

## **Students' Attitudes Toward Using Google Translate for Speaking Practice in English.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Speaking is a crucial but challenging ability for ESL students to acquire. They lack enough chances to practice, so they typically struggle to become confident and fluent; moreover, conventional learning techniques can be monotonous or not participatory. Nowadays, tools like Google Translate enable students to practice speaking independently (Alm & Watanabe, 2024). This study aims to find out how students view utilizing Google Translate to enhance their speaking. The study gathered responses using a 5-point scale and a survey comprising straightforward questions. Thirty-second students from the Muhammadiyah University of Semarang comprised the participants. Students' opinions on utilizing the instrument were ascertained by utilizing survey data analysis (Fatkhurozi & Hidayat, 2024). According to the data, most students enjoyed using Google Translate, particularly for confidence boost and pronunciation aid (Raza, 2018). Nevertheless, some students cautioned against counting too much on it since they claimed it was not always accurate. While Google Translate is commonly recognized for its practicality and speed, students' perceptions also reflect a growing awareness of its limitations in maintaining grammatical accuracy and contextual coherence (Putri et al., n.d.). The study concluded that, generally, given careful use and teacher guidance, Google Translate can be helpful. It can simplify and increase the enjoyment of speaking practice, but it should not replace other approaches to learning.

**Keywords:** Students' Attitudes, Google Translate, Speaking Practice.

## INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the most essential yet challenging skills to master in English as a foreign language. It requires not only fluency and accuracy but also confidence and proper pronunciation. Many students struggle with these aspects due to limited practice opportunities, anxiety, or traditional learning methods that lack interactivity (Ananto Prayogo & Wahyudi, 2016). In addition to technological limitations, many students face psychological barriers such as fear of judgment, stage anxiety, and lack of confidence, which significantly hinder their ability to perform speaking tasks in English (Pratiwi et al., 2024). As technology advances, tools like Google Translate have emerged as practical aids for language learning (Ericsson & Johansson, 2023). Google Translate offers features such as text-to-speech and pronunciation assistance, which can help students practice speaking (Dwi Aryanti & Hery Santosa, 2024) by listening to accurate pronunciations and repeating. Speaking is one of the most important skills in learning English. For many students, it is also one of the hardest to master. Being able to speak well requires not just knowing grammar but also having good pronunciation, fluency, and confidence. Speaking in English allows students to express their ideas and opinions clearly and helps them interact effectively with others. However, for non-native speakers, these skills can be difficult to develop. Many students face challenges such as feeling nervous about making mistakes, not having enough time to practice, or being stuck with traditional learning methods that don't allow for much interaction or creativity (Ananto Prayogo & Wahyudi, 2016). These problems make it harder for students to improve their speaking skills, highlighting the need for tools and methods that can make the learning process easier and more enjoyable.

One tool that has become popular among students is Google Translate. Although it was originally created as a translation tool, Google Translate now offers many features that can help students practice their English speaking skills. For example, it has a text-to-speech feature that allows students to hear how words and sentences should be pronounced. Students can also use the voice input feature to check if they are pronouncing words correctly by speaking into the app. These features give students a simple and quick way to practice speaking English on their own. Trang (2022) explain that Google Translate is especially helpful for students who may not have access to native speakers or English teachers, as it provides an accessible resource for language practice.

Students' attitudes toward using Google Translate for speaking practice are generally positive. Many students appreciate how easy it is to use and how it allows them to practice at their own pace. They find it

especially useful for improving their pronunciation and learning the correct way to say words or phrases. Wiboolyasarini et al., (2023) note that students who use tools like *Google Translate* tend to feel more confident in their speaking abilities because the tool provides immediate feedback, which helps them correct their mistakes. For instance, if a student mispronounces a word, they can quickly identify the issue and practice until they get it right. This kind of instant correction is often not available in traditional classroom settings, where teachers may not have the time to give individual feedback to every student.

Google Translate is also beneficial for group learning (Khasanah et al., 2022). In class or study groups, students can use the tool to create dialogues or conversations in English. They can translate their ideas into English, listen to how the sentences are pronounced, and then practice saying them together. This can make speaking practice more interactive and enjoyable, as students can learn from each other and work together to improve. Incorporating technology into group activities also helps to keep students engaged and motivated, making the learning experience more dynamic and fun (Wiboolyasarini et al., 2023).

