Jurnal Pendidikan Inklusif Vol. 10 No. 10 (Oktober, 2026)

# STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF GOOGLE TRANSLATE IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS AT GRADE OF 8 STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 1 SUNGGAL

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INFORMASI ARTIKEL

**Submitted : 2026-10-31**
**Review : 2026-10-31**
**Accepted : 2026-10-31**
**Published : 2026-10-31**

*KEYWORD*

*Students' Perception, Google Translate, Descriptive Text.*

***A B S T R A C T***

*This study aims to investigate students' perceptions on using Google Translate as a medium in writing descriptive texts based on Walgito perception theory (2010) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). This study used a descriptive qualitative design, combining data from questionnaires (n=25) and in-depth interviews (n=5) to analyze students' experiences. The results of this study indicate that students have a very positive perception of Google Translate as a functional learning tool. From an internal perspective, this medium enhances cognitive efficiency and provides psychological security by reducing writing anxiety. Externally, teacher instructions and internet accessibility serve as important stimuli in shaping students' usage behavior. The results show an increase in digital literacy where students cross-validate using other AI platforms such as Gemini and ChatGPT to ensure contextual accuracy. In conclusion, Google Translate is considered an important and effective bridge in the process of writing descriptive texts, although students remain critical of its linguistic limitations.*

## INTRODUCTION

The use of technology in the era of globalization has become an integral part of the world of education, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and translation tools such as Google Translate. In English language learning, writing is often considered one of the most challenging skills for students. Particularly in eighth grade, students are introduced to descriptive texts, which require mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and the coherent organization of ideas. Descriptive text writing is one of the most important skills in English learning, as it not only helps students in conveying information clearly, but also trains their creativity and critical thinking skills. However, students often face various difficulties in expressing their ideas well, especially when it comes to using the right vocabulary and appropriate sentence structure. This challenge can be caused by various factors, such as limited vocabulary, lack of understanding of grammar, or uncertainty in delivering accurate and interesting descriptions. Although Google

Translate offers convenience and speed in translating vocabulary or sentences, there is a debate over whether this tool truly aids the learning process or, on the contrary, makes students dependent on it and reduces their motivation to think critically. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the perceptions of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Sunggal regarding the use of Google Translate in writing descriptive texts, as well as examining the internal and external factors that influence their difficulties.
The research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What is the students' perception on the use of Google Translate in writing descriptive text?
2. How do internal and external aspects influence students' difficulties in utilizing Google Translate for descriptive writing tasks?

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

As stated by Robbins and Judge (2017) In essence, every human being is unique. Perception is a process by which we organize and interpret sensory impressions in order to give meaning to our environment Everyone has different ideas, calculations, and even perspectives. There are differences between individuals, some like the same object while others do not. This depends entirely on how the individual perceives the object. Students are the main and most important source in the teaching and learning process, Teachers can educate students, but instructors cannot teach without students. Students can analysis the objects they see and observe by using their five senses. The learning process always begins with perception.

This study uses the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) as the main framework for understanding how students accept and use Google Translate. TAM emphasizes two key aspects, namely Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use. These two aspects are the main benchmarks for whether a technology is considered to provide positive value for users in completing academic tasks, particularly in writing descriptive texts.

Krisnawati (2017), states that Google Translate is a technology provided by Google Inc. Google Translate is a translation machine that provides many language options. Google Translate is used to translate from one language to another. Google Translate has more than 100 different languages from around the world. Google Translate can be accessed online and offline. By using Google Translate students can improve their vocabulary, speaking skills, and grammar. Therefore, Google Translate acts as a tool that can support learning activities. Learning English is one of the sciences that everyone must learn. For example, translation courses. In the communication process, people automatically use language to transfer their ideas. Many ways are used to realize the goal, good communication, both oral and written. One of the ways is translation. Translation is a process in which the set of markers that make up the source language text is replaced by a set of markers in the target language.

