

## Students Attitudes and Perceptions Toward Using Google Translate at Ghor Institute of Higher Education

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### ABSTRACT

*The easiest and most accessible way for learners to meet their translation needs is by using Google Translate. Machine translation is now an integral part of learning a foreign language, particularly Google Translate (GT), which has influenced EFL learning as an online dictionary. It is used to translate from the source language to the target language. It is widely used by Afghan second-language learners today for translating between English and Farsi languages. The purpose of the present study was to explore students' attitudes and perceptions toward using Google Translate in EFL classes at the Ghor Institute of Higher Education. The data for this study were collected using a five-point Likert questionnaire and interviews with 145 English-major university students at the English Department and were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. After analyzing the data, the results indicated that almost all of the participants reported using GT. The three most frequent uses of GT were to look up the meanings of unfamiliar words and to translate sentences from English to Farsi and vice versa, while translating paragraphs and articles (discourse level) was the least frequent. The results also showed that a majority of the population frequently used GT in their classes, and less than half said they used it sometimes, but the rest stated they used it always and rarely, with a very small percentage admitting they never utilized it. All in all, most of the students expressed a high level of positive attitudes toward using GT as a language learning tool in EFL classrooms. It is expected that GT will be better utilized in the future after knowing students' perceptions and attitudes toward using it; that is, it may assist lecturers and educational practitioners in making informed decisions about its utilization in the classroom.*

**Keywords:** Google Translate, Machine translation, Attitudes, Perceptions, Afghan, Farsi

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the past, language learners used dictionaries to look up the meanings of unknown words in the target language. They consulted them either for vocabulary exercises or for translations. According to Alhaisoni and Alhaysony (2017), using traditional dictionaries can be time-consuming, and second language learners might encounter trouble interpreting the meaning. With access to ubiquitous Wi-Fi connections on laptops, tablets, and smartphones today, foreign language instructors and students have at their disposal a wide range of free online translator resources, including powerful machine translation (MT) websites and apps. Nowadays, one of the recent technological advances in the current era is machine translation (MT). It refers to the process of automatically translating words, phrases, texts, or speeches between languages (Agustine & Permatasari, 2021). There are a number of online (MT) tools available for L2 students, including Translator Online, Foreign Word, Web Trance, Prompt, and Google Translate (GT) (Hampshire & Salvia, 2010). However, the most commonly used online translation tool is Google Translate (Alhaisoni & Alhaysony, 2017; Chandra & Yuyun, 2018). This service is a free multilingual machine translation tool developed by Google that allows users to translate texts, speeches, images, sites, or real-time video from one language into another and is considered one of the most popular online translation resources (Kirchhoff et al., 2011). This MT tool is easy and quick to use, and using it is more effective than using a dictionary (Yanto, 2019). As Farzi (2016) points out, these tools have become more efficient over the last few years, allowing students to apply them for a variety of purposes, including translating one word or entire paragraphs between source and target languages. Due to GT's efficiency and compatibility with PCs and smartphone systems (e.g., Android and iOS), it has become very popular among its users and has made substantial progress. It also translates more than 100 languages (Mulyani & Afina, 2021). A number of scholars have agreed that GT can be helpful for students to learn English as a foreign language, including vocabulary learning, writing, reading, and translating (Sukkhwan, 2014). However, it also has some flaws, namely that its accuracy and effectiveness remain questionable. Despite its limitations, it is true that GT is widely used as a support tool by many students of different languages these days. The free services offered by it can help students accomplish a wide range of tasks with convenience and speed (Trang & Anh, 2022). In addition, Shankland (2013) states that students employ GT to help them learn the English language. This tool enables people to learn and use the language both inside and outside the classroom. In fact, the popularity and usefulness of MT, particularly GT, among students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classroom have drawn the attention of a number of studies worldwide. The first study is an investigation of Saudi EFL University students' attitudes toward the use of GT conducted by Alhaisoni and Alhaysony (2017). The results showed that almost all subjects were using GT. It was most frequently used for vocabulary, writing, and reading, whereas translation was the least common purpose. The next is research conducted by Marito and Ashari (2017) under the title EFL Students' Perception of Machine Translation. The results showed that most participants knew and utilized GT; they used it mainly for translating words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Likewise, Ardila (2021) also explored the perceptions of students in the Islamic Education Department regarding the use of machine translations for learning English. Additionally, several other researchers examined students' attitudes and perceptions regarding GT use (Susanto, 2017; Yanti, 2019; Agustine & Permatasari, 2021; Axelina & Setiawan, 2021; Mulyani & Afina, 2021).

