

## TRANSLATOR TOOLS IN SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING: THEIR IMPACT ON STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND PROCESS

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**Abstract:** This research discusses the role of translation tools in writing in a second language and their impact on students' writing performance and processes. Translator tools are software or applications that help in translating text from one language to another. This research investigates the extent to which translation tools influence students' writing abilities and students' writing performance in a second language. The research methods used involve surveys and interviews. The instruments to be used were questionnaire and interview guideline. There are three issues which covered in this research; the students' writing frequencies, the use of translator tools in writing and the impact of translator tool on writing performance. The results show that most of the students write weekly and actually they like writing but not really confident on their writing abilities. The use of translation tools in writing in a second language can have a complex impact on students' writing performance and processes. On the one hand, translation tools can help students overcome language barriers and improve the quality of their writing. However, excessive use of translation tools can hinder the development of natural writing skills and its dependence on technology. This research highlights the importance of a balanced approach in using translation tools, where students should be given proper guidance in combining technology with their personal efforts in improving their writing skills. In conclusion, a better understanding of how translation tools influence students' writing performance and processes can help educators design more effective instructional approaches to writing in a second language.

**Keywords:** Translator tool; Performance; Writing performance

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### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, advancements in technology have significantly influenced various aspects of education, including language learning and writing skills. Writing skills have long been recognized as a fundamental component of education, enabling individuals to effectively communicate ideas, opinions, and information. Traditionally, writing instruction has encompassed grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and organization. The students start learning to communicate through written form as they begin to interact with others in academic program (Javed, 2013).

One notable technological tool that has gained prominence is the translator tool, which offers the potential to bridge language barriers and enhance writing processes for students. This background section delves into the growing significance of translator tools in the context of writing skills development and potential impact on students' writing performance and processes.

However, with the advent of digital tools and platforms, the landscape of writing instruction has transformed. Technology has introduced innovative ways to engage learners and support their language learning journey. Translator tools, often powered by artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms, offer the ability to translate text from one language to another with

varying degrees of accuracy. These tools have evolved from basic word-for-word translations to more sophisticated models capable of understanding context and producing coherent translations. Some of the prominent translator tools include Google Translate, DeepL, and Microsoft Translator. The integration of translator tools into writing instruction has shown potential benefits for students, particularly those learning a second language or aiming to communicate across linguistic boundaries. Some of the benefits include: Vocabulary Enhancement: Translator tools introduce students to new understandings and idiomatic expressions in various languages, thereby expanding their linguistic knowledge. Grammar and Syntax: By analyzing and generating translations, students can observe grammatical structures and syntactical patterns, which can contribute to their understanding of language rules. Cultural Awareness: Translator tools provide insights into cultural nuances, encouraging students to consider sociocultural contexts when conveying messages. Quick Reference: Students can use translator tools as quick references to ensure the accuracy of terms, phrases, and expressions while writing.

While translator tools offer undeniable advantages, their integration into writing processes also raises questions about potential drawbacks and their influence on students' writing development. Some considerations include: Dependency: Overreliance on translator tools might hinder students' active engagement with language learning, potentially leading to a weaker grasp of grammar and vocabulary. Accuracy: Although translator tools have improved in accuracy, they can still produce errors or awkward phrasing, which, if unchecked, could negatively impact the quality of written work. Originality: There is a concern that excessive use of translator tools might lead to a lack of originality in students' writing, as phrases and structures may be directly lifted from translations. Critical Thinking: Students might bypass critical thinking processes when using translator tools, missing opportunities to engage deeply with the content they are writing. This study demonstrates the potential of translation to enhance foreign language teaching and learning. In our interconnected world and diverse Europe, translation plays a crucial role. Recent literature in applied linguistics indicates a renewed interest in using translation for language teaching (Leonardi, 2010). Therefore, this research focuses on The use of translator tool in second language writing: Their impact on students' writing performance and process.

## **METHOD**

This research applied a qualitative research design. According to Berg (2001), qualitative research involves researchers seeking answers to questions by examining various social and individual contexts. The design of qualitative research elucidates the contextual framework and extracts evidence from participants' responses. Qualitative methodology serves as a means to

uncover concealed aspects of an individual under observation. It encompasses both spoken interactions and traces left behind, including letters, photographs, and social media content, that are related to the individual. This research conducted by analyzing the the use of translation tools in second, language writing: Their Impact on students writing performance and process. This research conducted to the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program at STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa Sintang, which consisted of 18 students. To collect the data the researchers used Questionnaire and open ended interview. A questionnaire serves as a research tool comprising a sequence of inquiries and additional cues to collect information from respondents. While frequently crafted for the statistical examination of responses, this is only sometimes applicable. Sir Francis Galton (1822 - 1911) is credited with the invention of the questionnaire). Gracia (2010) Questionnaires have advantages over some other types of surveys in that they are cheap, do not require as much effort from the questioner as verbal or telephone surveys, and often have standardized answers that make it simple to compile data. As a type of survey, questionnaires also have many problems relating to question construction and wording that exist in other types of opinion polls. The researchers used closed ended questions. Interviewing involves asking questions and getting answers from participants in a research.. According to Cresswell ( 2008 :225 ), A qualitative interview occurs when researcher ask one or more participants as general, open-ended questions and records their answers.