Writing is one of the skills of the students must be optimally well-mastered. Through writing, the students can deliver their ideas, thoughts and experiences. In addition they also need a good writing skill in order to express their felling, need and desire in a understandable written form. Ariatna (2015) emphasizes that in developing writing skills, teachers need to provide a supportive environment so that students can achieve literacy success. Furthermore, Ariatna (2015) explains that even though there are challenges in learning writing skills, this process can be optimized through principles that allow students to engage naturally, such as through immersive

experiences and demonstrations, which ultimately help students express their ideas more meaningfully. Writing is difficult, but it is not impossible for someone master it. Being able to write well is not depending on the talent, but it is It depends on practicing, learning, and experiencing writing strategies and principles, then practicing continuously.

In addition, according Knapp and Watkins (2005) remarks that descriptive text is a genre of describing which arranges things into various ways of knowing them. First, it generally starts with naming the thing. Then, classifying it and finally deals with its attributes, behaviors, characteristics and so on. Descriptive text can also be defined as the way how the things look, smell, feel, or sound. This is usually done in order to evoke moods such as happiness, loneliness, or fear. In addition, descriptive writing is a genre that asks the student to describe experience, emotion, situation, qualities, characteristics, etc.

Previous Studies on Students Perception of Using Google Translate in Learning English, they are, First, study from Khotimah et al. (2021) to find out student perception of using Google Translate in learning English. Kok Wei (2021) examined student perceptions on the use of Google Translate in their English language learning. The study involved 112 students from a Malaysian polytechnic and used a quantitative research approach. Abdulloh (2022) to described student perceptions of the use of Google Translate in learning English during the fifth semester at UINSI Samarinda' English department. The population and sample were fifth-semester English Department students. Moreover, a study by Syafitri (2022) to investigate the student perception and their preference of using Google Translate in learning English at English Education Study Program of Raden Fatah State Islamic University Palembang. Another study was conducted by Yuliani et al. (2022) to understand what English students do think about using Google Translate for their English assignments, how frequently they use it, and how much they depend on it to complete their assignments.

## METHOD

In the research section, the researcher uses mixed methods research. This study used a mixed method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research design to explore the perceptions of students in SMP N 1 Sunggal the use of Google Translate in English language learning. According to Creswell (2011), mixed method research begins with a quantitative phase to collect data through measurable instruments, followed by analysis of the quantitative results. The next stage is qualitative research which aims to provide deeper explanations and develop a more comprehensive understanding. This approach is considered relevant with the current study context to accommodate more in-depth findings about junior high school students' perceptions on the use of Google Translate to learn English. The purpose of this mixed method is to invite students of SMP Negeri 1 Sunggal class 8 to imagine their understanding in using Google Translate to write descriptive texts.

The researcher quantitative approach method. Quantitative research is a collection of techniques for analysis numerical data. This study descriptive design because the purpose of this study is to determine students' perceptions of the use of Google Translate in learning English. According to Creswell (2012) explains that the descriptive method aims to find reasons systematically and provide a comprehensive description of the research object.

In the qualitative method, the researcher will conduct interviews with several students to find out how they progress in the learning process using google translate. Qualitative descriptive research is research describing the data as it is, explaining data or events with explanatory sentences in a qualitative way. Qualitative data is analyzed using the Spiral Data Analysis model or six specific steps proposed by Creswell (2012).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the Questionnaire The component shows the highest level of actual usage among the other components, with a total positive percentage reaching 64%. This proves that students' dependence on Google Translate is very strong, although on the other hand there is a 20% negative response indicating technical difficulties when practicing the use of the application in the classroom. This behavioral component has the highest positive percentage, which is 64%, but also records the largest negative perception figure (D + SD) compared to other components, namely 20%.

Internal Factors: Cognitively, students consider Google Translate to be far more efficient than printed dictionaries. However, they also experience anxiety regarding grammatical accuracy (such as verb tenses) when writing without the aid of such tools. Interestingly, students demonstrate developing digital literacy by cross-checking their work using other platforms such as Gemini, DeepL, or ChatGPT.

External Factors: Support from the school environment and teacher guidance (such as recommendations from English teachers to use AI tools) provide students with the legitimacy to use technology openly. Additionally, the availability of a stable internet connection is a key determinant of the smoothness of the translation process.