However, the review of previous related literature shows that students' attitudes and their perceptions of GT in EFL classes have not been explored in Afghanistan, in particular at the institute level. Moreover, GT is widely used by Afghan learners in different educational settings like universities, schools, and private educational centers. It is particularly popular with teachers and students in English as a foreign language class. In Afghanistan, Farsi is the first language (FL) spoken by Farsi speakers, and English is taught as a second language (SL). Students generally try to translate the material from English into Farsi in order to understand

it. When dealing with different types of texts, such as academic and scientific ones, they heavily rely on GT. In addition, as an ever-growing translation service, GT supports a wide variety of languages, one of which is Farsi. Despite the popularity of GT among Afghan students and the growing number of students using this user-friendly translator in EFL courses, nothing is known about their perceptions and attitudes toward GT's usefulness and shortcomings. As there is a gap related to the students' attitudes toward the use of GT in EFL classes in Afghanistan; therefore, research is required to address it. More specifically, this study aims to investigate students' attitudes toward GT at the Ghor Institute of Higher Education. It is important to know their attitudes and perceptions of GT in EFL classes since it may impact their learning outcomes. This study is expected to give a deeper understanding of students' attitudes toward using GT, leading to better utilization of it in the future. In addition, the results can be useful for teachers in gaining a deeper insight into how their students use GT in EFL class and guiding them on how to make the best use of it. Moreover, this study provides a new perspective on a context that has not previously been covered by previous studies regarding students' use of GT in EFL classrooms, thereby adding to the existing literature. It can also serve as a reference for researchers interested in conducting research on similar topics.

### **1.1 Research Questions:**

Specifically, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. Do students use GT?
2. How frequently do they use it?
3. What are their attitudes and perceptions toward using it?
4. What are their reasons for using it?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Definitions and Background**

There is no doubt that GT is one of the most popular machine translation tools. It allows its users to translate from a single word to various types of files (Sheppard, 2011). Developed by Google, GT is a free multilingual machine translation tool that can translate texts, speeches, images, real-time videos, or web pages from one language to another (Emira Putri, 2021; Maulida, 2017). According to Syakur and Sulistyarningsih (2022), GT offers translations of various written documents from one language to another and supports over 100 languages. As well as translating individual words, it is capable of translating expressions, text sections, or entire web pages. Similarly, Johnson (2012) adds that the GT system offers a plethora of services to its users, namely that it allows them to translate parts or whole websites, webpages, e-mail messages, YouTube video captions, instant messages, chats, etc. from one language into multiple languages. Thus, it has gained a growing number of users as a result of the variety of translation services it offers (Chompurach, 2021). Due to all these advantages, some studies suggest that GT has gained popularity not only among Internet users but also among language learners (Kumar et al., 2011).

### **2.2 GT's Quality**

The quality of GT has been the subject of several studies. For example, in their research, Kreger et al. (2019) discovered that a group of medical staff utilized GT while communicating with emergency department patients. Since their English proficiency was limited, they relied on GT to assist them in translating between their mother tongue and English. A total of 20 commonly used English emergency department discharge instructions were translated using GT. In this setting, they were then evaluated by 14 native speakers of seven commonly spoken languages, including Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Korean, Armenian, and Farsi. In general, 78.5% of the translated statements were accurate, but the accuracy varied

greatly between languages. This indicates that GT is a useful tool. Similarly, a study by Bahri and Mahadi (2016) also found that GT can act as a supplementary tool. The participants of the study were international students at the University of Sains Malasia, and the researchers investigated their use of GT as an additional tool. Sixteen international students from a variety of academic fields and backgrounds participated in the case study, and questionnaires were administered to them. The findings indicated that almost all participants viewed GT as a useful supplementary tool for learning vocabulary words, writing, and reading. Additionally, the application of GT in classroom activities and assignments encouraged the students to learn on their own. However, the results reported that students disagreed slightly with GT's effectiveness as a tool for learning grammar.

