

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter includes the introductory explanation of the study. It will cover the background information relevant to the study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, the clarification of the main terms, and the organization of the thesis.

1.1 Background of Problem

There are many websites on internet for students to practice language (Harmer, 2007: 192). According to the Harmer's statement above, the writer sees that the way how the students learn has changed. The growing number of facilities in information technology and the widely-used of internet services are the reason for the change. The situation also happened in Indonesia where students can find any references they need in internet without having much problem now. When they have any translation or writing assignment, they simply consult it to internet.

In term of English language learning, the translation process between source language and target language cannot be separated, although the intensity between them becomes lesser and lesser from time to time. As each language has different grammatical and syntactical rule, the students used their first language as their default language which includes its grammatical and syntactical rule. In line with the discussion above, Weinreich (1953, in De Bot, 2005: 43) mentions that students who learn different language to their first language will have three

processes. Those three processes are so called coordinate, compound, and subordinate organization.

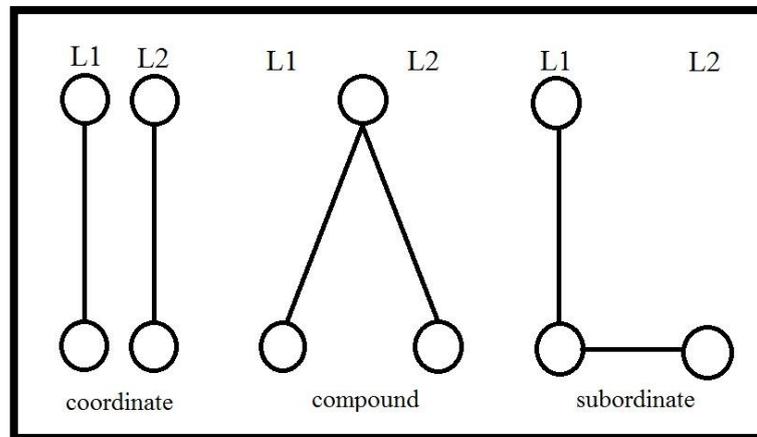


Figure 1.1 Weinreich's Three Processes

In coordinate organization, each language's concept separate completely, where in a compound organization learners unified the concept of L1 and L2 or there is a common concept but with different words of each language. In the subordinate organization, there is just one sets of concept, but the items from L2 can be reached only by L1.

Students, who do their task by consulting the internet, usually consult a dictionary which is online or consult to any other translation application program. Recently, many students used the so called online machine translation which provides richer feature than the conventional one. This online translation machine can also translate the slang language which never found in conventional dictionary. One of the famous and widely-used online translators is Google Translate. Davis (2011) mentions that Google Translate is probably the most widely used online translation tool recently. Google Translate as shown in translate.google.com is a free translation service that provides instant translations

between dozens of different languages. It can translate words, sentences and web pages between any combinations of our supported languages.

Regarding the use of Google Translate by students, there is an issue which tells whether Google Translate has positive or rather negative effect to students in term of English language learning. Davis (2011) with his blog article entitled “*Google Translate, Friend or Foe*” is a clear image which tells that the issue is still not validated by any study. However, the general negative implication of the use of Google Translate is that the students rely too much on it. Therefore, they do not learn anything as the translation process of Google Translate is very instant, and students just have to wait the result while online machine translation produces it instantly. In the other side, the major positive implication is that Google Translate can assist the student in term of English language learning, but how? Therefore, it is important to know the potency of Google Translate features as an aid for students in English language learning. Those Google Translate features include interesting features, such as instant translation, word and phrase highlighting, diction choices, pronunciation preview, and etc. Those features are bundled in a single user interface.

The discussion and phenomena in online machine translation and its relation to English language learning is very researchable. The decision to take part in this discussion is also strengthened by the limited number of the similar study regarding Google Translate and English language learning whether in Indonesia or in international area. However, the writer finds several studies which relate to Google Translate especially, or the other machine translation, online

translation tools, and English language learning. For instance, Kumar (2012) in his journal entitled “*Machine Translation in Arabic-Speaking ELT Classrooms: Applications and Implications*”. Kumar’s study investigates the use and the student’s dependence toward Machine Translation on EFL Arabic speaking learners. This study produced the conclusion which tells that machine translation is very popular among the EFL-Arabic speaking students in its usage in ELT classrooms. The students have various reasons ranging from understanding questions, concepts and topics.