In this research, the researchers used open – ended questions for interview to confirm the use of Translations tool for second language writing both performance and process. In analyzing the data of this research, the researchers used some steps that are proposed by (Burns, 2010). They are described from Assembling the Data In this step, the researchers collected the data that they have. After that, they review the initial. In this steps they revise questions and look for broad patterns. Coding the data in the second step, the researchers code the data into more specific patterns or categories. The researchers also identify which data that could be coded qualitatively and which data could be coded quantitatively. Comparing the Data After coding the data, the researchers compared the categories or patterns across different sets of data, for example interviews compare with surveys, to see whether they show the same thing or whether they were contradictions. Building Meanings and Interpretations. In this step, the researchers thought deeper about what could be seen from the data by reflecting beyond the immediate surface details. The researchers also looked for more abstract concepts and not just step-by-step descriptions of what had been found. Questions are posed, connections are identified and explanations about what the research meant at the broadest level of the research

understanding of it are developed in this step. Then, the researchers refine their own 'personal theories' about the meaning of the research.

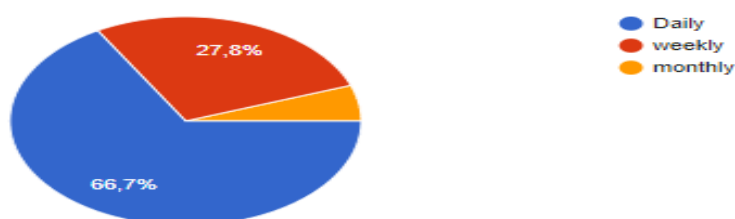
## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted to the fifth semester students of English language education study program of STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa. There were three big issues which covered in the research, they were : Writing Frequencies; The used of translation tool; and The impact of translation tool on writing performance.

### 1. The Frequencies of Writing

#### 1. How often do you write in your studies?

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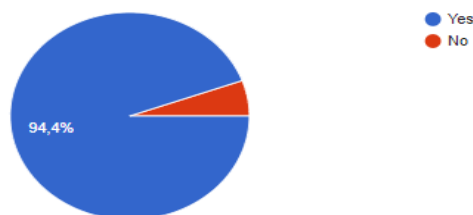
From the questionnaires that distributed to students, it was found that approximately 66,7 percent students engaged in daily writing as an integral part of their academic and personal lives. This high level of daily writing reflects the evolving demands of the modern world, where effective written communication is paramount. These students are not limited by their academic disciplines; they span a wide spectrum of fields, from the humanities and social sciences to the natural sciences and beyond. They recognize that writing is a fundamental skill that transcends boundaries, enriches understanding, and fosters creativity. Daily writing is not merely a task or an obligation for these students; it is a habit deeply ingrained in their daily routines. They understand that consistent practice is key to honing their writing skills and maintaining a high level of proficiency. As such, they approach writing with dedication, seeking opportunities to grow and refine their abilities. Furthermore, these students value feedback and collaboration as essential components of their writing process. They actively seek input from peers or online communities to enhance the quality of their work and to ensure their writing resonates with their intended audience.

In conclusion, the fact that 66,7 percent of students engage in daily writing speaks to the central role of writing in education and beyond. It underscores the recognition that writing is not only a means of expression but also a skill that empowers individuals to communicate effectively, adapt to various contexts, and contribute meaningfully to the discourse of our interconnected world.