A more positive view of GT has also been expressed by Valijärvi and Tarsoly (2019), particularly in relation to foreign language learning. It has been shown that by incorporating GT into the learning process, students who learn foreign languages (in the study, Finnish and Hungarian) become more analytical and proficient, which has encouraged them to learn these languages independently, thus increasing their confidence in the process.

On the contrary, Patil and Davies (2014) conducted an evaluation of GT's accuracy when translating medical statements from English into 26 languages. It was indicated that translation accuracy varied between languages. As part of a study, Vidhayasai et al. (2015) investigated the accuracy of GT for translating a Vietnamese legal document into English. It was found that the translation of documents about the airline's terms and conditions was inaccurate and unintelligible, which could create negative impressions among customers and passengers. In addition, Groves and Mundt (2015) studied the accuracy of a GT text that had been translated from Malay and Chinese into English and found translation errors. In a similar vein, Ghasemi and Hashemian (2016) examined the quality of a translation from English to Persian and the other way around, using GT. They found no differences in the quality of the translations; the errors were the same in both directions. Moreover, Brahmana, Sofyan, and Putri (2020) discovered that the major problem with Google is its inaccuracy and inappropriateness of meaning, as well as its structural inaccuracy. Keeping in view the problems, Trang and Anh (2022) state that teachers are asked to tell their students to use GT intelligently and should double-check its work by asking experienced teachers or other students to review it. From the literature review, it can be understood that machine translation, i.e., GT, has both advantages and disadvantages, particularly in language learning.

### **2.3 Previous Relevant Studies**

Literature indicates that many researchers have paid attention to students' attitudes toward using GT in EFL classes in different settings around the world. This may be due to its use for educational and learning purposes. For instance, Alhaisoni and Alhaysony (2017) investigated Saudi EFL university students' attitudes toward the use of GT. Ninety-two English major students from one of Saudi universities participated in the study. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect the data. The findings of the study showed that almost all of the participants reported using GT. That is, more than half of them mentioned that they use it often and always. Moreover, GT was the most frequently used tool for learning vocabulary, writing, and reading, while translation was the least frequently used one. Moreover, the results revealed that GT is also frequently used for searching for the meaning of unfamiliar words, writing assignments, and reading an English textbook. Overall, they had positive attitudes toward using GT because it is free and easy to use. It also translates texts quickly; its translation is better compared to their own; and it is a useful tool for learning vocabulary. However, participants also came up with some disadvantages of GT. They stated that GT is not able to translate every word accurately; namely, sometimes the meaning that it gives is not appropriate. That is why they look up the meaning of the words in the dictionary to confirm it or ask for help from their teachers and classmates. Further, the results indicated

that students wanted teachers to give them training or strategies so they could use them effectively.

Trang and Anh (2022) carried out a similar study investigating Vietnamese EFL learners' perceptions toward the use of GT in learning English. The study involved thirty participants who majored in English. They responded to GT based on their habit of using it, their satisfaction with it, and their perceptions of its pros and cons. The findings indicated that over half of the respondents held positive attitudes toward GT, reported using GT often to help them with translation, and were satisfied with it. However, over half of respondents also felt that GT had some shortcomings that needed to be addressed in the future, and more than half of them agreed that it could be improved. The majority of participants were fully aware of both the benefits and drawbacks of GT. In brief, on the one hand, the participants believed that GT helped them a lot in their study; on the other hand, they knew that GT failed to help them perfectly, especially when it dealt with culturally bound items and grammatical structures.

The results of the studies are also in line with those of Nurhazanna (2023), who recently explored students' perceptions of using GT in a practicum in translation and interpretation at the English Education Department at UIN Suska Riau. The nature of the study was descriptive-quantitative, and participants were students in the fifth semester from the English Education Department. The researcher employed a questionnaire to gather data from the subjects. The results indicated that students have a positive perception regarding the use of GT while studying the Practicum in Translation and Interpretation Course. The study also found that there are some factors that affect students' perceptions of using GT, such as absorption, understanding, and evaluation, and one of the most dominant factors is absorption. The positive tendency toward GT is further supported by Sagita et al. (2021), who did a study on the students' perceptions of the GT tool in learning English. The researcher employed a descriptive qualitative research design and two sets of questionnaires to gather data from the target population. The participants were students majoring in English at the English Department at Jabal Ghafur University who were selected through purposive sampling. The results of the research revealed that all the students used the GT tool while learning English because sometimes they encountered difficulties understanding English, particularly in translation activities. They used this tool for different purposes. For instance, to translate, to look up synonyms and antonyms, and to check pronunciation in general, they held a positive perception toward the GT tool for learning English, and most agreed that it is a useful tool for learning English.

