Exploring the role of online machine translation in language classrooms: Indonesian EFL learners' views and practices at Islamic university

Alfi Nur Nadiva Soetam Rizky[*]**, Wahyu Indah Mala Rohmana**

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The integration of Online Machine Translation (OMT) into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has ignited discussions about its practical use and ethical implications, particularly in Islamic universities where academic integrity is a core value. This study investigates the role of OMT in language instruction, explores Indonesian EFL learners' perspectives on its use, and identifies strategies to address the challenges it presents. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with three students and two lecturers selected via purposive sampling, and document analysis. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the findings. Results reveal that OMT enhances students' vocabulary, serves as a writing aid, and supports speaking practice in the language classroom. It offers benefits such as time efficiency, valuable features, and user convenience. However, challenges including inaccuracies, mistranslations, over-reliance, and excessive dependency were also evident. Both students and lecturers proposed strategies to mitigate these issues, such as fostering awareness of academic integrity among Islamic university students and restricting OMT use in classroom settings.

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[*] *Corresponding author*:

Alfi Nur Nadiva Soetam Rizky
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
Jl. Gajayana No. 50, Diyono, Lowokwaru, Malang 65144, Indonesia
Email: alfi.nurnadiva@gmail.com

1. Introduction

In today's era, students encounter difficulties at the beginning of their English learning journey. In the early stage, they often find it challenging to understand grammar, pronunciation, and other fundamental aspects of the language. The need for English skills is growing, and educators and researchers are responding with new, innovative methods to improve language learning (Rusmiyanto et al., 2023). One of the most promising of these methods is the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology into English language instruction. One of the tools among these AI is Online Machine Translation (OMT).

Today's students and instructors have easy and free access to a wide range of online tools. Machine translators are the most frequently used online tool by learners. Free online machine translation (OMT) tools like Google Translate provide written, voice, and other types of translations between many languages. These tools are popular, especially among language learners, because they are practical, easy to use, and free (Ata & Debreli, 2021). Interest in machine translation (MT) can be traced back to the 1940s. As Bowker (2023) stated, MT has existed for over half a century and is now a highly sophisticated technology.

In Indonesia, especially in the context of Islamic universities, each institution has its concept of how education should be implemented. A previous study by Ardila (2022) revealed that Islamic students tend to exhibit a positive attitude with regard to several aspects of their experience while also displaying a neutral attitude concerning another element. The integration of OMT within the context of Islamic education presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities. OMT tools are essential resources that empower students to engage with English-language materials, which are vital for academic success in a globalized world. These tools bridge the gap between limited English proficiency and the demands of educational coursework, providing students with the support they need to succeed. This statement aligns with research by (Knowles, 2016) from EFL teachers' perspectives, where the results revealed a notable enhancement in perceptions and comprehension regarding the mechanisms of OMT, along with an increase in confidence in conveying and integrating OMT into curricula and a tendency to integrate and assess student utilization of OMT.

However, it is essential to recognize that every phenomenon has both positive and negative aspects. Students perceive OMT as a "double-edged sword." OMT facilitates faster work, providing a valuable professional resource. On the other hand, they may become increasingly reliant on MT, potentially reducing their need for human translation services (Pastor, 2021). There is a risk that relying too heavily on OMT could have negative consequences for language acquisition and the development of critical thinking skills, especially in Islamic philosophy institutions where there is great importance on intellectual integrity, comprehensive understanding, and ethical considerations in the

pursuit of knowledge. There is a concern that excessive reliance on OMT might encourage a superficial approach to language learning, where students prioritize quick translations over deep engagement with the language.

While previous studies have extensively explored the impact of machine translation (OMT) on language learning in various educational contexts, there remains a gap in the literature concerning its use within Islamic educational frameworks, particularly in Indonesia. The majority of existing research has concentrated on the general advantages and disadvantages of OMT, including its capacity to enhance comprehension and provide immediate translations, as well as concerns about its potential to impede the growth of critical language abilities. However, there has been a limited focus on how OMT aligns with or challenges the comprehensive educational philosophies of Islamic institutions, which is pivotal to the academic mission.

