Google Translate: Perception among PhD Students

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Abstract
This paper aims to explore the perceptions of Ph.D. students on using Google Translate when writing their theses. This paper is qualitative research, where primary data was collected from interviews with three selected Ph.D. students. The students were selected randomly. The qualitative research was chosen because it represents the student's views and perspectives regarding the issue. Data were recorded, transcribed, and analysed using thematic analyses for multiple interviews. The result revealed that the three students find it easy to write their theses while using Google Translate. The students are also concerned with Google Translates ability in translating, but there is not much that can be done as they need a free and easy tool to use when writing their theses. Finally, we find that Google Translate has a positive impact on the students' theses writing, but there is still a limitation to Google Translate in translating long sentences.
Keywords: Google Translate, Theses, Translation, Writing, Perceptions.

Introduction
Google Translate (henceforth GT) has been a go-to tool for English as Second Language students as it is free and easy to use (Sylvi & Yuyun, 2018). Most of the students used GT to learn different languages. In 2016, GT served 500 million users, and in 2021, the online machine translation has provided up to 109 languages worldwide. The use of GT is viewed as a positive approach to learning a language (Wei, 2021). While GT is used widely, its' accuracy is still debatable (Ghasemi & Hashemian, 2016; Ismail & Hartono, 2016; Napitupulu, 2017). Therefore, Napitupulu researched in 2017 to examine the frequency of errors in GT abstract translations. The information was gathered from ten abstracts submitted by postgraduate students from a variety of faculties. From the result, it was found that some words have been misspelt, and other terms have been mistranslated. GT translation is questionable and through this study, the researcher wants to explore the students' perception toward using GT while writing their theses.

Literature Review
GT has evolved to meet the users' demand in producing a good translation throughout the year. GT worked by translating the source language into English before translating it into the

target language with the help of official transcripts taken from the United Nations and European Parliament. Starting as a rule-based machine translation, GT launched with only six languages: French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, and English (D'Monte, 2018).
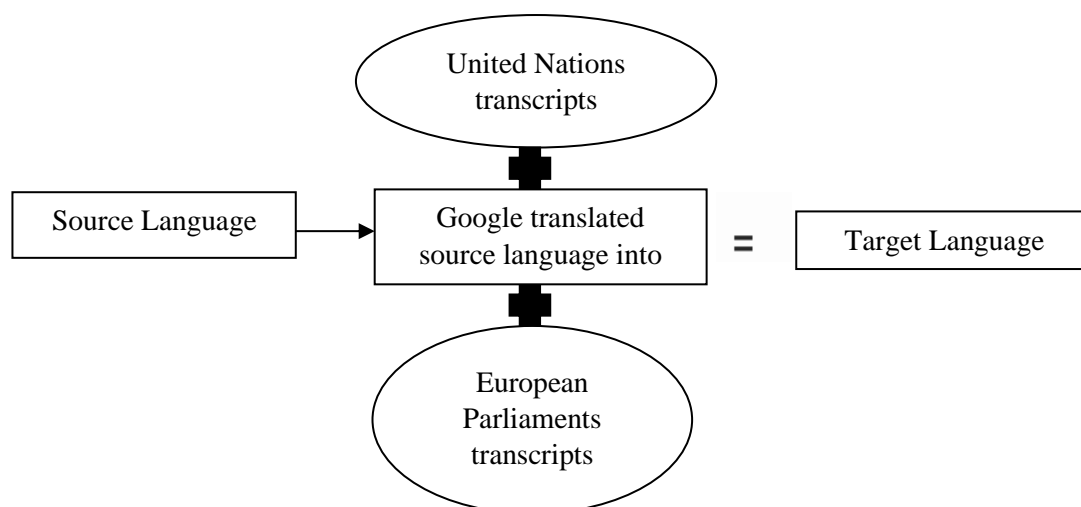

Figure 1: The Process of Google Translate

As of 2016, GT supports 103 languages and serves 500 million people worldwide (D'Monte, 2018; Turovsky, 2016). GT does not engage any language specialists to develop the grammar rules for each language they provide, making the service a little more challenging (Sommerlad, 2018). Although GT translation was imprecise, it provided the necessary rendition, and as time passed, the algorithm identified numerous patterns and received input from real people.

GT invites users to join the GT Community, which helps individuals improve translations and potentially introduce new languages to GT. The user may translate or validate words, phrases, and sentences in their native language. Even yet, it is not enough to make their translation immaculate.