Another similar study, entitled Students Attitudes Toward GT was conducted by Mulyani and Afina (2021). A total of 24 Indonesian university students participated in the study. The data about students fell into three parts, such as behavior, cognitive and affective attitudes, and were collected through mixed-method approaches (questionnaires and interviews). The findings of the behavioral attitude found that students often use GT for checking the meanings of unfamiliar words and translating sentences. In terms of cognitive attitude, few students believed GT was ethically acceptable without considering how it is used as a useful tool in language learning. The results of the affective attitudes indicated that students enjoyed using GT in translation.

Moreover, Agustin and Siswana (2022) conducted a study on students' perceptions of the use of GT for English learning in Jakarta. The study used a qualitative analysis method, and data were gathered through mixed-method approaches, namely a questionnaire and an interview with five senior high school students who already had experience using GT to learn English. To obtain the participants views and perceptions about using GT for English learning, a four-point Likert scale questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were employed by the researcher. The findings indicated that students had a positive perception of using GT in EFL classrooms. Moreover, it helped them in the translation activity by helping them find the meaning of the words, improving their vocabulary level, and getting a better

understanding of the English language. It is also believed to help students translate and complete their tasks quickly, and it is easy to use. In spite of the disadvantages of using GT, such as not being able to translate everything exactly, it saves time on translating English.

In contrast, a study undertaken by Agustine and Permatasari (2021) about students' attitudes toward using machine translation in Japanese language classes, which was conducted at a private university in Jakarta, revealed that students were not satisfied with the use of machine translation. This means that the student's attitude was negative. Furthermore, Dewi (2016), in a study on students' perceptions of using GT for writing analytical exposition texts in Banguntapan, indicated that they weren't able to determine whether they had negative or positive feelings about GT since most of the responses were undecided.

Considering the previous studies above, we can conclude that this study is similar to the previous ones in that it attempts to determine the students' attitudes and perceptions of using Google Translate but differs from them since it is conducted in a completely new setting with a different population. This is, in fact, the first study in which students' attitudes and perceptions toward MT (in this case, GT) use in EFL classes are explored.

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **3.1 Study Context and Participants**

The sample of the study involved English major undergraduates who were all doing their BA in English Language and Literature at the Ghor Institute of Higher Education, Afghanistan. Out of 150 students majoring in the English Language and Literature (ELL) department, 145 accepted to take part in this study. The research was conducted in the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth semesters of the fall semester. The subjects of the study were all males who were selected purposefully from the English Department. Their ages ranged between 20 and 30.

#### **3.2 Research Instruments**

The researchers used two data gathering techniques—a questionnaire and an interview—to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the participants regarding their attitudes toward using GT in EFL classes at the Ghor Institute of Higher Education and other research questions of the study. The researchers made the questionnaire using ideas from research instruments from previous studies (Alharbi, 2022; Yanti, 2019; Alhaison & Alhaysony, 2017) that also carried out similar studies on the topic under study. The author, however, made a few small changes and modifications to the items of the questionnaire to suit the purpose of the study. Afterward, the English version was translated into Farsi to ensure participants understood it very well and to avoid any misunderstanding. Meanwhile, verbal instructions were also provided by the researcher in their native language to make sure they understood every item of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was made up of two parts: The first part sought the subjects' demographic information. The second part was comprised of three sections: In the first section, participants were asked whether or not they were using GT. The second section was deemed to collect data on the frequency of using GT, and the third section elicited EFL students' attitudes Toward using GT. A five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = neutral; 4 = strongly disagree; 5 = disagree) was also used to allow the participants to choose their responses. Moreover, the interview, which consisted of one question, was conducted to get better insights into students' reasons for using GT.