Another example of the similar study focusing on online translation tools and English language learning is the study from Zengin (2011) with his journal entitled “*Turkish EFL Academicians’ Problems Concerning Translation Activities and Practices, Attitude towards the Use of Online and Printed Translation Tools, and Suggestions for Quality Translation Practice*”. This study mainly concerned on the students’ attitude toward the online translation tools has positive response. In line with the writer, Zengin sees that online translation tools and search engines were found beneficial in enhancing the quality of existing translation practices.

Both examples study on online translation tools were strengthened the background reason of this study which led to say that it was quite reasonable to take Google Translate and its relation toward English language learning to become a discussion for the research. Thus, by all reasons and foundation mentioned earlier, this study had taken out through the title “**The Use of Google Translate as a Learning Media for Improving Students’ Translation Skill, a Quasi-Experimental Study in One of Vocational School in *Kabupaten Bandung***”.

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The Use Of Google Translate As A Learning Media For Improving Students’ Translation Skill
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1.2 Statement of Problems

Lately, the government encourages students to become independent after they graduate from high school. It is especially for the vocational high school students in order to become an independent entrepreneur without relying much on large industry. The program which is called “*SMK Bisa*” is the tag-line to encourage them to enroll in *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan* (vocational high school). However, the leading industrial country is mainly western countries which use English as their official language (i.e.: United States of America and England). Besides that, English has become international lingua-franca since then. Thus the language of science is English also which makes all references written in English. The condition seems to oblige vocational students to at least understand English passively. Thus, the need of English language skill is very important to support the vocational competence for the vocational students.

In order to achieve that goal, government regulates the standard of content of English Subject for vocational school which contains purpose as follows:

English subject aims to make the student has ability to:

1. be capable and skillful on a basic level of English proficiency in order to achieve the vocational competence,
2. apply their English skill to communicate whether spoken or written at an intermediate level.

The excerpt above mentions that the purpose of English subject in vocational school aims to make the students to own the ability of English language, and to master English on a basic level of English proficiency in order to

support the vocational competence target. The next purpose is to apply the English skill to use in communication, whether spoken or written in an intermediate level.

From the citation above, the writer sees that the main purpose of English language is to support the vocational competence for later purpose in the industrial or entrepreneurship atmosphere. The English language skill is strengthened both on spoken and written skill. Regarding the speaking and listening skill, the vocational students are prepared to have spoken communication skill actively, whereas reading and writing skill is for supporting their skill on accessing information (i.e.: reading source book regarding their vocational competence), and communicating through written text.

Although translation is not mentioned in the content standard on the government curriculum as shown above, but to avoid it in term of English as foreign language atmosphere such here in Indonesia is almost a hard thing. Underlining the skill of accessing information on vocational competence source book, the vocational students seem to have an obligation to have a good reading comprehension. It means that they should have to understand the text easily. The writer assumes that while students reading, there is the process of transferring the second language (which in this case is English language) to their first language (*Bahasa Indonesia*, or probably their local language, i.e.: *Sundanese*). Thus the Weinreich's process as mentioned earlier happened. The role of Google Translate here is to assist them to learn understanding text through translation process. Thus, this study tends to measure whether Google Translate with its features help

students in term of English language learning, and especially in learning translation by redirecting them to use it correctly.

In term of translation, although the communicative learning avoids it, but Dagiliené (2012) states that while translating, students are incited to notice differences in structure and vocabulary, to strengthen grammatical competence, to shape their own way of thinking and to correct common mistakes that could otherwise remain unnoticed. Furthermore, Dagiliené mentions that translation activities are a useful pedagogical tool when it is applied purposefully and imaginatively into language will trigger the development and improvement of the learners' reading, speaking skill, as well as the grammar and vocabulary skill. With its clear strength and purpose of translation in term of language learning, the writer sees that besides helping in English language learning, translation – especially using Google Translate will be very useful in assisting students to understanding text easily.

1.3 Research Questions

The background of the study and the statement of problem as shown in the previous section give a clear reason to which discussion this study tends to lead. And then, in order to maintain the objectivity of the study and to limit the discussion, the study has formulated the statement of problem into two research questions as follows:

- Do Google Translate and its teacher's feedback help students to improve their translation skill?

- What kind of experience do students get from learning by using Google Translate as its media?