This study aims to investigate the role of OMT in the language classroom, the Indonesian EFL learners' views towards the use of OMT, and strategies to overcome the challenges of using OMT by exploring the ethical and pedagogical implications of OMT use, particularly in an educational environment that values both technological advancements and academic integrity. Additionally, insights from this study may aid educators in fostering a more conscientious use of OMT, encouraging students to see these tools as a complement to, rather than a replacement for, active language engagement.

2. Literature review

2.1. Online machine translation (OMT)

The OMT is a software tool that enables the automated translation of text or documents from one language (the source language) to another (the target language) via the Internet and a natural language processing system (Tuilan et al., 2023). According to Tuilan (2021), The OMT system utilizes a contextual and structural analysis of the source text to generate an equivalent translation in the target language. Its capacity to accommodate a range of languages enhances its utility as a tool in language learning. Consequently, OMT is a widely utilized system among language learners.

The concept of Machine Translation (MT) was initially proposed by Warren Weaver in 1947 (Weaver, 1955). Bowker (2021) stated that despite remaining imperfect, the output of neural machine translation (NMT) systems is more suitable as a preliminary result than that of the older systems. As an initial step or a starting point for further work, the results of machine translation may be suitable for specific purposes, such as acquiring basic knowledge or creating a first draft that can then be enhanced for academic writing. Consequently, an increasing number of individuals are adopting machine translation, which is now accessible at no cost. These tools are available online and thus easily accessible to anyone with an internet connection (Saputra et al., 2022). Today's students and instructors have easy and free access to a wide range of online tools. Machine translators are the most frequently used online tool by learners. These tools are popular,

especially among language learners, because they are practical, easy to use, and free (Ata & Debreli, 2021).

According to Khairyah et al. (2024), one of the most frequently utilized OMT tools is DeepL Pro, which is a translation platform based on a renowned AI engine. Its comprehensive and adaptable applications facilitate precise word-by-word, phrase-by-phrase, and paragraph-by-paragraph translation, resulting in exceptional outcomes. However, DeepL Translator has its limitations. While it can facilitate the comprehension of foreign language texts, its translation accuracy is not consistently reliable. Due to that, human participation cannot be separated from OMT tools such as DeepL (Fitria, 2023).

In contrast, Google Translate has emerged as a widely utilized OMT tool, largely due to its advanced multi-lingual online computer interpretation OMT system. It has been reported that Google Translate employs a multilanguage interpretation program, capable of decoding material from over 90 dialects (Kane, 2021). On the other hand, it is also revealed that Google Translate demonstrated the least proficiency in linguistic problem management (Laksana & Komara, 2024). Despite its capacity to yield a comprehensible result, Google Translate is incapable of translating legal structures and terminology with absolute precision when utilized as a machine translation tool (Alkatheery, 2023).

Additionally, ChatGPT, a game-changing language model developed by OpenAI that uses Natural Language Processing (NLP) to excel at various tasks, including translations, employs advanced machine translation (MT) capabilities (Dalayli, 2023). However, it has been observed that the utilization of prompting techniques that rely on chain-of-thought processes can result in a translation behavior that is word-by-word in nature. This phenomenon has been found to introduce errors that can significantly affect the quality of the translation output (Peng et al., 2023).

In other studies, Amanda et al. (2023) also stated that QuillBot becomes an alternative approach to language teaching that integrates paraphrasing and summarizing tools with AI-based language categorization. As indicated by Dale (2020), QuillBot is among the most widely utilized free paraphrasing tools. QuillBot provides a product that employs AI to propose paraphrases. However, one of the primary limitations of QuillBot is its reliance on existing language models and datasets. While these models continue to be updated and refined, they may not fully capture the diversity of writing styles, particularly in academic contexts that demand specific conventions and formalities. Consequently, QuillBot's suggestions and corrections may not always align with academic writing standards, potentially resulting in inaccuracies or recommendations that need further manual review and modification (Raheem et al., 2023).