#### **3.3 Research Procedures**

In order to conduct data collection, a permission and coordination request was made to the dean of the faculty of education at the Ghor Institute of Higher Education. After obtaining

their permission, the researcher set up four sessions with students from four classes to collect data. The researchers also sought collaboration from the English department lecturers for data collection. Each lecturer devoted time for researchers to conduct their study with their students since the research took place during their regular teaching hours. A brief introduction to the purpose, nature, and advantages of the study and its findings was also given to the participant, and the questionnaire was administered to them on four consecutive days. In addition, students were assured that participation would be optional and that their personal information would be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic and research purposes. They were asked to read the instructions and rate their level of agreement with each statement in the questionnaire. The study was conducted in their classrooms. Researchers were present to assist them if they had any questions about the topic or if any part of the questionnaire seemed confusing. The questionnaires were filled out and returned in roughly 30 to 35 minutes. To collect data through interviews, participants were informed in advance that their interview would be recorded on a mobile device. In total, five students participated in the face-to-face interviews, and each interview was conducted individually. The interview was conducted in Farsi and took about 5 minutes for each session, and the audio was recorded. Afterward, the researcher transcribed the audio recordings for analysis. Codes were assigned to participants during transcription in order to protect their confidentiality; they were named student 1, student 2, student 3, student 4, and student 5.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The SPSS Version 18 software was used to determine the frequency of each questioner's item and to calculate the percentage of GT application as well as the percentage of each statement regarding students' attitudes toward using GT. Also, a qualitative interpretation was then made of the data.

## 4. FINDINGS

In the present study, both questionnaires and interviews were used with the intention of providing answers to the four research questions employed in this study. Figures 1 and 2 show the findings of the first and second research questions.

### 4.1 Results of the First Research Question

The results in Figure 1 show that a high percentage (90%) of participants in the study used GT, while a small percentage (10%) did not.

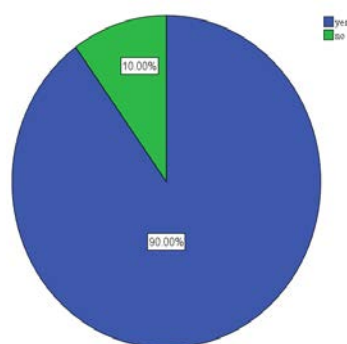


Figure 1. Using Google Translate

### 4.2 Results of the Second Research Question

Regarding the frequency of use, Fig. 2 indicates that more than half (54.67%) of the respondents indicated that they often use GT, and 21.33% stated that they sometimes use it, followed by 10.67% and 7.33% who reported using GT always and rarely, but only 6% admitted that they never use it in their classrooms.

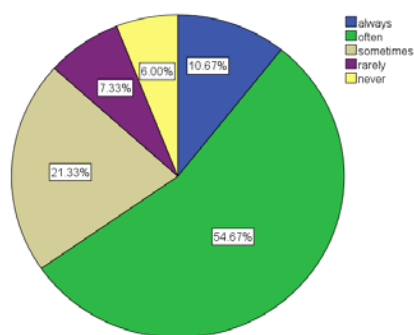


Figure 2. Frequency of Using Google Translate

### 4.3 Results of the Third Research Question

Table 1. Students' Attitudes and Perception Toward Using Google Translate

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1 I feel more confident while using GT for text translation	12.0%	64.7%		8.0%	15.3%
2 I prefer using the GT because it is a free of charge and easy to use	16.7%	61.3%		12.0%	10.0%
3 GT can provide very quick translation for texts and saves time.	26.7%	62.0%		4.0%	7.3%
4 I understand English sentences and passages better with the assistance of GT	19.3%	52.0%	8.7%	8.0%	12.0%
5 I feel satisfied with the results of the translation from GT	14.7%	66.0%		6.0%	13.3%
6 GT has more benefits than drawbacks	19.3%	47.3%	7.3%	8.7%	17.4%
7 The quality of translations by GT is better than mine	16.0%	42.0%	4.0%	26.0%	12.0%
8 GT is very effective for students of all levels of English proficiency	26.0%	49.3%	6.0%	4.0%	14.7%
9 It is faster to use GT than other tools	26.0%	46.0%		10.7%	17.3%
10 Translating English text with GT makes me lazy to open a dictionary	20.7%	35.3%	14.7%	12.0%	17.3%
11 GT can meet all my needs in terms of translating from English to Farsi and vice versa.	22.0%	41.3%	6.0%	4.0%	26.7%
12 GT can translate text effectively	13.3%	35.3%	14.0%	14.0%	23.4%
13 GT may alter the original meaning of a text	12.7%	42.7%	10.0%	19.3%	15.3%
14 I am not able translate without using GT	10.0%	13.3%	11.3%	40.0%	25.4%