### 1. The Use of Translation Tools

3. Have you ever used online translator tools (e.g., Google Translate, DeepL) for writing assignments?

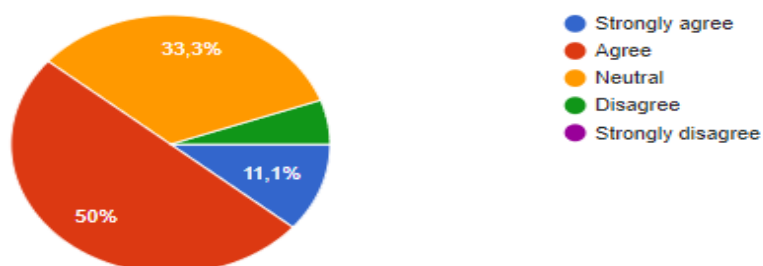
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The diagram above explained that almost all students use google translator for their writing assignment. Based on the result of interview the use of Translating Tools has been proven to improve the quality of students' writing. These tools help them understand sentence structure and proper comprehension, resulting in more organized and coherent writing. Improving the quality of writing is an extraordinary achievement that shows significant development in a students's writing abilities. From the questionnaire there are 94,4 percent of students that used translators tool as tool in their writing with various reasons one of the reasons is *“I write using translation tools. Sometimes, if I don't know the vocabulary or how to combine sentences, I will use Translate to translate my writing. I also use translation just to check my writing whether there is anything that needs to be corrected or not”*. In addition, a half of students that agree that translator tool could them to improve their writing.

6. In your opinion, do translator tools improve your writing performance?

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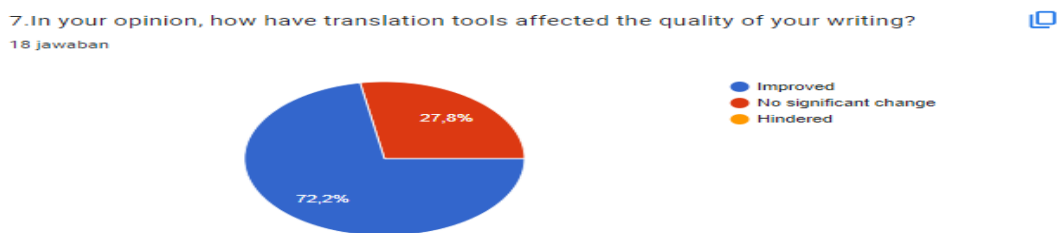


The importance of improving the quality of writing covers many aspects. From correct grammar to the ability to organize ideas coherently, all of these things play an important role in creating writing that convinces and captivates readers. By improving the quality of writing, a person can produce more in-depth and meaningful works, whether in the form of essays, stories, articles, or other creative works. Improved writing quality also allows a person to convey their messages and ideas with clarity and appeal, influencing and inspiring others. Quality writing

also improves a person's communication skills, opening doors to new opportunities in education, work and everyday life. Writing is one of the four skills in language learning. It is the system of written symbols, representing the sound, syllables, or words of language, with different mechanism, capitalization, spelling and punctuation, word form and function (Rao, 2018)

The journey to improve the quality of writing is an intellectual and creative adventure that produces satisfaction and pride. Through constant practice, diligent reading, and the drive to continue learning, one can experience progress in one's writing abilities. This improvement is not just about developing skills, but also about finding a unique writer's voice and identity. As time goes by, this achievement not only becomes a measure of a person's ability to write, but is also proof of dedication and passion that leads to achieving full potential in the world of writing. Therefore, improving the quality of writing is a meaningful and important journey, which transforms a person into a stronger writer, pconfident and inspiring.

## 2. The Impact of Translation Tools on Writing Performance Process



The diagram pie above defines that most of students felt that translation tools affected the quality of their writing. Students who use Translating Tools report that the tool makes the writing revision process easier. They can quickly identify mistakes and tidy up their phrasing, increasing their confidence in writing. Writing is a dynamic process, involving the creation, reflection, and transformation of ideas into words. Several factors contribute to the subpar performance in ESL writing. Research indicates that if students lack enjoyment in learning the target language, their language proficiency tends to suffer adversely (Andrade & Williams, 2009; Tuncay & Uzunboylu, 2010). However, the true beauty of writing often lies in the revision process. Revision is the stage where harsh words are transformed into polished sentences, where cloudy ideas are clarified, and where the written work begins to shine in its originality. In this process, persistence and patience become the writer's loyal friends. An effective revision process involves the ability to look back at written work with fresh and critical eyes. It's not just about looking for grammatical or spelling errors, but rather embracing new thinking, alternative points of view, and stronger ways of presenting. Effective writers are not afraid to cut, change, or replace parts of their writing, because they realize that it is through

changes that the written work will achieve the desired depth and sharpness. Additionally, an effective revision process requires the courage to accept feedback, both from oneself and from others. It's important to be willing to open your mind and heart to constructive suggestions, even if it means overhauling entire chapters or drastically changing the plot of the story. Feedback is a window to a better understanding of the weaknesses and strengths of writing, and through accepting and implementing those suggestions, the written work becomes stronger and more convincing. The assertion is that translation plays an integral role in a bilingual classroom, but it necessitates continuous supervision by the lecturers to prevent students from becoming overly reliant on it, particularly when they resort to online translation tools. Referring to the participants, their instructor opted for a shortcut by predominantly prohibiting the use of translation in the classroom to mitigate this issue. However, despite the ban, the participants affirmed their ongoing need for translation during classes due to their limited proficiency. This situation underscores the absence of a definitive solution to address the challenges associated with the use of translation in the classroom. (Medvedev, 2016)