1.4 Purposes of the Study

Based on those research questions above, the study had two purposes to gain. The first purpose was to measure whether or not Google Translate and its teacher's direction and feedback help to improve the students' skill in translation. This translation skill furthermore assumes to help students in understanding text. In term of vocational students, this first purpose defines Google Translate favor for the students to help them strengthening their translation skill, which later it will be useful for reading comprehension or understanding text easily. If we transcribe the statement above, thus the framework image will be as follows.

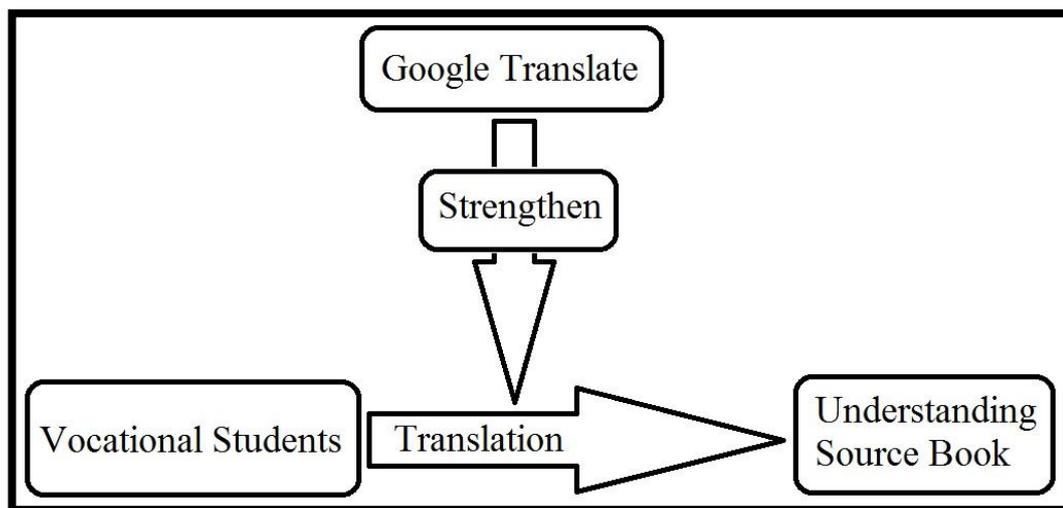


Figure 1.2 Conceptual Frameworks 1

The role of Google Translate based on the picture above is as a learning media to strengthen the students' translation skill. However, the use of Google Translate itself is under the direction of the teacher, and teacher gives feedback

and directs students regarding translation. The later purpose of the strengthened translation skill supposes to help them to understand their vocational source book or any other reference.

The next purpose of the study was to measure the students' behavior or responds toward Google Translate as a learning media. This purpose was also to know their learning experience through it. Furthermore, this purpose was to measure whether there are any other acquisitions the students have; for instance, after learning through Google Translate, the students' vocabulary building is improving.

1.5 Significances of the Study

This study is significant for three aspects (Marshal and Rosman, 2006:34-38 in Emilia, 2009:153). First, theoretically, this study can enrich the literature on information and communication technology in the context of English language teaching and learning in Indonesia as Suherdi (2012) says that ICT can help second language (L2) or English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners to accelerate their language learning. Second, practically, this study may provide the teacher a description and image of applying the recent product of technology in English language teaching especially in term of translation. Finally, professionally, the finding of the study hopefully is used as an information for later study concerns on the similar discussion.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Discussion in this study focused on three aspects. The first discussion focused on discussing Google Translate and its various features. In term of Google Translate, it covers the discussion of the history of Google Translate, how it works, how to access it, and the features. Those features are instant translation, words and phrases highlighting, diction choice, and etc.

The second discussion is the implementation of Google Translate as a learning media for translating activity in the class room. In the other word, Google Translate in this study was positioned as a substitution of conventional dictionary. The use of Google Translate was combined with the teacher's direction and feedback to students regarding their translating activity. At the end of this discussion is the measurement of the students' translation skill progress. And the last discussion is the students' aspects toward Google Translate. This discussion covers the students' experience and opinion.

