader.

#### ***Producing the report***

The goal of writing a thematic analysis is to narrate the complex data story in a way that convinces the reader of the usefulness and validity of the analysis.

## **RESULTS**

To answer the research question, the researcher conducted a *semi-structured* interview with the selected English teachers. In this section, the researcher has determined several questions *related* to the research. The researcher collected the data by recording the interview process.

### ***The Positive Perceptions of Using Google Translate as a Medium to Teach Pronunciation***

#### ***The Simplicity of Utilization***

The first result of the teacher's perception of the use of Google Translate as a medium in teaching English pronunciation is the simplicity of utilization. In the interview, the respondents shared their experiences in the following statement:

Respondent 1

*"I think using Google Translate as a medium to teaching is very user-friendly, and it also offers some features that support learning, especially pronunciation."*

Respondent 2

*"I have used Google Translate as a learning medium. It is suitable for teaching pronunciation because students can easily access and use it through the web. Google Translate as a medium to teach pronunciation is very practical and flexible, as it can be used whenever we need it."*

Respondent 3

*"I have been using Google Translate because of its ease of use, especially in learning how to pronounce difficult words through the text-to-speech feature and teaching basic pronunciation to my students in class."*

#### *Enhancing the pronunciation abilities of students*

The second result of the teachers' perceptions of the use of Google Translate as a medium in teaching English pronunciation is that it is appropriate to enhance and improve the pronunciation abilities of students. In the interview, the respondents shared their perceptions in the following statement:

Respondent 1

*"From my perspective, using Google Translate as a medium to teach pronunciation can make students more interested in imitating the pronunciation that comes out of the text-to-speech feature because students can directly listen to a native speaker."*

Respondent 2

*"In my opinion, it is suitable to use Google Translate as a medium in the classroom to teach pronunciation because the students can hear the correct pronunciation directly from a native speaker."*

Respondent 3

*"I believe that using Google Translate as a learning medium for teaching pronunciation to students is appropriate. With the use of text-to-speech, students can know their pronunciation and practice their pronunciation. The use of the text-to-speech feature on Google Translate can be beneficial for teachers to deliver the correct pronunciation to the students."*

### *Increasing students learning motivation*

The following result of the interview was that respondents explained that teachers' use of Google Translate as a new and exciting teaching medium could motivate students to improve their pronunciation skills by utilizing the features that are available on Google Translate. In the interview, the respondents shared their perceptions in the following statement:

#### Respondent 1

*"I think using Google Translate as a learning medium can motivate students. Many features support students in learning and improving their English skills. Furthermore, it is simple to use so that they can study independently at home."*

#### Respondent 2

*"In my opinion, the use of Google Translate can motivate students because when teachers use it as a medium for teaching pronunciation, students have to be more interested in how native English speakers pronounce their words so that students want to improve their pronunciation to be like a native speaker."*

#### Respondent 3

*"I think the effect of using Google Translate as a teaching medium is quite good for increasing students' motivation because the existence of new media like the text-to-speech feature on Google Translate can increase students' motivation to learn speaking seriously, especially pronunciation."*

## ***The Negative Perceptions of Using Google Translate as a Medium to Teach Pronunciation***

### *The Internet Access*

Based on the interviews conducted by the researchers, internet access is the first result of the negative perspective of using Google Translate as a learning media for teaching pronunciation. In the interview, the respondents shared their experiences in the following statement:

#### Respondent 1

*"The disadvantage of using Google Translate is that it needs to be connected to the Internet, so if the connection is bad, Google Translate won't work."*

Respondent 2

*“The disadvantage of using Google Translate as a teaching medium is that I must always connect to the Internet to access it. In addition, not all schools provide free internet facilities to their teachers and students, and students do not necessarily have a quota of internet access.”*

Respondent 3

*“The disadvantage is the internet aspect because **to** use Google Translate, you must always be connected to the internet, and the signal is not always good.”*

### *Smartphones as a distraction*

Respondents also mentioned the use of smartphones, which can be a distraction in the classroom, as the negative perspective of the use of Google Translate as a learning media for teaching pronunciation. The respondents shared their experiences in the following statement:

Respondent 1

*“As Google Translate is available on smartphones and computers, there is a risk that some students may be misusing it to access other applications.”*

Respondent 2

*“Another disadvantage is that if students access Google translate during the lesson, they may access other applications that can disrupt the lesson.”*

Respondent 3

*“The other disadvantage is that if students access Google Translate during learning, they may not listen to the teacher and are more preoccupied with their smartphones.”*

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***The positive perceptions of using Google Translate as a medium to teach pronunciation*** *The simplicity of utilization*

All of the respondents agreed that Google Translate was an easy and accessible tool, both for teachers and students. The respondents' statements are in line with (Khasanah et al., 2022), who stated that Google Translate was easy for the students to use anytime, anywhere, and it can also help them improve their pronunciation skills. In addition, (Afandi et al., 2023) stated that the utilization of Google Translate for enhancing students' speaking proficiency, especially pronunciation, has the benefit of offering simplicity of use for both

teachers and students, which may facilitate the enhancement of students' speaking abilities while they are engaged in study.

The respondents' statements show that teachers frequently utilize Google Translate as a medium for teaching English pronunciation to students in the classroom because is because Google Translate is a valuable tool that is easily accessible and usable. The utilization of Google Translate in teaching offers teachers and students a convenient and accessible tool for language learning. With its user-friendly, Google Translate seamlessly integrates into the classroom environment, facilitating smooth communication and comprehension across languages. Teachers can effortlessly incorporate this resource into their lessons, enhancing students' understanding and engagement with diverse linguistic content. Moreover, the availability of Google Translate across multiple devices ensures flexibility and convenience, empowering both teachers and students to leverage its benefits anytime and anywhere. Overall, the simplicity of use and effectiveness of Google Translate make it an indispensable asset in modern language education, revolutionizing the way languages are taught and learned.

### *Enhancing the pronunciation abilities of students*

The respondents stated that teachers can use the text-to-speech feature on Google Translate as a teaching medium to improve students' pronunciation skills. In line with the data from classroom observation, teachers and students employed the text-to-speech function in Google Translate to listen to the correct pronunciation, which they then practiced together. As the lesson continued, students exhibited greater interest in understanding and improving their pronunciation, mainly due to the assistance provided by Google Translate. Corroborating the data from classroom observations, (Hutapea et al., 2023) stated that to enhance pronunciation, students can imitate native speakers or use recorded materials.

According to the result of the research done by (Sain & Cobar, 2023), the use of Google Translate by teachers as a learning media gives significant results in the improvement of the students' pronunciation after using the text-to-speech feature on Google Translate. The findings of the research conducted by (Martina Mulyani & Fakhrunisa Afina, 2021) also mentioned that Google Translate was beneficial to students in facilitating the pronunciation of words like that of native speakers. The statement of the respondents is also consistent with the study by (Khasanah et al., 2022), who stated that Google Translate could improve pronunciation skills, allowing students to practice pronouncing difficult words. Teachers' incorporation of Google Translate as learning media has been shown to improve students' pronunciation skills. The use of Google Translate in the classroom setting provides students with valuable resources to refine their pronunciation effectively. Through guided exercises and interactive activities facilitated by teachers, students can utilize Google Translate to practice pronunciation with accuracy and receive immediate feedback. Furthermore, the ability to listen to the pronunciation repeatedly helps to reinforce learning and improve their skills.

## *Increasing students learning motivation*

The interview's outcome is in line with (Taka, 2019), who stated that using learning media will bring new interest and desires in students, inspire and stimulate learning practices, and psychologically influence the learner. Google Translate has the potential to make a significant difference in the motivation and confidence of students as they master pronunciation. The platform empowers students to perfect their pronunciation skills precisely and efficiently by providing instant feedback from the text-to-speech feature. According to (Afandi et al., 2023), using Google Translate to support speaking achievement emphasizes its positive effect on students' interest and motivation in practicing their speaking skills. Furthermore, (Lestari et al., 2023) specifically highlight that the utilization of Google Translate is a motivating factor for students in learning English.