2.2. The role of OMT

OMT is a globally utilized educational approach. In many countries, OMT has been used for translating, promoting students' vocabularies, and improving their pronunciation. In Oman, for instance, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners employ OMT to integrate OMT courses into translation departments across the Arab

world (Sabtan, 2020). In contrast, EFL learners in mainland China employed MT to facilitate their writing processes (Wang & Ke, 2022). Moreover, online Korean MT platforms, including Google Translate and Papago, have been integrated into an upper-elementary Korean as a foreign language course at a significant southwestern U.S. university (Ryu et al., 2022). Additionally, in Indonesia, EFL learners employ the use of OMT to facilitate their understanding of new vocabulary, learn word symbols, comprehend the meaning of words, gain insight into word formation, and improve their pronunciation. This approach is believed to enhance the learning process, making it more efficient and effective.

In Indonesia, EFL learners employ OMT as a supportive tool that enhances language learning when used appropriately. It helps students improve vocabulary and reading comprehension by providing quick translations of unfamiliar words and phrases. Additionally, it aids writing development by offering structural suggestions and helping students formulate sentences. However, while OMT can assist in idea generation, it often produces grammatical errors and unnatural sentence structures, requiring students to critically analyze and refine its output (Saputra et al., 2022).

2.3. Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' views and practices

In the context of educational research, the term "view" is used to describe learners' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about specific tools or practices that are utilized in their learning process (Borg, 2003). It is essential to gain insight into the perspectives of Indonesian English as EFL learners regarding Online Machine Translation (OMT) to evaluate the extent to which these tools are integrated into their language learning experiences. These perspectives encompass a range of opinions, from positive attitudes toward the perceived utility of OMT to concerns about its limitations. The term "attitude" is used to describe a belief pattern that is developed over time in a learning process and a given socio-cultural context (Liu, 2014).

2.4. Language classroom

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, the language classroom serves as a crucial environment where learners acquire and develop their linguistic skills. According to Schmidt (2012), Language learning is defined as the process of acquiring a new language, whether it be a first, second, or foreign language. This process can occur intentionally or unintentionally. Tuilan et al. (2023) additionally indicate that unintentional learning refers to the process of acquiring a new language without the explicit intention of the learner. For instance, a newborn infant acquires its initial language through the imitation of its parents' speech patterns. In contrast, "intentionally" denotes the process of developing a new language (typically a second or foreign language) with the conscious decision and volition of the learner or as a result of external influences, such as the demands of the situation. For instance, a high school student in Indonesia is compelled to learn English as a foreign language due to the

structure of the curriculum. Another example is a student who learns English as a second language because they intend to reside in an English-speaking country.

In the Indonesian context, language learning is a fundamental aspect of the academic curriculum. The objective of language learning is to equip students with communicative competence in the use of national, regional, and foreign languages (Gunantar, 2016). The "national language" is used to refer to Bahasa Indonesia, the country's official language. The term "local language" is used to refer to the ethnic languages spoken by various Indonesian ethnic groups. The term "foreign language" is used to refer to languages spoken in other countries, such as English or Arabic. This indicates that English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia.

2.5. The unique setting of an Islamic university

In Indonesia, the role of Islamic universities within the national educational framework is pivotal, providing a distinctive approach to secular and religious education. Rohmana et al. (2024) stated that in the Indonesian educational framework, particularly within Islamic institutions, the educational process is designed to be integrated with religious moderation. The concept of religious moderation fosters tolerance for the diversity of cultures present in Indonesia. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, religious moderation is defined by perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors that involve maintaining a balanced perspective, acting with moderation, and avoiding extremes in religious practice.

According to Alfian et al. (2022), the process of learning English is essentially intertwined with the acquisition of Western cultural norms, which may potentially collide with the Islamic values embraced by the majority of Indonesians. This study identifies a crucial need to examine the incorporation of Islamic principles within the English language curriculum at integrated Islamic institutions in Indonesia. In this educational setting, the selected curriculum mandates the integration of Islamic values into the English language teaching methodology, given that the student population is exclusively Muslim.