Table 1 shows that 88% of the participants reported that GT provides very quick translation for texts and saves time, followed by 71% of the subjects who believed that they understand



English sentences and passages better with the help of GT. Furthermore, 80% acknowledged that they feel satisfied with the results of the translation provided by the GT service, and 76% of them agreed that they feel more confident while using GT for text translation. A considerable number (72%) of the participants also indicated that it is faster to use GT compared to other tools. Likewise, 78% of them preferred using it because it was free and convenient to use. Sixty-six percent of them also thought that GT had more benefits than drawbacks. On the other hand, the data indicates that 56% of the population thought that translating English text with GT made them too lazy to open a dictionary. Moreover, 55% believed that it may alter the original meaning of a text, while only a small percentage (34%) of people disagreed with the statement, and a few of them (10%) reported that they had no idea about it. Overall, the findings revealed that respondents held positive attitudes toward using GT in EFL classes.

#### 4.4 Results of the Fourth Research Question

The results of the interview with students revealed that students mainly used GT to check the meanings of unknown words, phrases, and synonyms, to translate sentences (in terms of meaning and grammar), a whole text, a paragraph, or an article or essay. The most common ones for which GT was used were for finding the meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases and translating sentences, while the least common ones were related to using GT to translate a text, paragraph, or article from English into Farsi.

The results of the interview transcripts related to using GT as follows:

Student 1:

*I use GT to check the meaning of unknown words from my native language into English. I also use it to find the meanings of words, and phrases from English into my native language. I also sometimes translate sentences and my class activities, such as paragraphs, into Farsi to understand them better.*

Student 2:

*I often use GT to find the meanings of unfamiliar words or phrases and to translate a paragraph or a sentence that is difficult to understand from English into Farsi. I also use it to make sure my sentences are grammatically correct, particularly when writing paragraphs and essays.*

Student 3:

*I am using GT in the classroom to check the meanings of words and translate sentences. I also sometimes use it to translate a text or an article, as it provides a very quick translation of texts, speeds up my work, and helps me understand them quite well.*

Student 4:

*'I mainly use GT to translate sentences from English into Farsi and from Farsi into English and find the meanings of the words and phrases that I am not familiar with.'*

Student 5:

*I mostly use it for sentence translation, particularly when it comes to longer sentences; namely, when I cannot translate long sentences from Farsi into English due to my basic skills in grammar, I type them on GT, and it converts them into English. I also sometimes use it to check the meaning of unknown words or when I cannot find proper equivalents or synonyms for some Farsi words in English or vice versa.*

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study suggested that most of the respondents (90%) who took part in the study agreed that they used GT in EFL classes, while a small percentage of them didn't. The results of this study are similar to Khairani et al. (2020) study, which revealed that almost all of the participants employed GT in the translation process, and there were no students who

had never used it. Another study conducted by Kumar (2012) also found that the use of GT is dominant among Arab students.

In terms of frequency of use of GT by the students, the data indicated that more than half of the students (54.67%) reported using GT often, and less than half of them stated that they use it sometimes. In agreement with the present study, Winiharti et al. (2021) found that more than half of the participants (56%) used GT often, whereas almost a quarter (21.33%) used it sometimes. The results also concur with Alharbi (2022), who discovered that Saudi EFL students frequently used GT while learning English. Similarly, Korosec (2012) and Clifford et al., (2013) found that the vast majority of L2 learners use GT frequently. Moreover, the results of the study also revealed that a small percentage of them admitted that they always use GT, which supports the findings of the study by Panah et al. (2022), who reported that less than half of the participants accepted that they always use GT.