1.7 Clarification of the Main Terms

There will be several terms that will be repeatedly mentioned across this study. The terms are also abbreviated to meet the effectiveness of writing. The terms are as follows:

Table 1.1 Clarification of Terms

Terms	Abbrev	Explanation
Google Translate	GT	An online translation tool made by Google Corp.
Conventional Dictionary	CD	Any other dictionary beyond Google Translate which includes dictionary book, java/android based static dictionary software.
Information and Communication	ICT	The term used to refer the technology on computing

Technology		
<i>Rekayasa Perangkat Lunak</i>	RPL	Vocational School Major concentrates on computer software engineering
<i>Teknik Sepeda Motor</i>	TSM	Vocational School Major concentrates on Motorcycle Engineering

Furthermore, to resume and to understand the concept of this study, the writer provides general conceptual framework as follows:

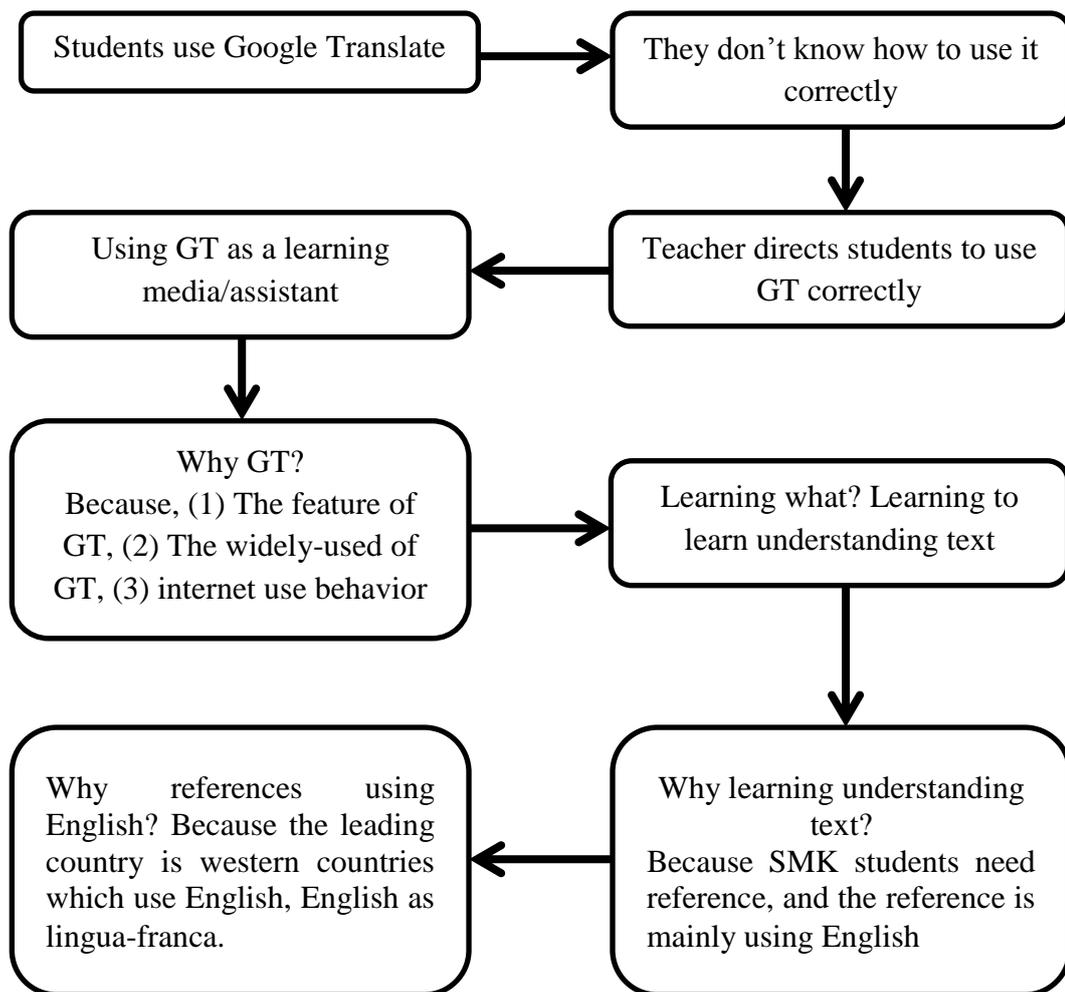


Figure 1.3 General Conceptual Framework of the Study

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This study consists of five chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the background of problem of the study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the significances of the study, the scope of the study, the clarification of the main terms, and the organization of the thesis.

Chapter 2 presents the literature review which covers the discussion of Google Translate including the Google Translate overview, the way how to access Google Translate, and the discussion of Google Translate User Interface and features; English language teaching, translation and teaching, and information and communication technology.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology of this study. It covers the research design, site and participants, and data processing.

Chapter 4 presents data finding and discussion.

Chapter 5 provides the conclusion of the findings and the suggestion for further study.