Furthermore, as stated in Nihayati (2017), Islamic teachings are believed to facilitate an individual's attainment of happiness, well-being, and human safety, whether within the context of this worldly existence or in the Hereafter. Given the comprehensive scope of Islamic values across all aspects of human life, educators must systematically identify and categorize those that can be integrated into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning materials. This process would facilitate the implementation of Islamic values in the EFL classroom. For example, Online Machine Translation (OMT) tools must be aligned with the educational objectives of fostering language proficiency and ethical use of language. This ensures that technological resources support the broader goals of Islamic education, helping students develop their English skills and ability to navigate and contribute positively to a globalized world while maintaining their religious and cultural identity. By integrating Islamic values with modern educational tools,

Islamic universities can create a learning environment that respects religious teachings while embracing technological advancements in language education.

3. Method

This study employs a qualitative case study design to explore the role of Online Machine Translation (OMT) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms at an Islamic university in Indonesia. Creswell (2014) defined a qualitative approach as a research approach that emphasizes the analysis of textual or visual data, as well as the collection of first-person narratives, to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to social or human problems. As a result, the researcher believes that this methodology, particularly a case study design, may provide in-depth data and data interpretation. Conducted from September to November 2024, this research examines students' experiences, perceptions, and challenges in using OMT, with lecturer interviews serving as supporting data. A purposive sampling method was used to select three EFL students who actively use OMT in their studies, ensuring firsthand insights into its practical implications. Additionally, two EFL lecturers were interviewed to provide further context on how OMT is integrated into teaching practices.

Data collection involved classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Observations focused on how OMT is introduced, utilized, and regulated within the classroom, while interviews explored student and lecturer perspectives, with thematic analysis used to identify key patterns in responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Classroom materials, lesson plans, and student assignments were also analyzed to examine OMT's impact on academic performance. Ethical approval was obtained before data collection, ensuring participant anonymity and informed consent. By adopting a case study approach, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how OMT tools influence EFL learning, balancing their benefits with pedagogical and ethical considerations.

4. Findings

To answer the research objectives, hereby the findings to address 1) The role of OMT in the language classroom, 2) The EFL learners' view towards OMT, and 3) Strategies to overcome challenges in using OMT.

4.1. The role of OMT in the language classroom

Based on the findings, it is found that OMT plays a big role in the language classroom, such as 1) promoting students' vocabularies, 2) students' writing assistance, and 3) speaking practice tools.

4.1.1. Promoting students' vocabularies

Based on the observation, OMT tools were introduced by the lecturer to assist students in tackling challenging vocabulary. Students were encouraged to use tools such

as Google Translate, DeepL, Gemini, ChatGPT, WhatsApp, and Google Lens to find word meanings and enhance comprehension while reading texts. In the classroom, Online Machine Translation (OMT) serves as a supportive tool that promotes language learning when used appropriately. It helps students improve vocabulary and reading comprehension by providing quick translations of unfamiliar words and phrases. During the learning session, the lecturer provided step-by-step guidance on using these tools effectively, promoting autonomous learning while ensuring proper usage.

To strengthen the data, the researchers decided to ask some questions to the lecturer about the role of OMT in the language classroom and how she integrates it into her teaching and learning session with one of the following transcripts *"I do not use it for a learning media, but I usually let the students use Online Machine Translation for their assistance when they are having Language Classroom"*. (Lecturer 1)

Based on the statement above, the lecturer revealed that she used the OMT as an assistance tool for the students in the classroom. Instead of integrating the OMT as a learning medium, the lecturer decided to introduce it as an assistance tool to help the students when the lecturer assesses a hard task.

4.1.2. Student's writing assistant

During the interview session with the students, the researcher revealed that OMT also plays a big role as a student's writing assistant. One of the best OMT such as DeepL provides useful features in writing that can help students to check and paraphrase their writing.

> I love to use DeepL for my writing task because it has a feature to suggest which verbs we should use and paraphrase the result too. It could also allow us to translate our document. Just insert the document and you will get the translation right away. (Student 1)

From the statement above, it is revealed that OMT such as DeepL becomes a writing assistant for the students since it provides useful features such as verb suggestions and paraphrasing features to help them do their writing assignments.