Despite its advantages, Google Translate is not perfect. One common issue is that the tool sometimes provides literal translations that don't fit the context of what the student is trying to say. This can lead to confusion or misunderstandings, especially in conversations where the exact meaning of a word or phrase is important. Besides pronunciation, the quality of translation produced by students when using Google Translate is highly dependent on their mastery of vocabulary and sentence structure (Hammam Hidayatullah et al., n.d.). For example, some idiomatic expressions or colloquial phrases may not translate well, resulting in sentences that sound awkward or unnatural. Another potential drawback is that students may rely too much on Google Translate (Lia & Tungka, 2023) and not develop their ability to think critically about how to construct sentences or express their ideas in English. Students also face lexical and cultural difficulties when translating idiomatic expressions, which are often mistranslated by automated tools such as Google Translate (Ayuningtyas et al., 2018). Over-reliance on any tool can limit growth, so it's important for students to use *Google Translate* as a supplement rather than a replacement for other methods of learning.

Teachers play an important role in helping students use *Google Translate* effectively. They can guide students on how to use the tool to practice specific aspects of speaking, such as pronunciation or sentence structure, while also encouraging them to engage in more creative and interactive activities (Utimaadini, 2023). Teachers can also explain the limitations of the tool and show students how to verify the accuracy of translations or use other resources to improve their understanding. By

combining *Google Translate* with traditional teaching methods, teachers can create a balanced learning approach that addresses both the strengths and weaknesses of the tool.

This study aims to explore students' attitudes toward using *Google Translate* for speaking practice. It will look at how students use the tool, what benefits they experience, and what challenges they face. By understanding these factors, the study seeks to provide insights into how *Google Translate* can be integrated into English learning to support speaking skills. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of the role of technology in education and offer recommendations for using it effectively in language classrooms.

## **METHOD**

This study used a qualitative method to understand students' attitudes toward using *Google Translate* for speaking practice in English. The focus was on gathering data through a survey to collect numerical results that can be analyzed easily.

### **Data Collection**

A survey was created with 10–15 simple questions about how students used *Google Translate*, how often they used it, and how helpful they found it for improving their speaking skills. The questions will use a 5-point Likert scale, such as:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Uncertain
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

The survey was shared online using tools like *Google Forms*, making it accessible and easy for students to complete.

### **Data Analysis**

After collecting the survey responses, the data were analyzed using basic statistical methods, such as calculating percentages or averages. For example, the analysis looked at how many students felt that *Google Translate* helped with pronunciation or how often they used the tool for practice.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study ensured that all students' information remained private. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and will be agreed to take part voluntarily.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study included 31 participants, mostly students from the English Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang. The respondents were aged between 19 and 21 years and had all utilized *Google Translate* as a resource for improving their English speaking skills. The questionnaire comprised 15 statements grouped into three primary indicators. Each statement was rated using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Survey findings revealed that the majority of students (85%) found *Google Translate* helpful in boosting their confidence while reading in English. Specifically, 73% reported that the *text-to-speech* feature significantly improved their pronunciation and word recognition.

**Table 1**  
Result of the Questionnaire

| Questionnaire   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| I feel comfortable using Google Translate to practice speaking English.                   | 5              | 15    | 11        | 0        | 0                 |
| I feel more confident when I use Google Translate to practice pronunciation.              | 5              | 13    | 8         | 5        | 0                 |
| Google Translate helps me understand how to say English words correctly.                  | 7              | 17    | 6         | 1        | 0                 |
| I feel more motivated to speak English when I use Google Translate.                       | 4              | 10    | 13        | 4        | 0                 |
| In general, I have a positive opinion about using Google Translate for speaking practice. | 3              | 17    | 9         | 2        | 0                 |
| Google Translate helps me improve my pronunciation.                                       | 4              | 17    | 7         | 3        | 0                 |
| I can practice speaking English by myself using Google Translate.                         | 4              | 18    | 7         | 2        | 0                 |
| Google Translate gives quick feedback on my pronunciation.                                | 4              | 16    | 8         | 3        | 0                 |
| I can practice speaking anytime without needing a teacher when I use Google Translate.    | 3              | 15    | 5         | 7        | 1                 |
| The voice feature in Google Translate helps me hear how words are pronounced.             | 5              | 19    | 4         | 3        | 0                 |
| Sometimes the translation from Google Translate is not correct.                           | 13             | 15    | 3         | 0        | 0                 |
| I think I use Google Translate too much and don't try to make sentences by myself.        | 3              | 10    | 11        | 7        | 0                 |
| The meaning of the translation is not always right for the conversation.                  | 9              | 17    | 4         | 1        | 0                 |
| I'm not always sure if the sentences from Google Translate are correct.                   | 8              | 16    | 7         | 0        | 0                 |
| Google Translate cannot replace a teacher or real speaking practice.                      | 6              | 18    | 5         | 2        | 0                 |