Methodology
The consideration behind this research is to explore the perceptions of Ph.D. students on using Google Translate when writing their thesis. Three students were interviewed to acquire general perceptions due to time constraints. Hence, the study used qualitative methods by conducting semi-structured interviews with 3 Ph.D. students from a public university. The uniqueness of qualitative research is focused on a specific group of people.
For this research, the Ph.D. students from a public university in Perak were chosen to be the participants. In qualitative research, the determination of sample size is dependent on the research needs under which the researcher wants to study (Boddy, 2016; Qu & Dumay, 2007). Qualitative methodologies, details, and descriptions of issues will produce comprehensive data on a small number of participants (Creswell, 2009).
This case study shows that research on students' perception of Google Translate when writing their thesis is suitable to use qualitative methodologies. The qualitative method allows the

researcher to ask questions to the participants. Here are the procedures implemented by the researcher to dissect this case study based on Robert K.Yin

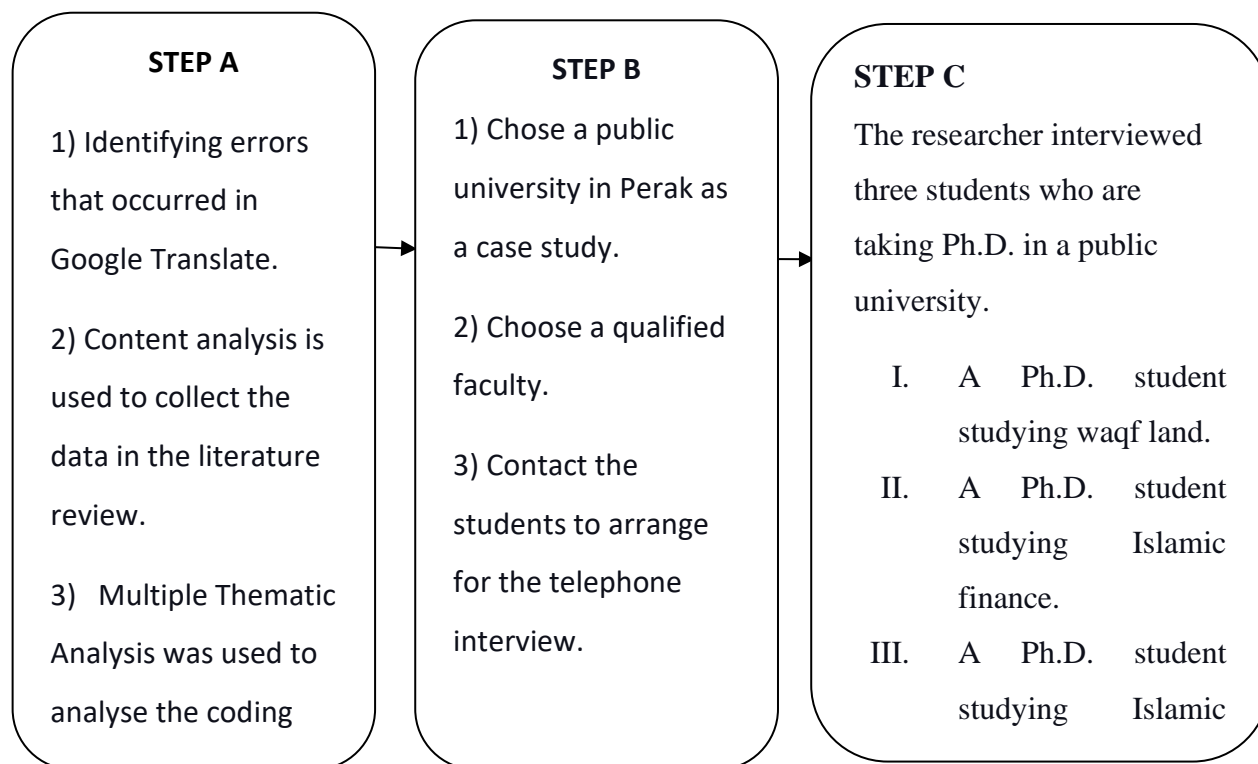| STEP A	STEP B	STEP C
1) Identifying errors that occurred in Google Translate.	1) Chose a public university in Perak as a case study.	The researcher interviewed three students who are taking Ph.D. in a public university.
2) Content analysis is used to collect the data in the literature review.	2) Choose a qualified faculty.	I. A Ph.D. student studying waqf land.
3) Multiple Thematic Analysis was used to analyse the coding	3) Contact the students to arrange for the telephone interview.	II. A Ph.D. student studying Islamic finance.
		III. A Ph.D. student studying Islamic

Figure 2: The process to choose participants.