4.1.3. Speaking practice tools

In the interview session, another student also revealed that they use OMT as a speaking practice tool because it has text-to-speech features that allow the student to know the correct pronunciation of a particular word. *"I love to use the Keyboard Translator on my smartphone. I love to use Keyboard Translator because it allows us to translate audio. So, I know how to pronounce it."* (Student 3)

From the statement above, the researchers found that audio translation helps the student to know the correct pronunciation by the text-to-speech features and vice versa. Furthermore, to strengthen the data, the researcher also asked another lecturer about the

role of OMT in her class. Additionally, the lecturer asked the students to use particular OMTs such as Chat GPT as a student speaking buddy and Google Translate to practice their pronunciation of certain words saying that *"I never prohibited my students from using OMT in the class, instead I asked them to use it as their speaking buddy or even Google Translate to check on their pronunciation."* (Lecturer 2)

The statement above addresses the role of OMT as a speaking practice tool due to its useful features such as text-to-speech in Google Translate and interactive AI in ChatGPT application.

4.2. The EFL learners' view on using OMT

To address the second research objective, the researcher asked three EFL students with purposive samplings to address their views on using OMT. The researcher will display it into three categories, such as benefits and also challenges in using it since the students give both good and bad perspectives on using OMT.

4.2.1. Benefits of using OMT

Based on the interview session, the students revealed that there are some benefits when they are using OMT in the language classroom, such as 1) time-saving, 2) providing useful features, and 3) experiencing convenience in using OMT.

4.2.1.1. Saving-time

The interview session revealed that the student felt the OMT is helpful in the language classroom because it is time-saving.

> It is helpful for me, learning language becomes so much easier with these tools. I am feeling grateful and interested in learning English since the role of OMT helps me to save time when I am doing my assignment." (Student 3)

From the statement above, OMT positively impacted the students' interest in learning English. It is shown that Student 3 expressed gratitude for the time saved with OMT, allowing for more efficient completion of assignments, which enhanced their interest in language studies. During the interview session, students also revealed their favorite application and its features that helped them.

4.2.1.2. Providing useful features

During the interview session, one of the students revealed one of their favorite applications named Gemini because of its photo-translating feature *"My favorite Online Machine Translator is Gemini to help with my assignment. I love to use Gemini because I can translate a photo and the features in it allow me to know the suggestions and conclusions about the translation"*. (Student 2)

The statement above showed that one of the OMTs named Gemini also captivates students' hearts with its useful features such as photo translating features and even it also

gives suggestions and conclusions about the translation so that the students can understand better.

4.2.1.3. Experiencing convenience in using OMT

One of the students revealed that he feels it is convenient to use OMT because it is easy to use and some applications do not require the user to download it.

> I love to use the Keyboard Translator on my smartphone. I love to use Keyboard Translator because it allows us to translate audio. It is convenient to use because we don't need to download any other application. Just from our keyboard on our phone. Unfortunately, many people still do not know about it." (Student 3)

The statement above showed that the student experienced convenience in using OMT because it does not require him to download any other application, he could access easy translation from one tool only.

4.2.2. Challenges of using OMT

Based on the interview session, the students revealed that there are some challenges when they are using OMT in the language classroom, such as 1) inaccuracy and mistranslation, also 2) over-reliance and over-dependency.

4.2.2.1. Inaccuracy and mistranslation

From the interview session, one of the students revealed that she experienced inaccuracy and mistranslation when using OMT, she said:

> I am satisfied to use Gemini; I rate it 9 out of 10. I like to use it, but sometimes it is not that accurate if we translate something word by word. I would rather translate something into a sentence. (Student 2)

The statement above showed that one of the OMT such as Gemini is inaccurate when it comes to sentence translation. It is better to use it for word-by-word translation rather than translate the whole sentence all at once.

4.2.2.2. Over-reliance and over-dependency

Another student also revealed that OMT can cause over-reliance and overdependency in using it. It happens because the students tend to be lazy and just copy-paste the result of the translation without checking it as described in the following excerpt:

> Well, I usually use an Online Machine Translator to check my work. I am the one who does my task, after that I check it on Gemini. So, I use it as a checker. However, sometimes when I am not in the mood to do the assignment, I use it unwisely by just copy-pasting the result without checking it back." (Student 2)

The statement above showed that the student intended to use the OMT as a checker, but as time passed by, he started to depend on the OMT when doing his task and ended up just copy-pasting the result when he was lazy.