In response to the third question, which intended to explore students' attitudes and perceptions toward GT use in EFL classes, the study found that students had a high level of positive attitudes towards using GT in EFL classes at the Ghor Institute of Higher Education, except for a small percentage who had negative views about it. The results of this study may be in line with Alhaisoni and Alhaysony's (2017), who found that the majority of Saudi EFL university students held positive attitudes towards GT for several positive reasons, such as that it was easy to use, it could render text quickly, and its translation was better than their own. Likewise, a study by Trang and Anh (2022) indicated that Vietnamese EFL students had primarily positive attitudes concerning the use of GT. Moreover, the findings of the study by Habeeb (2019) also showed that the Iraqi undergraduate students held a high level of attitude towards the use of machine translation (GT). The findings also seemed to be aligned with the results of the research by Tirtosimono (2017), who discovered that students of the English Language Education Program at the University of Kristen Satya Wacana had fairly positive attitudes regarding the use of GT for getting word meanings and synonyms. It stands in contrast with Agustine and Permatasari's (2021) study, which revealed a large number of Japanese students at a private university in Jakarta had negative attitudes towards machine translation. The current study, however, discovered that participants at the Ghor Institute of Higher Education were in favor of using GT; to put it another way, they had positive attitudes towards using it in EFL classrooms. On the other hand, the results also revealed that a small percentage of the participants also had negative views of using GT, believing that it makes them lazy to open dictionaries and that it changes the origin meaning too. The results correspond to those of Yanti and Meka (2019), who found that a great number of participants believed that the use of Google Translate made them too lazy to open a dictionary.

As for the students' reasons for using GT in EFL classes, the results of the study indicated that the three most frequent purposes for which the participants used GT were to find the meanings of unknown words or phrases and to translate sentences from English into Farsi and vice versa. It seems these findings are in parallel with Kharbakh (2016), which showed that students used GT for checking the meaning of unknown words and translating sentences, but a small number of them were using it for the translation of phrases. Moreover, the results of this study are consistent with Mulyani and Afina's (2021), in which they found students use GT to check the meaning of unknown words and translate sentences. In the same vein, Susanto (2017) discovered in a study that students had a high tendency towards using Google at the word level, such as checking unknown words and synonyms, but a moderate tendency towards using it for collocations. However, for higher levels (phrase, clause, and sentence), they had a moderate tendency to use GT. Moreover, half of the interviewees also stated that they used GT at the discourse level, that is, for translating a paragraph or an article, to understand them better. It also seems to agree with Ardila's (2021) study, which showed that students thought machine translation was a good way to help them translate not only difficult words and sentences but also paragraphs from English to Bahasa or vice versa. A similar result was also shown by Susanto's (2017) study, in which students said they utilize

GT at the discourse level, namely translating a paragraph, parts of an essay, a whole essay, or an article. All in all, the results imply that students held a positive attitude towards using GT in EFL classes and used it mainly to translate unfamiliar words, sentences, and paragraphs from English into Farsi and vice versa. Both the present study and other research support the results mentioned previously.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to explore students' attitudes and perceptions toward using GT in the context of the Ghor Institute of Higher Education. In light of the results of the data analysis described previously, the following conclusions can be drawn:

It is evident that GT is commonly used as an important tool for language learning among EFL students. The results of the current study revealed that a high percentage of students had a tendency to use GT in EFL classes. Another finding is that over half of the participants used GT often and almost a quarter sometimes, along with few admitting they used it always. Moreover, only a small proportion of the population reported using it rarely or choosing not to use it at all (never). The results also showed that students generally held highly positive attitudes toward GT in their EFL classes and called it a very useful tool. On the other hand, there were also a few minor disadvantages reported by participants. Finally, it was also found that students used GT mainly for looking up unfamiliar words or phrases as well as for translating sentences and paragraphs from English into Farsi and vice versa. Hopefully, it will provide better insight for language teachers into English Department students' attitudes and perceptions about using machine translation and help them utilize it effectively in their EFL classes. The results will also serve as a reference for future researchers as well as a baseline for further research on students' attitudes toward using GT.

### 6.1 Limitations and Further Research

There are some limitations to this study that need to be taken into account in future studies. First, the study sample only consisted of males. Researchers can conduct a similar study with learners of both genders, male and female. Second, it was conducted specifically with English major students at the English department of the Ghor Institute of Higher Education. So, the findings are not generalizable to other contexts. Similar studies from other settings, such as departments, universities, schools, and institutes, may provide more generalizable results. Thirdly, the current study examined only the students' attitudes and perceptions, so future studies could investigate either teachers' attitudes or both students' and teachers' attitudes. Lastly, the present research relied only on questionnaires and interviews to collect data. Future research may employ the triangulation technique to gain a deeper insight into students' attitudes toward GT.

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