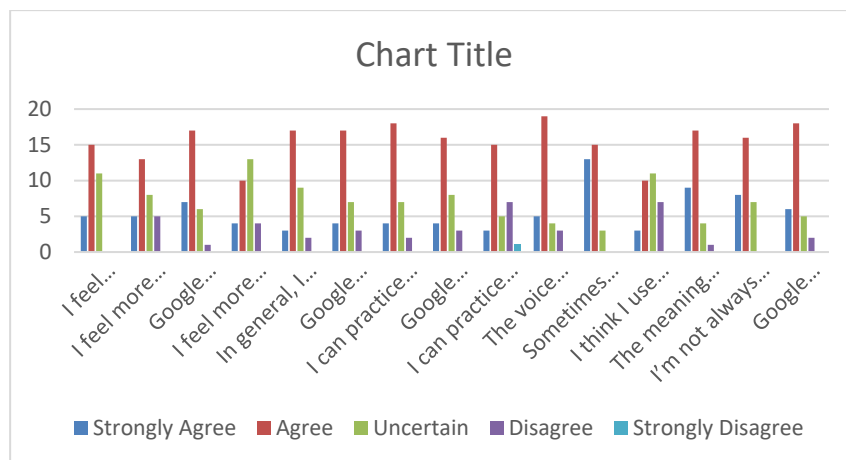
**Table 2**  
Students' Perspective

| Indicator  | Average Score | Interpretation              |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Students' Attitudes Toward Using Google Translate        | 3.69          | Positive Attitude           |
| Benefits of Using Google Translate for Speaking Practice | 3.68          | Perceived Useful            |
| Challenges in Using Google Translate                     | 3.93          | Some Significant Challenges |

Despite these advantages, certain challenges emerged. About 23% of students noticed that some translations lacked accuracy, making them hesitant to rely entirely on the tool for understanding complex texts. Additionally, 19% admitted that frequent use of *Google Translate* led to a diminished effort in independently decoding unfamiliar words, reinforcing concerns about over-reliance on translation technologies. And then to assess the impact of *Google Translate* on vocabulary learning, students underwent pre-test and post-test evaluations. Before using *Google Translate*, the average test score stood at 62.8. However, after incorporating the tool during reading activities, the post-test results showed a notable improvement, with an average score of 78.3. This increase highlights *Google Translate's* effectiveness in supporting

vocabulary recognition and comprehension. While *Google Translate* proved beneficial in assisting students with word recognition, its effectiveness varied based on their proficiency levels. Intermediate to advanced learners integrated the tool more strategically, using translations to clarify meanings without fully depending on them. In contrast, beginner-level students showed a tendency to rely on direct word to word translations rather than contextual inference, which could hinder deeper language acquisition. These findings underscore the role of *Google Translate* in promoting self-directed vocabulary learning, particularly in situations where students lack immediate access to instructors or native speakers. However, while most students experienced improved comprehension, those who relied solely on *Google Translate* without contextual inference faced difficulties in retaining newly learned vocabulary beyond their immediate reading activities. This suggests that effective use of digital translation tools requires a balance between direct translation and active cognitive engagement with language structures.

**Graphic 1**  
Graphic Format



## CONCLUSION

The conclusion, that some of the main factors is a valuable resource for vocabulary recognition, offering students immediate access to definitions and pronunciation aids. The significant improvement in post-test scores reinforces its role in facilitating learning. However, while *Google Translate* enhances comprehension, students should be encouraged to balance its use with contextual learning strategies to prevent over-dependence. Ultimately, *Google Translate* is best utilized as a supplementary tool rather than a primary method for vocabulary acquisition. Integrating traditional learning approaches such as

contextual inference and active engagement with texts can help students build stronger, independent reading skills while still benefiting from technology-assisted learning.

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