4.3. Strategies to overcome challenges in using OMT

Based on the challenges already mentioned above, it is also found that the students and the teacher have strategies to overcome challenges in using OMT such as 1) embracing students' awareness as Islamic university students, and 2) limiting the usage of OMT in the language classroom.

4.3.1. Raising awareness of ethics and academic honesty

The challenges that emerged such as the over-reliance on using OMT, make both the students and the lecturers concerned and aware to overcome these issues. Due to that, the researchers asked one of the lecturer's opinions about this in the interview session.

> In my opinion, to overcome the challenges, it is a must for the lecturer to give clear and direct instruction when they want to assign the students to use OMT as their assistance. Other than that, it is a must to always remind them to be honest, especially in our university where we embedded honesty as one of Islamic value that the students need to have". (Lecturer 2)

From the statement above, lecturer 2 emphasized ethical use in using OMT, ensuring it supplemented rather than replaced personal learning, resonating with the student values as an Islamic University student where they need to be honest and sincere in doing their learning process. She also mentioned that the lecturer needs to give a clear and direct instruction to prevent academic dishonesty in their learning process.

4.3.2. Encouraging responsibility and limiting the use of OMT

To mitigate this challenge, the lecturer also employs another strategy to overcome the challenge such as by encouraging the students' responsibility and limiting OMT usage during critical assessments such as mid-term and final examinations. By restricting the use of OMT in evaluative contexts, students are encouraged to rely on their language skills and knowledge. This practice helps reinforce independent learning, ensuring that students cultivate a more robust understanding of English without depending solely on technological aids. It also serves as a valuable reminder that while OMT can be a useful tool, it should not replace foundational language acquisition efforts asserting that "I overcame the challenge by limiting their usage to using OMT as their assistance on the evaluation such as Mid-term Examination and also Final Examination." (Lecturer 2)

This balanced approach—allowing OMT for support but limiting it during key assessments—illustrates the lecturer's dedication to fostering genuine language proficiency. By guiding students to use OMT responsibly, educators can maintain the tool's supportive benefits while encouraging a deeper, more thoughtful engagement with

the English language. These strategies ensure that OMT serves as a complement to traditional learning, rather than an all-encompassing crutch.

5. Discussion

Based on the findings, it is revealed that the OMT's role is to promote students' vocabularies in the language classroom. This finding is in line with a prior study by Taj et al. (2017) underscores the role of technology, such as OMT, in enhancing language learning outcomes, particularly in vocabulary acquisition. Their study demonstrated how technology streamlines the learning process, simplifying complex tasks like understanding new terms and facilitating faster learning. From this finding, we know that OMT remains unharmed since its role is to be an assistance tool for the students. The function is to help the students specially to overcome their vocabulary acquisition issues.

The findings also revealed that OMT could be used as a student's writing assistant. This statement is in line with a study by Groves and Mundt (2015) entitled "Friend or Foe? Google Translate in language for academic purposes", the question was posed about whether the individuals were friends or foes. The authors discovered that many students employ Google Translate as an advanced translation tool, particularly when confronted with challenging vocabulary and intricate sentence structures. The tool's convenience and speed render it an attractive option for students seeking immediate answers, particularly in reading and writing tasks.

Additionally, OMT also helps the students to practice their speaking and also becomes their speaking buddy. This finding is in line with other studies, by Pratiwi et al. (2024) which revealed that ChatGPT, one of the famous OMT, has been demonstrated to provide advanced language instruction through natural language processing, machine learning, and speech recognition, resulting in personalized, interactive, and efficient language learning experiences.

In the findings section, EFL learners' views revealed that OMT is a "double-edged sword" that has some benefits and challenges. They stated that OMT brings some benefits such as time-saving, providing useful features, and making them experience convenience in using it. This finding is in line with a study by Ata and Debreli (2021) entitled "Machine translation in the language classroom: Turkish EFL learners' and instructors' perceptions and use" which investigated how learners and instructors in Turkey perceive and utilize OMT in EFL classrooms. The findings also indicated that Turkish EFL learners frequently utilize OMT for various tasks, particularly for translating unfamiliar vocabulary and complex texts. Many students perceive OMT as a valuable resource for facilitating advanced translations and enhancing comprehension. From this finding, it is revealed EFL students are interested in using OMT because it has a significant impact that could help them from different aspects, especially in translating.