However, the use of Translation Tools also leads to increased dependence on them. Students tend to rely on translation tools for their writing assignments without deepening their understanding of the foreign language. Technological advances have brought significant changes to various aspects of our lives, including the way we interact with information and knowledge. According to Ali (2012), Translation should be used to foster and take advantage of a student's natural ability to assimilate L2 (second language) information via their L1 (native or first language) processing. However, behind this technological sophistication, there are challenges that need to be faced, one of which is increasing dependence on technology. This phenomenon occurs when we start to rely on technology for our daily needs, even things that previously could be completed independently. One area where dependency is increasing significantly is in the use of smart devices and the internet.

In the world of education, increasing reliance on technology raises questions about independent learning and deep understanding of the material. Students often rely on online resources and learning applications, reducing direct interaction with lecturers and classmates. Even though technology provides information in an instant, the process of critical thinking and analysis is sometimes neglected, because students tend to rely on answers provided by algorithms and search engines. The biggest challenge of increased dependency is the loss of traditional skills and the ability to solve problems independently. According to Kastberg (2012), the discussion by providing a comprehensive breakdown of the definition, capabilities, and the translation process employed by each translation tool. Furthermore, he delved into the

advantages and drawbacks associated with each tool, with the objective of furnishing both the reader and translators seeking assistance from these tools, especially when confronted with a substantial volume of text to be translated, with lucid and insightful information. Social skills, critical thinking abilities, and courage to face uncertainty can stall in this dependency. Therefore, it is important for individuals and society to develop awareness of this dependency and establish a healthy balance between technology and real life. Cook (2010), The use of different kinds of parts of speech has strict rules. Because of the differences between source language and target language, simply translate mechanically will cause great negative impact on translation work, especially in literary translation. While increased reliance on technology brings challenges inline with Cook, In a previous study conducted by Korošec (2011) on the feasibility and obstacles of integrating machine translation into translation training, it was observed that students predominantly adopted the practice of using Google Translate's output as a foundational draft.

Subsequently, they engaged in post-editing. Students undergoing translation training demonstrated an inclination towards actively reassessing translations generated by Google Translate rather than passively accepting them and submitting their assignments to their translation instructors. Their awareness extended to the potential for misinterpretation by Google Translate and other machine translation tools, particularly for words in the source language with multiple meanings in the target language. there are opportunities to increase digital literacy and a deeper understanding of how to use technology wisely. Education about responsible use, development of critical thinking skills, and promotion of direct social interaction can help overcome overdependence. Kenny states (2022) better understanding the implications of technology dependency, we can take steps to ensure that technology remains a useful tool without sacrificing independence and traditional skills that are important in our personal and social development. Achieving high-quality machine translation (MT) necessitates tailoring MT systems to a particular domain, such as content type or style..

Writing Strategy Development: Some students develop more efficient writing strategies by utilizing mixed translation tools. They use this tool as a tool, while still developing their writing skills independently. Writing is not just a chore, but an art that involves imagination, critical thinking, and self-expression. For many people, writing can be a daunting challenge, but with the development of the right writing strategies, the door to the world of words opens wide, allowing ideas to flow freely. Developing writing strategies involves a process of learning and exploration. It is a journey that allows one to discover one's own authorial voice and create stunning and meaningful works. One of the keys to develop a writing strategy understands your

audience. Writing with a specific audience in mind helps writers directing their message more clearly, making the writing more persuasive and impactful.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the rapid advancements in technology have brought about a significant transformation in education, particularly in the realm of language learning and writing skills. The emergence and growing prominence of translator tools, driven by artificial intelligence and machine learning, offer a potential bridge across language barriers and a novel approach to enhancing students' writing processes. These tools, exemplified by Google Translate, DeepL, and Microsoft Translator, not only aid in language translation but also bring forth several benefits for students. Translator tools enrich students' vocabulary, expose them to idiomatic expressions, provide insights into grammatical and syntactical structures, and encourage an awareness of cultural nuances in language usage. They serve as quick references, boosting efficiency in the writing process by streamlining the translation of words and phrases.

However, while the advantages of translator tools are evident, their integration into the writing process also raises concerns. Overreliance on these tools may hinder active language learning, potentially leading to weaker grammar and vocabulary skills. Despite their accuracy improvements, errors and awkward phrasing can still surface, affecting the quality of written work. Originality may be compromised as students directly lift phrases and structures from translations, and critical thinking processes could be bypassed.

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