Qualitative research is distinctive because of the various procedure that can be done on each subject. Figure 2 shows the process of operating and selecting participants for this research. According to Ali et al (2018), it increases the answer quality by the selective process. However, there is an obstacle within this method that needs the researcher to be persistent when setting up the telephone interview. The researcher must make several calls to the students to ensure the telephone interview's appropriate day and time. The request for telephone interviews was also sent via email and WhatsApp to get responses. The selection of the students in this research is based on their willingness to be interviewed. The researcher initiated the interview with student A on February 25, 2021, and student B on February 26, 2021. Student C was supposed to be interviewed on February 26, 2021, but as a matter that occurred for student C, the telephone interview was pushed back to March 2, 2021.
The semi-structured interview method was selected based on the interview design and direct questions towards the topics and issues. Once the students are interviewed, and data is gathered, the data will be transcribed into a paper script. Each of the interviews lasted around 1 hour. The researcher took some time to transcribe the interview, totalling 15 days to complete the transcribe. This is because the researcher took 10 minutes to break for every 15 minutes of transcribing.

Findings
The findings of Ph.D. students' perception on using Google Translate for writing a thesis are crucial in providing students perception on Google Translate. Thus, the findings found a positive review from the students when using Google Translate for writing their thesis as it provides them with easy-to-understand translation. The data themes show that the use of

Google Translate for writing a thesis in this case study is also influenced by the students' attitudes who are not confident with their English skills.

For example, thesis writing is not only to develop the idea but also to enhance the writing skills among Ph.D. students who are non-native speakers. The interesting fact about it is that by using Google Translate, the Ph.D. students are trying to improve themselves in English.

Moreover, one of the participants even writes his/her thesis in Bahasa Melayu before translating it into English using Google Translate. This shows the student is doing as much as he/she can ensure his/her thesis is completed in English.

Moreover, according to the students, the translation given by Google Translate is understandable. Even if there are mistranslations, they can easily change the word to a better translation that fits their writing. Human editing is still needed to make sure Google Translate translation is correct and suitable in their writing.

Based on this study, it can also be seen that using Google Translate can also boost the student's morale in writing their thesis as they know they have something to rely upon whenever they encounter new words or terms in their respective subject. Along with the help of a dictionary as well, the students can use Google Translate adequately to complete their writing.

Table 1

Summary of Transcription of Three (3) Participants According to Theme

Participants	Theme 1:	Participants	Theme 1:
A	"Free online translation service. I can save money before hiring professional proofreader later when my thesis is complete"	"Google Translate produce understandable translation which I can improve by using other words in my writing. I can also choose other words that is more suitable with my context within Google Translate."	"Writing become easy because words are translated faster. I feel motivated to write my thesis as I can use Google Translate to translate my thesis before sending it to a proofreader."
B	"Easy to use and to navigate. It doesn't require any payment."	"Can translate from various languages and gave almost accurate translation. I can also know whether it is noun or verb as it is shown by Google Translate."	"More writing can be done as more words are understood"
C	"Reliable online translation compared to others. It can also translate webpages which is very useful."	"Translation given is understandable and can help me to paraphrase the sentences better. Sometimes the words translated is weird, but I can understand and change it."	"Words use in writing are diversify as I have to use other words than the translation given to make it clearer"

Discussions

Many other online machine translations are available online, and one can choose which works best. This study contributes to the perception of using Google Translate in writing a thesis. Significant contributions can be made by exploring the perception of using Google Translate in writing a thesis, as perception plays a significant role in how something is perceived. Google Translate's ability to serve the students with adequate translation is valuable as it helps the students to complete their work academically. Specifically, when most of the literature focuses on the negative side of Google Translate.

This paper supports the view of using Google Translate when doing their academic work as it can help the students to understand their studies better. Finally, although Google Translate is easy and free to use, the students must be aware of the inaccuracy being made and be responsible for fixing the mistranslations. The researcher suggests that Google Translate users be aware of any remarks made by Google Translate as Google Translate translation still needs human editing to be error-free

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