Cognitively, students perceive Google Translate not merely as an aid, but as a primary medium that facilitates the thinking process in searching for difficult vocabulary (adjectives). Researcher conducted interviews and administered a questionnaire to eighth-grade students at SMP N 1 Sunggal. During the study, the researcher observed firsthand and identified challenges in the students’ use of Google Translate in their writing instruction. The researcher developed a worksheet to gain further insight into the students’ writing comprehension when using Google Translate to support their learning.

This section discusses the research findings and expert opinions from previous studies. As outlined above, the student questionnaire data revealed that the perception formed tends to be positive, as shown by the majority of respondents in this study. If analyzed using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis, students' positive perceptions are rooted in two main aspects: Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use. Students find GT very easy to use because of its simple interface, which then encourages the perception that this media is very useful for improving their writing outcomes. The finding that students continue to use GT despite being aware of its limitations indicates that utility value (efficiency) is often more dominant than the technical perfection of the media itself. The finding in this study is similar to the results of several previous studies. Students' positive perceptions in this study are in line with the findings of Khotimah et al. (2021), Abdulloh (2022), and Syafitri (2022), which collectively state that GT is regarded as a highly helpful learning tool and has a positive influence on the English language learning process. However, this study also found the critical side of students, which aligns with Kok Wei (2022) findings, although students view GT positively, some are aware of the limitations of the tool in translating long or

complex texts. Awareness of these limitations triggers cross-checking behavior using other media such as Gemini or DeepL.

This also confirms the study by Yuliani et al. (2022), which found that although students often use GT, they denied relying on just one medium. The researchers' finding that students use a digital ecosystem (ChatGPT, Gemini, Dola) proves that students' perceptions have developed toward broader digital literacy. They no longer focus on a single tool, but rather use GT as a starting point, which is then refined through other external stimuli. Externally, environmental support becomes the main catalyst. In accordance with the external components in Walgito Theory, stimuli from teachers and peers reinforce students' confidence in using technology. The fact that teachers recommend the use of AI (Gemini) indicates a paradigm shift in education at the school, where digital technology is considered a learning partner. This creates an ecosystem where external factors (internet and teacher support) meet internal factors (students' cognitive and affective needs), resulting in an adaptive and efficient learning behavior in writing descriptive texts. In this context, the main need of students is efficiency in searching for adjective vocabulary. When a medium is able to minimize users' cognitive barriers instantly, the perception formed will tend to be positive.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion in this thesis, the research conclusions can be presented in a complete and comprehensive manner in the form of a narrative paragraph that aligns with the research questions stated in the introduction. The first research question, regarding students' perceptions of using Google Translate when writing descriptive texts, indicates that eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Sunggal hold perceptions that are both highly positive and cautious. Cognitively, students acknowledge that Google Translate is very helpful in speeding up vocabulary searches (especially adjectives) and improving the efficiency of completing assignments. Affectively, there is a mix of feeling assisted and having doubts about the accuracy of the grammar produced by the translation tool. Nevertheless, behaviorally (conatively), students still demonstrate a high level of dependence due to the ease of use it offers, making this technology an instant solution for overcoming difficulties in writing descriptive texts.

The influence of internal and external factors on students' difficulties in using Google Translate reveals that the primary internal factors stem from limited mastery of basic vocabulary and understanding of English grammar (tenses). This triggers cognitive confusion when students encounter differences in meaning between word-for-word translations and complete sentence translations. Meanwhile, the dominant external factors include the characteristics of the translation tool itself which often produces stiff or literal translations as well as influences from the social environment, such as teachers' instructions in the classroom and the availability of a stable internet connection. An interesting finding in this study also points to the development of digital literacy, where students do not merely passively accept translation results (copy-paste) but also perform cross-checks using other artificial intelligence platforms such as Gemini, ChatGPT, or DeepL to ensure contextual accuracy. Thus, although Google Translate functions effectively as an external tool to aid writing, strengthening students' internal capabilities through an understanding of grammar and teacher guidance remains essential to ensure that the use of this technology does not diminish their critical thinking skills.

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