The OMT tool is an effective solution for students facing language challenges. It helps them comprehend texts, recall and retrieve difficult words and grammatical structures, and complete complex tasks in the classroom and beyond (Murtisari et al.,

2024). Research by Bahri and Mahadi (2016) also found that GT use can boost students' autonomy in learning Malay. It eliminates the need for students to depend on their teachers for language assistance, both inside and outside the classroom. The tool also helps students relax and participate more actively in class, as they no longer have to keep asking teachers for word meanings. The development of AI applications has resulted in a multitude of tools that meet a variety of linguistic needs. People of all ages and backgrounds use translation apps. There's no doubt that DeepL Translator is the best translation tool on the market. It outperforms Google Translate by a long shot, making fewer errors in general. Microsoft's Bing was ranked second to DeepL, while Google Translate performed the worst in linguistic problem management. ChatGPT also demonstrated that despite significant advances in translation technology, there is still a marked variation in the quality of translations produced by each tool (Laksana & Komara, 2024).

However, it is also revealed that OMT has some challenges such as inaccuracy and mistranslation. This issue is in line with several research journals, including Aguilar (2023), Farrell (2023), and Moisieieva et al. (2023). A series of these studies identified DeepL is the leading translation software, demonstrating superiority in performance and a lower incidence of errors when compared with other systems, including Google Translate. In contrast, Google Translate exhibited the least proficiency in managing linguistic challenges. Moreover, the introduction of ChatGPT underscores that, despite advancements in translation technology, translation quality remains variable across different tools. The findings of these studies indicate that each OMT displays a distinct quality in its translation, resulting in instances of mistranslation and inaccuracy.

It is also mentioned that OMT could bring over-reliance and over-dependency to the user. This finding is consistent with the results of a study conducted by Xu and Li (2021), which indicated that some EFL learners expressed concerns about the potential for overdependence and academic honesty violations. Additionally, these findings align with Susanto's (2017) prior research, which indicated that most EFL learners in that study perceived the use of OMT tools, such as Google Translate, as cheating, contingent on the context and manner of their application. Consequently, understanding how Indonesian EFL learners utilize these tools within their unique educational and cultural contexts is crucial to optimizing their effectiveness in supporting language acquisition.

To tackle issues in using OMT, the findings reveal mitigation ways such as raising awareness of ethics and academic honesty when conducting the learning process. A prior study revealed that academic dishonesty has been a major concern in higher education for a significant time. Students who engage in academic dishonesty may do so for a variety of reasons, including the challenge of understanding the content of the material or the perception that the instructor did not provide comprehensive explanations (Rohmana et al., 2022). Tasmedir et al. (2023) also underscored the necessity of balancing the use of OMT with traditional language learning methodologies. The study concluded with a recommendation that OMT should be integrated into the curriculum cautiously, ensuring

that students are made aware of its limitations and trained to use it critically rather than rely on it as the primary translation means. This research contributes to ongoing discussions on the role of technology in language education, providing valuable insights into how OMT can be both a helpful and problematic tool in language learning contexts.

6. Conclusion

Drawing on prior research articles and journals, this study has explored the role of Online Machine Translation (OMT) in EFL classrooms at an Islamic university, shedding light on its benefits and challenges from the perspectives of Indonesian EFL learners. The findings highlight concerns regarding OMT's inaccuracies and mistranslations, as well as issues of over-reliance and ethical implications that remain unresolved. The results underscore the need for pedagogically guided integration of OMT to balance its advantages with the preservation of academic integrity. However, the study's scope is limited, as it focuses on a single institution with a small sample size, potentially restricting the generalizability of the findings. Future research could expand to include a wider range of institutions, diverse student populations, and longitudinal approaches to evaluate the long-term impact of OMT on language proficiency. Additionally, further exploration of the ethical dimensions of OMT use in academic contexts could offer deeper insights into its responsible application in language education.

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