Google Translate allows students to practice the pronunciation of difficult words and makes them more motivated and confident in their learning. The platform offers a supportive learning environment where students can compare and adjust their pronunciation in real time, leading to deeper understanding. As students observe their progress through improved pronunciation, their confidence naturally grows, encouraging further engagement and enthusiasm for language learning. In addition, the data from classroom observation indicated that students exhibited a heightened interest in comprehending and enhancing their pronunciation, particularly due to the guidance provided by Google Translate. In this way, Google Translate can function as a practical learning media and as a stimulant to increase students' confidence and motivation to learn pronunciation.

## ***The Negative Perceptions of Using Google Translate as a Medium to Teach Pronunciation***

### *The Internet Access*

As one of the technologies that can only be accessed through the internet, one significant drawback of using Google Translate as a medium for teaching pronunciation is its dependence on internet access. It is in line with the result of the research by (Khasanah et al., 2022) that the obstacles when using Google Translate to learn pronunciation were that Google Translate often had errors and could not be used offline. In addition, (Agustin, 2022) also mentioned that the availability of an internet connection has an impact on the utilization of Google Translate. While the platform offers extensive pronunciation guides, its effectiveness depends on a stable internet connection.

The accessibility of an internet connection has a significant impact on the utilization of Google Translate as a medium for teaching pronunciation; with a stable connection, both teachers and students can seamlessly access Google Translate's text-to-speech feature, which enables them to listen to the accurate pronunciation of words and phrases. This availability enhances students' educational experience, as they are permitted to repeatedly listen to correct pronunciation until they have grasped it accurately. However, without reliable internet access, students may encounter difficulties accessing this resource, thereby hindering their ability to effectively use Google Translate as a pronunciation aid.

Consequently, the availability of an internet connection is paramount in enabling the effective utilization of Google Translate as a valuable learning medium for pronunciation instruction.

### *Smartphones as a Distraction*

The accessibility of smartphones can tempt students to divert their attention from the lesson at hand. This distraction can be detrimental to learning, as it diverts attention. In line with the result of the classroom observation, it became evident that several students were not paying attention to the instructions given by the teacher. When the teacher directed the students to use their smartphones to open Google Translate, some students instead used their smartphones to engage in activities unrelated to the learning process, such as playing games or accessing social media. This can undoubtedly act as a distraction for students, preventing them from being actively involved in the learning process. It also had a considerable negative influence on the students' academic performance due to the lifestyle associated with smartphones, which served to distract students from schoolwork. In addition, (Yin, 2019) stated that the prevalence of social media and smartphone gaming could distract students during class time. Instead of engaging with the material or participating in class discussions, students may use their smartphones to engage in non-educational activities such as social media, gaming, or messaging during class time.

This distraction not only distracts from the learning environment but also affects students' ability to fully understand and engage with the material being taught. According to (Soyemi & Abiodun Samson Oloruntoba, 2015), students' uncontrolled use of smartphones is the main reason for their poor academic performance. Teachers must be very aware of how to manage and avoid the misuse of technology during class time to ensure that students are focused and actively engaged in their learning activities. While smartphones offer numerous benefits, their presence in the classroom requires careful management to mitigate their negative impact on academic performance.

### **CONCLUSION**

According to the findings and discussion that explain teachers' perceptions of using Google Translate to teach English pronunciation, the researcher can conclude that teachers have positive and negative perceptions of this medium. The teachers agreed that Google Translate, as a medium for teaching English pronunciation, is simple to use and accessible because users can access it at any time. They considered using Google Translate as a medium appropriate and efficient for teaching English pronunciation because of its text-to-speech feature. Moreover, they also mention that using Google Translate as a medium for teaching English pronunciation can increase students' interest and motivation to learn pronunciation. On the other hand, the teachers also mention the negative perceptions of utilizing Google Translate as a medium for teaching English pronunciation. The most significant drawback is that using Google Translate depends on a stable internet connection. Furthermore, using smartphones to access Google Translate in the classroom can distract students, which could divert students' attention and be the main reason for students' poor academic performance. Although there are some negative views towards the use of Google Translate as a learning

medium, it can be concluded that teachers have more positive views towards using Google Translate as a learning medium to teach English pronunciation.

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